

A. A distinct division of labour based along gender lines accompanied with clear demarcations between men's public and women's private domain. The house was considered the private domain of the nuclear family, but more specifically the women's domain as opposed to the elevated room ('alieh) and the guest-houses which were considered the male's domain. The close and dark interior of the house contrasted strongly with the open and bright male's domain. The shifted position of the single entry door which provided for maximum privacy, and the elevated threshold, accentuated by the use of whitewash, clearly defined the boundaries of the two worlds.

B. The fallah's dependency on, and close interaction with nature was also reflected in the internal organisation of the house. Man, animals and agricultural produce were placed under one roof with only one entrance. The hierarchical division of the house into the animal lower space (qa'a el- beit), middle living space (mastabeh), and upper agricultural space (rawieh) was symbolic of the various values assigned to these three elements.

C. The law of mahram (being in a degree of consanguinity precluding marriages) was the principle that dictated visiting patterns and sleeping arrangement. During festive occasions such as marriages, circumcisions, or births, the rituals proceedings took place in and around the house. Though such occasions tended to relax and sometimes obliterate restrictions observed against having non-mahram male enter the house, the inside of the house remained predominantly a female domain.