

the separation based on kinship, privacy, and gender.

The separation of the different kinship groups was marked by the ordering of certain elements: spaces, buildings, alleys, landscape features. The main structural feature of the village lay-out was its division into three primary kin-based quarters (harat); the Barghouthi quarter referred to as the upper quarter (el harah el foqa), the Shu'abi quarter (harat el Shu'aibieh) and the lower quarter (el harah et tehtah). These three segments formed a space or indivisible whole with variety and diversity. Within these quarters further separation inside the same kinship groups was manifested. The harah was composed of a number of courtyards (ahwash), housing the different patriarchal families. The individual houses (dur) separated the different domestic units. The relationship between the different courtyards forming a harah varied. While strong external and internal boundaries existed between the Barghouthi courtyard houses, the Shu'aibi clan had more of a communal courtyard with strong external boundaries and less defined and less sharp internal boundaries (fig. 4.32). The lower quarter, in contrast, had weaker and more permeable external as well as internal boundaries.

The second law which governed the spatial organisation of the village was the separation between the private and the communal domains. The village could be seen as a structure based on a clear separation of, and a strong distinction between, private and communal (rather than public) domains governed by strong rules of segregation.

The visitor to Deir Ghassaneh receives the impression that the clustered inwardly-looking village did not reveal its spaces all at once in its heyday. One has the feeling that what was hidden seemed to have been much more than what was directly perceived. Spaces had a "layered" quality. This layering went on seemingly forever. The existing privacy gradient created a feeling that one could not enter into every space. There were strong rules and restrictions on the degree of penetration one was allowed, depending on his/her relation to the group or individual residing there. Strong rules and distinctive physical boundaries created the visible communal and the invisible private spaces. Interiority and exclusivity were two strong