

they were deserted and in direct connection with the lower regions, made them attractive places for spirits to inhabit. A number of villagers from Deir Ghassaneh described their encounters with the guardian spirits of both the Abu Nayyak and the Jdedeh springs. (Um Nu'aman, Interview: 1985). 'Ain el Hajjar spring was also believed to have been inhabited by djinn. But contrary to Cana'an's remark that "springs, cisterns and all running waters are inhabited" (1922: 3), in Deir Ghassaneh only three out of the nine springs around the village were believed to be the abodes of djinn.

To the north of the village was a stone heap (rudjm) which was believed to be the abode of a'jam (saints who have common characteristics with demons). Unlike most haunted spots, which were more or less deserted, the courtyard of the devil (hosh esh-shaytan) was located in the living quarter of the Barghouthis. People believed that the Satan appeared there, mostly at night.

#### SACRED ARTIFACTS

In addition to the landscape features mentioned above, many other artifacts and practices were seen as either endowed with supernatural powers or embodying evil or good symbolic meanings.

The fallah resorted to those practices which he believed to be most effective in keeping demons and evil spirits from penetrating his living spaces or even his body. Such penetration he believed to be the cause of disasters, such as sickness, infertility or death.

It was, and still is, widely believed that the mere utterance of the name of Allah, the name of the prophet Mohammed, and Koranic verses, drive away evil spirits. Hence we often see the word Allah inscribed on the wall of holy shrines, on tomb-stones, and on the keystone of entry ways.

As noted above, white objects were perceived as barakeh (blessings). In addition to white walls and white cloths, white stones called shabbeh (alum) were also believed to be blessed, and hence were often