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SLUMS: FAMILY LIFE  
A STUDY OF THREE  
DWELLINGS IN THE  
CITY OF PORT SAID

SHAWQI T. AL-SIBAI

1965

68

SLUMS FAMILY LIFE:  
A STUDY OF THREE DWELLINGS  
IN THE CITY OF PORT-SAID

20



M.A. THESIS  
PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO



Thesis 68

BY  
SHAWQI I. AL-SIBAI

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF AN M.A. IN SOCIOLOGY-ANTHROPOLOGY  
MAY 1965

DEDICATED  
TO  
MY FATHER

## PREFACE

The author wishes to thank Dr. Laila El-Hamamsy, the Director of the Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo, for training and supervising him through the process of collecting data. Her guidance to the successful use of the techniques of participant observation and informal interviewing that have been mainly applied for producing this research, was valuable. Special thanks are also due to Dr. Robert Fernø, the researcher's supervisor, whose advice and encouragement at every step made it possible. I am also indebted to Dr. Abdulla Lutfiyya, the Chairman of the Department of Sociology-Anthropology of this university; Dr. Cynthia Nelson and Dr. John Kennedy, Assistant Professors of Anthropology, for they all assisted me in the production of this paper.

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a study of slum family life in the city of Port-Said. The purpose of this investigation is to demonstrate how the poor live, feel and think. The urban poor usually live in slum areas that are not only frequently overcrowded, depriving those dwelling there of privacy, but are also, by any reasonable standard, unfit for human habitation. The effects of such conditions on the family life will be discussed here.

The intensive study of three dwellings, selected from different housing areas of the city, was undertaken to present to the reader a qualitative general view of the life of the poor. Broadly speaking, my approach has been the same as that of Lewis in his work in Mexico. "My purpose is to give the reader an inside view of family life and of what it means to grow up in a one room home in a slum tenement...."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, I agree with his argument that anthropologists should devote their efforts to the study of the masses of poor which form a great proportion of the world's population, rather than stressing studies in depth of small isolated societies in every corner of the globe. As Lewis puts it in the opening of his book Five Families :

This book has grown out of my conviction that anthropologists have a new function in the modern world : to serve as students and reporters of the great mass of peasants and urban dwellers of the underdeveloped countries who constitute almost eighty percent of the world's population. It is ironic that many Americans, thanks to

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<sup>1</sup>Oscar Lewis, The Children of Sanchez, New-York : Random House, 1961, p. XI.



anthropologists, know more about the culture of some isolated tribes of New Guinea with a total population of 500 souls, than about the way of life of millions of villagers in India or Mexico and other underdeveloped nations which are destined to play so crucial a role in the international scene.<sup>2</sup>

His theory of the culture of sub-culture of poverty is a very suitable framework for this study since it deals with the poor, who have certain characteristics in common all over the world regardless of the cultural context. My purpose has been to contribute to our understanding of the culture of poverty in contemporary Mexico and in so far as the poor throughout the world have something in common, to lower-class life in general....<sup>3</sup>

The concept of the culture of poverty is defined by him in the following terms :

To those who think the poor have no culture, the concept of culture of poverty may seem like a contradiction in terms. It would also seem to give to poverty a certain dignity and status. This is not my intention. In anthropological usage the term culture implies essentially, a design for living which is passed down from generation to generation. In applying this concept of culture to the understanding of poverty, I want to draw attention to the fact that poverty in modern nations is not only a state of economic deprivation, of disorganization, or of the absence of something. It is also something positive in the sense that it has a structure, a rationale, and defense mechanisms without which the poor could hardly carry on. In short, it is a way of life, remarkably stable and persistent, passed down from generation to generation along family lines. The culture of poverty has its own modalities and distinctive social and psychological consequences for its members. It is a dynamic factor which affects participation in the larger national culture and becomes a subculture of its own.

The culture of poverty, as here defined, does not include primitive peoples whose backwardness is the result of their isolation and undeveloped technology and whose society for the most part is not class stratified. Such peoples have a relatively integrated, satisfying, and self-sufficient culture. Nor is the culture of poverty synonymous with the working class, the proletariat or the peasantry, all three of which vary a good deal in economic status throughout the world. In the

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<sup>2</sup>Oscar Lewis, Five Families, New-York : Basic Book, Inc., 1959, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-2.

United States, for example, the working class lives like an elite compared to the lower class of the less developed countries. The culture of poverty would apply only to those people who are at the very bottom of the socio-economic scale, the poorest workers, the poorest peasants, plantation laborers, and that large heterogeneous mass of small artisans and tradesmen usually referred to as the lumpen proletariat.<sup>4</sup>

From this definition, it is quite clear that Lewis feels the culture of poverty has its own structure which fits the poor's social and economic conditions. Were this not the case, the lot of the poor would be almost unbearable. Moreover, it does not include those societies commonly called "primitive" which are generally without class stratification, and therefore applies to Port-Said, which is characterized by class stratification.

I begin with discussion of the history of the land and the people, and attempt to throw some light on the story of housing in a city with a historically constant population increase; an area with strictly limited economic resources that has witnessed a chronic immigratory movement to the towns producing a serious phenomenon of overcrowding and subsequent unemployment and illiteracy for a large proportion of the population, and finally a greatly increasing number of poor who form their own distinctive culture with its own modalities of poverty. Since Port-Said includes the residential slum areas of such poor masses, I give a full description of the whole city in order to show where the poor live, how that housing areas, occupations, education and the like are the lowest in Port-Said, in comparison to the rest of the city.

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<sup>4</sup>Lewis, *the Children of Sanchez*, op. cit., pp. XXIV - XXV.

I then deal in Chapter II with the closed universe of such lower class groups in order to make clear the difficult environment in which such people live. It also presents the problem selected for this study in more detail, indicating the aspects of family life selected for study to give a general view of the sub-culture of poverty reflected in three "sub-views" of three different types of housing conditions.

Chapters III, IV and V present to the reader a detailed description of the family life of the poor in three dwellings of different types. Finally, in Chapter VI, I examine Lewis' theory of the culture of poverty to see whether the poor actually have a distinctive culture with its own distinctive structure or not irrespective of historical differences. Lewis stresses that the social and economic conditions of the poor determine a way of life with its own modalities, that subsequently produce something in common to lower class life in general, regardless of the cultural context. A comparison between Lewis' findings in Mexico and mine in Port-Said will help to examine Lewis' thesis.

Secondly, this chapter aims to investigate the possible effects of housing conditions on the poor's family life. The slum areas of Port-Said include a new housing area and a comparison between the effects of this on family life in the three dwellings will be very important in order to see how the change of housing condition leads to a subsequent behavioral change.

I hope I have succeeded to present something about the poor, who

are usually misunderstood in most things, even in writing about them.

Lewis says : "Today, even most novelists are so busy probing the middle-class soul that they have lost touch with the problems of poverty...."

Lewis adds that Snow has recently stated : Sometimes I am afraid that people in rich countries...have so completely forgotten what it is like to be poor that we can no longer feel or talk with the less lucky. This we must learn to do. <sup>5</sup> Lewis also stresses that the slums have produced very few great writers, and by the time they have become great writers, they generally look back over their early lives through middle class lenses and write within traditional literary forms, so that the retrospective work lacks the immediacy of the original experience.<sup>6</sup>

At the time of this study the author was then an army officer near the slum areas in this city. He became interested to know something about the life in those areas that is usually unknown by most of the middle and upper class people, who unfortunately plan for their future, if indeed there is any thought for such planning. The author participated in their normal family life, using the already existing phenomenon of subletting to sublet a part of two dwellings for such an intensive approach. The dwellers knew nothing about his occupation, and rapport and confidence were very strong to the extent that, after few months, the researcher was able to elicit all the necessary information easily. Autobiographies and life histories were long and purposive to verify the true understanding of the dwellings' occupants.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. XXIII - XXIV.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. XII.

## CHAPTER I

### PORT-SAID

#### HISTORY OF THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The city of Port-Said is one of the big cities of the U.A.R. It lies on the Mediterranean Sea, at the Northeastern edge of the Delta of the river Nile. It is surrounded by the Suez Canal on the East, the Mediterranean to the North, and the Lake of Manzala to the West. (see the city's map in the appendix).

The city is politically divided into four main sectors : El-Sharq, El-Arab, El-Manakh, and El-Mina. El-Sharq mainly includes "El-Afrang" district, which means the foreigners' district, for it is usually occupied by the foreigners and the élite. The El-Arab sector covers most of the district known as "El-Arab". The El-Manakh sector formerly included the "Al-Manakh" district, that was destroyed during the Anglo-French aggression on the city in 1956; it is now known as the Masakin area, and includes the new housing areas. The El-Manakh sector also includes the "Ezab" area, of which some parts have already been tom down and replaced by new housing, while some other sections are still present, waiting their turn to be removed and replaced by the new housing projects. Since the destruction and removal of the Manakh district, the word "Manakh" is no longer used by the people except by the Governorate which still uses it as a term for a political sector. The El-Mina sector includes some parts of the Arab district and the "Qaboti" district, which lies on the fringe of the city beside the lake of Manzala, and is inhabited mainly by the fishermen. It also

includes the Golf barracks, which was originally a barrack used by the occupying British forces, and is now a temporary housing area for the houseless families, who are waiting till more housing projects are finished.

The names of the four political sectors are not used by the people, who usually give the names of the districts : Al-Afrang, Al-Arab, El-Ezab, and El-Masakin.

#### HISTORY OF THE LAND :

Port-Said's history goes to the digging of the Suez Canal in April 1859. Mohammad Sa'id Pasha, then the governor of Egypt had given the privileges of its digging to his French educator Ferdinand Deleseps. "Then the latter began its digging using thousands of Egyptian peasants, who were poorly paid by the French company. Subsequently, many peasants died from hunger. The digging of the canal was finished in 1869 in the days of Khedive Isma'il Pasha who visited Europe to invite heads of state to attend its opening in Isma'iliyya. The French company, then founded the city on the canal's northern Mediterranean as a part of the project to be a naval port, from which the canal could be administered."<sup>1</sup> Then, the authorities faced three main problems in founding the city, which carried the name of its founder : Said Pasha. These problems were: 1) providing land for the area was originally part of the lake of Manzala, 2) drinking water, and 3) housing. The first problem was solved by filling part of the lake of Manzala with earth from the canal excavations; the second was also solved by digging the canal of Ismailiyya; while the

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<sup>1</sup>Mohammad Mostafa, Ma'alem Tareekh Masr Al-Hadeeth (The Modern History of Egypt), Cairo : El-Matba'a Al-Amiriyya, 1952, pp. 67 - 80.

third problem has never been adequately solved. The main reason is the historically constant population increase and a subsequent housing shortage, which has actually led to poor housing conditions. Wooden shacks were finally built. They were quickly made to solve the problem.<sup>2</sup>

The French administrators of the project built the city to contain two different districts : Al-Afrang and the Arab. The former was designated to house the French technicians and administrators of the canal project; it was planned from the first moment to contain excellent houses and villas with wide gardens, that lie on wide streets, that included the bars and the Western night-clubs. El-Arab district was designated for the Egyptian laborers. It was planned to include small houses with narrow apartments. These were equipped with poor sanitary facilities in some places while in others such facilities were completely lacking. The houses lay on narrow streets and lanes. The city inhabitants still suffer from this poor housing.

Through the World Wars I and II, the city's population showed sudden increases, largely caused by sudden immigrations of extra laborers to serve the military forces.<sup>3</sup> While the city's population at the time of its founding was 2,000, it reached 244,000 in 1960.<sup>4</sup> This phenomenon required a corresponding increase in the housing to meet the needs of the excess population, but the authorities then did not even try to do any planning. People were therefore compelled to occupy the land that lay to the west of the Arab district, and built small wooden shacks; this

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<sup>2</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, Ashar Sanawat Magida fi Hayat Port-Said (Ten Glorious Years in the Life of Port-Said), Cairo: The Alamiyya Press, 1962, pp. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup>Lewis Qodsi, the Director of the Department of Projects and Housing in the City's Government, Interview, Dec., 8th., 1962.

<sup>4</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, op. cit., p. 1

additional area was named "Al-Manakh" number one and two. The shacks were not equipped with any kind of public utilities, such as electricity, water, or drainage. It became a very poor slum area.

In 1946, the housing problem reached its peak, and the people still found no better solution than establishing another Manakh area south of the Arab district, which was given the name of Al-Ezab. It contains three ezbas : Ezbet Farouk, Ezbet EL-Nahda, Ezbet EL-Nahas. Some parts of these areas are still present.

In 1956, the Manakh number one was completely destroyed during the aggression.<sup>5</sup> "The aircraft bombed it at one o'clock in the afternoon of November 6, 1956, and the fires continued till five o'clock in the evening. The streets Ebbadi, Abbas, Tawfiq, and El-Ameen in the Arab district were completely destroyed too, because they were centers of public struggle; the Egyptian forces were also occupying them." Consequently, many people became homeless (see sketches number 1 and 2 which show the city before and after the aggression.)

In January 1957, after the evacuation of the aggressive forces, a new ministry was formed, the Ministry of Port-Said Affairs, headed by Mr. Abdul-Latif El-Baghadadi, to rebuild the destroyed city. The minister decided to remove El-Manakh number two, and to erect a modern housing area, in the place of the two Manakhs, for the homeless families.

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<sup>5</sup>Qodsi, op. cit.

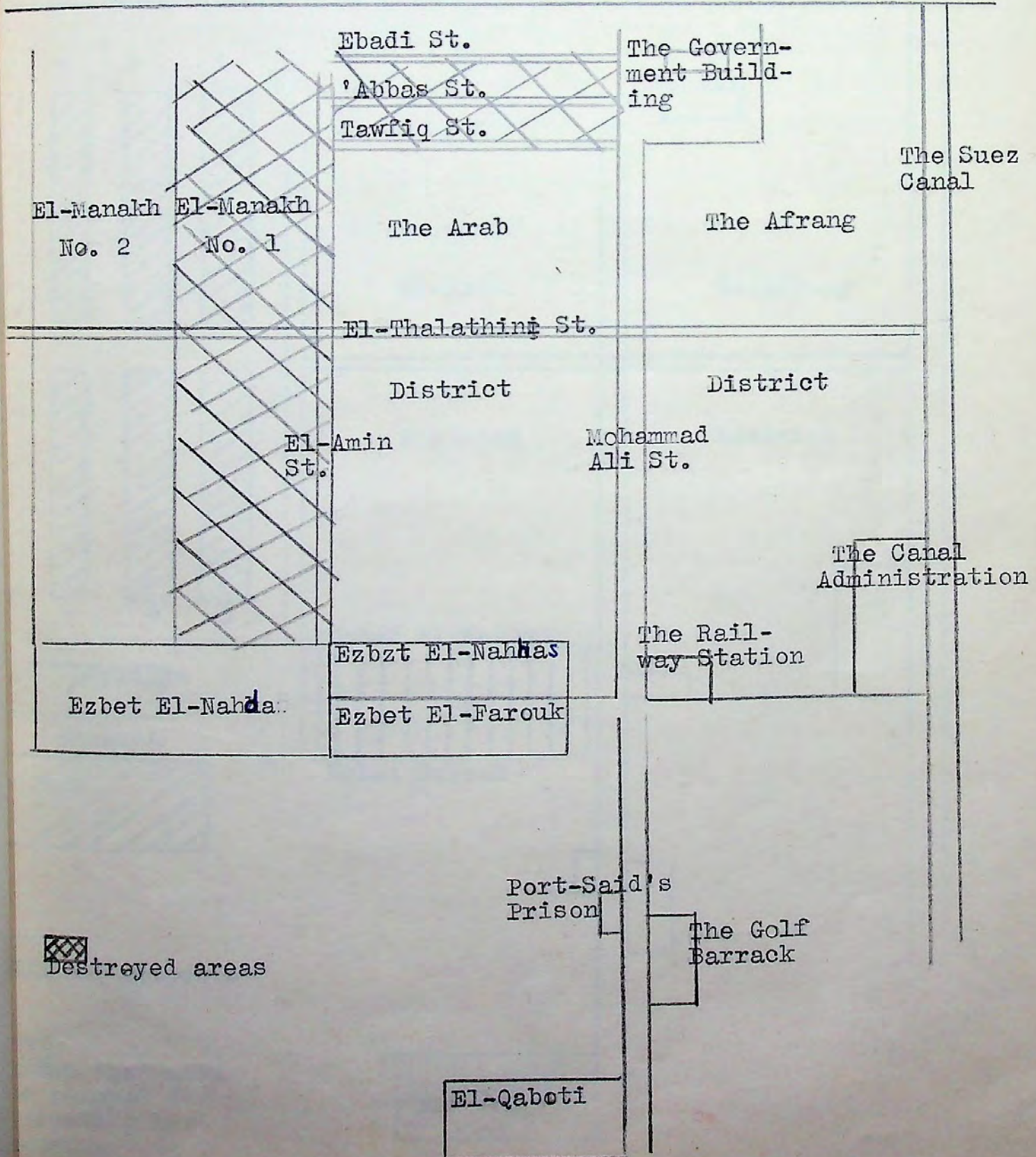


Sketch 1, Port-Said before the Aggression 1956

North



The Mediterranean Sea

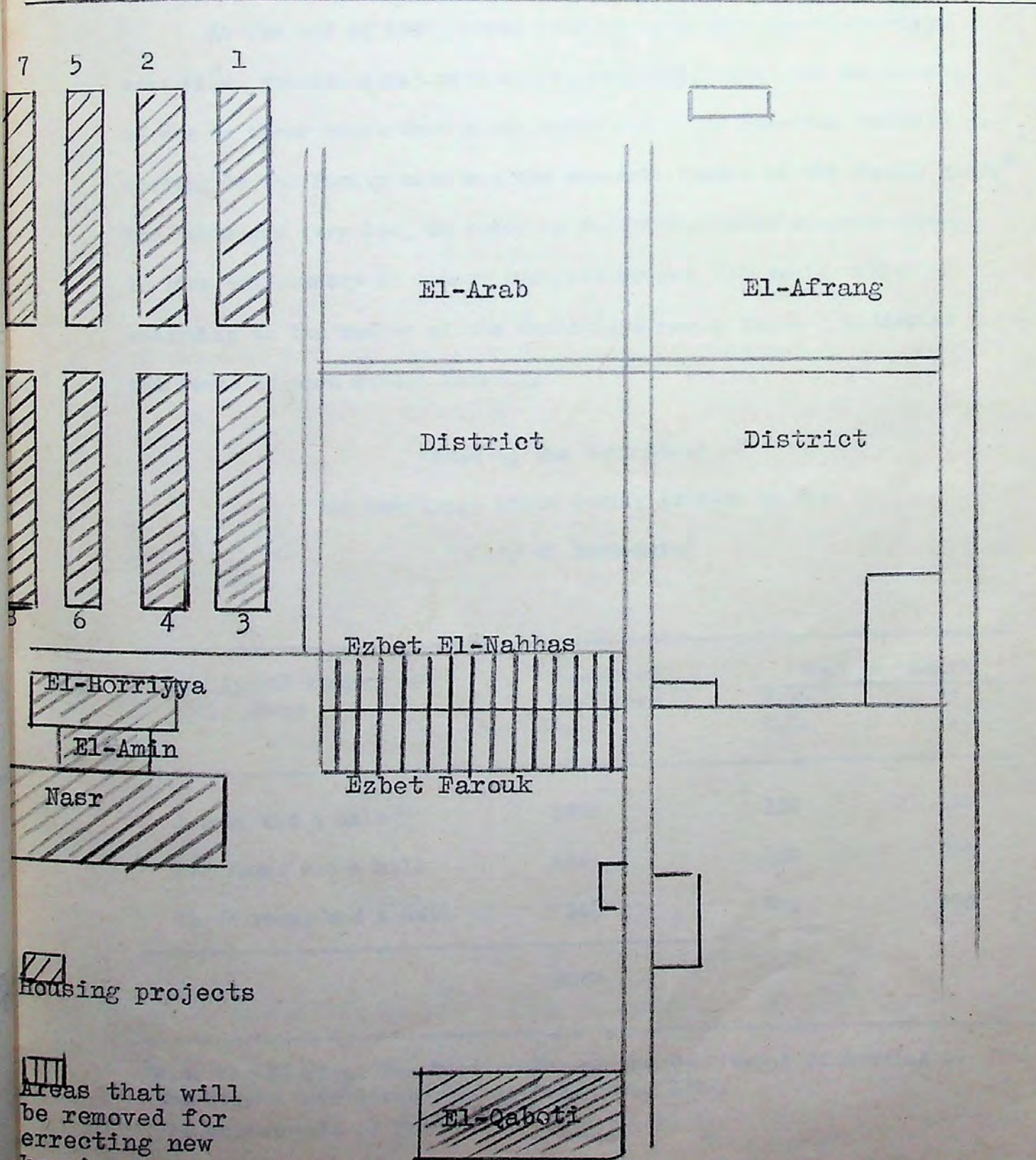



Sketch 2, Port-Said after the Aggression 1963


North



The Mediterranean Sea



 Housing projects

 Areas that will be removed for erecting new housing

This was to be a primary step toward removing all the wooden shacks from the whole city, as a reward for the inhabitants, who had suffered from the aggression. Then, he set aside the Golf Barrack to receive the homeless families.

At the end of 1957, seven housing areas and the El-Horriyya area (i.e. Freedom area) were built. Following this, new apartments of one to three rooms were distributed among the homeless families according to the family size and the economic status of the family head.<sup>6</sup> The rents are very low, in order to enable the lower economic group to live comfortably in modern equipped houses. The rents varied according to the number of the dwelling's rooms. Table 1 indicates the rents of such modern housing.

Table 1, The Rent Level of  
the Dwellings built during 1957-'60 in the  
City of Port-Said<sup>7</sup>

Dwellings' Number of Rooms	Number of Dwellings	Rent per Month	
		From P.T.	to P.T.
A room and a hall	1799	108	125
Two rooms and a hall	3344	160	250
Three rooms and a hall	240	340	380
Total	5563		

<sup>6</sup>M.A. Tag-El-Deen, The Subdirector of the Department of Housing in the City's Governorate, Interview, Nov., 1962.

<sup>7</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, op. cit., p. 5.

The rent differs according to the dwelling's location in relation to the main streets, as well as its location in the one building; the upper floor's rent is higher than that of the ground floor.

The water charge is added to the dwelling's rent as follows :

20 P.T. monthly for a one room dwelling.

25 P.T. monthly for a two room dwelling.

30 P.T. monthly for a three room dwelling.

At the end of the same year, the government of Port-Said decided on the gradual removal of Al-Ezab, as a five-year project which is now finished. In 1958, the area number eight and the Amen area were built and in 1960, Nasr area and the Qaboti area were also built.

At the end of 1962 many parts of the Ezab were removed, and half of the new housing project was nearly completed. The eight housing areas and Nasr area contain buildings of four to five floors; El-Amin and the Qaboti are three to four floors, and El-Horiyya's are all of the one floor type.

Again the phenomenon of immigration reappears on the stage, for this program attracted many rural migrants from the neighboring areas, who immigrated to benefit from living in such modern housing. Naturally, they lived in Al-Ezab in order to guarantee their aims. Building additional shacks in the area is prohibited by law to

prevent an increase in population, but the people continue to sublet, violating the laws through such devious means. All these housing projects, however, are insufficient.<sup>8</sup> Major General Ahmad F. Ragab, the Director of the city's Department of Public Security, comments on the problem; he says :

The housing attracted many people from other governorates to immigrate. They come directly to the Ezab area to live in the already existant shacks, for they know that they will be removed and replaced by modern housing; so they can secure the achievement of their aims. So the Ezab area is very crowded by such immigrants who sublet, violating the laws; a phenomenon that is also prevailing in the new housing areas, where the kitchen and the hall are sublet, each one to a family. Such areas are centers of crime and disease.<sup>9</sup>

This is the story of the poor in their struggle for life. They migrate to an already overcrowded area without fully understanding the meaning and the causes of their migration. They may be told by others that they will find prosperity in a new land, and they may consequently come to find nothing to do and no housing as well. But they may instantly prepare their defence mechanisms; for example, they may sublet parts of others' dwellings to solve the problem.<sup>10</sup>

#### THE PEOPLE :

Port-Said's inhabitants are predominantly Muslim. They speak Arabic, and form part of a traditional "preindustrial society". Sjoberg stresses that this society as well as the industrial one contain urban

<sup>8</sup>Tag-El-Deen, op. cit.,

<sup>9</sup>Ahmad F. Ragab, Major General, The Director of the Department of Public Security in the Government of Port-Said, Interview, Nov.'62.

<sup>10</sup>Lewis in his "Children of Sanchez" describes the poor saying that they have "a strong present time orientation with relatively little ability to defer gratification and plan for the future...".  
Oscar Lewis, The Children of Sanchez, New-York: Random House, 1961, p.XXVI.

agglomerations, characterized by the existence of technology, whose levels determine the distinction between the two types of social structure. Technology refers to the sources of energy, the tools and the know-how connected with the use of both tools and sources of energy for the production of goods and services. Industrialism is that type of technology that utilizes inanimate sources of energy for driving its tools, associated with it are implements and know-how of a much more complex form than those in non-industrial systems. In industrial cities (sub-systems of the industrial society), electricity, steam, nuclear fission...etc, supply the power that for many millennia were provided by animals and human beings. Therefore, energy is considered as the key variable for distinguishing between the main types of cities and societies.<sup>11</sup>

So, as it will be seen, Port-Said is largely a pre-industrial city, since it lacks inanimate means of energy that can produce large industries and most of its people are engaged in predominantly commercial, non-industrial activities (see Table 6.)

As has been mentioned before, the city's population averages 244,00 inhabitants, according to the 1960 census.<sup>12</sup> El-Arab and El-Manakh sectors are the most populated areas in the city, because they include the lower classes that form the majority of the inhabitants. Table 2 indicates the city's population distribution by political sectors. The table also shows a high sex ratio of about 106 percent.

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<sup>11</sup>G. Sjoberg, The Preindustrial City, Illinois; The Free Press, 1960, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup>The Government of the U.A.R. Department of Statistics, Unpublished Material, 1960.

Table 2, Population Distribution  
by Sectors to the City of Port-Said in 1960<sup>13</sup>

Sector	Population by Thousand		Total
	Males	Females	
El-Sharq	22	22	44
El-Arab	46	43	89
El-Manakh	50	48	98
El-Mena	7	7	13
Total	125	119	244

The number of males exceeds that of females' by seven thousand; a phenomenon that must be the result of migration, since the city lost thousands of its males population in the aggression, and consequently the sex ratio might be expected to be very low. However, since migration is usually begun by males, who precede the females, migration may be the cause of this high sex ratio.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, Department of Statistics, Unpublished Material, 1960.

<sup>14</sup>George Lundberg, Sociology, New-York : Harper and Brothers, 1954, p. 83.

The city is overpopulated. There are several causes for such a serious problem. As was mentioned before, the city still suffers subsequent increase in the number of people, in a city with restricted economic resources. The Government of Port-Said stressed that the increase of the occupying forces during the World War II required such an increase determined by the need for labor, but with the evacuated in 1956, the laborers who were serving those forces became unemployed.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the evacuation of a rich section of the population undoubtedly affected the peoples' incomes in a predominantly commercial city.<sup>16</sup> Then, the aggression occurred, and subsequently many inhabitants migrated from the city to their original villages. Soon after the aggression though, many foreign capitalists left the city and consequently many firms and companies were closed. So the supply of laborers far exceeded the demand.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, op.cit., p. 11.

<sup>16</sup>Tag-El-Deen, op.cit.

<sup>17</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, op.cit., p. 11.



Moreover, President Gamal Abdul Nasser announced in the city's first annual ceremony, after the end of the aggression, that the city would be compensated for its losses by modern housing and industrialization. The City actually witnessed revolutionary progress in these respects; many modern housing areas and some small factories were built. These two factors were sufficient to produce a huge migratory movement, not only people who had left returned but more people, attracted by the new housing, came from nearby rural areas. This led to an increase in poverty and unemployment, accompanied by a lowering of the standard of living. The majority of the city's present inhabitants are originally from outside.<sup>18</sup> Data on place of origin is not available for the whole population of the city, but two research projects were carried out by the governorate of the city in 1962 in two populated slum areas : El-Golf Barrack and Ezbet El-Nahda before its removal. Tables 3 and 4 show the population distribution relative to the place of birth of family heads of these two areas. From the tables, it is quite clear that the city's original inhabitants form only 36 per cent of the Golf population, and 34.7 per cent of Ezbet El-Nahda's.

There is also a serious problem of unemployment with concomitant social problems, of illiteracy, crime, delinquency, promiscuity, prostitution, malnutrition, poor health, and the like. The data were issued by the city's Department of Statistics in 1960.

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<sup>18</sup>Tag-El-Deen, op.cit.

Table 3, Population Distribution of  
El-Golf Area Relative to the Place of Birth of  
Family Heads - Nov. 1962.<sup>19</sup>

The Government	Population	
	Number	Percentage
Port-Said	360	36
Sohag	247	24.6
El-Daqahliyya	136	13.5
Dametta	98	9.7
Other Governorates	163	16.2
Total number of families' heads	1004	100
Total number of families' members	5187	

Note : Most of this population was originally the inhabitants of  
Ezbet El-Nahda and Ezbet Farouk.

Table 4, Population Distribution  
Ezbet El-Nahda Relative to the Place of Birth of Family  
Heads - May 1962.<sup>20</sup>

The Government	Population	
	Number	Percentage
Port-Said	366	34.7
El-Daqahliyya	397	37.7
Damyetta	153	14.5
El-Sharqiyya	14	1.2
Governments of Upper Egypt	62	5.9
Other governments	62	5.9
Total	1054	100

<sup>19</sup>The Government of Port-Said, Unpublished Material About the Golf, '62.

<sup>20</sup>The Government of Port-Said, Unpublished Material About El-Nahda, '62.

Appendix 1 shows the average percentage of male unemployment as 45.09. This percentage includes unemployed children over six years old, for while a considerable proportion of them are students in schools, the majority is not, and since, by the values of the sub-culture of poverty such children of this age are considered to be employable, they were considered as unemployed by the Department of Statistics.

Tables 5 and 6 indicate something of the occupational status of the same two areas of El-Golf and Ezbet El-Nahda. They are drawn from the findings of the same research projects carried out by the governorate.

Table 5, The Occupational Status of Families' Heads in the Golf Barrack in the City of Port-Said - Nov., 1962.<sup>21</sup>

Occupation of Families' Heads	Population	
	Number	Percentage
Unskilled governmental laborers	257	25.6
Unskilled laborers	271	27.1
Skilled laborers	138	13.7
Fishermen and fish-sellers	73	7.3
Wandering pedlars	104	10.3
Porters and long shoremen	138	13.7
Unemployed	23	2.3
Total	1004	100

<sup>21</sup>The Government of Port-Said, op.cit.

Table 6, The Occupational Status of Families'  
 Heads of the Already Removed Ezbet-El-Nahda in the City of  
 Port-Said - May 1962.<sup>22</sup>

Occupational Status	Population	
	Number	Percentage
Soldiers and laborers in the Municipal and Government	191	18.1
Fishermen and fish-sellers	224	21.2
Porters and longshoremen	38	3.7
Boatmen	57	5.4
Manual laborers	122	11.6
Wandering pedlars	82	7.9
Private guards	17	1.6
Other craftsmen	271	25.7
Widows	52	4.9
Total	1054	100

Lewis found in Mexico that such lower class group is usually characterized by unskilled occupations, low wages, unemployment and underemployment. The things that actually coincide with the condition of poor in Port-Said. The census and the governorate's reports all reflect these serious facts.

Illiteracy is one of the main characteristics of Egypt. There is no available recent data for the whole country, but only secondary research done by the Department of Statistics of the city's governorate

<sup>22</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, op.cit.

based on data collected primarily for the national census of 1960. (See appendix II.) Illiteracy in the whole city averages 51.8 per cent. El-Sharq and El-Mina show the lowest proportion of illiteracy, the former averages 34.5 per cent, and latter 31.4 per cent, while the percentage of El-Arab is 54.9 and El-Manakh's 60.3. The former two sectors include the elite of the city who usually give a high value to education of both sexes, while the latter two sectors are predominantly inhabited by the lower economic group, whose valuation of education, particularly in the case of females, makes it relatively unimportant. Females in general show a higher proportion of illiteracy than the males, but El-Sharq and El-Mina sectors again show the lowest proportion. The percentage of illiteracy of males and females of the sectors is as follows :

	Males	Females
El-Sharq	28%	41%
El-Mina	21%	41%
El-Arab	42.3%	67.8%
El-Manakh	47%	73.7%

These tables do not include the children of less than ten years old, though schooling in Egypt begins at six years. This again coincides with Lewis' description of the poor.

The percentage of marriage in Port-Said is relatively moderate in spite of poverty and unemployment in such overpopulated area. (See appendix III). The married males over 17 years old form 68.7 per cent of the total population of males over this age, while the married females over 15 years old form 65.7 per cent of the total population of females over this age.

From the foregoing description, the reader may distinguish several social conditions in these two districts of Port-Said, which are commonly associated with poverty, whatever its cause may be :

- a) large numbers of migrants from rural areas into an already crowded city.
- b) high rate of illiteracy among the population.
- c) employment in unskilled labouring jobs.

Poor housing conditions are also commonly associated with poverty and intensify the other problems of the poor. It is the housing situation which we aim to explore in some detail with respect to Port-Said.

CHAPTER II  
THE PROBLEM SELECTED

From the preceding chapter, it will be clear that Port-Said is suffering from several acute social problems which are mainly the result of poverty, in turn caused by immigration and overpopulation, and associated with a serious problem of poor housing in most areas, as well as shortages of facilities to deal with the excessive number of people. Subletting has become the acceptable form of providing accomodation in most cases in El-Ezab and El-Masakin, as it was indicated before. So, the general picture is that of the poor, whose lives may be expected to vary according to variations in housing conditions.

THE UNIVERSE :

As stated in Chapter I, Port-Said contains three main slum housing areas : El-Arab, El-Ezab, and El-Masakin, which are described in Chapter II. The housing conditions are different in each zone. For this reason, I have selected for study one house in each of the areas.

An El-Arab house is commonly made of cement and bricks, but lacks sewage and electricity in most cases. It is generally composed of one to two rooms and a kitchen which also contains the bath and the toilet. It is small and contains few windows. The sun rarely enters the Arab's house, because of the narrowness of the lanes as is quite clear in the city map, included as Appendix.

El-Ezab shacks are made of wood and usually composed of two to six rooms connected by a hall. They lack any specific place for a kitchen or a bath; there is only a very dirty toilet, which is no more than a barrel, under the floor, usually similar to that of the Arab's house. In both cases, the dwellers pay for its periodic drainage. The Municipality has specific cars that are equipped with certain pumps for drainage, as well as some other non-mechanical carts, that are usually made of wood and driven by mules. They have also a specific type of pumps, which differ from the other ones, because they function manually. The one drainage usually occurs monthly, and costs about twenty to twenty-five piasters.



The drainage car



The government of the city describes the condition of sewage in the city as follows :

Sewage disposal in the city was much worse before 1952. The daily drainage was 15000 m<sup>3</sup>, while the pushing stations' capacity was 9000 m<sup>3</sup> only. The difference is pushed by drainage cars. The condition is still bad, but we have approved several projects to solve the problem.<sup>1</sup>



One of the inspection chambers in the Ezab, into which the drainage car empties its content after being filled.

The Ezab inhabitants buy their water from a water-cart and keep it in a "zir" (a container made of pottery). They have no plumbing or piped water.

The Ezab district is adequately described in the government

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<sup>1</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, Ashar Sanawat Magida fi Hayat Port-Said, (Ten Glorious Years in the Life of Port-Said), Cairo : The Alamiyya Press, 1962, p. 7.

report, issued by the Housing Committee of the city, and directed to the Governor (see appendix IV). It contains the committee's findings of a study done in ezbet El-Nahda before its removal in 1962. The report stresses that, "...the most prevailing disease is tuberculosis and anemia. This may be caused by poverty, moisture, lack of furniture and sufficient covers for sleeping, and bad lighting." Moreover, it also stresses that, "most of the prisoners of the ezba were narcotic merchants and thieves."<sup>2</sup>



The water-cart is pulled by a donkey. It carries a big barrel that contains drinking water ready for sale.

The U.S. Public Housing Administration declared that 7,000,000 of the States' 45,900,000 dwellings are close to being unfit for human beings to live in.... The Federal records show that such slums are

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<sup>2</sup>The Governorate of Port-Said, Unpublished Material.

directly involved in 45 per cent of major crimes, 55 per cent of juvenile delinquency, 60 per cent of tuberculosis cases, 50 per cent of all diseases, and 35 per cent of all fires."<sup>3</sup> So, it seems that such poor housing areas share common characteristics, because such findings coincide with those reported by Port-Said's governorate, and to what has been subjectively said by Major General Ragab on page 14. His comments are the result of long experience as a policeman.

The housing unit in El-Masakin is a modern apartment house of four to five stories. The apartments contain one, two, or three rooms. The kitchen is separated from the bathroom, which contains the toilet and the bath. The apartments are crowded, and, as was indicated before, subletting is the main cause.

Tag-El-Deen, the sub-director of the city's Housing Department, comments on this phenomenon (see appendix V). He says that peoples increase, and consequently housing is always insufficient. Though, people sublet parts of others' dwellings, whose tenants welcome them to overcome their poverty.<sup>4</sup> Cullin stresses that "at a time when there is a housing shortage, many persons who need separate accomodation may be living as parts of other households."<sup>5</sup> So, this phenomenon seems to be one of the possible consequences of housing shortage; the thing that is

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<sup>3</sup>Donald Robinson, "Slum Clearance Pays Extra Dividends", Reader's Digest, Nov., 1955, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup>M.A. Tag-El-Deen, the Sub-director of the Department of Housing in the City's Governorate, Interview, Nov., 1962.

<sup>5</sup>J.B. Cullin, "The Measurement of Housing Need", The British Journal of Sociology, IX : Dec., 1958, p. 342.

evident in Port-Said. This often causes many troubles to the dwellers, as it will be seen in the description latter on.

Burges defines the slum families in the U.S. as the working class people with the lowest incomes, who live in cheap rent areas. He also defines the house in the slum areas as the one, that is composed of a two room shack with a floor space of approximately twelve by eighteen feet.<sup>6</sup> This is the case in Port-Said's slum areas, and it may be worse. A slum has been also defined "as a scene of ways, ranging from a simple shack-list of easily recognisable physical features to a whole complex of psychological, social, and emotional factors. It can be rural or urban, old or nearly new, respectful or sinful, drab or honky-konk. Somewhere in each definition, the idea of physical conditions which violate human dignity, which burden the human spirit with feelings of disgust, frustration and hopelessness."<sup>7</sup>

Port-Said slums clearly present such a scene, and as we shall see, the families are actually quite hopelessly poor, suffering from poor incomes and poor housing which is made worse by subletting, which is characteristic in most of the Ezab and El-Masakin's dwellings.

#### THE PROBLEM :

The problem selected was to investigate the conditions of

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<sup>6</sup>E. Burges, The Family, New-York; American Beak Com., 1960, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup>Astrid Nonson, "Slums, Semi-Slums, and Super-Slums", Marriage and Family Living, XVII : May, 1955, p. 118.

of family living in the slum areas of Port-Said. An intensive study of three dwellings in the principal housing areas of the city was designed to obtain information regarding these aspects of family life :

I- Housing.

II- Life History of Family Heads.

III- Standard of Living.

A- Food.

B- Clothing.

C- Rent.

D- Other Expenses.

IV- Household Routine.

A- Housekeeping.

1- Cooking.

2- Housecleaning.

3- Washing Clothes.

4- Poultry.

B- Personal Care.

1- Washing.

2- Bathing.

3- Defecation.

C- Sleeping.

V- Interpersonal Relations.

A- Among the Family Members.

1- Husband-Wife.

2- Parent-Child.

3- Sibling-Sibling.

B- Among the Dwelling's Members.

C- Between the Dwelling's Members and Non-dwelling's.

VI- The Treatment of the Sick.

A- Medical Treatment.

B- Non-medical Treatment.

1- Through using "Al-Wasfat Al-Baladiyya" (non-medically described ways of treatment).

2- Through practioners.

VII- Receiving Visitors.

A- The Male Visitors.

B- The Female Visitors.

VIII- Recreation.

A- In-door for :

1- Males.

2- Females.

3- Children.

B- Out-door for :

1- Males.

2- Females.

3- Children.

Family life has been described by Una Bernard in the following terms : The family is living at home; the material and social environment created and maintained by husband and wife, in which they may live together in privacy, and nurture their children, and in which

provision is made for primary needs of shelter, food and clothing, and also for cultural and aesthetic needs.<sup>8</sup> The definition should also include two main factors, that should be emphasized since they determine its pattern. They are : (1) the economic status of the family head, and (2) the degree of privacy afforded by the house.

Poverty is determined according to the economic status of the head of a slum family. Rowntree defined it at the beginning of the present century. He stated that, "families living in poverty are those whose total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities of merely physical efficiency."<sup>9</sup> He drew up a list of necessities under the heading of food, clothing, and household sundries, and estimated how much it would cost to buy them. In fact the necessities stressed by Rowntree may not typically fit Egypt, where food, clothing and shelter are actually the main requirements, which if not obtained by the family classifies its members as poor. And that is the condition in the three dwellings studied in Port-Said. As will be seen latter on, the dwellers of such dwellings will be found suffering and complaining from the shortage of all such necessities.

Privacy is a desired degree of seclusion not involving isolation from society, the group, or the family. It may relate to the opportunity of an individual or a family to be alone at times when being alone is essential.<sup>10</sup> Johnson studied the problem of privacy in a multi-family dwelling. He stressed that, the home

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<sup>8</sup>Una Bernard, New Horizons for the Family, New-York : Macmillan Com., 1941, p. 639.

<sup>9</sup>Peter Townsend, "The Meaning of Poverty", The British Journal of Sociology, XIII : Sep., 1962, p. 215.

<sup>10</sup>Dictionary of Sociology, New-York : Philosophical Library, 1944.

should be the place where each family member can find <sup>n</sup>sactuary from the stress of life outside the home. This requires a minimum of interference of family life by external factors. This privacy may be considered as a problem of space, of light, and of sound : space in terms of size and location of rooms and yard, and in terms of geographical relationship of the home to the external world; sight in terms of a family living subjected to the observation of outsiders; and sound in terms of any obtrusive noise from outside the home. It should be noted that sound also involves the necessity of a family's inhibiting its activities to prevent neighbors from knowing the intimate details of its life.<sup>11</sup>

The concept and expression of privacy is actually culturally relative and is determined by values which vary according to the classes of the community. Lower classes attitudes toward privacy are naturally influenced by poverty and associated with poor housing. This class may hope to live in a dwelling that offers privacy to its dwellers against outsiders' curiosity to see or hear what is going inside. Moreover, the dwelling must offer privacy for the women, if the family is visited by strange men. These are actually standards of behavior which are violated by poor living conditions.

Overcrowdedness limits privacy, but there are different definitions of the term. "The census reports, a density of more than two persons per room has been used as a comparative index of the prevalence and distribution of overcrowdedness."<sup>12</sup> In the three families I studied in Port-Said, about four persons per room was average.

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<sup>11</sup>Elmer H. Johnson, "Family Privacy in a Multi-Unit Dwelling", Marriage and Family Living, XIV : Aug., 1952, p. 123.

<sup>12</sup>Cullin, Op.cit., p. 347.



THE AIM OF STUDY :

The purpose of my study is to do an intensive descriptive study of family life in slum areas and to examine Lewis' concept of the sub-culture of poverty. I have also been interested in the effect of poor housing on family life which forms part of the tremendous emotional burden of the poor.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDY :

1- The elite of the city, including the government's staff members, generally have little first-hand knowledge of the social behavior of such people, and the psychology of this pattern of living. "What are their problems? How do they think and feel? What they worry about, argue over, anticipate or enjoy."<sup>13</sup> It is hoped that the research will reveal many social problems that otherwise might remain unknown. Therefore, the result may be valuable to the governorate of the city for future social planning.

2- The study may be useful for comparisons between the present and the future in Port-Said.

3- The study will also be a practical historical record of an area that will soon be removed, that is the Ezab district.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid. p. 1.

4. The intensive study of family life in slum areas will present a living picture of one segment of a population who live in similar conditions.

Since the problem is to present such a picture of the slum family life, and since a slum study reflects a general picture of poverty, poor housing, overcrowdedness, subletting, lack of privacy, illiteracy, and the like; it is well to review a few of the works of others whose studies have attempted to understand such problems. Many studies have been made of slum housing conditions in western countries, among which are those of Mogey and others but these do not seem relevant to our study. Only Oscar Lewis' work to which I have already referred, has seemed particularly useful. However, I have included a summary of the Mogey and the other studies in Appendix VI.

#### METHODOLOGY :

It was decided to live in three different slum dwellings for this study, one in the Arab, another in al-Ezab, and the third in al-Masakin area. Housing conditions are different in each and family behavior may be affected by this fact. The family which buys its water and dwells in a wooden shack, may have a different way of life from the family living in the new housing project which has all kinds of sanitary facilities.

Since such a study demands an unusual rapport and confidence

between the researcher and the people living in the slum dwellings, and since the researcher cannot simply knock on any door for information about internal family life, the researcher sublet space in each of three dwellings : a hall in a dwelling of one room and a hall in al-Masakin, where the kitchen is also sublet to a fisherman and his wife, while the main room is occupied by the real tenant of the apartment. Another wooden room in a shack of seven rooms in al-Ezab area was also sublet by the researcher. It is occupied by five families. The third was a dwelling in El-Arab of one room and a hall.

In the first case, the dwelling's members knew nothing about the real aim of the researcher's presence in the hall; he was merely known as a laborer, who travelled in a lorry transporting goods outside the city and returning again to Port-Said, in order to explain his absence from the dwelling in the case he passed the night in al-Ezab's dwelling.

In the second case, one of the family heads who live in al-Ezab knew the aim of the researcher and consequently presented him as a distant relative who was a student at the university. By the end of the first month, a strong rapport and confidence had been established between the researcher and the people in the two dwellings. They began to welcome him when he came and to feel unhappy when he left. So, the researcher eventually informed the dwellers of al-Ezab about his intention to study their family life, for his university, and consequently they welcomed the study and expressed their best wishes for him to succeed.

The third dwelling of al-Arab, composed of one room and a hall,

was easy to come in and study, for it is occupied by a compound family. One of the family members had trouble in his life and consequently he found in the researcher a friend, with whom he might consult. This friendship facilitated the researcher's presence in this dwelling for many hours through the day and night. He became a friend to all the family members including the females; they all knew the researcher's aim.

At the time of the study, the researcher was working as an army officer in Port-Said, as was mentioned before. During the day, he visited the three dwellings to strengthen the rapport. At night, he slept either in the Masakin or in the Ezab dwelling.

Eight months from November 1962 to June 1963, were spent among these dwellings for the pilot study, the establishment of rapport, and collecting the relevant data. The researcher collected his data through the techniques of participant observation and informal interviewing.

CHAPTER III  
BAYYOMI'S DWELLING

Cast of Characters

Bayyomi-age 50 a family head

Nifisa-age 44 his wife

Ahmad-age 15 the eldest son

Muhammad-age 14 the second son

Samira-age 19 the eldest daughter (married and living with her  
husband in the same dwelling)

Badran-age 27 Samira's husband

Tahiyya-age 17 the second daughter (unmarried working girl)

Fawziyya-age 7 the youngest daughter

Laila-age 3 Badran's daughter



(From right to left) Bayyomi,  
Laila, and Badran.

HOUSING:

Bayyomi's dwelling lies on the ground floor of an old house in the Arab slum area. It is composed of a "ruwaq" and a "khazna".<sup>1</sup> It is composed of a room, a hall, and a kitchen. The last one is the stairs and contains the toilet. There is no bath in the dwelling. It has poor utilities, with no electricity. It has running water but without drainage. The dwellers pay for toilet drainage.

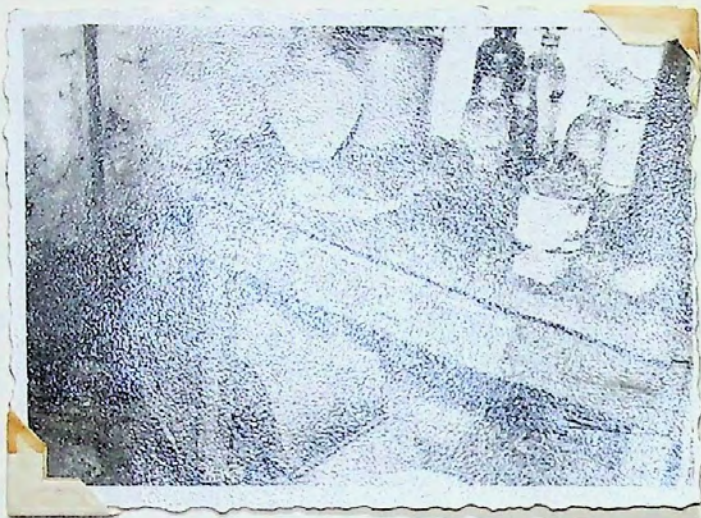


The kitchen lies under the stairs, that are seen in the picture.

The dwelling is extremely dark through out the day, and the kitchen is darkest place in the dwelling; though, the housewife

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<sup>1</sup> A Port-Sa'idi expression that is not used outside the city. The word "ruwaq" has no meaning in Arabic, but the word "khazna" means "safedeposit box", for it is closed like it, and the hall "ruwaq". This is the usual type of most of the Arabs' dwellings.



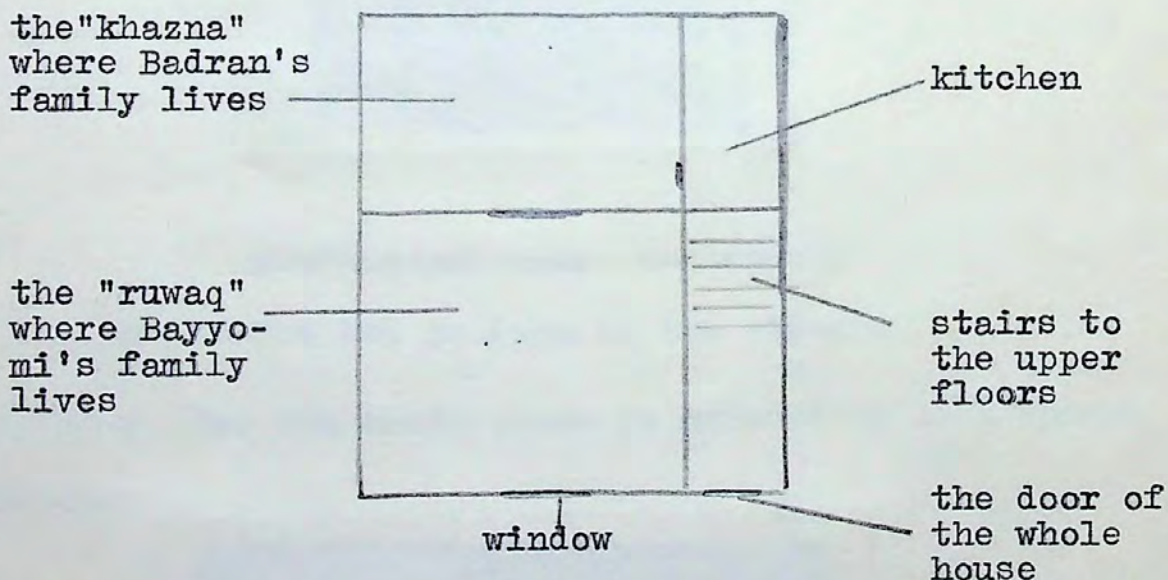
The kitchen includes the toilet;  
it is beside the cooking table.



"... it has running water, but  
without drainage...."

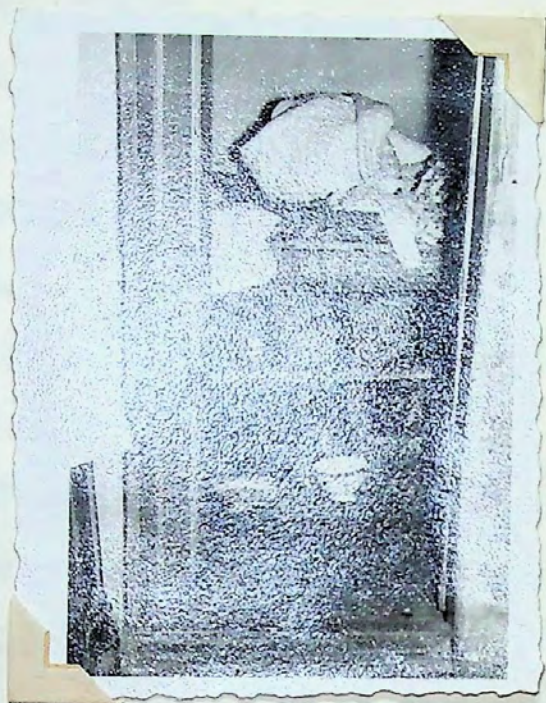
always keeps a lighted kerosene lamp in it, through day and night. The sun never enters into the dwelling; so the place is chilly.

The "Khazna" is very narrow. It is three by three meters, (see the diagram) and is occupied by a young couple-Badran and his wife and their child Laila, and contains their bed made of copper, a mattress, pillows, blankets, a small carpet, and a chair.



The "ruwaq" is wider than the "khazna," it is three by four meters. It is only occupied by Bayyomi and his family. But it is still too crowded with six persons in it. It is too narrow to take all the furniture of Bayyomi and his married daughter Samira. The "ruwaq" contains Bayyomi and his wife's bed and a wooden cupboard used by everybody in the dwelling, a mattress for others' sleeping (it is hidden under the bed through day time), an old carpet, and some chairs that don't find a better place than the





The "khazna" where the couple lives. The bed is seen in the picture.

cupboard's roof, for the whole place is crowded by both humans and furniture.



Samira's cupboard that is put in the "ruwaq". The chairs are seen put on it.

LIFE HISTORY OF FAMILY HEADS:

Bayyomi is fifty years old. He is the tenant of the dwelling . He is a laborer in the Municipal Department of Port-Said, and earns thirteen pounds monthly. "My salary is too small to meet the family's needs", Bayyomi said; "I have many children who go to schools, and this requires a lot of money. I have grown up daughters, who sooner or later will marry, and I should save some money for their dowery, but I can't."

The man's history begins in 1913. He was born in Port-Said, where his wife and his mother were born too. His father was born in Manzala. The man remembering his father, said, "My father lived in Manzala most of his life. He was then a peasant. His uncle was killed by the "omda's" family (i.e. the rector's family). Then; his family asked him to take his uncle's blood vengeance, but ~~my~~ father could not do it, for the "omda's" family was stronger than his own. My father was then compelled to leave the country, and so he came to Port-Said. Here he was far from his relatives, who were always driving him to blood vengeance. For this reason, my father married from Port-Said, and refused to marry from El-Manzala. When my father came here, he worked in the Municipal Department, and married my mother. They had three sisters and myself. I am the eldest."

Bayyomi in his childhood was a clever student in the "kottab" (a traditional elementary school for learning the three Rs and the Koran). He said: "I was the best in reciting the "Koran". The "kottab"

FIVE HISTORY OF FAMILY LEADS:

Bayomi is fifty years old. He is the tenant of the dwelling. He is a laborer in the Municipal Department of Port-Said, and earns thirteen pounds monthly. "My salary is too small to meet the family's needs", Bayomi said; "I have many children who go to schools, and this requires a lot of money. I have grown up daughters, who sooner or later will marry, and I should save some money for their dowry, but I can't."

The man's history begins in 1915. He was born in Port-Said, where his wife and his mother were born too. His father was born in Mansala. The man remembering his father, said, "My father lived in Mansala most of his life. He was then a peasant. His uncle was killed by the 'ombas' family (i.e. the restor's family). When his family asked him to take his uncle's blood vengeance, but his father could not do it, for the 'ombas' family was stronger than his own. My father was then compelled to leave the country, and so he came to Port-Said. Here he was far from his relatives, who were always driving him to blood vengeance. For this reason, my father married from Port-Said, and refused to marry from Mansala. When my father came here, he worked in the Municipal Department, and married my mother. They had three sisters and myself. I am the eldest."

Bayomi in his childhood was a clever student in the "kottab" (a traditional elementary school for learning the three Rs and the Koran). He said: "I was the best in reciting the 'Koran'. The 'kottab'"

was administrated by a great sheikh. He was accustomed to hit those who would not recite the Koran with a thick stick on their bare feet, after taking off their shoes. He would usually leave them crippled. Nowadays, the students are taught nonsense, because their teachers laugh with them, and take them on trips, and these things that were not done in our days."

He then left the "kottab", and worked as an apprentice in a grocer's shop, for three piasters per day. He said: "I continued working here until I was about twenty years old. Then, my late father helped me in being appointed to work with him in the Municipality Department, where I was accepted a laborer. Shortly after, I married my first wife Sayyeda, who was about thirteen years old. She was a Port-Saidian. We had Tahiyya who died in the first year after her birth. Sayyeda was very stubborn and dominant. She was always quarreling with me. We had been different in everything; so I divorced her. She is now married to one of my friends, who sits with me in the "qahwa" (a coffee shop where people gather to drink all kinds of beverages), but I don't visit him at home. This marriage lasted for about four troublesome years.

In 1941, I married Nifisa, my present wife, and I am not her first husband, for she was married before."

Nifisa said: "My first husband was a dirty man and was always taking narcotics. I hated him, and asked him to divorce me which he did. From him I bore Om-Mohammad, who married three years ago."

The man continued: "Nifisa bore me five children: Samira, the

eldest is nineteen years old. She studied in the elementary school for one year. She is married to Badran, who is twenty-seven years old, who has his "Ibtidaiyya" (the final certificate of the primary school). He is a clerk in a company, and earns seven pounds per month. He has one daughter Laila, who is three years old. My second daughter, Tahiyya, is seventeen years old and is still unmarried. She is working in a company, and earns four pounds per month. She has "Al-A'adadiyya" (the final certificate of the preparatory school). I have another four children, and they are all children in schools."

Bayyomi spoke about Samira again: "When my daughter married, her husband could not find a cheap dwelling; so I gave him the "khazna". Really, the place is very crowded, but we can't do better than this." Bayyomi added, "I have three sisters, and they are all married. They have grown up children. The eldest sister, Bahiyya, who is about fortyeight years old, is married to a Manzalawi peasant (i.e. a person from the area of the Lake of Manzala, that lies south the city, and extends to the Manzala village), who is also a distant relative of my father. She is living with him in Manzala. I visit her periodically. She is very kind and likes my children. She always gives them money, and sends me buns, pigeons, and sometimes ducks, especially for the feasts.

"My second sister Sa'adiyya, who is about fortyfive years old, married twice. Her first husband was my cousin, and he was a grocer in Al-Afrang. She married him when she was twelve years old, and

she stayed with him for about six years without bearing any children. His mother insisted that he ought to divorce her, and he did. Another bridegroom came within the following few months. He is a Manzalawi, and he was interested in her, before her marriage. When he learned of her divorce, he came quickly and married her. She bore him two children. She is now living in the Masakin.



(From right to left) Nifisa,  
Laila, and Samira. The latter is seen sitt-  
ing on the carpet behind  
the chair.

Her husband sells vegetables, and he has a shop

My third sister Hanniyya, is about fortytwo years bld. She has the chest <sup>disease</sup> (i.e. tuberculosis). She got the infection from her husband, who died ~~the~~ last year in the sanitarium, after he had suffered many years. Now she is subletting a kitchen in the Masa-

kin, where she lives. She has only one married son, who is a longshoreman in the canal!"

Bayyomi's parents died in the aggression in 1956. They had been living on Ameen street, which was completely destroyed by the forces during the aggression. "On November 5th., 1956, at one p.m. o'clock, I witnessed the destruction of the Manakh district", Bayyomi said, "it was bombed by the aircrafts that made it only a burning heap within few minutes. Fires were seen covering the whole district, and they reached the sky, that was seen reddish for more than hours. Cries were heard everywhere. In the same night, I came out to the street, and I ran unconsciously towards my parents' home. In the way, I saw many dead bodies covering streets and lanes. People were running to all directions from fear, whenever they heard the bombers approaching again. Horror and fear were written upon all faces. At last, I reached the Ameen street to find the whole street destroyed completely. Then, I found myself weeping among many others that were also weeping. I looked at the house's remains, and I distinguished my parents' furniture among them. I saw also some of their dresses that were still hung on a nail in their bedroom's wall, which did not fall."

Bayyomi was very impressed as he told of these events. Tears came down his cheeks, but he quickly removed them with his handkerchief. Then, he drank his coffee, and smiled, trying to push ~~out~~ these memories from his mind.

STANDARD OF LIVING:

Bayyomi's income is exactly thirteen pounds, Badran's seven pounds, and Tahiyya's four pounds. Members of the dwelling form a household. So the total income is twentyfour pounds. From this Bayyomi takes two pounds as pocket money, Badran three for both pocket money and his family's clothing, and one pound pocket money for Tahiyya.

FOOD:

The family usually eat fish and rice, for it is the cheapest of foods. They eat the "shabar" (fishes of moderate size and relatively cheap). They don't buy meat except once or twice per month. Moreover, they buy a large quantity of vegetables per time which would be sufficient for two days.

The daily housekeeping money for food is spent as follows:

bread	15 piaster
beans for breakfast	4 "
oil for the beans	1 "
fish for dinner	15 "
rice	2 "
oil for fish and rice	2 "
or	
lentil for dinner	10 "
oil	1 "

or



vegetables for two days (20 P.T.)	10	piaster
butter for two days (6 P.T.)	3	"
cheese for supper	4	"
or		
beans or "ta'amiyya (a kind of food made of grind beans)	4	"

---

Total 43, 35, or 37 piasters

So the total monthly housekeeping money for food is about twelve pounds.

#### CLOTHING:

In the family females and children complain of shortage of clothing more than anyone. The children wear worn out clothes and shoes, and their father mends them by halfsoling the shoes, to avoid buying new ones. Moreover, the man spends about two pounds monthly for clothing. Badran is responsible for for his wife's pocket money and clothing. So, he gives her fifty piasters monthly for both.

#### RENT

The dwelling's rent is two pounds monthly.

#### OTHER EXPENSES:

books for the children 40 piaster

pocket money for children	100 piaster
toilet's drainage	20 "
tea, coffee, and sugar	60 "
	<hr/>
Total	220 "

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE:

HOUSEKEEPING:

COOKING:

The actual cooking is done in the kitchen, but all the preparations preceding it are done in the "ruwaq", i.e. cleaning fish, sorting rice, cutting onions, and the like occur outside the kitchen for it is too small and dark.

Samira, who is directed by her mother, buys and cooks the food with her mother sometime assisting her.

Tea utensils are usually kept in the "ruwaq", where it is usually prepared. The woman sits on the carpet to do it.

HOUSECLEANING:

Samira and her mother work together in cleaning the dwelling. A broom is used to clean the whole place, but even right after it is done, it looks dirty and unorganized.

WASHING CLOTHES:

This takes place in the kitchen, where the washing utensils are

kept. Samira usually washes all the clothes of the family. On the day for washing, she stretches certain rods in the "ruwaq", to hang the clothes to be dried, but they usually are there at least three days for the place is dark and damp.

#### Poultry:

There is no poultry. The women hoped to have poultry, but they complained of the lack of space and money.

#### Personal Care:

##### Washing:

It takes place in the kitchen's sink. It happens usually in the morning right after raising, when everybody washes his face. Samira and her sister Tahiyya are the only persons who clean their teeth using tooth paste and a tooth brush. They rarely wash their hands after eating dry food, but the legs are periodically washed.

The guest usually washes his hands, after eating, in the "ruwaq". They bring the water-vessel and the washing bowl, to him where he sits, and then somebody pours the water for him to wash his hands over the washing bowl, that receives the water.

##### Bathing:

It takes place in the kitchen. Everybody pours the water for himself, using the water-vessel, for there is no bath. The water

falls on the kitchen's ground; a woman collects it later on, in the washing ~~cup~~<sup>bowl</sup>, and throws it either in the toilet barrel, or out in the street, for there is no drainage.

#### DEFECATION:

The toilet is no more than a barrel in the kitchen. It lies exactly beside the cooking table. The water-vessel is always put beside it. It has many usages. It is used as a toilet utensil for washing the anus, for there is no toilet faucet. It is also used in bathing, washing a guest's hands in the "ruwaq", and in washing clothes.



A cooking pot is seen under the cooking table, beside the toilet's barrel. The water-vessel stands beside them all.

#### SLEEPING:

Badran, his wife Samira, and his young daughter Laila sleep in the "khazna", where the bed nearly fills the whole place.

Bayyomi and his wife sleep on their bed in the "ruwaq"; their children sleep on a mattress, that is put on the ground beside their parent's bed.



The couple's bed; an unused "hasira"  
(a lower classes' carpet made of straw) is seen to the left.

Badran can't have sexual intercourse with his wife easily, because of the presence of his daughter with him on the same bed and the presence of his wife's family in the "ruwaq". "I can't have sexual intercourse with my wife at night", the man said, "but I usually do it in the day time when everybody leaves the dwelling. The presence of my wife's family in the "ruwaq" does not encourage me to do it. I am suffering much from this shortage and it troubles my nerves. I am ready to eat bread only if I can just satisfy this need. My father-in-law has grown up children. I don't want to hurt their feelings, and consequently I deprive myself of doing this. My marital status is troubled. For this reason, I pass most the time in the "qahwa". I often masterbate to satisfy myself."

Bayyomi on the other hand, has sexual intercourse with his wife at night, but he suffers psychologically from the presence of his grown up children . "My daughter Tahiyya is seventeen years old. When I am sure that all my children are sleeping, I exploit the opportunity to have the intercourse. Sometimes, a child may awake at this time; then, I move my body on the bed pretending that there is a bag on the bed!" The man added that intercourse occurs without arousing and stimulation. So consequently his wife may not be pleased. Moreover, he and his wife don't wash themselves after the intercourse. "It is impossible for me to leave the bed to wash, for my grown up children will undoubtedly understand my aim in leaving the bed. Consequently, I don't wash my body," he said.

#### INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS:

##### AMONG THE FAMILY MEMBERS:

###### HUSBAND-WIFE:

Bayyomi's relation with his wife is affected by his poverty and his wife's domination. "She interferes in everything in my life", he said, "she is irritable, and she always wants to do what is in her mind, in spite of my limited income that must feed this large family." The woman wants to buy new clothes for the children; her husband refuses. He asks her to mend the old ones, and she may angrily refuse and quarrels with him.

The dwelling is also overcrowded, and consequently the males

pass most their time in the "qahwa". Moreover, the dwelling does not give them privacy for sexual relations with their wives, which affects them adversely.

Badran's relationship with his wife is affected by his poor relationship with his mother-in-law. "My mother-in-law is always interfering with everything. She pushes me to the extent that I am thinking of breaking with my family. I am always trying to erase this attitude from my mind. If I am living alone, this would not happen."

#### PARENT-CHILD:

The relation is also affected by the father's poverty. The man buys the meat about twice per month. The family usually eats fish and rice or lentils.

Once, Bayyomi was sitting with his friends in the "qahwa". One of his young children came to him, where he was sitting, and asked him to give him two piasters as he did not want to eat lentils. The man was compelled to give him the money before his friends, but later on, he said that these two piasters upset his budget, and would prevent him from going to the "qahwa" the next day. The children are not aware of their father's inability to meet their needs. Once again, one of the children said to his father: "Apa (i.e. papa but usually said by the lower classes), my shoes are worn out. I want new ones." His father, then, said, "Boy, I'll half-sole them for you." The boy said angrily, "No...no, I want new ones."

A child may desire to eat an expensive type of fruit; he will weep and shout. His mother usually hits him. Bayyomi said, "My daughter Tahiyya works for four pounds monthly. She wants pretty dresses in order to marry (he means to get nice looking to be pretty before men). She wants to appear nice before her colleagues, with whom she works. Such things trouble me, and I may also quarrel with her and her mother as well if she defends her point of view."

#### SIBLING-SIBLING:

They all like each other, but sometimes they quarrel amongst themselves. Some of these quarrels are caused by the crowded place, and sometimes because of poverty of their father.

Bayyomi's children sleep all together on the floor in the "ruwaq". The place is too narrow to let them sleep comfortably. A boy may say to one of his brothers, "Move over", Then, the second may say, "No", so, they may hit each other. The cover is also insufficient. It causes quarrels. Each child pulls it from the other, and they may consequently quarrel. Tahiyya once quarreled with the youngsters, for they tried to eat from her plate after their food was finished. The girl knows that she can not have any more food and consequently she refused them.

#### AMONG THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS:

"My mother-in-law is impossibly and so is my father-in-law", Badran said. "They usually interfere in my personal affairs. My wife



is decent, but she becomes weak in front of her parents. Sometimes, she stands beside me against them, and shouts at them. In such cases, they attack both of us, and ask us to leave their home. If I were living alone, this would not happen and my life would be more stable. I am ready to pay one fourth of my salary to live in a separate dwelling but one is not to be found." The man added, "Her children are always quarreling with each other. Whenever I shout at one of them, they (my in-laws) say to me, "You are not supposed to shout at him." Yebqa el-beit beit aboona, weyeegi el ghorb yeshahatoona" (an Egyptian proverb that means: the house is our fathers' and the strangers come to dominate).

"In the winter for instance", the man added, "she asks me to buy many dresses for my wife, and says, "You must bring sufficient dresses, where do you waste your money." I say, "people, it is sufficient to bring half the quantity." She answers, "Do you think one dress is sufficient; see 'Alliyya and Zenab (two neighbors). Their husbands bring every thing for them." I find myself obliged to satisfy her wishes at any cost."

Nefisa also complains of her son-in-law, and says that he wastes his money on smoking.

#### BETWEEN THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS AND NON-DWELLING'S:

The men of the house usually go to their work in the morning. The females pass their time inside their dwellings. Each one prepares dinner for her family. Some children go to schools, and those who do not, usually waste their time playing with each other in the

lane, before the house.

In the evening, the men go to the "qahwa", while the women gather together in one of the dwellings. They pass the time chatting about their children in school, their husbands, what they cook, and the like until their husbands return.

During day time, are most of the family's quarrels. There are many causes for them, but mainly caused either by the children, who quarrel with each other, and their parents, who interfere to defend them, or by a dispute between an inhabitant in one of the upper floors and one in a lower one. This is so because the water does not reach to the former, and the latter refused to close his faucets. Throwing dirty water from the window in the lane may also cause a quarrel, for the water may fall on washed clothes, that are hanging on a rod, to dry outside one of the windows. Nifisa and Samira, as well as their husbands confirm that the children cause most quarrels.

The researcher will report the following quarrel. It was between Nefisa and Om-Sami (a neighbor in the third floor). The reason was that the two children of these women had hit each other. It is to be observed that all quarrels take ~~on~~ this form. Nefisa came out of her dwelling, and stood on the stairs, saying, "I said to you before to stop your son from hitting mine. Though, he hit him." Om-Sami answered her saying, "Your son is older than my son, and he hit him first." Nifisa said, "If you will not prevent your son from hitting my son, I 'll let my son hit him, or I, myself, will hit him. Om-Sami, then, said, "Go and hit him, and I 'll show you

(i.e. I 'll consequently take revenge) I or you here in this house." (i.e. I 'll not leave you till one of us wins the other.) Nifisa said, "Go away dirty family." Om-Sami said, "I am not of a dirty family. There is no one more dirty than you are. I 'll not give anything to you. Search for a low woman like you to answer you." Nifisa said, "From now on, I 'll not keep silent about you? (The woman hits the palm of the left hand with the right fist-clenched, and then rubbing the fist clockwise on the palm for teasing.) From now on, I 'll come crime and I 'll hit the child who hits my son."

The two women's husbands were not present. The quarrel would not stop, unless one of the husbands interfered . Someone shouted to both of them and asked them to go into their dwellings. They did not leave immediately, but bad words from both sides continued through their entry in their dwellings.

#### THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK:

MEDICAL TREATMENT: Bayyoni does not go to the hospital except when he has a serious disease, which may require an operation. His wife Nifisa practices "al-wasfat al-baladiyya". She knows many prescriptions . She usually uses them to treat the members of the family. The woman is also aware of the hospital's importance for treatment. "El-hokama" (physicians) are important in some serious cases,"she said, "sometimes, I begin with a prescription, and in some other cases, I may consult the physician first, if I doubt the ability

of the prescription. If the physician fails in such cases, I either practice my methods or consult one of the famous shaykhs." Badran, her son-in-law, said, that physicians usually do nothing. "You go to the hospital to take some colored water which does not cure your illness, while the "attar" (the man who sells the materials, that are used in doing al-wasfat; the materials are usually unknown to most people) has all materials, that cure diarrhea, constipation, stomachache, and the like." His father-in-law, Bayyomi added, "El-hokama invented new diseases, that we did not hear about before. They invented cancer, which frightened the people."

Badran's wife, Samira, commented on the subject saying, that the physician is good in some cases and not good in others. Her sister Tahiyya said that her mother's wasfat were excellent, but that the physicians' drugs were also useful. She said, "I don't go to the hospital except for difficult cases that I have for <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> long time."

The members of the family emphasized the shaykh's ability to treat the cases, that are caused by the spirits. He expells them from the body, and he usually prevents their returning.

#### THE NON-MEDICAL TREATMENT:

##### THROUGH USING AL-WASFAT AL-BALADIYYA:

Bayyomi said that in each district there is a certain specialist or "sun taker", who treats headaches. He takes the sun, because it is the cause of all headaches. "You work in the sun all the day", Bayyomi said, "and you get a headache. The sun is the cause. Then,

you have to go to the "sun taker", who is known to every body. You pay him a piaster or two, to take out the sun for you." Badran and his wife added that each "sun taker" has his own way of "sun taking". Bayyomi mentioned one of the famous ways that is practiced. It massages the head from its back to the forehead several times. Then, the practitioner bits the sick person on his forehead, and consequently the sun is taken. Then, the headache should stop at once.

Badran mentioned another way of "sun taking". He said, "The practitioner pulls the ears till he hears a crack. Then, he massages the body from the chest to the back, to gather the sun only in the back. Then, he cracks each vertebra in the spinal cord. Finally he massages the ~~body~~, begining from the shoulders, and ending by the hands, till he reaches the fingers, and cracks them. He does the same thing with the legs, till he reaches the toes. Then, the headache stops immediately."

Once, the researcher had acute headache; he was then sitting in Bayyomi's dwelling. He did not know anything about these prescriptions. So, he asked the man to send one of his sons to buy aspirine. The latter's face showed surprise. He said, "Why ? " The researcher told him about his headache. The man, then, said, "Oh '. That is caused by sun, that must be taken." The researcher allowed his readiness to "take the sun". Then Bayyomi's son was ordered by his father to call a cigarette seller, who was their "sun taker". His shop lay on a neighboring street. The man came,

and fortunately used a relatively simple and kind method of treatment. He massaged his head from its back to the forehead, several times, and finally caught a certain amount of hair, by his right hands fingers, and then, turned them several times on his forefinger, and suddenly pulled them out till a crack was heard. Then, he said, "Now, the sun is taken." He took two piasters and went to his work. Bayyomi then said that the headache would stop at once.

The hair pulling was very painful. It increased the headache which continued through to the next day. Then, he took an aspirine, the headache stopped, while the pains caused by the "sun taker" lasted several days.

The poor usually tries to know all means of treatments, which do not afford them much expenses. So, Nifisa spoke about an eye inflammation. She said that it is caused by dirt, which enter it and are not immediately removed. It is cured by a tomato, put on the sick eye, after removing its interior part. Badran added that tea-leaves are also very useful for eye inflammation. They are simply put on the sick eye before one goes to sleep, and they consequently stop the pains.

"For treating a sore", Samira said, "my mother makes a paste of flour, water, and sugar or sweet, and puts it there to heal the sore."

#### THROUGH PRACTITIONERS:

All the family members agreed that there are some cases, that are not cured either by physicians or such former descriptions.

Consequently, they must be examined by a famous sh~~ekh~~<sup>ikh</sup>.

Nifisa said that El-Sh~~ekh~~<sup>ekh</sup>ha Fatma, in el-Ezab, has a wide reputation in all Port-Said, and that many people go to her for treatment, from outside the city. She added that al-Shiekh Hassan is the opposite number of el-Shiekhha Fatma, in al-Arab district.

The family members spoke about "Maqam" (the grave of a deceased famous blessed shiekh, that is visited by people, seeking blessing, success, treatment, etc.) Abu-Salam. They said that sterile women visit him seeking his blessings. Later on, they bear once or twice. They added that many chronic cases were cured by His power for He was a blessed shiek. "When he died, the box that contained his corp~~se~~<sup>se</sup> was carried by four men, fl~~oat~~<sup>ew</sup> in the air through the funeral, and the people ran after him. He knew the way to his "Maqam", for He was blessed", Bayyomi said.

This researcher visited "Maqam" Abu-Salam which is situated on a small iskand lying on the Lake of Manzala, near Al-Matariyya, twenty kilometers South Port-Said. He saw many visitors that came from different villages and cities to be blessed by His "Maqam".

Bayyomi said, "My son Ahmad has been sick from heart trouble for more than two years; we met many physicians, but his heart did not improve. Our neighbors told us that the boy must have "asyad" (spirits), and consequently a shiekh must do something to expell them from his body. I took the boy to el-shiekh Hassan. He asked the boy whether he had been sick before or not. He said that it is the first time. Then, he made a "tahweeta" (a spiritual action to protect the patient against the "amal" in advance;

the "ammal" is an action done by a shiekh to harm someone) on a dead crow's head, and told me that if the boy goes to the physician anymore, he will be sick again", Bayyomi continued, "and the boy is still sick; the "assyad" must be beyond the shiekh's power. He could not command them. I am sure they are "assyad" caused by the "evil eye", because the boy is very successful in his school. I 'll take the boy to "Maqam Abu-Salam" and I hope God takes with his hand (i.e. God saves him)."

RECEIVING VISITORS:

THE MALE VISITORS:

Bayyomi's dwelling is really too crowded to receive visitors, but he receives them in the "ruwaq", and hides the rest of the females in the "khazna", if they are not known by the family, otherwise they don't hide themselves.

The visitors usually sit on the chairs that are always kept over the cupboard in the case of no use.

"When a man visits me", Bayyomi says, "confusion usually prevails among the family. My wife may be washing the clothes in the "ruwaq". Badran's child may be defecating in his pan, and so forth. So, I usually meet my friends in the "qahwa".

The women hide themselves automatically when a male visitor sees the family for the first time. They, then, prepare the tea for him, and send it with one of the children. This happens till the visitor becomes well acquainted with the head of the family.



Then the females gradually pass before him, salute him, present the tea by themselves, sit in his presence, and finally they can receive him in the absence of their husbands.

Badran said how he received an unfamiliar male visitor, who visited him for the first time. He said, "Once a friend visited me, he was not from the city's inhabitants, but from a neighboring village. He had no money to pay ~~for~~ to sleep in an hotel. Consequently, I was obliged to find a place for him to sleep in my already crowded dwelling. So my father-in-law, my friend, and myself slept in the "khazna", while the rest of the family slept in the "ruwaq".

In the morning, we let the women hide themselves outside the dwelling, in order to present the breakfast to to the man in the "ruwaq". Then, we came out; my father and I went to work, while the man sat in the "qahwa", till I came there to take him back home for dinner. Then, I sent all the women to the "khazna", till he ate. I was obliged to bring him water in the "ruwaq", to wash his hands, to avoid troubling the women, if he passed through the "khazna" to the kitchen. All this happened for this visitor was not familiar to the home's dwellers".

The young man added, "Once my uncle came from the country to visit me, but when he saw all these people here, he stayed till 12 o'clock p.m. and left. He was planning to sleep with me, but when he realized the situation, he kindly left. He saw that the children sleep under the bed, and on the "ruwaq's" floor. His

conscience refused to let him stay and sleep here in the dwelling."

THE FEMALE VISITORS:

The males leave home and go to the "qahwa", if the female visitors are unfamiliar to them. They stay at home if they are familiar to them. "If the woman is not familiar, I say, "good by, I am leaving", and I come out with my father-in-law to sit in the "qahwa", Badran said.

The man narrates how he and his father-in-law were troubled by a visit of a nonfamiliar female visitor. He says, "My mother-in-law's friend is accustomed to visit her with her eight children and stays more than half the day. I don't stay at home in her presence.

Once, I came from my work at 4:30 p.m., and the woman and her children had come at 4 o'clock p.m. I was very hungry, but when I found her present at home, I was compelled to come out instantly, to sit in the "qahwa". My father-in-law also did the same thing, when his wife informed him about the woman's presence. He consequently left the home; he came from work very tired and hungry, and had to sit with me in the "qahwa".

After about one hour, we became more hungry, and we had no money in our pockets to buy anything to eat. We accidentally found a neighbor's boy passing before the "qahwa". We asked him to go home, to bring two loaves to eat. We told him to say to Samira that the loaves would be given to a begger, lest the guest

might be annoyed if she knew how she troubled us by her presence. The boy brought the loaves, and we ate them in the "qahwa", where we stayed till the guest left the home at 9:30 p.m."

RECREATION:

IN-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

Bayyomi and his son-in-law Badran have at home no means for recreation. They are always in the "qahwa". They go back home to eat and sleep only.

FEMALES:

The women usually stay at home gathering to chat together. Sometimes, Samira plays cards with her mother and sister Tahiyya.

CHILDREN:

Sometimes, Tahiyya plays cards with her brothers Ahmad and Mahmoud. They drink tea and listen to the neighbor's radio. They have no other means of recreation.

OUT-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

Both Bayyomi and Badran prefer the "qahwa" to any other place. It is their means of recreation. "We meet our friends in the "qahwa", because our dwelling is too small and crowded to receive them in it," Badran said. It is the place where we play cards and "tawla"

*Trick-Track*  
(an oriental play). The man likes to go to the cinema as well, but not with his wife. On the other hand, his father-in-law does not like to go at all.

They have no radio, but they hear it in the "qahwa".

Sometimes, they visit their friends and relatives in their homes.

**FEMALES:**

The women rarely come out the dwelling for recreation. They are always present at home. They don't go to the cinema or any other place, but sometimes they visit a friend or a relative.

**CHILDREN:**

The children usually go out in the evening to see television in the street. Sometimes, they visit their friends to play ball with them in the lane.

## CHAPTER IV

### EL-SHIEKH AHMAD'S DWELLING

#### Cast of Characters

El-Shiekh Ahmad-age 60 a family head and the owner of the shack

Nabawiyya-age 40 his wife

Ahmad-age 13 the eldest son

Abdul-Hamid-age 7 the youngest son

So'ad-age 4 the eldest daughter

Fatma-age 4 months the youngest daughter

Hanim-age 60 a widow

Fawziyya-age 20 her daughter

El-Sayyeda-age 50 a widow

Mostageer-age 25 her son

Amina-age 14 her daughter

Fatma-age 40 a deserted woman

Rodah-age 13 the eldest daughter

Gamal-age 7 her son

Kamilya-age 6 her youngest daughter

Soltan-age 60 a family head

Hamida-age 50 his wife

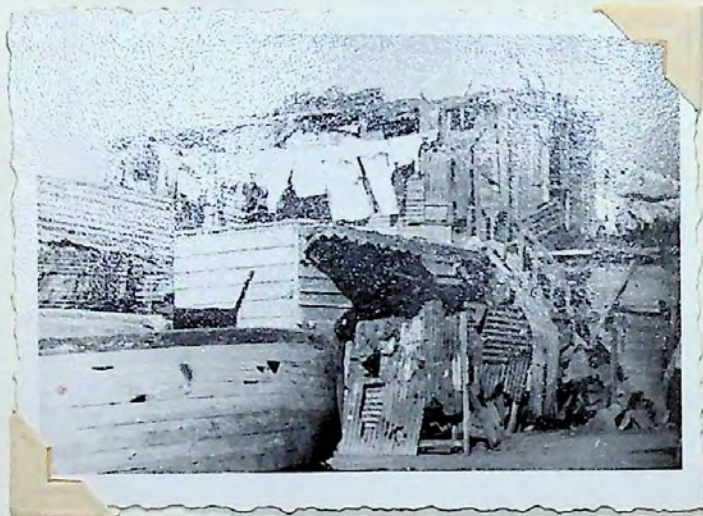
Muhammad-age 27 the man's son by his first wife



El-Shiekh Ahmad's  
dwelling, Mostageer is seen  
entering through the outer  
door

HOUSING:

El-Shiekh Ahmad's dwelling is a wooden shack , that lies in the Ezab slum area in Port-Sa'id. It has seven rooms, no kitchen, and a very small toilet, that is no larger than a barrel which is hidden by a worn curtain. The dwelling has none of the public utilities, i.e., no electricity, sewage, and water. The tenants buy



El-Shiekh Ahmad's shack. A fisherman's boat is seen before it.

their water and keep it in the "zir"(a container made of pottery). They also pay for the periodic drainage of the toilet. They use kerosene lamps for lighting. The shack has a long narrow hall, that contains the toilet at its end. The entrance is at the opposite end (see the diagram). All the rooms' doors open on it. The shack is windowless, hence its rooms are always dark. El-Shiekh Ahmad and his family occupy two of the rooms. Each room is about three and his family occupy two of the rooms. Each room is about three by three meters. One room contains only a wide iron bed, in which

El-Shiekh Ahmad and Nabawiyya his wife sleep. The other room contains a worn dirty mattress for the children, a "tabliyya" (a small rounded wooden table with short legs), a "zir", a primus, a wash-tub, cooking pots, and tea-utensils.



Nabawiyya and her two daughters So'ad and Fatma are seen sitting in the outer room

Hanim and her daughter Fawziyya live in the adjoining room. It is two by two meters. It contains an iron bed, a "hasira", a "zir", a primus, a tub for washing, cooking pots, and tea-utensils.

El-Sayeda, her son Mostageer, and her daughter Amina occupy the next room, which is about the same size as Hanim's. It also



has the same furniture in it.



A view to Hanim's room. Cooking utensils  
are put on wooden shelves.



(From right to left) Amina, El-Sayeda, and  
Mostageer. They are all sitting on the bed  
in their room.

Fatma and her children live in the opposite small room, which

is no larger in size than one by two meters. It is really an additional room to the shack's hall recently built by El-Shiekh to gain more income. He wanted to use all the space in the hall, which he did by adding this small room. (El-Shiekh Ahmad told the researcher, that he did not bring in a carpenter to build it, but he built it himself, as well as its neighboring one, that also occupies a part of what was the hall, where Soltan and Hamida his wife now live.)



A view to Fatma's room. It is very low as seen in the picture. Mostageer stands beside the room. His head may be higher than its ceiling. Fatma stands inside.

These two additional rooms are very narrow, and receive very

little sun light. The height of the room does not exceed a meter and a half. El-Shiekh Ahmad explained this deficiency. Wood was so expensive at the time, so he had tried to save money. The man said, "Now, the family that occupies a room in the Ezab will secure a new apartment in al-Masakin; therefore, I take a "khelew-regl" (money paid to the tenant or to the owner of a house, or both by another person to secure hiring a dwelling in case of facing shortage. In such case the original tenant or the owner makes profitable use of the crisis and takes a "khelew regl".) fifty pounds to sublet any room. It is a low price for securing a new apartment."

Fatma and Soltan have no beds in their rooms, for they are too small; each one has only a worn mattress and the other essential things that were mentioned before. Fatma has a very old sewing-machine for she works in her room as a tailor for her neighbors, besides working out.

#### LIFE HISTORY OF FAMILY HEADS:

##### El Shiekh Ahmad:

He is an aged man of about sixty years old. His long beard may well indicate this title that precedes his name. (The word "shiekh" is a title given to Moslem scholars who master the Koran and the religious teaching of Islam.)

When you ask the old man about his history, he begins his

speech proudly saying, "I am the first person to have built a shack in this ezba, i.e. about fifteen years ago. It was only composed off one room, but when the people increased, I added more and more rooms."

El-Sh~~ekh~~ Ahmad was born in Abu-Kebir, where he lived until he reached sixteen years of age. His father sold Sudanese beans in their village. His mother <sup>died</sup> forty days after his birth. His grandmother raised him after his mother's death. His brother Abdul-Salam died at two months. El-Shiekh says, "Of course, I knew nothing about that; the man added, "my father, then, remarried a woman, who sold Sudanese beans. She was a woman much older than he was, but he was marrying her to rear me for him. He married her when I was ten years old, and continued with her for about four years, and then he died. She died too three years afterwards. My father sent me to school, but I hated it, and consequently I escaped. I can write my name only, but not a letter. I began working at the age of twelve as a seller of "'arq-soos" (a national drink usually drunk by the lower classes), and continued till the age of sixteen." El-Shiekh began to reminisce, and then said, "I earned much money from this work, but when my father, with whom I lived, saw me saving anything, he took it. In my adolescence, I lived with him in his house. It was composed of one room that contained an attic. We were accustomed to sleep over it, and used the place under it for other utensils. After my father's death, I sold the house for sixteen pounds, and left the village for another one called "Okhtowa"

in the region of Faqoos, where I continued selling "'arq-soos" to the peasants. I was paid not in money but in seeds. At the end of the day, I would sell them. So, I gathered ten pounds. Of course my father was daed, and I had no body in the village to ask about me; so, I would come to Port-Said periodically to buy sardines, and then go back to "Okhtowa" to sell them. When I visited the village, the people would say, "Ahmad Al-Sardini has arrived", and I was well known there, for I had been giving the call for prayers at dawn."

El-Shiekh Ahmad looked at his wife Nabawiyya, who smiled when he began to speak about his former marriages. She sat on the floor, while the researcher and El-Shiekh sat on the latter's bed in his room. He said, "The first woman I married was Zakiyya from whom I have a son, whose name is Abdul-Sami'a. He is now about twentytwo years old, and works as a gardener. I see him every year." Nabawiyya interfered and said, "I did not see him till now." El-Shiekh did not pay any attention to his wife's comment and continued, "but Zakiyya was not obedient, and I divorced her after a marriage that lasted one year, and when she was in her sixth month of pregnancy. However, I had already married Hamda, and since Zakiyya did not wish to live with Hamda, she asked me to divorce her, and I did, and I have heard nothing about her since then."

El-Shiekh Ahmad began think about Zakiyya, and said, "My marriage to this woman had a story: Zakiyya had a friend, whose

name was Gamila, and the two were interested in me. I preferred Gamila, but I did not intend to pay a dowry. However her father refused me, and told me that I had to pay the dowry. I had the money, but I vowed to myself that I would not pay. So, I was compelled to marry Zakiyya, since her father did not ask for the dowry. Zakiyya loved me, and was jealous of her friend Gamila on my account. However Gamila was more beautiful.

Hamda (God forgave her with His blessings) was very obedient. She was from Okhtowa, and was older than I. Our children were Muhammad and Sayyeda, who both died, the former in the first year, and the latter in her fourth. I married Hamda after I had stayed five years in Okhtowa. She had been married before, and had Fatma by her preceding husband. I considered Fatma as my daughter, and I prepared her for her marriage.

Once I said to Hamda: "I want to marry, and I don't want to lose you; will you be angry?" She said, "No!" El-Shiekh Ahmad continued, "And if she had said 'yes', I would not have married again. Hamda engaged Nabawiyya for me, who is still with me. In those days, I was making a profit from selling sardines. Hamda died six years ago. I wept greatly for her, for she was the best (Nabawiyya smiled on hearing the last sentence). Nabawiyya and I had Ahmad, who is a butt scavenger. Whenever I send him to work, he escapes. There was Mahmud, who died at the age of seven, Abdul-Hamid, who is seven years old, So'ad (a female), four years old, and Fatma (a female), four months."

El-Sh~~ekh~~ Ahmad said that he has not sold sardines for two years. He has sold beans, but now is without work, for the beans are expensive. His neighbors say that Nabawiyya, his wife, begs in Al-Afrang district, because his income from the shack is usually insufficient to meet their needs.

Moreover, Fatma said that Nabawiyya is the seventh wife of El-Sh~~ekh~~ Ahmad, and that he wants to marry another. El-Shiekh was asked about this. He said, "Yes, but they were not real wives, but were "ima'as (the ima is the woman that lives with a man, as his wife, without contract; Islam permits the man to marry up to four wives, and if he wants more women, they must be ima'as).

Hanim:

Hanim Sabir is the name of another dweller. She sublets a room in El-Sh~~ekh~~'s shack, where she lives with her daughter Fawziyya, who is about twenty years old. She is a widow of about sixty.

Hanim was born in El-Kafr El-Gedeed, a village, that belongs to Manzala. When she was asked about her education, she said, "I did not enter any school, for in our days, there were no schools. The schools came when the children were born."

The woman was married, when she was sixteen, to a tinner from her village named Hasanain. She lived with him in this village until he died four years ago. Then, she moved to Port-Said. Hanim said, "When my husband died, his brother did not give me any

aid. So, I was compelled to leave the village, and came to Port-Said. It was the first time that I saw it. I have lived here for about five years. I came to this city hoping to get work. The women who came from my village to Port-Said encouraged me to come here. They had come and worked. I vowed to myself that it would be also an opportunity to secure a new dwelling in the Masakin in order to sublet it and live in it"

Hanim has four grown up children: Samiha, a married woman of about fortyfive years old; Fathi, a married man of about forty-two years old; he sells "arq-soos"; Om-Hashim, a married woman of about forty years old, and Fawziyya, a young girl of twenty years old, who is still living with her mother in her room.

Hanim and Fawziyya work as sorters of onions. They work seasonally when the onions are cultivated. Each one takes fifteen piasters per day, but they often work over time.

"No one of my children went to school, except Fathi and Samiha who spent three years in school," Hanim said.

#### El-Sayyeda:

She is another widow of fifty years old. She is also born in "El-Kafr El-Gedeed" Manzala. She occupies a room in the shack, where she lives with her son, Mostageer and her daughter Amina. When she was eighteen, she married a peasant from her village. She lived with him in the country till he died. Before his death,



occurring before the aggression, he sold his land. "After the aggression, many people from my village migrated to Port-Said. They, then, said that the city needs many laborers, for it lost many during the aggression. They also told us that we should find better opportunities for work. The new housing also attracted everybody in my village," the woman said.

El-Sayyeda has four grown up children; Mostageer, the eldest, is twentytwo years old; he works with his mother as a sorter of onions, for thirty piasters per day, while his mother takes only fifteen, for females usually take less wages. Ameena is about fourteen; she is not working. Mohammad, who is thirteen years old, and Ali, who is fifteen years old are not living with their mother, but they are living with their uncle in Al-Qabooti, where they work with him in fishing. They visit their mother periodically.

No one of her children went to school, except Mostageer, who studied for one year only.

**Fatma:**

She is a woman of about thirtyfive years old, who was deserted by her husband. She occupies one of the rooms of the shack, where she lives with three of her children. She was born in Port-Said, but her husband is a Domiati (from Damietta), who lived most of his life in Port-Said. He is forty years old. She married him when she was seventeen. He left her five years ago, but he did not remarry.

She takes a "nafaga" (a compulsory payment paid by the husband to his divorced or deserted wife according to the Islamic rules) that is ordered to her by the court; it is three pounds. "My husband's salary is twelve pounds", she said, "so, I deserve more money, for I have many children. But, I have a sewing machine, so, I sew to earn my living, to rear the children, who are five: Fayza, sixteen years old; she studied in the school for six years and works in the weaving factory, for four and half pounds per month, She does not give me any part of her salary. Al-Sayyid, fifteen years old, also studied for about six years in the school, and left it to work as an apprentice in a restaurant. He takes ten piasters daily, and gives me five. Faiza and El-Sayyid are not living with me for the room is too narrow, so they live with my father in al-Arab. My daughter Rodah, thirrtten years old, studied for four years in the school, and left it to assist me at home. Gamal, nine years old, is stillstudying in school. Kamilya, six years old, did not go to school yet." Fatma herself had been a student for three years when a child. She can write a letter, ~~she~~ she said.

Soltan:

He is an old man of about sixty years old, and he is married to Hamida, who is about fifty years old. He ~~was~~ is born in Sohag in Upper Egypt, and migrated to Port-Said, twenty years ago. Hamida is not his first wife. He had married Amina before her, while he was living in Sohag, and she is the mother of all his children. He

married Hamida after Amina's death. The second wife did not bear. He has four grown up children by his first wife: Ali, his eldest son, is thirtyfive years old. He studied in the "kottab" for about three years. He is now working in the Electricity Department of Port-Said. He is married, and lives with his wife in el-Arab. Mohhamad, the younger son, who is twentyseven years old, did not study in any school. He works with his father in the latter's "qahwa" in the Arab. "My son and I profit about thirty to forty piasters daily, from which we smoke cigarettes, me'assel (a kind of cheap tobacco), drink tea, and eat." The man added, "Mohhamad is married; he finished "katb el-ketab" (contract of marriage) only, but not the "dokhla" (the wedding), for he did not find any dwelling for the bride. He is still living with me and my wife in this small room." The man has two married daughters: Wagida, twentyeight years old, and Safiyya, twentyfour years old, who did not study ~~also~~ in any school.

STANDARD OF LIVING:

There are two sources <sup>of</sup> ~~from~~ El-Shiekh's income: one from the shack, and the other from his wife's begging. The shack's income is exactly 440 piasters monthly.

Hanim and Fawziyya have a monthly income of about nine pounds but their work is not guaranteed every month.

El-Sayyida and Mostageer have a monthly income of about 13.5 pounds, but this work is also not guaranteed every month.

Fatma takes a monthly "nafaqa" of three pounds from her husband. Her son El-Sayyid gives her five piasters daily. So, the fixed income is exactly 4.5 pounds, but the woman sews dresses to earn more money.

Soltan and his son have a monthly income of about 11 pounds on the average.

#### FOOD:

It is very very rare when members of the dwelling eat meat. Fish and rice constitute the main source of food that is usually eaten. These are very cheap. They buy the kilo of small sardines for one piaster, and this feeds a family like el-Shiekh Ahmad's. He says, "I eat meat once every three or may be four months, but because the fish is cheap, "el-wileyya" (a word used by the lower classes, which means the woman) brings a half kilo of fish with one piaster. El-weleyya brings a half kilo potato, we eat two days from it. The prophet was accustomed to stay three days hungry. So, a small piece of bread and some salt satisfies us. Patience is a good thing."

The following is El-Shiekh Ahmad's daily housekeeping money for food, and the picture is nearly the same in the whole dwelling:

bread	8	piasters
beans for breakfast	2	"
oil for the beans	1	"
sardines for dinner	1	"
oil	1	"
onion	.5	"
rice	1.5	"
beans for supper	2	"
oil for the beans	1	"
	<hr/>	
	18	"

The total monthly housekeeping money for food is about 540 piasters.

#### CLOTHING:

Everybody in the dwelling complains of shortage of food and clothes, and that is actually true. The dresses are worn out and mended several times.

#### RENT:

Hanim and El-Sayyeda each pay one pound monthly for their rooms, while Fatma and Soltan each pay 70 piasters, for their rooms are smaller than the others.

#### OTHER EXPENSES:

Every room's inhabitants pay five piasters each for periodic drainage of the toilet. Moreover, they buy the water, that costs each room about one piaster daily.

They also buy the tea, coffee, and sugar, that are essential and fundamental before even food.

#### HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE:

##### COOKING:

Nabawiyya cooks in the children's room. She buys what she needs in the morning, and returns back to prepare the food for the family. She has cooking utensils, but there are no plates for eating. All the family eats together from the same cooking pot.

Hanim's daughter Fawziyya buys raw food from the market, and cooks it. Her mother often assists her in the simple works such as sorting rice and the like.

El-Sayyeda and her daughter Amina work together. They cooperate in the buying and the cooking of their food.

Fatma and Hamida do the same thing, and everybody cooks in her room.

##### HOUSECLEANING:

Every housewife cleans her room, but it is never wholly organized, for it usually contains odds and ends. Nabawiyya has organized,

ized a shift that is carried by all the housewives of the dwell-



Cooking takes place in El-Sayyeda's room. A cooking pot, that is put on a primus beside the family's "zir" is seen clearly in the picture.



"...but it is never wholly organized for it contains odds and ends." The view is a corner in Hanim's room.

ing to clean the hall and the toilet. Everybody takes her shift for a complete day. Sometimes, quarrels may take place between them, for someone may claim that it is not her day, but Nabawiyya usually mediates them and administrates justice.

#### WASHING CLOTHES:

All the housewives wash their clothes inside their rooms. After washing, they throw the dirty water in either the street or the toilet's barrel. The "zir" is the source of water for this work, and it is usually refilled twice in the day of washing. One piaster may be sufficient to buy water to fill a "zir".

Washing lines are stretched inside the rooms to hang the washed clothes on. The sun does not enter the rooms, and consequently clothes take at least three days to dry.



"The washed clothes are seen hung on a rod to be dried in Hanim's room."



POULTRY:

There is no poultry in the dwelling. The housewives said that the rooms are crowded enough with humans, and consequently, there is no place for poultry. They had hoped to have it.

PERSONAL CARE:

WASHING:

It takes place inside the rooms. One person must assist the other to enable him to wash his hands, or his face, or both; for they have no faucets but "zir". A vessel is filled with water, and then is poured by someone to wash another's face (for instance). The washing tub is put on the ground to receive the poured water through washing, and finally the housewife throws it out in the street or in the toilet. A husband is usually assisted by his wife, and not vice versa; the latter is assisted by one of the children.

Washing occurs only in the morning, and it is usually done only by the adults and not children. Washing hands after eating is not important, unless the food was fish. The legs are not washed at all. Some of the adults and most of the children go barefoot.

BATHING:

*It* takes place in the rooms. If the person, who wants to take the bath is a man, everybody in the room comes out till he finishes his bath. He, then, pours the water for himself using the vessel

and the washing tub. The women and children, then, sit in the hall before the room or in a neighboring room chatting with other women till he finishes. If she is a woman that takes the bath, the males go outside the whole dwelling to pass their time in the "qahwa", till she finishes. The children must be out in the hall. It is observed that Hanim and Fawziyya assist each other in taking the bath; so, they stay together inside their room.

The women complained that the wooden walls of the shack have many holes, and it has happened that some children used them to look at them.

Fatma's room is too narrow, and consequently she gets all her furniture out before taking the bath. Soltan also does the same thing.

#### DEFECATION:

Everybody in the dwelling usually goes to the toilet daily. Many quarrels take place between children especially in the morning; two children, for example, want to enter the toilet in the same moment. El-Shiekh Ahmad said, "What annoys me is the existence of so many children. The youngsters are always found in the toilet, and an adult stands outside waiting angrily."

At the beginning of the month El-Shiekh Ahmad may prevent somebody from entering the toilet, if he is late in paying "el-matbakh" (money deserved for draining the toilet). He pays twenty-five piasters monthly for its drainage. He collects five piasters monthly from each room. The person who may be late in paying the

money of the "matbakh" is usually prevented ~~to~~<sup>from</sup> enter<sup>ing</sup> the toilet. "If a person refuses paying the five piasters, I wait for him untill he comes to use the toilet. Then, I prevent him from entering it, till he pays me." Mostageer said, "I usually pay the "matbakh" in the time it is due."

### SLEEPING:

Sleeping forms no problem for El-Shiekh and his family, for he has two rooms, one for him and his wife, and the other for the children, who simply sleep on a mattress on the ground.

Hanim and Fawziyya also sleep comfortably on their bed, while Mostageer is not satisfied with sleeping with his mother and sister on the same bed. "I want to sleep in a bed alone, but the room is too narrow to hold two beds", he said.

Soltan complains from the same thing, for he, his wife, and his son by the first wife, all sleep on one mattress. He is deprived from sexual intercourse at night, but he says, "I am not too young to care about it", But when his wife was asked about the same thing, she smiled and said, "Soltan wants to do the sexual intercourse every minute, but he is impeded by his son's presence in the room; so, he does it in the morning."

The problem of insufficient room which would enable Fatma and her children to sleep comfortably in their room could not be solved until woman sent her two eldest children to sleep in her father's dwelling at night. She and the remaining three children

sleep in the room. The woman puts the youngest child beside her on the mattress to sleep, and puts the other two's heads on the opposite direction; their legs would be facing the others.



"...But the woman solved it by sending the eldest grown up children to sleep in her father's dwelling.... She and the remaining three children..."

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS:

AMONG THE FAMILY MEMBERS:

HUSBAND-WIFE:

El-Shiekh Ahmad considers his relationship with his wife as a solid one, inspite of his poverty. He says, "My wife is decent

and obedient; one of good origins would not be bad. She puts up with me in poverty, inspite of her disability. She has caught cold in her legs, and this made her unable to walk. She is a cripple.

I have done my best to please her; I sold "serees" (donkey's food), in order to live and sponsor her. I always say to her, "be patient for patience is a good thing", and really I am shortening in my duties towards her. But "God does not ask the soul to do something except it is in its capacity." She "sees the well and its cover" (an Egyptian proverb, that means that she knows his condition). When she wants something, and I say, "I don't have", a quarrel occurs, but according to your cover's length, extend your legs" (an Egyptian proverb). But, God is guiding her in the right way."

The man's relationship with his wife is actually not solid. He is idle, and his income from the shack does not cover the needs of the family. Consequently, his wife begs, and the children flee outside. The man has no status in front of his wife. The woman once said to this researcher right in front of her husband, "El-Shiekh Ahmad is idle, and I am doing good to live with him." The man was silent.

He does not go to the "qahwa", but he is always staying at home. He often~~ly~~ goes to the mosque.

The man usually calls his wife bad names that are included in his normal speech. The woman passes most<sup>of</sup> the time, in the evening, with the other women chatting, while her husband stays in bed.

Nabawiyya usually quarrels with her husband. Poverty is often the main cause of these quarrels. Whenever she asks him to give her some money to buy clothes, the man shouts and says, "I have nothing, mend your old dresses."

Once, El-Shiekh Ahmad quarreled with her. He had given her five piasters to buy food for the dinner. He told her to buy bread with three piasters, fish with one piaster, onion with half a piaster, and potatos for the children with half a piaster. Instead, the woman borrowed another two piasters from her neighbor. The man knew, and hit her; calling her bad names. The woman, then, left the dwelling angrily. Her husband came after her in the street and brought her back.

"All the quarrels with my wife are due to lack of food and clothes, but sometimes, I quarrel with her because my children run away," El-Shiekh Ahmad said.

Soltan's wife Hamida is also discontented from her husband and their poverty. She also complains of lack of food and clothing. "My wife usually compares herself with other women. She says to me; "See this woman and this woman; their husbands brought them new clothes, and you brought nothing to me. They are not better than I am", the man added that his wife also complains to him that he wastes his mony on Hasheesh.

The man passes all the day and most the night in his "qahwa", while his wife stays usually alone in her room or in the hall.

PARENT -CHILD:

"If we gave the children something to eat, they will eat it, if not, they will run away. My son Ahmad is always running away. Abdu began also to immitate him", Nabawiyya said.

Poverty again determines the relationship between the parents and the children. The parents are unable to educate their children, and they are no longer respected by them, inspite of the man's cruelty in punishing them. El-Sheikh Ahmad has an ox whip. He has also fixed an iron chain to the floor of the room. He ties his son to the chain, and hits him with the whip. "I don't leave him until I really cut him up", the man said. His wife added, that the chain is injuring the children's legs.

The man's son Ahmad steals from his mother when she is sleeping. The woman keeps her money under her pillow. He raises it while she is sleeping, takes the money, and runs away to sleep in the streets.

The boy collects cigarette butts, and sometimes begs. "My son Ahmad was the reason that I went to the court three times, for he collects butts and begs. The police catch him, and the judge calls me in. I say to him, "Beh ( a title given to the upper upper class), this boy is not living with me", but the judge shouts at me. once, when they called in the police station, the officer then said to me, "You don't know how to educate your child." Then, he left his office, and took a thick stick, and hit him severely before me,

till he became tired. Then, he called the warrant officer to continue hitting him, till he was wounded and the blood came out of his mouth. I, myself, usually hit this boy, and I frighten the other children, but without any such result."

Hanim's relation with her daughter Fawziyya is marked by a very strong friendship. They respect each other. Sometimes, they quarrel, but they make it up quickly.

El-Sayyeda's relation with her son Mostageer is affected by their seasonal employment. This causes many troubles for the two. The woman saves money for emergencies, which come during periodic unemployment, while her son wastes his money. When he is not working, he asks his mother to give him money, but she refuses him. She had saved the money for food and the like. The son quarrels and then stays at home to avoid any expenses. El-Sayyeda treats her daughter Amina as a friend, but sometimes the girl as well as her brother quarrel with her for lack of food and clothing.

Fatma likes her children; she sews to earn her living, and to educate them in schools. The woman takes what remains from the clients' clothes to make new dresses for them. The children assist the mother in housekeeping. Sometimes, a child or two may be seen assisting their mother in her work. The woman is very annoyed that her eldest two grown up children are not living with her, but with her father because her room is too small to take all the children. Her eldest daughter Fayza feels the same. She visits her mother



every afternoon. She is not content to live with her grandfather, for he is married to a young ugly step grandmother, who treats her badly. El-Sayed, the eldest child, also visits his mother periodically, and also complains from his young grandmother.

"I sometimes, quarrel with my children because of the shortage of food", the woman said. "My children may ask me for food to eat; I, then, shout at them; they weep for a while, and keep silent again. Then, I may borrow some piasters to feed them, till God provides something."

Soltan's relationship with his son Ahmad is one that is economically cooperative. They work together in the "qahwa", where they pass all the day and most the night. "We respect each other, and we don't quarrel except over business affairs", the man said.

#### SIBLING-SIBLING:

The man's children usually play with each other in the hall. They quarrel with each other, and the mother mediates either by insulting or hitting a child or two. They have no toys to play with, so, they play in the mud making it into balls to throw at each other.

Ahmad sometimes persuades his younger brother Abdul-Hamid to run away with him. The boy sometimes refuses to go with him, but he gradually learned this ~~real~~ behavior; but when he is hit, he stops doing it.

Ahmad sometimes kidnaps his sister So'ad, to carry her for

begging in Al-Afrang. He begs to go to the cinema. He kidnaps her, when he finds her playing before the shack. He begs and returns her back again, leaving her a bit far from the shack to avoid being caught by his father. He then gives her a small piece of a sugar-cane or a skin of an orange, as a real orange, and leaves her.

El-Sayyeda's grown up children Mostageer and Amina have a good relationship. The girl is quite submissive to her brother.

Fatma's children usually play with Nabawiyya's in the hall.

#### AMONG THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS:

The women are usually occupied in the day time preparing food for dinner, washing clothes, cleaning their rooms, and the like. In the evening, they sit with each other in the hall chatting. El-Shiekh Ahmad, sometimes, quarrels with the members of the dwelling at the beginning of the month, for they may be late in paying him their rent.

Soltan, once, refused to pay the "matbakh", while the others paid. El-Shiekh, then, left his room, and sat before the toilet to prevent the man and his wife from entering it. The next day, the man came again to use the toilet, but this time he was agitated from a retarded feces. El-Shiekh expelled him, and did not allow him to use the toilet, unless he paid the "matbakh".

Fazziyya said that once El-Shiekh Ahmad closed the toilet'

with a wooden door, and nailed it to prevent everybody from using it, for they all, then, refused to pay the "matbakh", and they were obliged to pay the money.

Sometimes, the women quarreled with each other, for one may have made a mistake over their shifts to clean the hall and the toilet.

They may also quarrel for one of them throws dirty water in front of other's room.

#### BETWEEN THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS AND NON-DWELLING'S:

The dwelling's site makes its dwellers as a relatively separate unit from the other dwellings. But even <sup>so</sup> ~~though~~ some dwellers from other neighboring dwellings visit the shack to pass the evening with its members.

#### THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK:

##### MEDICAL TREATMENT:

El-Shiekh Ahmad's attitude towards sickness is absolutely affected by his religious attitude. "Allah (i.e. God) determines every thing. If you are sick, that is God's will; and if you are healthy, that is His will too", the old man said.

He does not go to the hospital except in the complex cases. He says, "I go to the governmental hospital, and wait for hours, and finally <sup>be</sup> given some water that treats nothing. But sometimes,

I find myself obliged to go to the hospital, but I generally cure myself by myself. There is a certain prescription for every disease. Nabawiyya said, "El-Shiekh Ahmad is a "baraka" (bless<sup>e</sup>s). His "wasfat" are always "mabrooka" (blessed).

All the dwelling's inhabitants justified "al-wasfat al-baladiyya" as a decisive treatment. They go to the hospital when their prescriptions are not efficient. The shiekh cures the cases that are caused by the spirits, or in other words, the cases that are not cured by medicine. He makes the "'amal", the "tahweeta", the "hegab" (a permanent protection against the harms that may occur in one's life; it is usually formed of a small piece of cloth that contains a written paper, whose writings are usually mysterious), and the like.

#### THE NON-MEDICAL TREATMENT:

##### THROUGH USING AL-WASFAT AL-BALADIYYA:

El-Shiekh Ahmad and everybody in the dwelling know all the methods of "sun-taking". They spoke about them in the same way Bayyomi and his family members had spoken.

El-Shiekh Ahmad knows how to cure backache. He says that it is cured by tying the toes of the foot one above the other. If the pains are found in the right side of the back, the toes of the left foot must be tied, and vice versa.

The women of the dwelling spoke about the treatment of difficult deliveries. They said that the husband, then, wears his

"gallabiyya" (a national dress usually worn by the lower classes; it may have wide sleeves) on its other face, and walks around the ezba without speaking, answering, or saluting anybody. He walks one tour only, and returns back to his home; he finds his wife bearing easily.

Soltan knows the treatment of the pains of the test~~s~~s. He says, "Bring some be~~ns~~ns and boil them in some water, and put the test~~s~~s in the hot solution. The pains will definitely stop." The man added, "To treat a twisted hand or leg, you simply tie it with a wooden thread, and the pains consequently stop."

#### THROUGH PRACTITIONERS:

EL-Shiekh Ahmad said that el-shiekh would treat difficult cases such as paralysis. "If paralysis is dangerous and the physicians could not treat it", EL-Shiekh Ahmad said, "the case must, then, be cured by a skillful shiekh. He seats the patient on a chair, and stands before him, from a distance of about six to eight meters. Then, he asks him his name and his mother's name, and begins his "ta'azeem" (murmuring mysterious words as if he were speaking with the spirits) by saying incomprehensible words to expell the evil spirits. Finally, el-shiekh orders the patient to stand and walk, and the patient actually stands and walks."

The women spoke about el-shiekh's services to those who wish to become pregnant, and to those who are actually pregnant and

want normal and easy deliveries and a good healthy child.

Fatma says that the sterile woman goes to the sheikh to give her a "sofah" (a woolen piece of cloth) to wear it in her vagina after bathing. It makes her pregnant. (The researcher met a sheikh's assistant in Port-Said, who told him about the secret of such "sofah". He said that it contains a man's ejaculation, and that is why it impregnates the women, who may be married to sterile husbands. When it succeeds, the sheikh's reputation increases.) Fatma added, "When I was pregnant with my daughter Kamilia, my neighbors told me to go to the sheikh to do something to facilitate the birth, and to keep the child alive after birth. Then, I went to the sheikh. He took my head's handkerchief, and asked me to come after two days, till he finishes his "ta'azeem". I came to him in the due date. He gave me a "liboos" (literally means something to be worn) to put it from beneath (i.e. in her vagina). In the mean time, he gave me some written papers, and asked me to make a solution of them in a glass of water, and to drink it. I did what he exactly said, and the birth was very easy."

Hanim said that she did the same thing, when she was pregnant in her daughter Fawziyya, but the method was slightly different. The sheikh instead of giving her the written papers, gave her a ceramic plate, whose surface contained unknowable mysterious written words. He asked her to put some water in the plate to dissolve the writings, and finally take a bath in this water. Hanim did exactly what he said, and the birth was also easy. The woman added

that he also gave her a "hegab" to keep the child alive and healthy.

"The sick pregnant woman goes to the sheikh", El-Sayyeda said. "He writes a "hegab" for her, and gives her some "bokhor" ( a variety of usually unknown materials, that are sold by the "attar". They are put in a container and burned. Then, the person passes in front of the smoke to get blessings and protection against the evil eye.) To "titbakhar" (the verb of the word "bokhor") on a Friday's Moslems praying, helps to blind the evil eyes, and so, she is cured."

Hamida commented on the sheikh's miracles saying, "Isal meggarrab wala tis-alsh tabeeb" (i.e. ask an experienced person and don't ask a physician; this means, don't consult a physician but consult an experienced person). Her husband Soltan, then, said, "In fact, it is not the sheikh's who cures people, but that is God who caused these sheikhs to do such things. So, they are blessed by Him." The man added, "There was a man here in the ezba, who was stammering. He went to the sheikh after he had consulted many physicians without any benefit. The sheikh asked him to eat green uncooked "regla" (a green plant) for seven days, and to visit him again. The man did the prescription to the extent that he got an acute diarrhea. Then, he went to the sheikh, who gave him a "hegab", and told him that he will speak without stammering within a few hours, and he actually spoke." Soltan added, "It is always the God's will

that comes to His humans through these blessed shiekhs."

RECEIVING VISITORS:

THE MALE VISITORS:

El-Shiekh Ahmad usually receives the male visitors in the mosque, but sometimes, they visit him at home. There, they are received in the "ruwaq". They are seated on two wooden sheets, that are put on the floor, and covered by a "hasira".

The old man says that he has no relatives to visit him, but those who come are usually those of his wife. "If a man visits me", the man says, "I meet him out in the street, but it is also possible to meet him in the "ruwaq", and hide my wife in the "kha-zna", but if he is a relative, she stays."

The woman, in actuality, does not hide herself at all in the presence of male visitors. Moreover, she prepares the tea, and presents it the visitors by herself.

Hanim receives male visitors in her room. Whenever the researcher enters her room, he sits on the bed, for she has no chairs. Her daughter Fawziyya usually sits beside him, while her mother sits on the "hasira". Her visitors are usually females.

Mostageer prefers to meet his friends in the "qahwa", for he does not like to trouble his mother and sister by the presence of a friend. Moreover, he would not be able to speak freely with his friend before his family, but sometimes, he is obliged to



receive anybody, who visits him in the room, especially his relatives.

Fatma has no place to receive any visitor. If she has any, she receives them in the hall, where there is no privacy for speaking; while Soltan receives his visitors in the "qahwa".

#### THE FEMALE VISITORS:

"When an unfamiliar woman visits Nabawiyya, I go out, but if she is familiar to me, I stay at home, and sit with her", El-Shiekh said, while he does not come out at all. The man says, "I have forbidden my wife from sitting with any other woman, because no one spoils the woman except another woman, but I allow only her brother's wife to visit her, and I must be present with them to know what they say." On the contrary, Nabawiyya sits with any woman and smokes a cigarette if anybody gives it to her, in her husband's presence. (Smoking is actually not permitted to be practiced by females in the subculture of poverty in the Egyptian urban as well as rural areas.)

Mostageer usually does not leave the room on receiving a female visitor, but he says, "If I feel that they can't say anything because of my presence, I come out instantly to stay in the "qahwa".

Fatma receives her clients outside the room. "I leave them standing at the room's door", she said; while Hamida receives her visitors in the hall, where she puts a small "hasira", to seat them on it.

RECREATION:

IN-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

El-Shiekh Ahmad usually plays with his child So'ad, early in the morning after awaking. He kisses her saying many bad words to her. He says, "Oh, daughter of prostitute, daughter of dog...", and laughs loudly to amuse himself.

The man passes most <sup>of</sup> his time in his bed; he has no means of recreation in his house.

Mostageer is usually seen chatting with Fawziyya. They love each other. Moreover, Fatma is his concubine; she usually visits him at night in his room, when his mother and sister have travelled to the village.

Soltan is always out in his "qahwa".

The dwelling does not contain a radio or any other means of entertainment.

FEMALES:

The women of the dwelling usually pass their evenings together. They sit together in one of the rooms, and chat. They usually speak about what they have done in the morning. Nabawiyya, for instance, complains about her husband's poverty and his idleness. She says, for example, "My husband, God cuts his neck, does not work to feed me."

The "hattota" (i.e; a fictitious <sup>ti</sup> tale that is narrated by somebody to others; it is not written) is usually narrated in such gatherings.

Once Nabawiyya narrated the following "hattota" in a gathering that gathered nearly all the dwelling's women and children in an evening:

"Once, there was a king and a minister. The king is married to three women; the minister has one woman only.

Once, the king said to his minister, "Give me your impression my minister. I am married to three women, and they are troubling me, and you are married to one woman, and she satisfied you." The minister said, "The dissatisfaction and satisfaction are caused by ~~women~~." The king said, "No, dissatisfaction and satisfaction are caused by God. Come to walk in the fields of the country."

They came out, and through their walk, they met a Sa'aidi farmer (i.e. from Upper Egypt), who has two cows, that are attached to the plough, and cultivates the land. At time of dinner, he stopped the cows, and left them without food, and sat to eat a loaf, a small piece of cheese, and an onion. The king saw another peasant; he then said to the minister, "Come, to go a bit down to see him." They found the peasant wearing clean clothes, and shoes <sup>his feet</sup> on ~~his feet~~, and singing behind the cows saying, "Oh night, oh day....", and his cows work alone without supervision. The king said to the minister, "Come to hide ourselves here behind the maiz, to see why the Sa'aidi is unhappy and his cows are bad, and why the peasant is happy and his cows are happy too. They sat and then observed the wife of the happy peasant coming, and carrying a basket on her head, which contained the cows' food and a cooked hen for her husband. The peasant, then, stopped the cows, and his wife put the food before them, and prepared her husband's food. When he ate, the cows were

happy. Then, the peasant said to his wife, "Om-flan, I want to sleep for a while." The woman stretched her leg for him, to put his head upon it. After that, she awoke him saying, "Abu-flan", awake, the cows ate and you took a rest. Come to put the cows on the plough." The man stood and washed his face; his wife took what remained from the cows' food; put it in the basket; put it on her head, and left her husband to go back home.

The king, then, appeared before the peasant, and said, to him, "Call your wife, I am the king, and that is the crown." The peasant's wife came and put the basket on the ground. The king then said to the peasant, "I 'll let you marry my three women, and I 'll take your one wife; and I am a king and that is the crown." The peasant, then, said, "No, you are able to live with ten women, because you are a king." The king actually divorced his women, and the peasant his wife, and the peasant took the three women of the king, and the king took the peasant's wife.

The peasant went to the field with the three women, and they are naturally delicate, so, before they reach<sup>ed</sup> the field, their legs were very tired.

They met a canal of water. The peasant passed the cows, and wanted to pass the women. He brought the first woman, and carried her to cross the canal. He came to its center, and said to her, "If you did not tell me why the king divorced you, I 'll drown you." She, then, said, "Ana falateyyet reggala" (I am a concubine to more than one man in the same time)". The peasant said, "I am able to live with you."

The man did the same thing with the second and third woman, and asked them the same question. The second woman said, "Ana harameyyet beti" (I ~~steal~~<sup>stole</sup> ~~my~~<sup>from</sup> house). The man said, "And you also, I can live with you." When he asked the third woman, she answered, "The king plays and laughs outside the home, and whenever he comes back home, I must annoy him, and consequently, he sleeps angry."

The peasant said, "I can't live with you", and threw her in the water, and said, "Wekam akalemek wel tab'a fiki ghaleb, wedail elkalb ma yen'adel welaw hattom feeh aleb" (i.e. Whatever I advice you, but your nature is dominant; the dog's tail ~~will~~ never be strait whenever ~~it~~ is caught by anything).

The man took the two women and walked. He has two houses; one for keeping the land's products, and the other has two doors. He put "falateyyet el reggala" in the house, that contains two doors, and said to her, "This is for the man who enters from here, do ~~not~~ meet the one who enters from here. The woman, then, said, "No, God maintained me on your hands."

The peasant said to "harameyyet betha", and that is the house before you; it contains rice, maiz, beans, and other things. So, whenever you steal, take a part of each kind, in order I don't know. The woman said, "No, God maintained me on your hands". The man said, "You are maintained, and you are maintained. Then, I want each one of you a week in my bed, and a week for serving me and the cows." And they followed his rules.

The peasant's happiness increased, and he was very pleased. He continued on this way for a year.

The king and the minister came back to see the Sa'adi and the peasant. They found the Sa'adi as he was, and the peasant is more happy. The king, then, said to the peasant, "I want my women. I left them to you for one year, to educate them, and you are now happy." The king, then, saw one of his women bringing the food for the peasant and the cows, exactly like the first woman. Then, he said to the peasant, "Call the woman; I am the king and that is the crown, and I want my women, and take your woman." The peasant agreed, and narrated the story of the three women to the king. The king gave him five thousand pounds as a prize. The king took his wives. Then, the minister said to the king, "My Majesty, is it God or women that cause happiness?" The king said, "You are right; happiness and unhappiness are caused by women."

CHILDREN:

The children usually play with each other, and they sit with the women in the evening to hear their tales. Their quarrels are usually endless.

OUT-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

The qahwa is the place most preferred by the males, in which they pass their leisure time. They meet their friends in the qahwa, where they drink tea and coffee, and smoke tobacco and chat together. But El-Shiekh Ahmad does not go there at all. "I am here in Port-Said since the days of Hitler, and I never went to the qahwa, but I go to the mosque, where I meet my friends. I left my late son Muhammad dead at home, and I went to the mosque to pray," he said. The man does not go to the cinema because he is so poor. "What we would pay for the cinema, we could eat with it", he said. El-Shiekh Ahmad does not visit his relatives in the village, unless he has travel expenses, and this actually does not happen, as his wife said.

Mostageer passes most <sup>of</sup> his free time in the qahwa. He rarely goes to the cinema to avoid the expenses, but he usually watches television in the street with his friends. The young man frequently visits his relatives.

FEMALES:

The dwelling's women usually pass their time in the shack.

Sometimes, Fawziyya sees the television in the street. The women may also visit their relatives in the city.

**CHILDREN:**

They may play in the street with other children from other shacks, or in the hall with each other.

CHAPTER V  
HAGGA NOORA'S DWELLING

Cast of Characters

Hagga Noora-age 42 a widow and the tenant of the dwelling

Abbas Mazroo'a-age 42 a husband

Rawhiyya-age 46 his wife

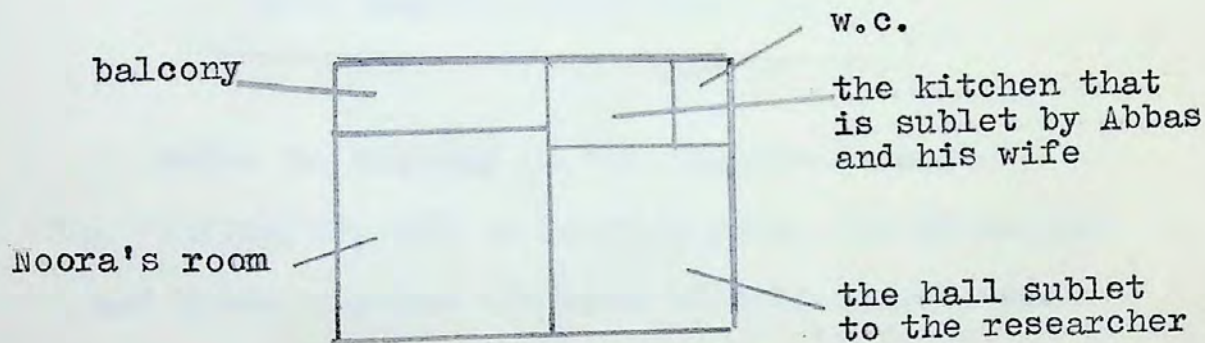


(From right to left) Abbas, the  
researcher, Noora and a neighbor.



HOUSING:

The dwelling is new. It is on the first floor in one of the buildings of the new housing project. It has one room, a hall, a kitchen, and a toilet, which contains the bath as well (see the diagram). It contains all kinds of sanitary facilities such as water, sewage, drainage, and electricity.



The room is occupied by Hagga Noora, the tenant of the dwelling (the word "hagga" is an Islamic title given to those who do the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi-Arabia, but she carries the title as a nickname, for she did not make the pilgrimage). She is a very poor and has little furniture. The room is three by three meters; it contains only a small narrow iron bed and a mattress, "hasira", "tabliyya", a primus, cooking pots, and the tea utensils. The clothing is hung on nails, that are driven into the walls. The poultry is kept on in the balcony, which contains a wooden cage for shelter.

The kitchen is sublet to a fisherman and his wife. It is a very small place; it is one by two meters. It contained a sink and



Noora is sitting on the "hasira before the "tabliyya"; she is sorting rice. The researcher and Noora's guest are seen sitting on her bed.

a shelf, that is made of a dark marble. It has only a small window near the ceiling. It is forty by forty centimeters; so the place is always dark in the day time. The kitchen was originally a part of the hall, but was separated from it by wood leaving a narrow entrance. This is covered with a very dirty curtain made of a cheap cloth.

Abbas has very poor furniture which is an old worn mattress, that lies on the floor, and a blanket. His fishing nets as well as the family's clothing are all kept together under the shelf on the floor.

The hall is sublet by the researcher. It is two by three meters in size. It contains only his bed, mattress, and a pillow, which he bought with him when he sublet it. The hall also contains Noora's



Abbas and the researcher are  
seen sitting on the former's worn mattress in  
his kitchen. The sink and the shelf are seen  
inside



The researcher and Noora's neighbor are  
seen sitting on the former's bed in his hall

washing tub and the like.

All the doors of the room, kitchen, toilet, and the dwelling's door open in the hall.

LIFE HISTORY OF FAMILY HEADS:

Hagga Noora:

She is a widow of fortytwo years old. She was born in Manzala, where she lived with her family till she married her first husband. This marriage lasted for a few years, and ended in divorce. Then, she worked in her village to support herself economically, till she migrated to Port-Said, where she worked again and found her first love, that soon died leaving a greatly disappointed unhappy, lady. At last, she left her work to marry her second husband, who died after about four years' marriage. Her history has a more detailed story, that is said by her through several interviews.

"My late father was a famous butcher in Manzala," the woman said, "I am from a good family, but it is the times that <sup>are</sup> not good. My father married my mother when she was thirteen years old. This means that my mother-if she is still living-will be fourteen years older than me. Before marrying my mother, he married a peasant, who bore him six sons: Muhammad, Abul-So'aod, Abu-Khalid, Abu-Zid, Kamal, and Ahmad. They all died, but one of them was killed, in his youth, by my uncle, who also died after he had suffered from severe insanity. My father and mother had I and Abdul-Halim, who

drowned; if he lived, he would be older than I am. My father divorced my mother Hanim, when she was first pregnant for me in her first month, and he did not remarry. Then, my mother married a Suisi person (i.e. from the city of Suez in the Canal area), and left me to her sister to rear me; I was then three months old. She left Al-Manzala to Suez to live with him. My father died when I was seven years old.

My aunt had no children, but after she took me, she had a child. I was reared in her home, my father's, and my mother's father's, where I was staying a week in each home; I lived for seven years this way. My family sent me to school for about one year. The school was called "Madraset al-Nasara" (the school of the non-Moslems). I don't read or write, but no one is cleverer than me in the world. Even though, I am not happy, for I am living alone.

I saw my mother for the first time when I was seven years old. I was then, calling the aunt I lived with "mother". Once my real mother came from Suez to Manzala for the first time after her marriage. She came beside me staring at me; I was afraid of her, so I ran quickly to my aunt, and said, "Mother ' this woman stares at me; I am afraid." My aunt said, "Noora, that is your real mother; I am your aunt." She hugged me and kissed me, and since then I knew that she was my real mother.

My mother by her second husband had three daughters: So'ad, Amina, and Fatma, and one son Mohammad. The former So'ad was mentally ill; she had been staying in the Mental Hospital of Al-Abbasiyya, where she died in the 1956 aggression, for this hospital was

bombed, and some patients died. I was always visiting her in the hospital.

I don't like any body of my family; my mother is "Suisiyyah bent-kalb" (i.e. from Suez-daughter of dog); for what aim did she bear me; I hope my father did not creep to my mother (i.e. did not her, and consequently did not marry her, for she wished not to come in life).

Fatma, my second sister, also died. Amina and Mohammad are living in Manzala with my mother and my aunt in the family's house. Amina is twentyfive years old, and she is still unmarried. Mohammad is about twentythree years old; I made him marry twice, the first when he was sixteen and the second when he was nineteen; I did this for my mother's sake.

The last year, I had my mother divorce her husband after she had suffered from him for more than forty years. She is now about sixty."

Noora's first marriage occurred in Manzala, when she was thirteen years old. She married her cousin, who was then fortytwo years old. "This means that he was the age I am now. He was very bad, so I divorced him. This occurred in the days of the Germans' war in 1944. I had three children by him, but they all died. He died in Al -Isma-iliyya in 1951. Then I worked in the 'Alamain Factory, in my village, to support myself. I was a cook, and I was working with twelve men, and I was not careful in their presence.

I left Al-Manzala in 1949, and came to Port-Said to find a better opportunity for work and more salary. Then, I worked in the

French hospital as a cook. I have seen much (i.e. I gained much experience). I am a good cook; I cook Italian, French, and Greek foods, for I lived with the foreigners in al-Afrang district for a long time before I come here. I did not find any people better than the Greeks. They are the best people in the world. They cook much food, and throw away what remains of it. In the hospital, I was working one month in a day shift, and one month in a night one. I profited more form the night shift; I sold "coca-cola" at eight piasters to the Americans.

Once a Moslim French, whose name was Ahmad asked me, "How much do you sell the "coca-cola"?"; I said, "With ten piasters!" He then said, "Be kind; I am a Moslim from Algeria!" The woman continued, "His Arabic language was "broken" (i.e. not perfect), and he was always speaking French. When I found him like that, I gave him the "coca-cola" with only one piaster. He then asked me, "From where are you going to bring the rest of the money?", I said, "From the idiot people inside, the French, the Americans, and the Italians!" I was strong and nobody is stronger than me.

Once an English patient said to me in English, "Come here". I answered him in Arabic, "Itnayyel katak sitteen neela" (bad words). This man went to ask a cunning Italian about the "neela". He said to him, "She is insulting you!" The English man came and shouted at me. That Italian man was dirty and son of dog. The English patient whenever seeing me says, "Good morning neela".

Noora worked in this hospital till 1956, when the Anglo-French aggression occured. Her salary was nine pounds, but she says that

she was making another nine from selling the "coca-cola" and tips. She says, "I dressed well, ate well, and I was happy."

After Noora's arrival in Port-Said, she met her maternal cousin who is a merchant of clothes in the Arab district. "I loved my cousin", Noora said, "and this was the first love in my life, but for my bad luck, I found that he was married, and that his wife was in Alexandria. He was handsome, and I loved him. I am ugly, but I like beauty."

In 1958, Noora met her second husband. He saw her for the first time in his physician's clinic in al-Afrang, where she was visiting her friend Amina, who was a nurse in the clinic. "As he came out of the door of the clinic, he fell on the floor. He was one legged", Noora said, "the other was amputated because he had diabetes. I helped him stand up, and when he was up, he said to me, "My daughter, I am sick!" He was fiftyeight years old, at the time he was the secretary of the Ali Mobark School, that lies in the center of the city. I then offered him coffee.

The next day, the man came again to the clinic, and asked Amina, "Where is the lady who helped me yesterday? I want to see her." When I revisited Amina, she told me. Then, he met me, and said, "I want to marry you, and I 'll make you happy." In the same day, he met my cousin in Al-Arab, who told him that I had been a widow for about thirteen years, but the man insisted on marrying me. "Katb-el-Ketab" (the wedding day) took place the next day; it was on August, 8th., 1958.



Noora sneezed and said, "I vowed to myself: my God ' how shall I sleep with him. I feared him, because his leg was cut, but I lived with him. This second husband Abdul-Latif was also impotent; for this cause, he was always biting me teasingly, when he could not have intercourse. He would also strike his cheeks with his hands for the same reason. I said to him several times: "man... divorce me", but he would say to me, "No, I would be an idiot to leave you to another man". He was always depriving me of sleeping through the night.

The man had married before, but his first wife had died long before. They had five grown up children. Abdul-Latif, his eldest son, was then twentyfour years old. He died ten months before his father's death. 'Adel, his second son was then twenty years old. He also had two daughters, one a teacher, and the other is still a student. The last child was a young boy, who was then, about thirteen years old. They have been living in al-Afrang, and he obtained this dwelling for me to be far from his children. The dwelling is still recorded in the government under his name. Abdul-Latif then said to me, "Noora, be here far from my children. I know they will trouble you".

Noora did not like any person from his family except the late Abdul-Latif. "He was a king gentleman," she said, "but Fawziyya, his eldest daughter has a long tongue (i.e. impolite). Once I visited him in his home in al-Afrang, she then said to him, "Papa, expel this woman from the home; divorce her, papa". He had a very weak personality, so he answered her, "Yes, Fa'wziyya, she will be divorced". I heard them saying so in my presence; so, I said to them: "children of dog, I 'll not come here any more". I came back to my dwell-

ing, and he came quickly after me apologizing, and said, "Noora, I have nothing in this life, but you." I was always forgiving him, for he was a kind man."

Noora continued, "My husband's salary was fiftytwo pounds monthly, and he had forty suits.

Before his death, he stayed in the hospital for about six months. Once, I visited him there; he shouted to me and said, "Don't come here anymore; great people come to visit me. Do you want to insult me by your presence before them." On the day of his death, the physicians amputated his other leg, and consequently, he died. This was in August '61, and he was then sixty years old. The marriage lasted exactly four years. I did not know anything about his death except after about twenty days. His children did not ask me to attend the funeral. They did not write my name in the newspaper, but wrote the name of his first wife.

Recently, I found out that his son 'Adel wrote a statement to the Pension Department, and mentioned that his deceased father had no second wife, in order to take my share of the pension. I sent a complaint, and he knew about it, so, he came quickly to me. I have no objection to leave him without harm, if he gives me my share, since the date of his father's death." (The researcher visited her later on after he had finished the field work, and she informed him that she took her share in the pension. It is two and half pounds.)

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Noora liked her two mothers-in-law. "My first and second mothers-in-law were moon" (i.e. beautiful like the moon) Noora said, "the second one is very beautiful and stocky; she has big hips and a big chest."

Noora added, "I can marry again, but my menstruation has stopped since the <sup>ag</sup>gression. The bombs destroyed my neighbor's house. I saw it falling over its inhabitants. It was a horrible scene; I 'll never forget it. So, fear and horror cut the menstruation. This happened before its due time, for it stops at the age of fiftyfive, and I was then thirtysix only; there was still much time. I went to the physician, but he said that I have to do an operation, because the uterus is closed, but I refused to do it."

Noora, after her second husband's death, tried to work again in the same hospital, but its administration did not accept her, except as a dress washer, for thirty piasters per day, but she refused.

Abbas:

Abbas, who is fortytwo years old, is a fisherman; he sublets Noora's kitchen for sixty piasters monthly. He was born in al-Gameel (an area that lies on the shore, fifteen miles West of the city; its inhabitants are predominantly fishermen and peasants). His father gained much from fishing, but he wasted all his profits on "hashish", a habit which he has taken from him.

He married twice before his mother. He has only one daughter

by his first wife. Her name is Sa'adiyya. She is married to a Manzalawi fisherman who was working with his father. "She is now living in Manzala", Abbas said. "I really see her rarely, for I can't afford travelling expenses. My father and his second wife had born three daughters: Om-El-Hana, Sabra, and Zakiyya. I am fortytwo years old, and they are all older than me. They are all married, and they have mature children. My mother was the third wife, and she was also married before him, but she did not bear by this man, who divorced her for this reason, to marry another one to bear for him. Then, she married my father, and they had only one child, myself. My father died in the aggression of 1956, by the British paratroops in our village "Al-Gameel", for they had found a rifle with him. His wives migrated to Al-Manzala after his death, to live with their families there. My mother died three years ago".



Abbas carries his fishing net before his kitchen

"I married my first wife before my conscription", Abbas added, "this was in 1942. She was decent, but she did not bear, so, I divorced her after five years of marriage. In 1947, I finished my conscription period, that was at the time, for five years.

After the <sup>ag</sup>gression, I married my present wife Rawhiyya. She is about four years older than I am, but she is obedient. She had been a widow, and she has a son by her deceased husband; he is now conscripted in the army. I saw Rawhiyya for the first time in the Guests' Barrack, after the <sup>ag</sup>gression. We loved each other."

Abbas added, "I was a tenant of a dwelling in this house, but I was "broke~~n~~ for rent for seventeen months; so the municipal<sup>m</sup> expelled me, and closed the apartment. Then, I was compelled to sell it in order to pay the municipal its money. Abu-Sa'aid, who was subletting the room, bought it. I was then occupying the hall, and the kitchen was sublet to a widow and her kids; and even ~~then~~<sup>then</sup>, I could not pay the dwelling's rent systematically. Finally, I left my dwelling to live in Noora's kitchen.

#### STANDARD OF LIVING:

Noora's income comes from two sources: one from subletting the kitchen and the hall, and the other from selling poultry and handkerchiefs. It is nearly impossible to estimate her income exactly. The kitchen is sublet for about sixty piasters, and the hall for seventy. The total is 1300piasters, while the room could be

sublet for two pounds, and that is why later on, she expelled 'Abbas, to take his place in the kitchen, to earn more money through subletting the more winning room.

Abbas' income also can not be exactly estimated. He sells what his net brings of fishes and sardines.

FOOD:

Noora usually cooks a large quantity of vegetables each per time, which are eaten in two days. The food is always cooked with oil. At breakfast, she eats beans, or a small piece of cheese, and a loaf of bread. At dinner as well as supper, she may eat vegetables and rice, though usually without meat.

The daily housekeeping money for food is spent as follows:

bread	2	piasters
beans or cheese for breakfast	1	"
oil for the beans	1	"
vegetables for two days (6 piasters)	3	"
rice for two days (2 piasters)	1	"
oil for two days (2 piasters)	1	"
anything with supper	1	"
	<hr/>	
Total	10	"

The total monthly housekeeping money is about three pounds.

Rawhiyya rarely cooks. The couple usually eat fish and sardines. They don't eat meat at all. "I am a poor man, I don't buy the meat, but I eat fishes, and that is good", Abbas said. The couple usually eat beans for breakfast, and sardines for supper.

CLOTHING:

Noora has few dresses, but her ~~outlook~~<sup>appearance</sup> is good and clean. She saves money to buy her dresses.

Abbas and his wife wear dirty worn out clothes, that are mended several times, and smell of fish. The man rarely buys new dresses for his wife. He and his wife are always barefoot.

RENT:

Noora's rent is 150 piasters, that is paid to the Municipality Department. The woman is always late three to four months.

Abbas pays sixty piasters for the kitchen, and is also late paying the rent.

OTHER EXPENSES:

Noora spends about two piasters daily for food for the poultry. Moreover, she spends about sixty piasters monthly for tea, coffee, and sugar, and pays about thirty piasters monthly for electricity.

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE:

HOUSEKEEPING:

COOKING:

Noora cooks in her room on the floor beside her bed. She sits on the "hasira" before the primus to p<sup>r</sup>epare her food. She puts everything that may be needed for cooking beside her in order to <sup>prevent</sup> moving. Abbas serves her for he buys her needs from the market. The researcher was sitting once beside her around the "tabliyya". She wanted to make tea. She found that the glasses were not clean; they contained tea-leaves, since the time they were used before. There was a container beside her that was full of water. She simply took some water from it and washed the glasses without any effort. She put a small quantity of water in the glass, and then moved it with her fingers inside and outside it, and finally threw it in the room, beside her.



Hagga Noora cooks beside the "tabliyya".  
The tea-utensiles are seen to the left.

Noora after expelling Abbas, put her bed in the kitchen beside the wall, and it nearly filled the whole space, except a very narr-





Noora and the researcher in the former's room; the latter is sitting on the "hasira" beside her.



The researcher is sitting with Noora participating with her in preparing the cabbage while she is smiling.

ow passage between it and the sink and the shelf on the opposite side.

When Noora lived in the kitchen, she was preparing her food while sitting on the bed. The woman is stocky, and she could not stand up in such narrow way. Moreover, she does not like standing to work; so she does everything on the bed. She sits on it, and puts the "tabliyya" before her and stretches her legs beneath it. If she wants to drink, to prepare food, tea, or anything, she does it without leaving her place, for everything is found before her, within her hand's reach.

Abbas' wife naturally cooks in the kitchen where she lives. She has no bed but "hasira", on which she sits to cook, prepare tea, eat, and so forth.

After they had to leave the dwelling, they lived on the stairs of the fourth floor, on which Rawhiyya was also cooking. She was then obliged to buy a small "zir" to preserve water in it. She was always filling it from the neighbors, and using it for drinking and cooking.

#### HOUSECLEANING:

Noora cleans her room and the balcony, where the poultry lives, but sometimes she calls Abbas to do this job and not his wife, for she is always quarreling with her. The man is always late in paying the rent, and consequently obeys her silently.



Abbas and his wife are sitting on the stairs after their expulsion from Noora's kitchen. Cooking and tea utensils and the small "zir" are put beside the wall. Two dwellings' out-doors are seen behind the couple, while they are facing another two of another two dwellings. A neighbor's child is seen standing behind them.

Noora after expelling Abbas, did not clean the room, for it was empty, waiting <sup>for</sup> someone to hire it, but she ~~was~~ cleaning the kitchen into which she moved.

Rawhiyya does not clean the kitchen at all, for she and her husband don't care whether the place is clean or not.

Nobody cleaned the toilet and the researcher's hall at all.

WASHING CLOTHES:

Both Noora and Rawhiyya wash their clothes in the toilet. The washing tub is put beside the toilet's faucet, and the woman then sits on a small low chair that is specially prepared for this purpose. Then, she puts the dirty clothes in the washing-tub, and washes them with water and soap. Then, each woman hangs the washed clothes on her own rod. Noora has one in the balcony, and Rawhiyya has one in the kitchen, for the latter is not allowed to come in Noora's room.

After Abbas left, his wife washed on the stairs and hung her clothes on the bannister.



Noora keeps her washing utensils in the researcher's hall beside the toilet's door.

POULTRY:

Noora keeps her poultry in the balcony that contains a wooden cage. She has ducks, hens, and pigeons.



The couple ~~are~~ standing on the stairs, where they also wash their clothes. The washing-tub is seen to the left.



The researcher is seen in the balcony beside the poultry's cage, on which some hens stand.

At the time of their feeding, Noora opens the balcony's door for them to come in her room. Then, she feeds them by throwing beans on the ground. Then, she plays with a duck or hen, and laughs with it. She has given her ducks human names; i.e. Fatma, Ahmad, and the like. She kisses the duck and says, "She is giving me her cheek to kiss it."

Once at night, Noora gathered all the ducks in the balcony except one, whose quack was heard under Noora's bed. The researcher then asked her whether she had forgotten to gather it in the balcony or not. She said, "This duck whose name is Salma is lying on her eggs, that were eighteen, from which I ate two, and bought four to complete them to be twentytwo. I have put Salma under my bed to warm it, in order to fill the house with ducks."

After Abbas left, Noora, prepared to rent her own room. She moved the poultry, without the cages, to the hall with the researcher, for she was sure that he would not object.

Abbas has no poultry. He said that he has neither money nor a place for poultry.

#### PERSONAL CARE:

##### WASHING:

Noora washes her hands and plates in the toilet, while Abbas and his wife do the same thing in their kitchen.

BATHING:

It takes place in the toilet.

DEFECATION:

Noora usually takes priority over any other person there, in going to the toilet. Once, Abbas used the toilet, at the moment she wanted to use it. She asked him to come out, but he refused. Then, she teased him by closing the water-valve, to prevent the water from coming in the toilet.

After Abbas left, he and his wife used their neighbors' toilets, but they did not take any bath as he said, "I can't ask a neighbor to let me come into his dwelling to take a bath. It is not important." But Noora affirms that the man never took a bath in his life, while his wife rarely does.

SLEEPING:

Noora sleeps on her bed in her room. Abbas and his wife sleep on their worn mattress in the kitchen, that is closed at night by a worn curtain for privacy. After they left, they slept on the stairs.

Abbas' sexual relations with his wife could be considered from two viewpoints. The first, when he was living in the kitchen, and it was good as he said, for he has no children, and the kitchen's curtain offered him privacy as to vision but not to noise. The

second, view was to the couple after their ~~expulsion~~<sup>expulsion</sup> from the dwelling, to be on the stairs, when the man has been deprived from having the intercourse comfortably, for he can't do it unless he is sure that the inhabitants of the dwellings are all asleep, but he is always afraid that somebody may open his door sudenly.



Abbas in the kitchen ,where he lives. The mat and blankets on which he and his wife sleep are seen in the picture. His wife was then still sleeping.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS:

AMONG THE FAMILY MEMBERS:

HUSBAND-WIFE:

Noora as she is a widow, lives alone, but she was married twice



before, as it is mentioned in her life history. She is now living as an individual in the dwelling, but perhaps the reader is interested in knowing something about her relationship with her husband specially the second one, for it is more recent, and consequently more memorable. He must go back again to her life history, which is full of incidents. Although it is narrated from one side, it throws some light on what happened. The marriage occurred between two persons of unequal social backgrounds. They were different. The man's class was not the same as Noora's. Moreover, he was physically handicapped, more educated, and was living actually with his grown up children at the time he married her. Consequently, the relationship was strange in many ways.

Noora, once, sang a certain song. She then said that it reminded her of her late husband Abdul-Latif, who always sang it. She said several times, he was a kind gentleman, Even though, she would not forget the severe things he did. She remembers them as accidents that happened in her life. The woman spoke about her late husband, when he and his daughter Monira visited her in her dwelling, and hit her and took a sheep she had reared. She also remembers his daughter when she asked him to make her leave their dwelling when she would visit them. Her husband refused to let her visit him in the hospital before his death, because of social differences, <sup>This</sup> may also show the existence of such troubles that fill her life.

Abbas and his wife Rawhiyya were usually silent. They stayed

in their kitchen. The woman complained that he ~~could~~ not take care of <sup>her</sup> even in the way of sufficient food and clothing. Once, she was coming out with her neighbor to see the annual military review of the Victory Day at Port-Said. The woman asked him to give her a piaster to buy anything through her walk in the city. The man insulted her, before the researcher and her neighbor, and said, "You took a piaster yesterday; where is it?" She, then, said, "Abbas, it was half a piaster." The man said, "It is sufficient for you; what you are going to buy with <sup>it</sup>?" She said, "Please Abbas, for my sake, give me a piaster, so I might buy something, while I walk through the street." Her friend also begged him to give her the piaster. Then, he said, "Give me the half piaster, that you have, and take this piaster." He actually did.

AMONG THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS:

Noora is a person who would dominate people. Once, she was sitting with the researcher before the "tabliyya"; they were eating breakfast. She called to Abbas-saying: "Oh boy Abbas, come to buy beans with a piaster." He then came, leaving his wife in the kitchen, took the piaster and brought the beans.

Noora once was speaking about Om-Ali, her neighbor, who presented a request to the Department of the Winter Aid, to give her some clothes. The researcher asked Abbas, who was sitting with his wife in the kitchen, whether he intends to do the same thing or not. Noora, then, said loudly, "He is son of dog; he does not des-

erve any help."

The woman was using Abbas to run many things for her; in the mean time, she was always insulting his wife in his presence. Sometimes, she commanded him to buy her needs, and to clean her room and the poultry's cages, and he did so silently. Abbas explained his submissiveness to Noora in this way, he is afraid that she may kick him out of her dwelling, for he is always late in paying the rent.

Noora's ability to dominate appeared also in her relationship with the researcher. She usually commanded him to bring her a glass of water.

Noora once explained her constant insults to Rawhiyya. The latter and her husband had owned a dwelling in the same house before they subletted her kitchen, and ~~the~~ her niece was subletting Rawhiyya's kitchen. The latter accused her niece of coming out from Abu-Sa'id's room (the man who was subletting Abbas' main room and bought the whole dwelling later on after Abbas' inability to pay the rent, while the latter was living, then, in the hall) at night, when his wife was away visiting her village. Since then, Noora hated her. "Time came to see this "daughter of dog" loosing her dwelling after their inability to pay the rent to the Municipality Department, and came to sublet my kitchen. I never forget what she said about my niece," Noora said. "But I also remembered the good things, that she did for me. Once, I travelled to the "Cap", and I had forgotten to gather the hens and ducks from the street, bef-

ore travelling. When I came back, I found that she had gathered and put them into their cages. Otherwise, they would have been lost.

Consequently, once, her husband gave her five piasters to buy food for cooking. She lost the money and came back weeping and very much afraid of the consequence. I, then, said to her, "don't worry", and I gave her three-quarters kilo "shabar" (fish), that I had, and asked her to cook it." Noora added, "My heart is clean, I have no cunning, and I don't lie, for it is bad."

Noora, consequently, did not allow Abbas to put a lamp in the kitchen because of her quarrel with Rawhiyya.

Noora's stiff, aggressive attitude towards Abbas and his wife, finally reached its peak, when she kicked them out of their dwelling, after she had accused Rawhiyya by stealing fifty piasters from her room. The real cause was the woman's aim to sublet the room for two pounds, and to move in the kitchen, that was sublet to Abbas for only sixty piasters. Abbas was always late in paying the rent. So, the already troubled relationship between the two <sup>was</sup> predisposed to the final result. Noora forced him to leave his place and go into the streets.

The man, then, did not find any better place than the stairs, on to which he moved after collecting his nets and his poor furniture. He, then, lived on the stairs of the fourth floor, before his preceding dwelling, that had been sold to Abu-Sa'id.

The man and his wife lived on the stairs for about three months (till the collection of data was finished, but later on, the resear-

cher visited the dwelling, and found Abbas has built a wooden shack in the stair-well, where he lived, while Noora has sublet the room to a soldier and the kitchen to another soldier, and she occupies the hall, now that the researcher has left).



"He, then, lived on the stairs of the fourth floor, before his preceding dwelling, that had been sold to Abu-Said.

Abbas was expelled in this way: Once evening, Noora came out of her dwelling, and accused Rawhiyya of stealing fifty piasters from her room. (the researcher was then in El-Shiekh Ahmad's dwelling). Then, she asked Abbas to give her the second key of the dwelling, that he kept with him (the dwelling has three keys, one with Noora, the second with Abbas, and the third with the researcher)? He refused . So, she shouted to him, and insulted him. Then, she said that she would take it by force. The researcher, then, came

and witnessed the whole incident. The woman said to Abbas, "The key is mine and the kitchen's shelves are also mine. I want them all." Abbas refused to give her any of them. Then, Noora punched him in his face, and caught him from his neck, and pulled him outside the dwelling, and cried saying, "People, Abbas hit me, his wife stole fifty piasters." The inhabitants, then, came from their rooms to see what was happening. The children crowded the stairwell to see the quarrel. The researcher stood in the crowd. Rawhiyya was, then, trying to get Noora away from her husband. The inhabitants were also trying to end the quarrel. Noora's fist was then wounded during Abbas' struggle to be free from her grip. She, then, accused him saying that he hit her in her fist, and she must go to the police.

Abbas and Noora went to the police station, while Rawhiyya and the researcher stayed in the dwelling. She was weeping and asking God to take revenge on Noora for her husband's misfortunes.

Three hours passed, and Noora came back alone, and said, "I got rid of him." She entered her room and began to insult Rawhiyya, while the latter was silent.

At mid-night, Abbas came back again from the police station, after he had stayed about seven hours there. Noora opened the door for him, and said to him, "Did they leave you so quickly; come in. I 'll not speak with you now, but tomorrow."

In the morning, Noora came out of her room to leave to do her shopping. Abbas, then, said, "God does not leave the strong,

for if He does, He would compound the blood on the milk (i.e. God usually revenges from the <sup>ag</sup>gressive person who exploits the weak one, otherwise He would compound the blood with the milk in the woman's mammals if He is not careful). I serve Noora, but God will not leave her."

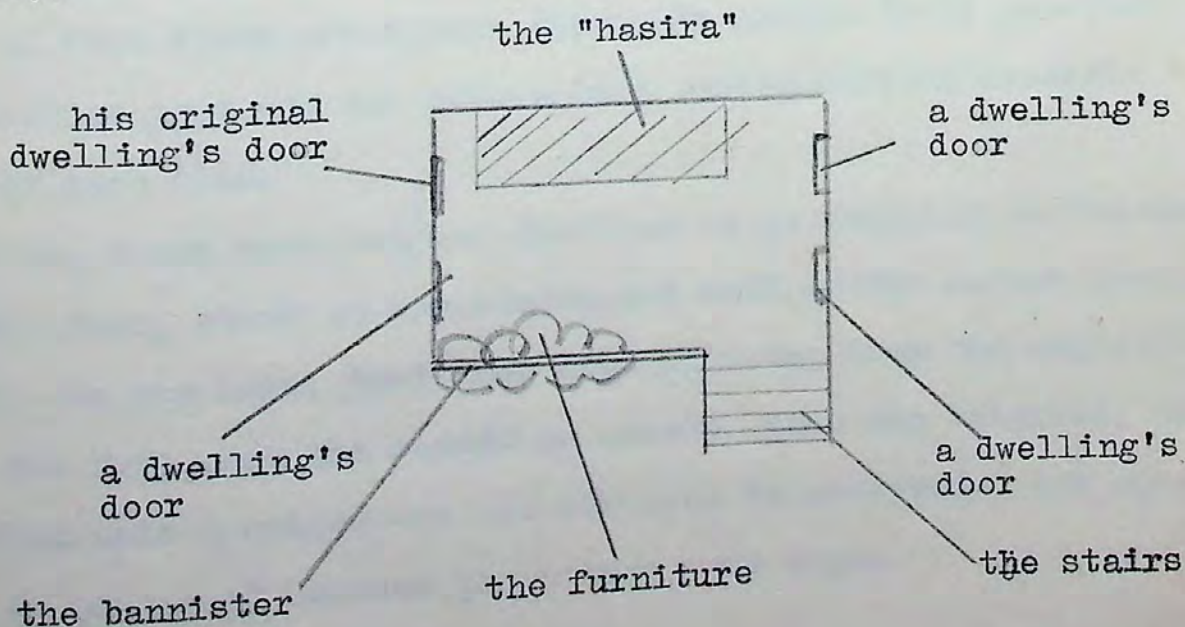
Later on, Noora informed the researcher that the police took twentyfive piasters from Abbas as a fine. "I have met the warrant officer, who is also a far relative of mine, from Manzala. I asked him to aid me against Abbas. He, then, promised me to keep him for a night in the police station. "Son of dog" this warrant officer; he let him out at the mid-night. I was, then, shouting saying, "this man hit me; I want a medical examination and a treatment, till the officer sent me in a car to the governmental hospital, where they said I was wounded. They fined him twentyfive piasters only, while they should take one pound and a piaster, for I have taken a long treatment...sons of dog these police officers."

At last, the woman used the man's absence for he was fishing and threw all his things outside the dwelling on the stairs. The man, then, came and took his furniture silently, and put it on the stairs of the fourth floor. Noora, then, said that Abbas was a dirty person, and that the kitchen became clean after he left. "He is now living on the stairs, but it is impossible to let him come back again," she said. She went immediately to Om-Ali, in the opposite dwelling, and brought her ladder, and put it in the kit-

chen, where she put a lamp, she had removed from the place, when it was sublet to Abbas. She put another lamp in the toilet and said, "Now, I put these lamps for I 'll use them, for Abbas and his dirt has left the apartment. His fish smell made the house dirty. "There is no better than your own home that has no foot ." His clients were always coming to him in the dwelling, when he brought fish. I have expelled him to get more income. I want to sublet the room for two pounds; I am not a liar and I don't like the one who suspects what I say."

Abbas on the other hand, tried after he left to sublet the hall of Abu-Said, in his original dwelling. The man refused and said to him, "I have bought it from you for forty pounds." He prevented him, even, from using the toilet.

Abbas, then, put his furniture and nets on the bannister. He put the "hasira" on the threshold (see the diagram and the picture).







The couple stand on the stairs.

BETWEEN THE DWELLING'S MEMBERS AND NON-DWELLING'S:

Noora's relationship with the dwelling's inhabitants of the same floor is usually a permanent relation, for the four dwellings' doors of this floor are always opened to enable their numerous occupants to come out and return back easily without knocking the door each time.

Once, Noora came out <sup>of</sup> her dwelling to go shopping in the market. She, then, stood on the stairs, and said loudly before leaving, "People who are here, don't you want anything from the market." Then, she left when she heard no answer. When she returned, she said that this question was not directed to everybody, but specifically to Om-Hassa, because the others were dogs.

Noora actually is not friendly with any one on this floor. Moreover, her relationship with most of the inhabitants is characterized by hatred or dislike. Her attitude towards them differs from person to person according to the experiences she has had with them.

In spite of the fact that Noora ~~dislikes~~<sup>asked</sup> Om-Hassan, if she wanted anything from the market, the woman <sup>her</sup> dislikes. "This woman who sells the cigarettes-Om-Hassan- is like a snake; she gives her poison and escapes. If somebody said to her, "Noora is a daughter of dog", she says, "Yes, daughter of dog." "Noora is good", she says, "Yes, she is good."

Noora does not visit this woman, because of the bachelor, who occupies the room; whenever he sees a woman, he plays with his genitals. "He is fortyfive years old, and he does not marry", Noora said, so, I said to Om-Hassan, "I 'll never come into your dwelling on my life." Once a neighbor visited her; as soon as she entered the home, she came back quickly, and said, "My God...the man plays with himself." Noora added that this man insults Om-Hassan and her husband, but they can't expell him, for he pays a good rent.

Noora hates Om-Awad for the quarrel that happened between the two of them. They avoid speaking to each other. "She is a dirty woman", Noora said. "I intended not to hit her, but I 'll hit her husband, because she can't bear hitting. May I lose my life for her".

Noora described Om-Sa'id as a person who has a long tongue (i.e. usually insults everybody). But I have shortened it, I hit

her with the cover of a cooking pot. I paid one pound and a piaster, because she took a treatment. I vowed to myself, "why not, money is not important, but she must be educated."

"Om-Hassan El-Masrawiyya", she added, "is also a dirty woman, but she is weak. A neighbor does not fear you, unless he knows that you are strong. I don't go to a strong person to quarrel with him, but to the weak one, and hit him; the others will then be afraid. The proverb says, "Hit a weak person and the strong one's heart trembles."

I am living amongst gipsy people (i.e. people of lower lower class, who are troublesome), and I have to be a gipsy like them, otherwise I would be eaten up by them. I made the officer in the police station astonished. I told him that I have diabetes, and this man hit me (she means Abbas). So, I must go to the hospital. When he found me like that, he sent me, where they gave me a twenty days treatment. The soldier who lives on the third floor cried from my deeds. I accused his wife of stealing a big hen that ovulates, and lays many eggs. I made him into a woman. I made three complaints against his wife. Each time, I said that she stole a hen, till they feared me. And he was the person, who took Abbas to the police station, otherwise, the people would have eaten me."

Noora also dislikes Om(Ali. "She is a daughter of dog", the woman said, "she does not deserve what I did for her. When the man of the Department for Winter Aid came to detect and investigate her request, he asked me about her. I said to him, "By God's name, she

is a miserablē woman, and she has nothing to eat. Her husband is sick, and she has six children, while she has four only, but I said so, for I know that she mentioned ~~six~~ in her request. But she does not deserve any service. When I quarreled with Abbas, she came to me the next day, and said, You have been not just to Abbas, he is innocent." I, then, answered her, "Now you stand beside Abbas. Did you forget when you had a bachelor in your dwelling, who quarreled with you. I helped you against him. Whenever he tried to raise his hand to hit you, I caught him, so that you could hit him, doing with the proverb that says, "I and my brother against my cousin, and I and my cousin against the stranger." But who knows?"

Noora has four friends: Om-Mohammad, who occupies a dwelling in the second floor of the same building, Fathiyya Om-Hassan, who lives with her husband in Al-Arab, Ratiba, who is a far relative, that lives in the Cap outside the city, and her cousin Zaki, who is a clothes merchant in the Arab quarter; she loved him but found him married, but she buys the handkerchiefs from him to decorate them and sell them again.

Fathiyya is her best friend. "I visit her in Al-Arab, and I stay there the whole day," Noora said. "I assist her in cleaning the fish and the rice? I eat with her and her husband. We are like sisters. We all sleep on one bed."

Om-Mohammad is also a sincere friend. She visits her nearly every morning to sit with her, and asks her whether she wants to buy anything from the market or not, to bring it for her. "She is a

good friend", Noora said.

Noora visits Ratiba in the Cap periodically. Ratiba's mother is Noora's cousin. "When I visit her, she offers me ducks as a gift. When I come back to Port-Said, I sell them"; she said.

Once Ratiba and her husband visited Noora. The researcher then saw them for the first time. He took breakfast with them on the "tabliyya", where they all sat together, before it on the floor. She is a young woman of about thirty years old. She is about the same age of Om-Mohammad. She has beautiful dark eyes and a pretty face. She was always laughing and joking. Her husband is also a young man of nearly the same age. He was always silent and smiled coolly at the jokes.

At night, Ratiba and her husband slept on Noora's bed in her room. When the researcher came back home in the evening, he found Noora sleeping on his bed. She, then, asked him to sleep beside her, and he did in spite of her fleshy stocky body, that covered nearly the whole mattress. The next morning, Ratiba said to Noora that ~~that~~ she troubled the researcher, but Noora said, "I don't like to sleep in a room, that contains a married couple."

Noora said that there are no true friends, for they all put on an act. She said this proverb: "They say, "You don't have friends." I say, "they are plenty." When the load falls, the one who felt with it carries it alone." She means that when a person faces a problem, no friend helps him.

Noora considers the Greeks as the best people in the world.

She lived with them before, when she was in Al-Afrang. Moreover, she worked with them in the Frech Hospital. "The Greeks are the best people in the world, for hospitality, much food, no quarrels, they don't speak about anybody. I did not learn shouting except here in this home, for its inhabitants are quarrelsome. When I was living with the Greeks, I was good."

Once, she was sitting in her room; then somebody knocked the door; she said loudly, "anexa porta." She said that is means "open the door", in Greek, and added that "eclisa portta" means "shut the door". "I was living with them. They have much food, and what remains from it, they throw it out", the woman said.

Noora is a Manzalawiyya;<sup>1</sup> she considers those of Al-Matariyya inferior to the Manzala inhabitants. "We say about the Matari "kharsho", that means he does not understand," she said.

El-Sa'aida (Upper Egypt's inhabitants), are also considered inferior. "When the Sa'aidi comes to Port-Said, he collects <sup>cigarette</sup> butts, then he is promoted to work as a servant, then to be a worker in building, and suddenly he makes himself a master, and commands after wearing the trousers, and then turns his hair to the back", Noora said.

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<sup>1</sup>The Manzala and Matariyya people form a considerable proportion of the city's inhabitants. Upper Egypt's also form part of the population; They came after the aggression to build the housing projects, for they usually select this type of work. They settled in the city, after they found such opportunities of work.

Noora's relation with the municipality's employees changes. She said that she can take another dwelling in addition to the one she actually has. "I can write a request mentioning my name as Hekmat and that I am living in El-Ezba. By this way, I can be the tenant of two dwellings to sublet them and profit," she said. "I tried to persuade the housing's employee with a bribe to get a larger dwelling. I said to him that I want it to earn more money, and that I am ready to pay five pounds, but he refused."

Abbas has no friends in the whole building except Abu-Sa'id, who occupies the opposite dwelling. He passes most his free time with him drinking tea and "goz el-teep" (a cheap type of narcotic). "It has the same effect as "hashêesh", Abbas said, "but it is cheaper."

The man's relation with his neighbors is mainly economical. They come to buy fish and salted sardines.

Rawhiyya has no friends except one on the third floor. She visits her and they make trips together to the city. She is always staying in the kitchen to assist her husband in selling the sardines and fish, but she can't sell any of them, unless she knows the price from her husband.

Abbas and his wife are liked by everybody in the building, except those who live on the fourth floor. They hated them when they occupied the stairs before their dwellings' doors.

THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK:

MEDICAL TREATMENT:

Noora believes that all physicians are thieves, "You go to a physician to sit with him for five minutes and you have to pay fifty piasters. He writes anything of a prescription for you. I worked with them in the hospital, and I am the best to know their methods of cheating. The hospital's physicians were accustomed to keep the patients in it for as long as possible in order to take more money. It is true through this you can't avoid their assistance especially in difficult cases. More or less, there is no better than what I do to cure most diseases," Noora said.

Abbas and his wife also confirmed this point of view.

THE NON-MEDICAL TREATMENT:

THROUGH USING AL-WASFAT AL-BALADIYYA:

While the researcher, once, was sitting with Noora, at night before sleeping, she observed that he had caught cold. Then, she cut a piece of cloth; burned it, and asked him to smell its smoke, and said, "The smoke cleans the nose immediately. My mother was doing it, and the cold would finish at once." The researcher followed Noora's description, but the cold did not stop. In the morning, he put his finger on his nose, and found it sooty.

At the same time, she had cold too. She said, "I have caught cold, and so, I must burn a piece of cloth in order to expell the cold. But my cold is acute; so I must add some sugar to the piece



of cloth before burning it." She actually put some sugar on the cloth, burned it, smelled its smoke, and said, "I don't like "el-hokama", in spite of my work with them."

The next evening, the researcher found her very sick with a cold. She said to him, "I made tea with kerosene." The researcher thought that the primus had expelled some kerosene on the tea through its preparation. So, he kept silent, while she was expecting him to explain about what she said; so, she repeated what she said again, and added, "I did so to stop the cold. I remembered my mother when she did so. I vowed to myself that I would do it too. It is prepared simply by adding a drop of kerosene to the tea."

Abbas said that such prescriptions are very usefull and very well known too.

The members of the dwelling talked about their experiences in following such prescriptions.

Noora said, "Once, Om-Ali my neighbor came to me with her son Ali, whose eye was swollen and reddish. I brought an egg, and took its white matter only, and put it in a dish. Then, I added "shabba" (septic stick) on it. I dissolved them together, and put them on the sick eye. The eye was cured."

The woman added, "If the person had a sideache, you bring "atroon" (an unknown material, that is sold by the attar), burn it on the primus, and add some tea to it. Drink it; the pains stop.

Abbas mentioned another prescription for treating the same

case. "For those who have a sideache", the man said, "there is a simple description to be used. You bring a piece of "aphion" (opium) with some "bon" (ground coffee), and boil them together in some water, and drink the solution. The pains must stop at once." The man added that his late father was always using this method for this case.

Noora again said, "For those who have fever, bring a leaf from an orange tree; dry it, and chop it till it becomes smooth; then, boil it in some water. When the patient drinks from it three times daily, he becomes cured."

Nabawiyya mentioned another prescription for treating the same case. She said, "If the patient has fever, bring some ground coffee, and a piece of dog feces; add them together in some water, and give them to the patient without him knowing the components. The patient will be cured."

Noora said that the sore is simply treated by putting a piece of onion on it for several days till it ends. Both Abbas and Nabawiyya justified this prescription.

"For cough," Noora said, "I buy the "batloo" leaves (a kind of plant that is usually unknown to ordinary people) from the 'attar; I boil them in water; then, the patient drinks from it every morning before eating. The cough stops."

They all spoke about the "sun-taking" in the same way Bayyomi, El-Shiekh Ahmad, and the others have spoken before.

THROUGH PRACTITIONERS:

Noora said that "prescriptions" are usually useful, but in some cases, may not be cures. In such cases, the disease must be caused by a "'amal"; so, the patient must go to a sheikh, so that he would examine it and treat it spiritually to stop the action of the "'amal" by an anti-action.

She added that el-Sheikh has many techniques for treatment, for marriage, love, hatred, success, and the like.

She said that once her neighbor in al-Agrang, had a sick child, whose sickness lasted for several years, in which his parents wasted much money on physicians and drugs without any benefit. "I took the child to a famous sheikha in the ezba. She has a great reputation. She asked the child's mother to bring a piece of cloth from his dress. She took it, and wrote two papers, on which she had done some "ta'azeem". The sheikha's writings were written by the purple ink. She gave the papers to the child's mother asking her to dissolve them in a glass of water, on a Friday, and to let the child drink it. The mother did, and the child was cured in the same week."

Nabawiyya added that there is another prescription, that was described by another sheikh in the Arab, for a similar case of a child too. She said that the child was brought to the sheikh in his home, where he made his "ta'azeem" on the child's head. Then, he asked his mother to let the child go to a mosque on a Friday,

before paying. Then, he must pass through the mosque's window during the praying. She said that the child had a chronic diarrhea, that stopped at once after this prescription.

RECEIVING VISITORS:

THE MALE VISITORS:

Noora receives visitors in her room. She usually sits on her "hasira", before the "tabliyya", while the visitors sit on her bed. She, then, prepares the tea, and presents it to them.

When she occupied the kitchen after Abbas' expulsion, both she and the visitor sat on the bed which took up the whole room.

Abbas receives his male visitors at the kitchen door, where they sit together on the floor. His wife usually sits in the kitchen, where she prepares the tea, and presents it. She does not hide herself at all, in the presence of any male.

When the couple moved out to live on the stairs, Abbas received the researcher by sitting him beside him on the stairs, before the dwellers of four dwellings in the fourth floor. There was no privacy to speak at all. The place was full of children. So, he usually lowered his voice whenever he spoke about any private matter. Sometimes, he was compelled to descend four or five stairs in order to be away enough from the children's ears.

THE FEMALE VISITORS:

Both Abbas and the researcher don't come out the dwelling

in the presence of any female visitor. Noora usually presents the researcher to her visitors, and they all drink the tea together.

RECREATION:

IN-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

Abbas passes all his free time in his dwelling, but sometimes, he visits his friend Abu-Said in the opposite dwelling, to smoke "hasheesh" with him, whenever the man brings it. The same thing continued after the man left Noora's rooms.

FEMALES:

Noora passes nearly all her life in her dwelling. In the evening, she may sit before her door to chat with other women. She likes to hear the radio, but she has no money to buy one. "But I usually hear the radio of the bachelor", the woman said.

Rawhiyya, also, is always sitting in the kitchen alone, but sometimes, she is visited by her friend from the third floor. The same thing happens now that is living on the stairs.

OUT-DOOR FOR:

MALES:

Abbas does not go to the "qahwa" at all, for he has no money

to pay for the drinks? He does not go to the cinema for the same cause. Moreover, he does not visit his relatives in the village for he can't afford travelling expenses.

FEMALES:

Noora rarely comes outside to walk in the city, and if it happens, it is to visit her good friend Fathiyya in the Arab quarter. She also goes to the Cap to visit her relative Ratiba, or to al-Arab for her cousin Zaki.

She does not go to the cinema at all.

Rawhiyya rarely comes out <sup>of</sup> her dwelling, but she may walk with her friend in the city. She does not go to the cinema for lack of money.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

From the foregoing description of the three dwellings selected for intensive understanding of the sub-culture of poverty, it will be clear to the reader that the poor's pattern of family life has some distinctive characteristics, that are produced by their economic conditions of poverty. So, the previous chapters have shown how the poor of Port-Said live under the stress of their poverty and the shortage of certain necessities of food, clothing, proper housing, medical treatment, and the like; the things that all together produce a way of life for the poor. Through this adaptive process, they assume some common characteristics which distinguish their way of life in any cultural setting as was mentioned before.

Groves says that "the home that is forced to exist in bad quarters is undermined in every aspect of its life. The proper privacy is denied, family clashing is fostered, the right relationship between parents and children becomes more difficult, slovenly habits are stimulated, a sense of shame bothers family loyalty, and the ambitious come to feel that the home represents an obstacle to success. The young man and woman seek their pleasure as much as possible apart from the wretched home surroundings and at the first opportunity slip from the home to try to hide their family connections as something that brings them disgrace."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Groves, The American Family, Chicago: Lippincott Com., third edition, 1934, p. 310. Other definitions of poverty and its effects may be found in the summary of literature in Appendix V.

In fact, this is the general picture of the slum areas studied in Port-Said, whose picture may be even worse, since extreme poverty intensifies the problem in Al-Ezab and Al-Masakin and actually prevented most dwellers studied in these two areas from seeking any pleasure outside their dwellings, for lack of money.

In the previous chapters, the life of the three Port-Said families was described in detail to see the over-all effects on the families of their poor housing and otherwise miserable condition.

First we can see that the people have adjusted their limited resources to the necessities of life in the following ways :

a) Multiple Uses of Space and Facilities :

In the Arab dwelling, composed of a "khazna" and "ruwaq". The "ruwaq" or hall is used for many purposes. In Bayyoumis dwelling for example, which houses 9 people, food preparation takes place there, for the kitchen is too narrow and extremely dark in the day time. The family eats in the "ruwaq" since there is no specific place for eating, and it is used as a sleeping room for Bayyoumi, his wife, and their four unmarried children. The "ruwaq" is also used to dry clothes which may take three days to dry in the chilly room. Moreover, Bayyoumis "khazna" is too narrow to take his married daughter Samira's cupboard, so this also is put in the "ruwaq", where all visitors are also received. Any social gathering in the evening among



females usually takes place in this crowded place. Children also often play there.

This is only one example. Bayyoumi and his compound family have the "khazna" and the "ruwaq" which they use as outlined above. In the other two dwellings, that of Noora and El Sheikh Ahmad, all extra space is sublet to earn money, and all family activities take place in only one room.

Other facilities, such as toilets, are shared by many people besides the family, in fact, there is only one toilet for all the people in the building in the Arab, the Masakin, and the Ezab sections. In addition, Noora in the El Masakin, washes herself and her clothes in the toilet, for her kitchen is sublet. Noora is the only one of the three who has a balcony. Here, she both dries her clothes and keeps poultry.

Because of the dark rooms, windowless in Bayyoumi's dwelling, the people are forced to keep lamps lighted throughout the day.

Any household objects owned by the families are also put to multiple uses. Bayyoumi has a "tabliyya" on which the food is set for eating, but Abbas has no tabliyya and no plates - he and his wife eat from the cooking-pot.

b) Effects of and Limitations on Social Interaction :

Subletting has produced several effects on ~~the~~ the relationship between the actual tenant of the room and the people to

whom the other rooms have been sublet. El Sheikh Ahmad and his wife Nabawiyya are leaders of their shack simply because they are the owners. In house cleaning, Nabawiyya is the responsible person who organizes the housewives' shifts for cleaning the joint hall and toilet. El Sheikh Ahmed is also responsible for collecting the 25 piasters monthly which is the fee paid to the government for drainage of the toilet and sewage. If one of the sublettees is late in paying the five piasters, Sheikh Ahmad will nail the door of the toilet, shut or sit in front of it, preventing the late payer from entering the toilet until he has paid the five piasters.

Noora is another example. Because Abbas is very poor and is often late in paying the rent of his sub-let kitchen, Noora in housecleaning, exploits the man. She orders him to clean her room and the poultry-covered balcony, to bring her things from the market. She does not allow him to keep poultry on the balcony or dry his clothes there. Moreover, she has first priority on the use of the toilet and will order someone out of the toilet if she wishes to use it. Eventually, despite Abbas' work, Noora expelled him and his wife in order to raise the rent; she herself moved into the kitchen (formerly rented to Abbas for 70 piasters per month) and rented her own room for 2 pounds per month.

All of these people quarrel constantly, quarrels brought on by the crowded conditions, e.g. the one toilet is the source of much trouble. Quarrels often occur between two or more persons who

wish to enter the toilet at the same moment. Women quarrel about their shifts to clean the co-hall and co-toilet in El-Sheikh Ahmad's house. In Bayyoumi's dwelling, the children quarrel about the space and the cover for sleeping, which is not sufficient for all to sleep comfortably.

Bayyoumi and his wife, as well as their daughter and her husband, quarrel about the shortage of clothing. So do El Sheikh Ahmad and his wife. El Sheikh's wife complains because he is unemployed and they quarrel about this, so the wife must go out to beg in Al Afrang district. Shortage of necessities is a factor which causes quarrels in all dwellings. Fatma, for example, hit her children when they asked for more food, because of course there was no more food. Children also want new clothes and quarrel with their parents about wearing mended clothes.

The shortage of facilities also cause quarrels. Lack of drainage makes it necessary for the housewives' to throw the dirty water out in the street. This may fall on children, and the mothers quarrel. In the El-Arab dwelling, lack of water pressure also makes quarrels between housewives, especially in the morning, when all women are using the water faucets and not enough water is available.

Moreover, the children find no better place for playing than the street, for the dwelling is too narrow to allow any child activity; consequently they become far from their parents' supervision. So, they may quarrel with other children causing much trouble between the adults.

Moreover, they are usually hit by their parents for such disturbances

that arise from their long staying in the street. "The effects of overcrowding, squalor, filth, and other aspects of slum housing on family welfare are well known. Poverty, bad housing, family breakdown, and social disorganisation form an all too familiar vicious circle. Children born and bred in the slums have the tensions and frustrations of their parents as a heritage. Their own adulthood and the families they one day will have in turn bear the scars of their own childhood deprivations."<sup>2</sup>

Recreation and all social activities are strictly limited by the lack of space and facilities as well as by the lack of the necessities of life.

One of the social values of Islam has been to receive visitors honorably and hospitably, and in the cities, to keep the women out of sight of unfamiliar men. In the Arab dwelling, Bayyoumi still makes an effort to conform to this pattern, despite the fact that he is living in crowded conditions. For example, when I first went to visit Bayyoumi, he shut up all the women in the "khazna" and received me in the "ruwaq"; several other examples are mentioned in previous chapters. This is an old housing area, inhabited by original inhabitants of Port-Said. But in the other two areas, El-Sheikh Ahmad's dwelling and Noora's dwelling, they have no place at all to receive anybody. Therefore they are received in the hall before the room or in the "qahwa" in the latter's case. In this crowded slum area, the females do not hide themselves at all in the presence of any nonfamiliar person, for such a tradition has disappeared. The overcrowdedness of these poor

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dwelling in such areas deprives people from privacy. Moreover, this area usually receives most rural immigrants who do not have this cultural trait because women cooperate with men in cultivating the land. So, females do not face any trouble if they are visited by such male visitors. Moreover the original urban values are changed concerning this respect, because of the difficult conditions of such poor housing, which also led to general social freedom of most females, a factor that is not present in the relatively conservative traditional dwellings of the Arab district. El-Shaikh Ahmad, who was originally a ruralite but migrated to Port-Said about twenty five years ago and consequently acquired most urban traditional values specifically in such respect, speaks about his ideal moral code which is no longer the actual one. The man says that the woman must hide herself in the presence of any non-familiar male visitor, at the moment when his wife Nabawiyya jokes with the researcher and takes cigarettes from him in the presence of her husband. The culture of such lower classes, whether urban or rural, does not permit such behavior (women's smoking). So, housing conditions have gradually led to such serious cultural changes that are also evident in Al-Masakin dwellings. Social mixing of men and women is mainly caused by subletting which destroys privacy.

In this dwelling, the rooms also have no furniture to receive the visitors, and consequently they usually sit on the bed. Lack of chairs also drive the young ladies to sit on the same bed beside any male visitor, while the original culture considers such behavior as not respectable.

In Noora's case, also, no woman hides herself in the presence of any male visitor. This trait is not found at all and the causes are the same as in Al-Ezab, which is why the researcher could easily sublet a place in these two dwellings. Noora also has no furniture to receive any visitor other than her bed.

Abbas on the other hand, has neither place nor furniture to receive any visitor, therefore usually nobody visits him, but if someone comes he seats him at the kitchen's door on the floor.

Males pass most of their time in the "qahwa", for the dwelling is not a comfortable place for passing leisure time. Riemer stresses that "the smaller the apartment the greater is the tendency of adolescents to spend evenings outside the home."<sup>3</sup>

But in El-Sheikh Ahmad's dwelling, the males are too poor to go to the qahwa; so, they usually stay in their rooms without any activity other than chatting with the dwellers. They have no other recreational means.

In Noora's dwelling, Abbas usually sits with his neighbor in the other's room to eat "goz-el teeb"; otherwise, he simply sits in his kitchen.

In Bayyouni's case, the women usually sit in social gatherings in the evening, to chat and drink tea. But they usually avoid out-door activities to avoid expense, and this is the case in the other dwellings for all women.

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Folsom, The Family, New-York : John Wiley and Sons, 1941, p. 577.

Lack of space may also divide families and deprive children of material care. Fatma in the El Ezab section (who rents a room from Sehikh Ahmad) is an example. Her room is too small to house all her children, though, she keeps her eldest two children in her father's dwellings, and consequently, they are deprived from their mother's care, tenderness and supervision. The eldest ones are adolescents, and they should not stay apart from their mother. They are compelled to live with their young step-grand-mother, who may have mistreated them. Moreover, the place is also insufficient to enable the woman and her remaining three children to sleep comfortably. Naturally, the place like Soltan's does not permit putting any small bed, and even though the woman is compelled to put two pillows, each one on the opposite edges of the mattress, she and one of the children sleep one one side, while the other two sleep on the opposite.

El-Sheikh Ahmad's poor housing and poverty led to his child's escape. The boy became a typical delinquent, his father was called several times by the court and the police. In all cases, the man was advised to take care of his child, but without any benefit. Edwards, the Probate Judge in charge of Juvenile Division in Michigan "feels that children whose families are unable to provide adequate housing will come to the attention of the courts because the combination of family strain plus poverty plus poor housing lead to family break-ups."<sup>4</sup> Monson comments on the problem, and stresses the same factors that lead to the child's personality maladjustment. He says that "the slums physical environment - the homes and neighborhoods

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<sup>4</sup>Bette Jenkins Report on Housing Section, Annual Meeting, N C E R, Marriage and Family Living, XVI : Feb., 1954, p. 68.

which, from the day a child is born mould his personality through the concepts they give him of the world in which he lives."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the children's personalities are affected by such serious factors, which characterize these poor slum areas. The escape of El-Sheikh Ahmad's child may be interpreted by the existence of the same factors mentioned above. Groves says that "all members of the family are affected by poor housing conditions. When conditions for living are so crowded with no space for privacy different members of the family may seek escape outside the home."<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, El-Sheikh Ahmad's delinquent child usually tries, and sometimes succeeds in kidnapping his younger sister Soad, to carry her through begging to draw on peoples' pity. The child may possibly be imitating his mother, who is also driven by poverty and consequently begs in Al-Afrang district.

c) Effects and Limitations on Private Relations, and Sexual Relations :

It is difficult for a husband and wife, in these crowded conditions, to practice normal sexual marital relations. It is also difficult for them to perform the necessary ablutions after intercourse, which Islamic law prescribes. Let us look at Bayyumi's room ( Bayyumi and his wife Nefissa and four children in the "ruwaq" - Bayyumi's daughter Samira, her husband Badran and one child in the "khazna" ).

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<sup>5</sup>Monson, op.cit., p. 118.

<sup>6</sup>Ernest Groves, Family and its Relationships, Chicago: Lippincott Com., Third Edition, 1953, p. 91.



Samira's "khazna" is too narrow to take her cupboard, therefore it is put in the inlaw's "ruwaq", which is also too small to give a sufficient space for the children to sleep comfortably. Moreover, the young couple and the in-laws are usually deprived of sexual intercourse because of the presence of the children in the same rooms. So, Badran is actually compelled to have intercourse occasionally through the day time, when the children go out to schools; moreover, the young man is compelled to masturbate to overcome his sexual hunger, which drove him to think of breaking off his marriage. "The sex drive may be more capable than others, such as hunger and thirst of being directed into substitutive forms of expression or sublimations, the clinical evidence suggests that excessive sexual deprivation produces personality maladjustment that are inimical to satisfactory social relationships."<sup>7</sup> Bayyoumi also, was psychologically affected, but usually tried to do it at night time, whenever he feels that all his children were quite asleep. However, he is handicapped by the situation from stimulating and arousing his wife before intercourse. Moreover, he and his wife do not wash themselves after they finish it, for fear the grown up children may understand what they have done.

El-Sheikh Ahmad faces no problem as such, because he occupies two rooms, of which one is used for the children's sleeping; but Soltan faces this problem, for he sleeps with his son and wife on the same mattress, which fills his narrow room.

In Noora's case, Abbas finds no privacy as to sound, for the worn out curtain threatens the man's seclusion from the one who sleeps in the hall.

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<sup>7</sup>C.E. Matin, Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1948, p. 205.

Darkness may give him privacy as far as vision is concerned. Therefore the sexual intercourse is definitely affected.

Thus the husband-wife relationship is affected in all cases by their poverty and limited housing facilities.

From the above we can see that poverty and bad housing in our three Port-Said families has affected their social life, private life, their use of space and facilities, and has even influenced their customs and culture. Let us turn now to a final discussion of Oscar Lewis' definition of the sub culture of poverty and how the Port-Said data fits this definition.

From the foregoing analysis of the possible effects of housing conditions, over-crowdedness, lack of privacy, and the like, on the poor's family life, one can see that such associated factors undermine the life of such people and intensify their main problems of poverty. That is why Lewis described them, in general, saying that they are very patient, and for any problem they meet, (and there are many) they can find a solution. Naturally, they are accustomed to meet endless problems, which subsequently guide them in their reactions to each condition. Moreover, they usually are ready to accept any solution whether partial or complete.

So, Lewis describes the poor, stressing the universality of several characteristics, large proportion of which fit the poor of Port-Said as well, as will be seen later. He says :

"It seems to me that the culture of poverty has some universal characteristics which transcend regional, rural, urban, and even national differences. In my book, Five Families, I suggested that there were remarkable similarities in family structure, interpersonal relations, time orientations, value systems, spending patterns, and the sense of community in lower-class settlements in London, Glasgow, Paris, Harlem, and Mexico."<sup>8</sup>

So, <sup>the</sup> economic condition of poverty drive the poor to adapt their lives to meet this stress, and consequently their behavior comes to be alike.

Of course, Egypt and Mexico are geographically separated from each other by thousand of miles. The cultures are different, and naturally integrative. But the integration of the sub-culture of the poor is adapted to the general condition of poverty, as was mentioned before. One expects to find some profound similarities between the two places,

Lewis in his book : The Children of Sanchez<sup>9</sup> presents the general characteristics of the poor in Mexico. He stressed that :

1- They have a very low level of education and literacy.

This point is evident in Port-Said. ( See Tables in Chapter I ).  
As we have seen in the description of our three dwellings, all the women studied were illiterate except Fatma, who had passed some few years in schooling. The men as well had very little education, and some of them

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<sup>8</sup>Oscar Lewis, The Children of Sanchez, New-York : Random House, 1961, p. XXV.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. XII - XXVII.

were completely illiterate (such as Abbas, El-Sheikh Ahmad, and Soltan). Only a very few are in school - in Sheikh Ahmad's house, only Fatma's children go to school.

2- They do not participate in medical care. They are "unable to afford doctors who are used only in dire emergencies, and suspicious of hospitals, where one goes only to die; they rely upon herbs or other home remedies and upon local curers and midwives."

This is the case in our dwellings studied in Port-Said. All the dwellers behaved in such a way. They all depended on their own techniques or "wasfat" of treatment, and on their "sheikhs" or practitioners who cure them for a few piasters. Lewis' concepts of the poor's rationale and defence mechanisms are very significant for they determine the form of their specific distinctive pattern of life.

3- "The economic traits which are most characteristic of the culture of poverty include the constant struggle for survival, unemployment and underemployment, low wages, a miscellany of unskilled occupations, child labor, the absence of savings, a chronic shortage of cash, the absence of food reserves in the home, the pattern of frequent buying of small quantities of food many times a day as the need arises, the pawning of personal goods, borrowing from local money lenders at usurious rates of interest, spontaneous informal credit devices organized by neighbors, and the use of second-hand clothing and furniture."

Again, we find the same thing in Port-Said. The problem of unemployment in the whole city was discussed before in Chapter I, along

with its sister problem of over-population, consequently the wage level is very low; Bayyoumi is the only permanently employed man in all the three dwellings; his income is LE. 12 per month, the others in the Arab section range from 4 - 10 LE. per month.

Our study showed that all men were unskilled laborers. One of them was unemployed, El-Sheikh Ahmad whose poor economic condition drove his wife to beg in the elite district. In the meantime, one of his children became a delinquent. Some others were seasonably employed. Moreover, child-labor was witnessed; one of Fatma's boys, 10 years old, works as an apprentice for 10 pt. daily, gives his mathoer 5 pt. and uses the other 5 pt. for food. Naturally all the dwellers complained of a serious shortage of food and clothing, that, together with <sup>bad</sup>housing and furnishing, produced a distinctive type of life regardless of differences in the wider culture.

The following points support this view. I'll present examples from Mexico city. Lewis described Martinez, saying that he did not finish the first grade (in the public school) and barely learned to read because his step-father took him out of school to begin to earn eighteen centavos a day. After the revolution, he knew only that he was still a poor, landless peasant who depended heavily upon the labor of his sons to make ends meet. His tile-roofed house...consisted of one windowless room and an attached kitchen flimsily built of cane stalks.

The other poor families, studied by Lewis show the same picture; so there is no need to present to the reader further examples. It is sufficient to say that the poor live a specific type of life which is a product of their own conditions of poverty.

Naturally all the other characteristics mentioned by Lewis such as the absence of savings, chronic shortage of cash, the absence of food reserves in the home, the pattern of frequent buying of small quantities of food many times a day, and the like are all witnessed in our three dwellings of Port-Said.

4- They live in crowded quarters, where there is no privacy.

As was seen before, Port-Said's slum areas are characterized by overcrowdedness, ill-housing, and lack of privacy. This <sup>(isa)</sup> thing that was clearly evident in our three dwellings, where everybody suffered from lack of privacy - Bayyoumi, Fatma, Abbas, Badran. Moreover, the space of the dwellings was completely insufficient to meet the different activities of the family. This point was clearly analyzed in the beginning of this chapter.

5- Lewis found also that the poor in Mexico showed a "frequent resort to violence in the settlement of quarrels."

Noora's quarrel with Abbas is an evidence of such violence in Port-Said. El-Sheikh Ahmad's quarrels with the dwellers of his shack for being late in paying the "matbakh" or fee to drain the sewage, is another example. Nifisa's quarrel with Om-Sami included the exchange of extremely bad words.

6- They frequently use physical violence in the training of their children; wife beating is also frequent.

These characteristics seem to be significant in Port-Said. Parent-child and husband-wife relationships include several situations of violence.

El-Sheikh Ahmad's relationship with his children is an evidence of such physical-violence in the training of children. The same man's relationship with his wife Nabawiyya and Abbas' domination over his wife Nabawiyya give other examples of the existence of wife beating.

Wife beating maybe also attributed to cultural similarities, for males, in both Mexican and Egyptian cultures, have a higher status than the females, and consequently the poor's values in the two areas regarding women is to increase their power over their personalities. The women were seen in our study always complaining of the shortage of food and clothing. The husbands, then, were seen to take physical vengeance on their wives for the wives' complaints about the husbands' inadequacies.

7- The Mexican poor also showed early initiation into sex, free unions, and consensual marriages.

The Egyptian Islamic culture prohibits premarital sexual relations, and does not have a system of free unions or consensual marriages. Therefore, such aspects are not known in Port-Said's culture, even in the sub-culture of poverty, but the phenomenon of early marriages which is evident in the governorate's census as was mentioned in Appendix III, may be analogous to the Mexican phenomenon of early initiation into sex. Also there is evidence that female promiscuity is growing in these crowded mixed urban-rural groups.

8- They have a high incidence of alcoholism.

Alcoholism is also prohibited by Islam and consequently is not practiced by most lower and middle classes, but sometimes by the

upper-class people. Also the people of Port-Said we have described are far too poor to buy alcohol. <sup>may sometimes</sup> They use hashish and "goz-el-keeb" when they have enough money.

9- Lewis also described the poor in Mexico saying : "The stories in this volume (The Children of Sanchez) reveal a world of violence and death, of suffering and deprivation, of infidelity and broken homes, of delinquency, and police brutality, and of the cruelty of the poor to the poor. These stories also reveal an intensity of feeling and human warmth, a strong sense of individuality, a capacity for gaiety, a hope for better life, a desire for understanding and love, a readiness to share the little they possess, and the courage to carry on in the face of many unresolved problems."

Again this general description of the poor in Mexico fits Port-Said's poor. Suffering and deprivation for example, have been witnessed in all the cases we have described. Everybody in our study was suffering from shortage of food, clothing, and ill-housing, the things that largely affected everybody's relationship to one another. In the meantime, we witnessed a significant example of the cruelty of the poor to the poor. This is Noora's quarrel with Abbas. The woman expelled him from her dwelling for the sake of more income from subletting of her own room. Also parents were often cruel to their children and husbands to their wives, and the women to each other.

Moreover, the poor people in Port-Said seem to be the most patient people; as Lewis says, they continue to facing difficult unresolved problems; their lives are actually a series of difficulties and sufferings which they bear reasonably well.



10- Lewis also described the poor of Mexico as not belonging to labor unions, or political parties, and as not participating in the old-age benefits of the national welfare agency, making very little use of the city's banks, department stores, museums, art galleries, and airports.

Naturally, the same view is evident among the poor of Port-Said. Not one of the people in the three dwellings belonged to a labor union or a political party, none knew anything or seemed to care about politics, except as it might affect themselves, e.g. a government program for better housing has been discussed by them. But sometimes, a few poor people benefit from the government's welfare agencies, which cannot extend their services to all poor.

11- The Mexican poor are also described as having a strong present time orientation with relatively little ability to plan for the future, "a sense of resignation and fatalism based upon the realities of their difficult life situation."

Of course, the poor in Port-Said as well show the same thing. They cannot plan for their future because of their poverty which produces a subsequent resignation. <sup>The traditional belief that</sup> misfortune is evidence of God's will also contribute to this feeling among the poor of Port-Said.

Lewis explains why the sub-culture of poverty has universal aspects that are distinctive of the poor everywhere, regardless of cultural differences.

Many of the traits of the sub-culture of poverty can be viewed

as attempts at local solutions for problems not met by existing institutions and agencies because the people are not eligible for them, cannot afford them, or are suspicious of them. For example, unable to obtain credit from banks, they are thrown upon their own resources and organize informal credit devices without interest. Unable to afford doctors, who are used only in dire emergencies, and suspicious of hospitals "where one goes only to die" (as was mentioned before), they rely upon herbs or other home remedies and upon local curers and midwives.

A critical attitude toward some of the values and institutions of the dominant classes, hatred of the police, mistrust of government and those in high position... Finally, the sub-culture of poverty also has a residual quality in the sense that its members are attempting to utilize and integrate into a workable way of life the remnants of beliefs and customs of diverse origins.<sup>10</sup>

Of course, Lewis' explanation of the universality of the characteristics of the sub-culture of poverty is supported by the data we have presented in this thesis. We may consider culture as the major differentiating factor between the poor of different areas, yet, the similarity of economic circumstances which offer a highly limited range of alternatives produces a corresponding degree of similarity of behavior patterns.

In conclusion, the author may summarize his findings in the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. XXVII.

following points :

1- The poor have a distinctive socio-cultural pattern of their own, that carry some common characteristics of poverty within any cultural context, regardless of cultural variations.

2- Housing conditions as well as other associated factors affect the family life of the poor in all of the activities of their life.

Therefore, the general picture of the poor I have presented in the three slum families of Port-Said show us three slightly different variations on a general pattern of poverty in contemporary Islamic society.

APPENDIX L

Population Distribution  
Relative to Unemployment in the City  
of Port-Said, '60.

Sectors	Male or Female	Number of Unemployed	Total Population	Per- centage
El-Sharq	Male	8201	18460	44.4
	Female	16192	18198	
	Total	34393	36658	
, El-Arab	Male	17335	37510	45.9
	Female	33969	35435	
	Total	51304	72945	
El-Manakh	Male	18233	40617	45
	Female	37607	38821	
	Total	55840	79438	
El-Mena	Male	2392	5351	45.3
	Female	4744	5093	
	Total	7136	10444	
Total of Government	Male	46161	101938	45.09
	Female	92512	97547	
	Total	138673	199489	

Note: Children less than six years old are not included.

APPENDIX 2

Population Distribution  
Relative to Reading and Writing Ability  
in the City of Port-Said, '60.

Sector	Male or Female	Reading and Writing Ability		Total	Per- centage Of Illit.
		Illiterate	Literate		
El-Sharq	Male	4520	11492	16012	28
	Female	6462	9176	15638	41
	Total	10982	20668	31650	34.5
El-Arab	Male	13513	18392	31905	42.3
	Female	20596	9627	30223	67.8
	Total	34109	28019	62128	54.9
El-Manakh	Male	16187	18052	34239	47
	Female	24237	8639	32876	73.7
	Total	40424	26691	67115	60.3
El-Mina	Male	992	3553	4545	21.8
	Female	1791	2516	4307	41.1
	Total	2783	6073	8856	31.4
Total of Government	Male	34812	51889	86701	40.1
	Female	53086	29958	83044	63.8
	Total	87898	81847	169745	51.8

Note: Children less than ten years old are not included. They are 38759 males and 36814 females.

APPENDIX 3  
Population Distribution  
Relative to Marital Status in the City of  
Port-Said in 1960.

Sector	Male or Female	Marital Status				Not in- dicated	Total
		Single	Married	Widow	Divorced		
El-Sharq	Male	3853	7846	264	140	14	12117
	Female	2749	7255	1616	229	43	11892
	Total	6602	15101	1880	369	57	24009
El-Arab	Male	7068	15054	448	232	53	22855
	Female	4272	15132	3247	462	113	23226
	Total	11340	30186	3695	694	166	46081
El-Manakh	Male	6887	16848	424	239	51	24449
	Female	4002	17282	339	474	164	25261
	Total	10889	34130	3763	713	215	49720
El-Mena	Male	875	2388	46	18	2	3329
	Female	662	2181	341	38	11	3233
	Total	1537	4569	387	56	13	5562
Total of Government	Male	18683	42136	1182	629	12	62750
	Female	11685	41850	8543	1203	331	63612
	Total	30368	83986	9725	1832	451	126362

Note: Males less than 18 years old, and females less than 16 years old are not included. They are 62710 males and 56246 females.

Appendix IV

A Report on Ezbet El Nahda Issued by the  
Housing Committee in 1962 and Directed to  
the Governor of the City.

"The Ezab's inhabitants are immigrants, who occupied the Ezba, with the aim of attaining a vew dwelling through the removal of the shacks. The committee was very careful in enumerating the true original inhabitants only, so the requests for new dwellings are carefully filled, and the data contained are also investigated by asking the neighbors and by all possible means.

The study contained detailed data about the owners of the shacks and the inhabitants of the "ezba" it studied their occupations, their economical conditions and their needs of rooms according to the family size.

The Occupational Status  
of the Tenants of the Shacks of Ezbet  
El-Nahda - May 1962

Occupations of shacks' tenants	Population
Laborers in the government and companies	62
Ladies and widows	114
Shops' owners	15
Laborers	136
Tenants of shacks live outside the city	9
Total	336

So, those who are unable to pay the rent, because of their low incomes, or because of unemployment are excluded, in order to be able to get the rents easily.

The study is summarized in the following points :

1. Unemployment is very low although the work is not permanent, but they can get their food.
2. From the health view point, the most prevailing disease is tuberculosis and anaemia, and this may be caused by poverty, moisture, lack of furniture and sufficient covers for sleeping, and lighting. Most inhabitants mentioned that their health becomes much worse in the winter.

Bad smells prevail in the whole "ezba" for lack of complete drainage; waste is not collected, and there are horses, mules, and donkeys inside some shacks.

3. Many inhabitants have groceries and shops that are attached to their shacks that they hire or live in; others sell water to inhabitants, and others depend on hiring their shacks. Those inhabitants will be affected economically by the removal of the "ezba".

4. Many families occupy one dwelling, whatever the number of rooms it contains. So, a one room dwelling will be sufficient for any family, for more rooms will help them to bring their relatives from the neighboring countries, and that what has happened in distributing the last dwellings.



5. Illiteracy is prevailing in the "ezba", and those who join the elementary and secondary schools are very few.
6. Most of the prisoners of the "ezba" were narcotics' merchants or thieves.
7. The ezba does not contain any place for praying, entertainment and recreation, and clubs, except some qahwas that are attached to the shacks."

Appendix V

Tag-El-Deen's Observations on Peoples' Life  
in Al-Masakin Area (Interview, 1962)

"El Horriyya housing area is overcrowded, but subletting is not the cause. The area contains one room dwellings in one floor buildings. It is built for the poorest inhabitants of the city. All its narrow dwellings are occupied by such people whatever the family size may be. So, the one room dwelling may be occupied by a family containing 13 children.

In all other housing areas subletting occurs. The people increases, and the tenants of the dwellings exploit the opportunity of a subsequent shortage of housing to profit by subletting parts of their dwellings to overcome their poor economical status. So, you can see in most dwellings, three families occupying a one room dwelling; the tenant in the main room, another family in the kitchen, and the third in the hall. And this causes many quarrels, and we have hundreds of complains, that are usually written by the women, who are very skilful in writing them. Moreover, in many cases, we find the husbands know nothing about such complaints.

Though, there is no privacy in such dwellings, and consequently promiscuity and prostitution prevail in such housing areas. We receive many complaints from the neighbors. Marital infidelity also occurs, for the dwellings contain more than one family in each one, and husbands come out to their works in different hours. The fisherman, specifically, may stay at home for days, for the climate may not permit fishing. So, a

man may have sexual intercourse with another man's wife in his absence. Moreover, many husbands divorced their wives to marry others' wives. Adolescent students also live among such people. They come from the conservative country to study in the city's institutions. They do not find any cheaper place than the Masakin, that is also modern and containing public utilities. Though, they sublet to live in such promiscuite environment. They may either marry through their studenthood period, or have sexual intercourse with the women in the dwellings, where they live. Then, complaints come to us from their parents as well as from the neighbors.

Once, one of the wives was divorced to marry a student living in the same dwelling. When her husband knew about this marriage, he committed suicide. Many other stories could be told which may throw some light upon the phenomena of the increasing number of illegitimate children, that are frequently seen in the streets of the housing areas.

The story of housing also includes some defects in selecting the inhabitants of any given area. The fishermen were formerly living alone in Al-Manakh district before the aggression. Now, they are living among the other inhabitants, and they are generally not liked by them, for their dwellings produce an undesirable fish smell. The fishermen usually put their fishing-nets in the balconies, and consequently they produce this unbearable smell that annoys the neighbors, and usually cause troubles and quarrels. Then, we receive numerous complaints.

There are many other things that usually annoy the inhabitants, such

as the carts of the wandering pedlars that are usually put beside the stairs tied to the floor with a big chain. A horse may possibly be seen in a dwelling in the third floor. The horses are usually trained to ascend and descend the stairs easily.

Appendix VI

Effects of Poverty - A Short Summary of Some Western Literature

Mogey studied the effect of redevelopment or slum clearance on the behavior and attitude of families in England. This study was selected for review because it attempts to measure the change in the family's behavioral pattern, produced by the erection of modern housing. Port-Said's three slum areas include one new housing area, El Masakin, whose inhabitants had been originally the dwellers of the old slum areas. Moreover, our study aims to see if there is any change in family behavior caused by modern housing or not. So, this study done in England seems to be very important. It reflects the effect of such vital factor on family behavior and attitude regarding the following aspects :

1. The internal climate of the family.
2. Relations between the family and the kindred.
3. Relations between the family, the immediate neighbors and its friends.
4. Aspirations of the family toward a better house.
5. Attitude toward employment.

Mogey selected two samples of families, one from a poor housing slum area, and the second from a post-1945 municipal housing project. The two areas are centers of disease and crime and they were frequently attacked by moralists, medical men and sanitary reformers. Moreover, the two areas have approximately the same occupations in similar proportions. They contained mainly the workers of the mines and factories.

A random sample of 30 families from each of the two areas which

both included about 1000 families, were interviewed.

Mogey presented the following findings :

1. The internal climate of the family :

There were differences in the way of interrelations of families' members. Wives in the poor housing area showed more disagreement with husbands and a high proportion of division of labor between husbands and wives.

2. Relation with kindred :

In the housing project the families are far from their kindreds. In the old area daughters after marriage tended to occupy a house or rooms near the family home.

3. Neighbors and friends :

More people in the old area felt that the neighborhood is a friendly place than in the new housing.

4. Aspiration towards a better house :

Most inhabitants of the old area are aware of their houses' worse condition, even though, aspirations for better houses were significantly more frequent, not in this area, but in the new housing.

5. Attitude towards employment :

Men showed no change in the attitude towards employment in the two areas, but women differed relatively in the new area, wives were less desirous to have a job.<sup>1</sup>

This is the case in England and we think this change is also

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<sup>1</sup>J.M. Mogey, "Changes in Family Life Experienced by English Workers Moving from Slums to Housing States", Marriage and Family Living, XVII: May 1955, p. 123.

possible in Port-Said, since the same causes usually tend to produce similar effects. Naturally, cultural differences must be put into consideration, but even so, the picture is relatively similar. So we can conclude from this study done in another country, but in similar conditions, that new housing actually produce certain effects which will be seen in Port-Said later on in Chapter VI.

Chapin did a similar study in the U.S. to investigate the effect of the same factor of new housing on family life. He selected a random sample of 38 families rehoused in a housing project and another 38 families residing in the same slum, similar in other respects, but not rehoused.

Chapin found significant improvement in the rehoused families in the aspects studied, but however no significant improvement in moral or general personal adjustment.<sup>2</sup>

This also reflects the fact that modern housing actually produces certain effects on family life. A finding that is found significant in Port-Said as well.

Rumney also did a two-year study to investigate the effect of the same factor on dwellers' health in Cleveland and Philadelphia in the U.S. He studied the health records of dwellers of three slum areas from which the majority of the housing projects dwellers had come as a control group, and the rehoused dwellers as an experimental group.

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<sup>2</sup>Joseph Folsom, The Family, New-York : John Wiley and Sons, 1941, pp. 577-79.

Ramney found that the number of new cases of tuberculosis was 6 per 1000 people in the slums, and 3.3 in the housing project, among the 19 to 40 years-old age group. The infant death rate was 40.6 per 1000 in the slums, and 34.7 in the project. Communicable diseases - whooping cough, measles, scarlet fever, chicken pox, mumps, and German measles - were found with the rate of 163.5 per 1000 in the slums, and 114.2 in the project among children under 15.

Ramney also compared the school records of 93 New-York slum children before and after they had been rehoused. He found an improvement of 7 percent in attendance, 10 percent in academic grade, 15 percent in personality development grades, and 19 percent in health habits grades.

Juvenile delinquency as affected by new housing was also studied in the same areas.

In Cleveland, the delinquency rate among 4018 boys and girls in six housing projects averaged 1.57 percent, while in adjoining slum areas, the rate was 2.26 percent.

In Philadelphia, the rate of juvenile arrests in 15 projects was 2.1 percent and 11.6 percent in the slum areas, where most the projects' children lived formerly.

"One reason for the lower delinquency rate in the housing projects is the better home life afforded. A second, is that many housing projects provide clubs and recreational facilities for youngsters."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Donald Robinson, "Slum Clearance Pays Extra Dividends", Reader's Digest, Nov., 1955, pp. 89 - 91.



No similar researches were done in Port-Said to compare between the two areas. But we may conclude from this study done in the U.S.A. as well as from the preceding others done in other places, that new housing actually produces several changes in human life in general and family life in particular. This may reflect the possible consequences that are also significant in similar conditions in other areas such as Port-Said.

Groves again gives us an illustration from the U.S. which may help the reader to understand the psychology of the poor. He says :

"A student friend was recently given an interesting illustration of the young person's reaction to bad home conditions. Meeting at a church entertainment in a mill-town, a rather attracting working girl, he asked permission to escort her to her home. She led him to the better residential section of the town and bade him goodnight at the gateway of a substantial middle-class home. Somehow he became suspicious that this was not the place where she really lived and he loitered near, soon to discover that she went only part way up the path, turned about and retreated her steps to the street and then hurried homeward. My friend followed, and when she reached her house fully understood why she had been unwilling to let him see where she lived. The house was one of those box-like two-family dwellings so frequently found in mill-towns, bare and uninviting on the outside, distinguishable from twenty others only by its individual number over the porch door."<sup>4</sup>

From the above illustration one realises how these people feel and think, whenever they live in such poor areas, which diminish human dignity and respect.

Groves again says that bad housing raises the death rate, especially of children. He also stresses that it establishes anti-social attitudes, and crushes the inner life of the family, and makes the home difficult to succeed.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ernest Groves, The American Family, Chicago : Lippincott Com., Third Edition, 1934, pp. 310 - 11.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. p. 311.

Koppe studied the family attitude towards housing, architectural design, the space distribution of the house and its adequacy and the arrangement, the type and adequacy of furnishing. Koppe reflects the importance of housing. How it must be adequate for family needs to produce a healthy normal family life. Inadequate housing is the characteristic of Port-Said's main two old slum areas and even the new one became an inadequate housing area because of excessive subletting. Koppe stresses that housing and furnishing are important to the psychology of the individual,... the mealtime with all its furniture and food almost forces eating behavior."<sup>6</sup>

In England, a National Health Survey took place in 1935-36 to study the relationship between housing and health. This study stressed the effect of poor housing on health. It seems to be a universal principle, that poor housing produces poor health. This conclusion is actually stressed in several other studies. Moreover, it fits Port-Said's slum areas, which are described in its government's report as "the centers of crime and disease." In the meantime, it also shows the effect of overcrowdedness that is usually characteristic of such areas on health. It presents valuable findings that may successfully reflect the picture of Port-Said's poor housing areas.

The study stresses that the children living in crowded dwellings with more than one person per room tend to have chicken pox, diphtheria, measles and mumps at an earlier age, and the attack rate was higher than for those living under less crowded housing.

The households that contained 1.5 persons per room showed

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<sup>6</sup>W. Koppe, "The Psychological Meaning of Housing", Marriage and Family Living, XVII, May 1955, p. 129.

more increase in secondary cases of tuberculosis, than those having one or less persons per room. The pneumonia case also showed a higher proportion for the crowded housing than the less crowded one.

It has been also found that infants born into families that have moved from slums to satisfactory housing, showed a significant drop in the mortality rate.<sup>7</sup>

The effect of housing on health studied in England's survey may help us to understand the general picture in any similar place, such as Port-Said, the study of which reflects the qualitative picture of the effect of poverty and housing condition on family life. So both studies may present to the reader a clear picture in depth of what happens in such slum areas.

Dyer stressed that the family heads with low occupations, that are characteristic of slum areas are met by family members' dissatisfaction.<sup>8</sup> Naturally people in such condition are mainly dissatisfied with the shortage of the economic factor which deprives the family from meeting its needs of food, clothing and the life, and this is the case in Port-Said.

Rowntree studied the housewives' awareness of the nutrition value of different food stuffs of the lowest possible cost and his work shows to what extent the poor class becomes poorer, if they are not aware of such an important factor that affects the family biologically and socially in a number of ways.

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<sup>7</sup>M. Pond, "The Influence of Housing on Health", Marriage and Family Living, XIX: May 1957, p. 154.

<sup>8</sup>William Dyer, "A Comparison of Families of High and Low Satisfaction", Marriage and Family Living, XVIII: Feb. 1956, p. 58.

He also studied the diets of 28 families in different income groups in his 1936 survey of York.

"Experts on nutrition have worked out the average nutritive needs of broad classes of the population in terms of calories, proteins, vitamins, iron, calcium and so on. These needs can be translated into quantities of different foods, and from foods into money terms. The diet as derived, gives adequate nutrition at the lowest possible cost, and demands considerable knowledge of the most nutritious and cheapest foods on the market".<sup>9</sup>

Rowntree found that among the 28 families, some of which were very poor, not one succeeded in selecting a diet anything like as economical as that of the minimum standard of living.

Here one sees how this lower economic group becomes poorer and poorer as a consequence of its ignorance of the nutritive value of food material. Such people eat, if they earn the sufficient money to eat, even then they do not understand how to obtain the best values of what they eat, in order to economize financially and benefit from the largest possible amount of calories, nor do they know what calories are. This is naturally the case in Port-Said.

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<sup>9</sup>Townsend, Peter, "Measuring Poverty", The British Journal of Sociology, V: June 1954, pp. 130-132.

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