



Fig. 5.2: Location of village guest-house

the saha. The only access to the madafah was from the saha (fig. 5.3). In front of the madafah was one of the only two trees planted in the saha. There also used to be a number of pergolas covered with grape vines. Under these, several strawmats were spread on which men sat. The area in front of the madafah was used whenever the weather allowed, and particularly on festive occasions. The madafah, which consisted of one big room, was constructed in two stages. The older part to the south was built around 1830 [this date was estimated by Abu-Hani, for I could not find any material evidence]. This part was one step higher than the new extension to the north which was built seventy years later. Both spaces were roofed by domes. The older part had a square dome, while the newer extension had a round dome. The dome signified the importance of the building, for only holy shrines, or buildings of some significance were roofed by domes - as opposed to cross-vaults, barrel vaults and flat wooden roofs.

In contrast to the small windows which characterized most village dwellings (women's domain), this male domain had eight big windows, hence making it possible to see whatever was happening around it. This also enhanced the close functional relation between the madafah and the saha. Western windows overlooked the saha, while those to the east overlooked the entrance to the saha, located below part of