



Fig. 4.51: The construction of the peasant house was a communal act (taken from S.G.Brown, 1980)

"The chief festive events (farah) in the life of a Palestinian peasant or townman are three in number: marriage, the birth of male children and the acquisition of a new house" (Cana'an, 1933: 58).

The process of building a peasant house was an occasion in which almost every member of the community participated ('auneh). Though the construction of the house was seen as primarily a man's task, women and children also gave a helping hand, particularly in the construction of the cross-vaulted roof ('al-aqd). Most houses in Deir Ghassaneh were built with the help of a master builder (m'alleem) who was brought from the neighbouring villages of Birzeit, Kefer ed-Deek, Beit-Rima and, most of all, from the town of Nablus, famed for its builders. The elaborate Barghouthi houses are believed to have been built with the help of master builders who came from the town of Nablus. (Abu Hani: Interview, 1984). The m'alleem often came