

The ideology of geneology (i.e., belonging to the same ancestor) was the determinant factor in maintaining this hierarchical spatial order. Both the village built-up area and the village fields could be seen as systems of geneological spaces. The caste-like separation between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen was reinforced both by the physical separation of their living quarters (harat) and ultimately by the rule of exogamy. The further hierarchical segmentation of the harah into courtyard dwellings (ahwash) and individual houses (dur) was based on closer kinship ties.

Attitudes towards privacy and seclusion affected the nature of the boundaries that marked the different geneological spaces. While in the case of the Barghouthis the line separating the outside public world from the inner private world was drawn close to the front door of each Barghouthi dwelling, the lines of separation in peasant dwellings was drawn at the quarter level. In both cases the law of mahram (individuals that are not eligible as spouses) dictated rules of interactions and movements at the house level. While the law of mahram was an overarching principle for most of the Barghouthi women, extending beyond the high walls of their compounds, for most of the fallaheen women, who mingled relatively freely with men working in the fields, the law of mahram ceased to operate outside the walls of their homes.

Within the different geneological spaces, a hierarchical order of gender separation existed. However gender separation was subordinated to kinship separation, thus reflecting the status of women in relation to men. The village built space could be seen as segments of male and female domains. While most of women's domains were defined within kinship spheres, men's domains extended beyond their own living quarters.

The differential status and role between the Barghouthi and the fallaheen women reflected itself in the definition of most Barghouthi male and female domains. While most Barghouthi women considered their homes as their domain, the majority of the fallaheen women extended their domain to the level of the harah, were they moved freely, as well as the village fields (men's domain) where they travelled daily