

procedure. In serving coffee honourable guests and elders were served first, and the rest followed. The Nablus historian Ihsan Al-Nimr noted the different words used while offering the coffee depending on the status of the guest. The expression (sub) "pour the coffee" was used for those visitors who came to the diwan (the town guest-house). The expression "qaddem" ("offer the coffee") was used for important guests. In the latter case the coffee cups were offered on a tray as opposed to being carried by hand. The expression (erfa') "lift the coffee" was used for very distinguished guests. Here the coffee cup was put in a special case and then offered to the guest on a tray (Nimr, 1962: 462). A similar pattern was followed in offering the food. The kind of food offered to the guest differed also according to the visitor's status. Basically visitors were ranked into three status categories (Barghouthi, manuscript: 16), and hence the food offered to them was also of three categories.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

By examining the spatial organization and articulation of the village saha and guest-house, and by looking at the activities which took place in them, as the people used them and their behavioural patterns, one can conclude the following:

- 1) The saha acted as a centripetal force, uniting the different parts of the village around it.
- 2) The village saha was seen as the most important centre of activity in the village which gained its meaning by gathering around it the village's most important structures: the village guest-house, the village mosque and the sheikh's compound.
- 3) The guest-house was the place where the integration of the village as a whole was manifested. It acted as the arena where the village appeared as an administrative, legal and political unit especially vis-a-vis other villages, and as a unit for social control.