



Fig. 5.4: Village guest-house (madafah)

in the madafah or in a small room outside. It was roasted in a large shallow iron spoon (mikhmas), then put into a mortar (mehbash) made out of wood and pounded with a wooden pestle. Once ground, the coffee was poured into a deep brass or iron pot with cold water and put on the fire to boil a few times. When ready, the coffee-maker went around and served it in china cups. (For a detailed description of the coffee set see El-Barghouthi, 1924: 180)

The guest-house was maintained by a special caretaker (natour). He was one of the villagers, hired by the village as a whole, and paid in kind annually by each member of the village. The caretaker's duty was to keep the place clean, fill the water jars, light the lamp etc. He also prepared the coffee and kept it ready for every newcomer. But his main duty was to look after the needs of the guests by fetching mattresses and pillows, by serving them food and coffee, and also by looking after their horses which were kept outside in the saha.