

not urban dwellers, as the Barghouthis claimed. In the fallah's mind it was, and still is, degrading to be of Bedouin origin.

The discrepancies in the stories about the Barghouthis' origins (the same was true about the origins of other clans) reveal to us the nature of relations that prevailed amongst the different clans, especially between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen, in the period under discussion.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE HARAH

Similarities between members of the same harah was not confined only to their common ancestors as discussed above, but also to many other socio-behavioural patterns. For example the harah was seen as the spatial framework for finding eligible spouses. There was a tendency for men and women in the same clan or harah to marry. The distinct social stratification amongst the Bargouthis, the Shua'bis, and the residents of the lower quarter, imposed restrictions on inter-clan/inter-harat marriages. Marriage bound together people who were already linked by residence. In the case of the lower quarter, marriages between the different clans were quite common. This meant that marriages were mostly restricted within the same harah but not necessarily within the same clan. The recruitment of marriage deputation (jaha) was also restricted to elderly men mostly from the clan and at times from the same harah.

Visiting patterns, as a result of marriage patterns, were also restricted within the same harah. Visiting, which was mostly done by women, was restricted to their families or to their in-laws, hence movements were mostly restricted within the harah. It was only during festive occasions that visiting occurred across the different quarters.

The harah was also the political unit for mobilisation. At times of disputes, the individual expected protection primarily from members of his clan, but also from members of his harah. The elders of each harah had the responsibilities for settling such disputes. The harah