

As discussed above, the division into different quarters was based along kinship lines as well as social stratification. As illustrated in figure 4.5, the village was, and to some extent still is, divided into two areas; the Barghouthis' and the fallaheen's. The Barghuothi area occupied the top of the hill and hence was referred to as the upper quarter (el harah el foqa). This quarter was both physically as well as symbolically higher. The fallaheen areas, which extended to the lower slopes of the hill, included two distinctive quarters. The lower quarter (el harah et tehtah) on the southern extremities, referred to a geographically low location and to the most socially deprived groups. The fallaheen areas also included the Shua'bi quarter on the eastern slopes. In addition to these two primary quarters, the fallaheen areas included another two very small quarters (Fig. 4.6). The Halabieh quarter housing the small Halabi clan was located on the northwestern slopes. This quarter also included a single house for the 'Abweini (a refugee from the village of 'Abwein). The second small quarter was the Misshel, referring to the group of houses next to the Shu'abi quarter.

The name given to the quarter usually referred to either the name of the clan residing there, or to the geographic location, which was in this case a status symbol, i.e., lower and upper quarters. In some cases the harah was referred to by its orientation i.e., east, west etc.

The harah could be seen as the physical expression of social identity. Each harah in the village had different social status connotation; people were located in social space through their location in physical space. The harah defined the group and stressed its differences vis-a-vis others. Hence, the harah was the most familiar and identifiable spatial territory for the clan.

Basic to this strong territorial claim was a sharp sense of limits. Within their own territory and with their own life style, the different kin groups were able to maintain separateness both through strong physical boundaries as well as through social and behavioural patterns.