

Third, the fact that none of the village centres of activities (such as the village mosque or guest-house) were located within the Shu'aibi quarter; hence there was no need for non-Shu'aibis to enter this quarter, as was the case in the Barghouthi quarter.

Spaces within this quarter were differentiated into communal circulation areas (service areas), in which all members of the Shu'aibis moved freely, and semi-private areas, located directly outside the individual houses. The former included natural non-paved circulation paths and also the women's baking area, where all the tawabin were located.

Each one of the single room houses located around the courtyard defined its own front yard (kussah). This front yard constituted the houses' semi-private domain.

Depending on the occupants' needs and desire for privacy, the spatial definition of these semi-private domains varied. In some cases, as in the case of houses 14-17, the semi-private space was defined by raising the level of the platform located in front of these houses from that of the main courtyard (fig. 4.36).

In other cases (houses no. 1-4 and 18-23) rubble stone walls (slasel) separated the different adjacent frontyards (fig. 4.36). Both Abu Jabir and Ali Salman (houses no. 5-13) created their own private courtyards by completely enclosing their front yards with rather elaborate entry gates (fig. 4.36).

In whatever way the front yard was defined, it remained the most active part of both the habitat, and the communal hosh. Its many elements included cooking utensils, washing basins, goods, fire wood, water jars and barrels, clothes hung on rubble walls or lines, and eating and drinking vessels for livestock. All indicated the active role this space played, particularly in the lives and activities of women. Cleaning dishes, washing clothes, cooking, cleaning grain, drying produce, making clay utensils and also sitting and talking, were all activities that took place in this semi-private domain. Activities in the front yard lasted throughout the day; hence the