

distinction was made between the lower and upper floors, both built from rough squarish stones. The massive and solid exterior walls had very few openings, hence revealing very little about the inside. As seen in figure 4.25, the west and east elevations each had two small squarish windows (20 x 20 cm) called hlalat. In 1966, two relatively big windows were opened in the west elevation, hence changing the character of the once impermeable exterior boundary.

This impermeability was also true of the front facade before the opening of the middle door and the big window in the 1930s. The middle part of this facade was badly damaged in the 1928 earthquake. As a result the middle elevated room ('allieh) was pulled down in 1942, leaving only the slab of a projecting window (kishk). The four corbel stones which carried this window are still projecting from the facade today.

The most elaborate section of this degenerated facade is its entry gate. The projecting frame receiving the gate, the two lines carved around this frame and the smooth ashlar stone used only for this frame, all emphasize the importance of the former single opening.

The architectural articulation of the entry gate (Fig.4.52) also expresses the social significance of the compound. The wooden gate which is made of a single leaf, is set in a niche. The door itself has a beautiful segmental arch made of red and white interlocking voussoirs. The big door contains a smaller auxiliary door. Only important guests were received through the fully opened door. The niche receives a simple pointed arch with two stone seats (maksaleh), typical of most Barghouthi houses.



Fig. 4.52: Entry gate

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The darkness of the entry vestibule, and the change in direction of