

were conscripted into the Turkish army. The year of the big snow referred to 1919; the year of immigration (sant el-hijra) refers to 1916 when the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh fled their village due to the Turkish-British battles around the village. These events were reckoned as markers of time and hence it was not easy for the fallah to translate them into specific years. (Abu Nada, Interview: 1985).

The ecological cycle not only created a pattern of similar activities and movements for the fallaheen, but also gave the community a distinct common history. The year began with the first rains in autumn. The fallah followed a twelve month year so as to order and fix his agricultural events. Unlike the

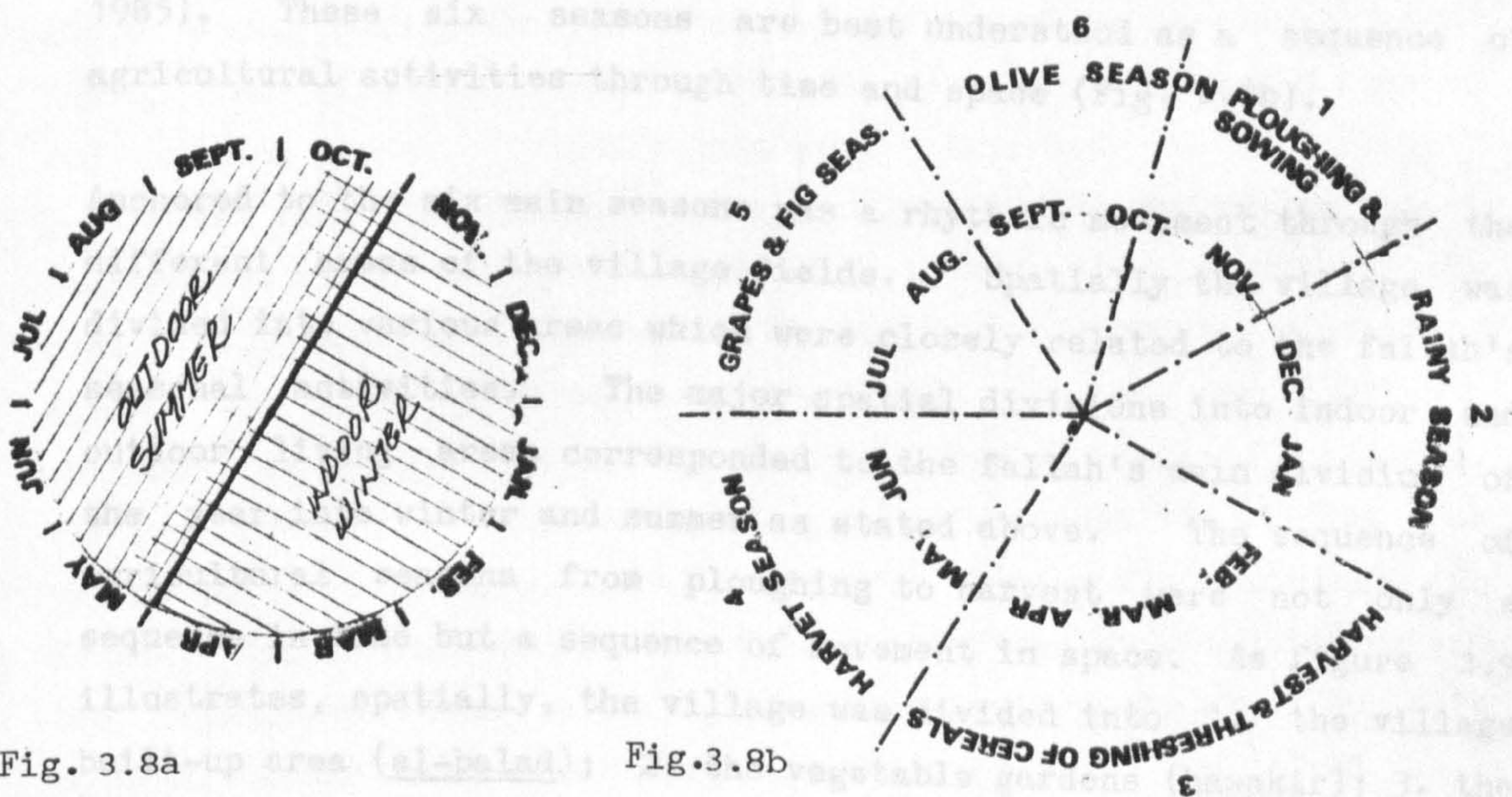


Fig. 3.8a

Fig.3.8b

Fig. 3.8a: The division of the year into into two main seasons

Fig. 3.8b: The division of the year into six seasons

neighbouring Christian peasants who used the same year for fixing agricultural as well as religious events, the Moslem fallah in Deir Ghassaneh depended on the hijri lunar year to fix his religious events. For his agricultural cycle, the Palestinian fallah adopted the Julian year - taken from the Syrian year - because it is anchored in the cyclical ecological changes (which is not the case with the Moslem hijri calendar). The fallah's calendar was (and to great extent still is) a relation between a conceptual cycle of 12