

This Thesis for the Master of Arts Degree

by

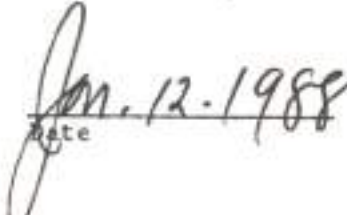
Hala Ahmed Omar

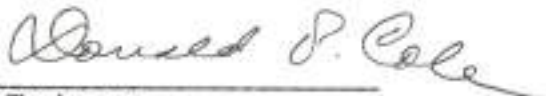
has been approved

  
Chairman, Thesis Committee

  
Reader, Thesis Committee

  
Reader, Thesis Committee

  
Date

  
Chairman,  
Sociology-Anthropology  
Department

Housing, Services and Integration:  
The Foothold of a Squatter Settlement

by

Hala A. Omar

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE  
SOCIOLOGY-ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

January, 1988

ABSTRACT

1960-1961

1962-1963

1964-1965

1966-1967

1968-1969

1970-1971

1972-1973

1974-1975

1976-1977

1978-1979

1980-1981

1982-1983

1984-1985

1986-1987

1988-1989

1990-1991

1992-1993

1994-1995

1996-1997

1998-1999

2000-2001

2002-2003

2004-2005

2006-2007

2008-2009

2010-2011

2012-2013

2014-2015

2016-2017

To my family

## ABSTRACT

This research attempts to explore and interpret the process of transformation of Arab Rashed: an illegal/informal squatter settlement which had obtained formal recognition by virtue of its integration as part of a pilot upgrading project in 1979. In doing so, the collective effort of the residents of Rashed in order to produce their housing and realize their public goals were examined both in light of their historical development and relation to macro-level factors.

Results obtained from the fieldwork indicated that the participation of members of the community was temporary and goal-oriented rather than being directed to long term activities. Later on, outside intervention--in the form of the upgrading project--yielded positive output in terms of services and infrastructure, but had a negative consequences on the local politics of the community. Members of the community could no longer act collectively to attain their goal independent from the government or any other institution.

That is to say, whereas the upgrading project aimed at the decentralization of the Egyptian local politics and the empowerment of small communities by instilling them with the ability and resource to depend on themselves, it transformed this community, which had previously relied almost exclusively on its own resources to develop, change, and grow, to one in a state of dependence on the macro-level state apparatus.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations.....	v1
List of Figures.....	v11
Acknowledgments.....	viii
I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
DEFINITION AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Significance of the Problem.....	4
Research Locale.....	6
Methodology.....	8
Research Methods and Data Collection.....	8
Housing and Community Upgrading for Low-Income Egyptians: an Overview.....	10
II. CHAPTER TWO: RASHED AND ITS PEOPLE.....	15
Rashed: General Description.....	15
Physical Environment.....	16
Streets.....	20
Basic Services in Rashed.....	22
Entertainment and Social Service.....	24
Infrastructure.....	25
Social Composition of Rashed.....	26
Social Stratification.....	29
Tribal Consciousness and the Nobility of Descent...30	
Drawbacks in Disparity in Access to Resources.....32	
Historical Context of Rashed.....	32
Origin and Development.....	32
The Flood.....	35
Migration to Rashed: 1950s-80s.....	36
III. CHAPTER THREE: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN RASHED.....	40
Socio-political Institutions in Rashed.....	41
The Foundation of <u>Nadi ash shabab</u> .....	42
Rashed at the ASU.....	46
The Community Development Association.....	51
Conflict and Competition in Rashed.....	56
Strengthening the Patronage of the CDA Over the Community of Rashed.....	61
Strategies Used by the CDA outside the Community...64	
Conclusion.....	66

IV, CHAPTER FOUR: HOUSING: THE Foothold OF THE COMMUNITY.....	70
The Baross Model for the Analysis of Housing Production Systems.....	72
Applicability of the Baross Model to the Community of Rashed.....	75
The Foundation of Rashed: 1946-57.....	77
The Beginning of Commoditization in Rashed: 1957-1972.....	79
The Institutionalization of Rashed.....	83
The upgrading project in Rashed: 1980-87.....	89
The Rashed Model: Discussion and Conclusion.....	92
 V, CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION.....	 96
 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	 101

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Government of Egypt.
EJJP	Executive Agency for Joint Project.
GOE	Government of Egypt.
HILP	Home Improvement Loan Program.
MOHR	Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction.
NCSCR	National Center for Social and Criminological Research.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development.

## LIST OF FIGURES AND MAPS

Figure	Page
Fig.1 Research locale.....	15
Fig.2 Physical Setting of Rashed.....	17
Fig.3 The Dwelling Environment of Rashed.....	19
Fig.4 Basic Services in Rashed.....	23
Fig.5 Sketch Showing the Location of <u>Nadi ash shabab</u> , the Elementary School the CDA.....	58



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my informants in Rashed: Engineer Tala'at, the contractor in charge of the project and residents, Sa'ad, Hassan, Ramadan, and Hussein, who shared with me their hopes and fears for the future, thank you, you have been of great help to me.

I would also like to thank Dr. Cynthia Nelson, Dr. Soraya Altorki and Dr. Donald Cole, my thesis committee. Dr. Nelson's guidance throughout my graduate program was a constant source of inspiration. Dr. Altorki and Dr. Cole carefully read and re-read the manuscript. I thank them for their encouragement and will to help.

I am thankful to Dr. Abdel Baki Ibrahim, whose integrated approach to architecture enlightened me throughout this work, and to Dr. Hazem Ibrahim for his understanding and willingness to offer every possible help.

I owe a special gratitude to Yehia Salem, the computer consultant of the Caravan, for his support and patience throughout the writing of this work. Yehia was always there, not only to rescue my data, which often times disappeared while working on the computer, but was also a reliable friend and companion.

I also would like to express my appreciation and thanks to many of my friends and colleagues. Hania Sholkamy tediously read my ever-changing manuscripts. She patiently listened to my readings of the manuscript and was willing to help whenever assistance was needed. Reem Saad, whose careful reading and

critical advice contributed to the development of many ideas in this work, was always of support and help throughout my graduate program. The moral support and the sincere help of Luan Hamdy, Hanan Sabea, Deborah Wickering and Mai Abdel Sabour, backed me up in difficult times. A special thanks goes to Khaled AbouBakr for his assistance in the difficult task of the physical survey of Rashed.

To my parents who shared with me the worries and pleasures of writing this thesis, I would like to express my deepest gratitude. I am particularly indebted to them for having instilled in me independence, curiosity and the will necessary for completion of this work. Hesham Niaz, my friend and future husband, provided his generous support, encouragement and patient understanding during my field research and writing. To him, I would like to express my affection, gratitude and appreciation.

To all, thank you.

## Chapter One

### Introduction: Definition and Methodological Considerations

#### Problem Statement:

The problem addressed in this work evolves around the process of transformation of a once illegal/informal squatter settlement to one that has obtained formal recognition as a community by the government of Egypt. The attempts made by community members to overcome the government's ambivalence and sometimes its intolerance of their attempts to obtain social integration within the existing national structure set the basis for that very process of transformation.

Our purpose is to study those aspects of the community that brought about this transformation as well as those that developed as a consequence of it. It is our belief that this process of transformation is not only multi-dimensional but also a complex one where both the subject and object of change are inseparable.

When we talk about transformation we are implying a process experienced by the community as a whole. We are in fact referring to changes occurring in the form and substance of social structure at the community level. These include, among others, the production of housing, processes of social and political participation and their institutionalization, the use and abuse of land tenure laws as well as the alliances and conflicts between various groups constituting the community.

On the other hand, we find that this process of transformation was enhanced by the vulnerability of the status of the squatters as urban dwellers in the absence of a tolerant

state. This reflects the type of relationship that prevailed between the government and members of the community. This relationship was established through the institutionalized distribution of urban services which only this government could provide (Castles: 1983: pp. 190-192 & pp. 323-329).

Therefore, this process of transformation could be perceived as the instrument or tool used by the populace in order to integrate themselves into the national network of the country. It is their reaction and form of resistance to the system that once excluded them from its very plans.

This process of transformation is manifested at both the individual and collective levels of consciousness on the part of community members. While the individual aims at satisfying the immediate need of shelter through squatting, the consciousness of community members was at the base of their collective effort in order to get integrated into the wider network of the city. Accordingly, the process of transformation of a particular community could be examined as expressed in the collective effort of its members in order to produce their housing and realize their public goals.

In this study, both housing and the collective effort for the realization of a public goal will be discussed as main indices for examining the process of transformation. By housing, here, we do not mean the mere shelter but rather the whole "squat-made" environment which reflects a set of organized relationships among a group of squatters who share the same environment. Therefore, housing will be referred to as the participation of the individual members of the community in order

to promote the physical existence of the squatter settlement in which they live (Lobo: 1982, Stuart: 1986). This definition implies that housing will shed light on the economic and social dimensions that govern the organization of this community. Moreover, the housing production process in the community is subject to external factors, e.g. the market system and its relation to it. One can learn a lot about the impact of such exogenous factors on the organization of the community by considering the physical structures of housing in a socio-political context.

The collective effort of members of the community for the realization of public services will be examined as an index in the process of transformation of the community. A clear-cut definition of the nature of participation of members of the community is of little relevance in our case. By virtue of being dwellers of squatter settlements, the members of these communities are deprived of their political and social rights, hence the distinction between the performance of a social and/or political participation becomes insignificant. Moreover, we find that the role of an activist holds little distinction between social and political participation since both are motivated and perpetuated as means, not goals, for the integration of this community within the wide network of the city.

In this study, we will be dealing with all types of collective effort undertaken by members of the community in question. These efforts, whether institutionalized or not, contribute to this very process of transformation. Exogenous

factors that influence these aspects of transformation of the community will be considered. The changing attitude of the government vis-a-vis the squatter settlements and their dwellers were among the factors affecting the process of transformation. These attitudes changed from complete ignorance, to identification as "marginal and cancerous" settlements recognized for their "backwardness", to final praising as self-help solutions provided by the settlers.

#### Significance Of The Study.

The outcome of this inquiry is intended to be an asset to the body of knowledge concerning the studies of urban squatter settlements. The significance of this study lies at its integrated approach in dealing with both the physical and social components of the squatter settlement. The study also depends on the shared perceptions of the settlers for the creation and development of their community, as well as their own definition and interpretation of its transformation process. Being examined in light of its historical development and as a response to exogenous factors at the national level, the study of the transformation process will add a dimension which is lacking in previous studies dealing with squatters in Cairo.

Studies, which took the squatter settlements in Cairo as their target, are numerous; especially during the last decade. Although examining different locales, these studies share a number of common traits. On the one hand, they focus on specific aspects of the communities under study, thus ignoring them as integrated wholes. These studies resulted in an individualized

body of knowledge about these settlements on such issues as socio-economic profile, general mode of living, prevalent services, etc. The collected data on these settlements serves mainly as a background for designing development plans for the respective settlements and analysing the social and environmental organizations rather than documenting these areas.

While these studies have emphasized the immediate needs of the community as generally expressed in their living environment, other studies have concentrated on the analysis of the physical structures of housing as a base for solutions suggested for its improvement (see for example Howell et al.: 1981; Forbes: 1984). Hence, they concentrated their inquiry within a limited time span, thus neglecting the historical dimension and its effect on the development of the settlement altogether. Moreover, they treated the physical structures as a "free standing process" to be analysed in isolation from the other factors. As far as housing is concerned, they considered the main components of technical modes of construction alone. Even when examining the resources mobilization methods involved in housing construction, they tackled it in terms of its potential in improving or deteriorating the quality of housing (see for example Ashour: 1986; Howell: 1981). Therefore, these studies were more inclined to serve as an evaluation of the produced physical environment, while imposing the norms and standards of the research team on these settlements.

This study's importance lies in its attempt to shed light on a body of knowledge that could be of use to policy makers and implementers of development projects undertaken in squatter

areas. On the one hand, while trying to overcome the shortcomings of project/goal oriented studies, we are providing decision makers, project designers and implementors with additional knowledge about the complexities, transformational nature and intricacy of the squatter settlements. Such perspectives would not only give insight into the adopted policies in the development of such areas, but also would provide room for reconsidering the outcome of the evaluation of the undertaken project. Furthermore, this perspective would suggest to the officials, whether social workers, planners, architects or administrators, involved in the implementation process to temporarily abandon their developed stereotypes about these settlements and to increase their ability to tolerate the settlers interpretations and perceptions of their own life, problems and aspirations.

#### Research Locale

Arab Rashed is an informal squatter settlement located in the south-east of the industrial city of Helwan. Rashed emerged in the 1940's and has since developed, expanded and perpetuated its existence by virtue of the continuous effort of its inhabitants. Rashed was chosen as the research locale of this study for many reasons. The process of creation and development of this community without the interference of the government illustrates the popular participation of the inhabitants of Rashed in order to produce their living environment. Moreover, this informal settlement has witnessed various attempts made by community members in order to get integrated into the wider



network of the city of Cairo and so enjoy infrastructure and services offered by the government. These attempts illustrate the process of mobilization of the people of Rashed while acquainting us with a sense of the local politics that govern this community.

We hope that by examining these processes of mobilization of resources for producing housing and of people for acquiring services would outline a pattern that could be used to understand other informal settlements around Cairo.

The choice of Rashed as the object of the pilot project of the upgrading of the urban environment in 1979, co-sponsored by the Government Of Egypt and the USAID, highlight the significance of the research locale. Such a pioneering project implied heavy government interference expressed in the provision of physical infrastructure of housing and services in the area. Both the limited period of the project as well as the intense official interference helped in tracing the process of transformation in Rashed.

We have to note here that evaluating the works and realizations of the upgrading project in Rashed falls outside the scope of this work. In fact, such an attempt should include not only the basic information about the social organization of the community as well as its processes of stratification and differentiation--which we hope to cover in part of this work--but also should extend to the analysis of the financial, administrative and implementation components of the project. It would also be necessary to study the broader circumstances in which the project took place. This would require a study of its

implications for the community in light of the general political trends of the government as well as the strategies of the foreign development agencies. More important is the practical possibility of tracing immediate changes that occurred in this community as a result of the project in such a short time. That is what this study does.

Therefore, the study of the process of transformation of the community of Rashed acquired further significance. We hope that our findings in this work would serve as a base for further study exploring new aspects on the development of the community.

### Methodology

This study is concerned, as we have previously mentioned, with the process of transformation of an illegal informal settlement into one that has obtained formal recognition. It seeks to analyse the strategies and tactics developed by the residents of this settlement for obtaining such recognition. These tactics will be described and analysed in terms of the social composition, stratification, power structure and historical development of the settlement, taking into account the broader context in which it is situated.

This study is, therefore, based on a methodology that seeks to account for micro-level information in terms of their macro level implications.

### Research Methods and Data Collection

The study was based on data collected from field work conducted in the period February-May, 1987. During this

fieldwork, people's own perception and interpretation of their environment and the process of its transformation were considered. In addition to the general method of participant observation, unstructured interviews with members of the community were undertaken. The population interviewed included average members of the community as well as others involved in collective activities. The latter included the Community Development Association (CDA), officially recognized as the representative of the community, as well as the nadi ash shabab, youth club, which was the the second public service in Rashed. The oral history of the settlement was recorded to account for its historical development. In order to get more acquainted with the physical encounter of Rashed, an up-dating of the physical layout was undertaken. On the up-dated map, information concerning land use and the general housing and environmental conditions were recorded. A non-representative sample of housing contributed to the validity of the collected information. This sample included 15 houses of varied types. It was not at all representative in terms of housing structure or household general features. Rather, it was mainly illustrative for the various systems of housing production that prevailed in Rashed during its development. For this sample, history of the building process of the house was reconstructed where various changes and improvements were considered. In so doing, I mainly relied on the memories of the house owners/dwellers. Their perception, as average community members, of the ongoing process of transformation were quite illustrative to the position of shelter vis-a-vis the ongoing events.

The second source of information were the documents about the settlement which included previous descriptive studies conducted in 1979 and 1981. The exploration of the institutionalization of the collective effort of the settlement was based on the content analysis of the correspondance of the CDA with the concerned agencies for the development of the area.

I did not use a pseudonym for the settlement of Rashed upon the request of many of its residents who expressed their wish to have their achievements presented to the public. Names were also unchanged since most of the cited persons were already quoted in previous studies.

Providing a brief account of the upgrading project in Rashed is necessary before proceeding into our examination of the process of its transformation. In the following section we will rapidly review the works of the project, as presented in the project documents .

#### Housing and Community Upgrading for

#### Low Income Egyptians: An Overview

Two major trends can be distinguished in urban development projects. The first is described as the "piecemeal approach" with one or more aspects of the community in question as an independent variable. The second is an integrated approach which aims at a balanced treatment of the various aspects of the community (Ibrahim: 1986, Gram: 1983, Davidson: 1983). The concept of the squatter upgrading is based on this second approach; therefore, it aims at the amelioration of both the

physical and the social environment of the settlement.

In 1978, a program for helping low income Egyptians by upgrading the community was authorized by both the Government of Egypt and the USAID. The two parts equally shared the costs which amounted to \$160 million. In order to carry out the project works, the Joint Housing Project was founded. Preliminary studies were undertaken in order to provide a data base for the formulation of the project. The implementation of the plan began in 1980.

The aim of the upgrading project was to provide six informal communities in Helwan with the basic services and infrastructure, as well as to mobilize the private services of the inhabitants of these settlements for the improvement of their dwelling environment. The project also aimed at providing solutions for the organization of land ownership in these communities, thus encouraging people to improve their own houses.

Moreover, the project was designed to demonstrate that "the premise that basic housing and community facilities that are socially affordable can be provided for low-income families in a manner that allows the government of Egypt to recover a substantial percentage of its investment (USAID paper agreement: 1978). The project is considered a test for replicability of similar projects in other squatter settlement.

The upgrading project is based upon the enhancing of community organization in the settlement, while accounting for their own perception in designing, implementing and evaluating the project. For the fulfilment of this task, the project officials relied on the Community Development Association. In

order to activate the residents to improve their houses, a Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP) was proposed in collaboration with the Credit Foncier d'Egypt. These loans consisted of low interest loans (8%) provided to the house owners. Other loans were provided for the undertaking of small scale activities in the settlement. These loans were sought to contribute to the improvement of the general standard of both housing and the environment. Vocational training centers were founded at two of the CDA centers in these settlements, Rashed and Choneim, in order to improve the technical skills of the dwellers of these settlements and help them find new job opportunities.

In Rashed, the following implementation plan for the upgrading project was proposed. A new public water network was to be extended in order to cover the existing residential bulk. Meanwhile, a sewage system would be installed and connected to the Helwan main sewage station. The main streets of Rashed would be paved while the secondary ones would be properly graded for drainage and circulation.

In terms of communal facilities and services, an elementary school of eighteen classrooms would be constructed. The CDA was granted funds for the completion of 630 square meters expansion, as well as the improvement of the performance of the day care center. A health center was to be founded at the CDA.

Enhancing community organization constituted a major goal in the proposed implementation plan. It was considered the base of promoting self help projects, small community facilities, mini parks and allotment of gardens etc.. as well as assisting HILP

administration.

In 1987, the water and sewage networks were completed and the main streets were paved. A five storey school was constructed. The CDA of Rashed was considerably expanded, enclosing the Vocational Training Center of the project. Many of Rashed residents applied for the HILP, especially during the first years of the project. The problem of land ownership remained unsettled with the government.

This rapid overview of the upgrading project in Rashed provides an adequate background for the next chapters. In chapter two, the settlement of Rashed will be sketched in terms of its social composition and stratification as well as its historical development. Chapter three discusses the collective activities of community members. It also points at the moments where these activities reached their peak and how they were employed by the community to gain power vis-a-vis the government. Chapter four concentrates on housing as a process used by the residents of the community in order to counterbalance the pressures exerted by the exogenous factors. Some concluding remarks follow.

## End Note

1. See for example Howell: 1981, Forbes: 1984. Also see the NCSCR, MOHR and USAID studies concerned with the data collection, of the six settlements chosen for the undertaking of the upgrading project.



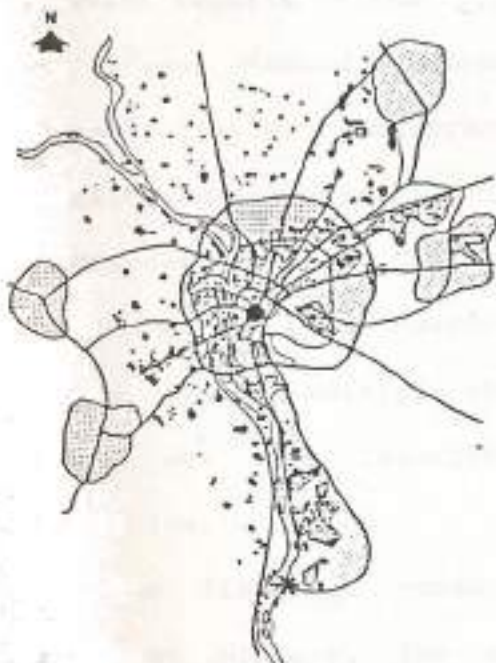
## Chapter Two

### RASHED AND ITS PEOPLE.

This chapter is a step towards the understanding of the ethnographic present and the interpretation of the internal dynamics of the community of Rashed. It includes the general description of Rashed in terms of its social and physical structure. It also gives an account of the development of the community in terms of its social composition and stratification as a necessary background for the discussion of the process of transformation of this settlement.

#### RASHED: GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

Rashed is an informal squatter settlement located at a site South-West of the city of Helwan(fig.1), situated at a 10-minute walk from the main road leading to its center. This community



\* Arab Rashed

lies within the boundaries of four different environmental areas. On the one hand, the wreckage of public buses and railway wagons separate Rashed from the massakin (low-income governmental housing of Helwan) to the North. The Qawmiyyah street constitutes the Eastern border which separates Rashed from the Helwan Military Airport and the Hawf desert. This street,

with its railway junk, constituted a barrier limiting further expansion of the community. During the past few years, this barrier gradually disappeared in the face of the changing conditions of Rashed. Rashed El Gedidah (New Rashed) is now being founded along this street. Industry and agriculture represent the Southern and Western boundaries of Rashed, respectively. The Silk factory and the Portland Cement factory border Rashed from the South and separate it from the adjacent agricultural land within the Zimam of Kafr El Elw. The latter extends to the West to form the fourth border of Rashed (fig.2). Such diversified and combined setting of residential/industrial and agricultural/desert around Rashed shaped its physical and social characteristics.

#### Physical Environment of Rashed

In 1979, and according to the description provided in the relevant reports of the upgrading project, the following account was given. Rashed was labelled an ezbah the physical aspects of which is similar to an urban village. Traditional rural types of dwellings were reported to be dominant. These were combined with relatively modern houses constructed with red bricks and reinforced concrete. Houses consisted of one floor in average. No sewage system existed while three water taps were reported. Rashed was also reported as lacking educational and health facilities.

The fieldwork conducted for this study sketched a quite different picture. The settlement of Rashed did not have any rural origin, since it was located in a desert area and occupied

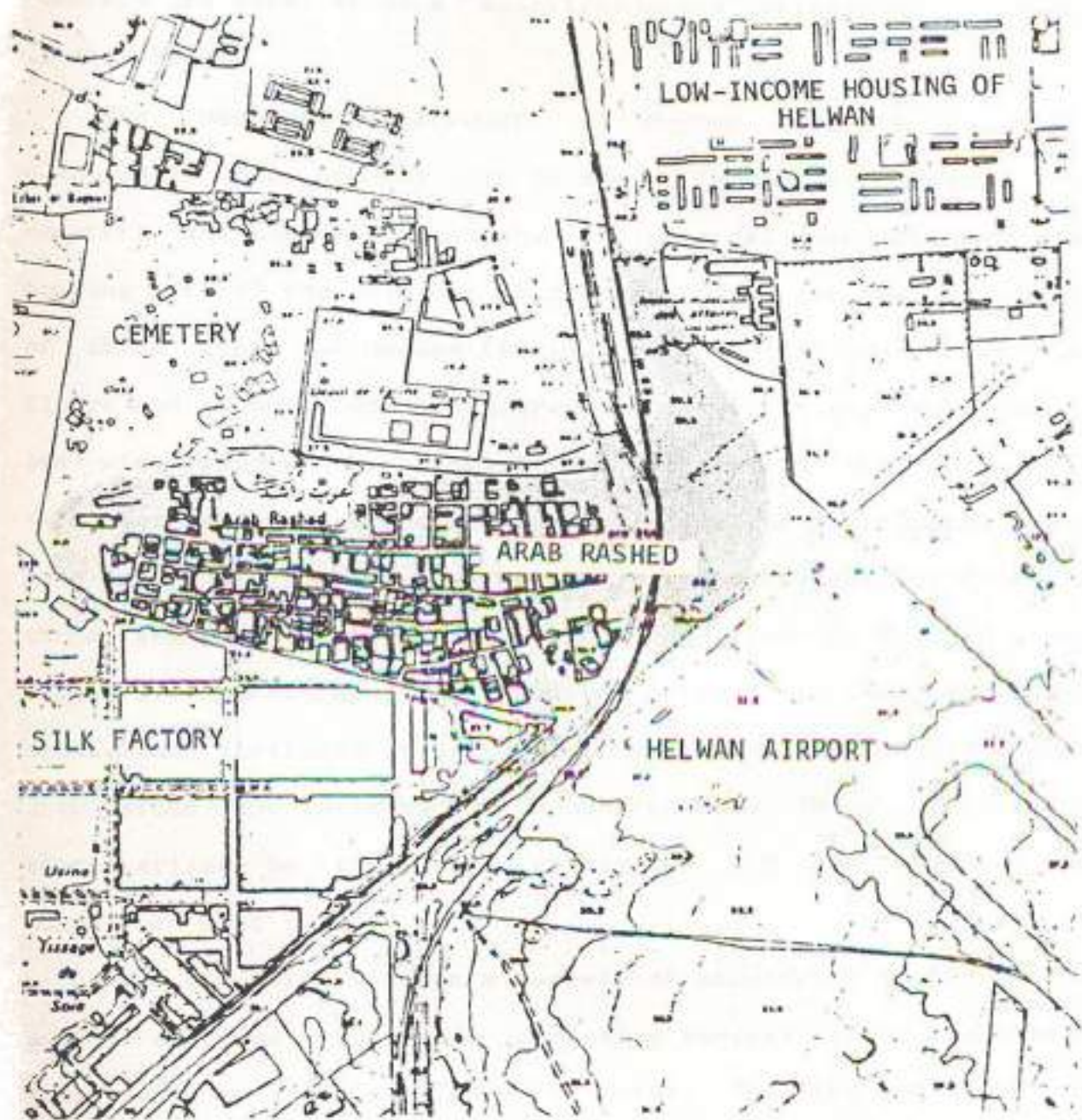


FIG. 2 The Physical Setting of Rashed

by a population of bedouin origin. Therefore, it would be more accurate to label it as a "desert/mountain" settlement (Oldham, et al.: 1988).

The physical environment of Rashed consists of three components: the housing bulk of the original settlement, the cemetery and Rashed El Gedidah. The physical description of the housing bulk of the original settlement points out the existence of three types of houses (fig.3). The average house has two floors and is built with reinforced concrete. It enjoys balconies and wide windows which reflect the decrease in the occupant's value for privacy. Scattered on the fringes of the community, we find houses of higher standard. These are apartment buildings of three and four storey high. Their ground floor is divided into shops, i.e. cafeterias, car repair mechanics, carpentry workshops etc...Also scattered in the area, are much older houses built with stone and roofs made of wood branches. These houses are characterized by their open courtyards and are occupied by tenants in most cases.

The cemetery includes a variety of structures ranging from walled spacious courtyards enclosing several tombs to small individual ones without fences or gates. The size and space of these cemeteries vary in accordance with the social status of the owner. The cemetery area is exposed to the same process of lay hold on land.

Rashed El Gedidah is the new extension under construction. It is bordered by the Helwan Military Airport and the railway line to the West. There are few built up houses since most of the land is subdivided and yet unoccupied. The few houses that exist

are occupied by newcomers and the off-springs of the a'ilat. The latter do not purchase the land, rather they rely on family ties for its acquisition.

### Streets

Rashed is entered through either one of two main entrances. The first is at the Garage street, a 12 m wide paved street along which are situated new multi storey apartment buildings, cafeterias and Video clubs. The inhabitants of Rashed are very proud of this entrance and explicitly express their wish for transforming Rashed to become "all like this". The second entrance to Rashed passes through the cemetery and is bordered by low level swamps of liquid waste disposal. This entrance is mainly used by pedestrians as it presents a short-cut to the main circulatory spaces leading to the street network of Rashed.

The street network in Rashed consists of three main narrow longitudinal streets, ranging from 3 to 6m in width. They have no side walks or light posts. These streets are crossed by smaller transversal streets. Occasionally, one finds a dekkah (a built-in sitting place) at the external walls of the houses. These dekkah are used for two main purposes: it represents a place where young people socialize and meet together and in the meantime provide the external walls of the houses with an additional protection against the water overflow in the streets. Streets are also used as a playground for children and a market place for the daily needs of the community. Despite the fact that the streets of Rashed are open in nature and serve different purposes, it is uncommon to find women carrying out their domestic activities in these streets.

Small, irregular land subdivisions obscure the street network in Rashed Al Gedidah. There, the only function of the streets lies in the connection of the existing houses to the narrow lane that links them to the Qawmiyyah street. The streets in Rashed El Gedidah, are neglected by both the land owners and the tenants. For the moment, wide streets would be a "luxury", as one of the owners told me:

The wasted area of the streets will inevitably raise the land price of the houses. People here are poor and need shelter. (We) should help them. They can manage with any kind of streets. Anyhow, they are not worried, the project will come to (them) and pave these streets.

The reproduction of a new community with much lower standards than the previously existing one raises a multitude of questions about the impact of the upgrading project on the behaviour and perception of the Rashed settlers, both owners and tenants. It is a reflection of how market forces in this community acted to perpetuate deteriorating standards and regressive environmental conditions.

The main longitudinal streets of Rashed were named after the Sahabah (the Prophet's companions) Aboubakr, Omar and Othman. The fourth main longitudinal street was named in the old maps of Amlak (property rights) Dayer El Nahiah (around the corner); a name which gave Rashed a rural connotation. This name was substituted in Rashed today by Al Hassan Bin Aly, the fourth of the sahabah, to match with the three other street names. The transversal streets are named after the bedouins owners of the old houses lying in these streets.

The religious inclination expressed in the choice of street

names was substituted by a more secular one, which suited the changing conditions of Rashed as a site for the upgrading project. With the beginning of the implementation of the project in 1980, two new streets were added to the network of Rashed: officially, these were named El Salam street and El Sadat street. Informally the Rashed dwellers used to substitute the latter with Shari'e El Rahmah (street of mercy) as it faced the cemetery. In Rashed El Gedidah the only street there had, again, a name of one of the Prophet's followers: Bilal Bin Rabah.

#### Basic Services In Rashed

Rashed is a self-sufficient settlement as much as the basic needs are concerned (fig.4). Food supply can be bought from existing co-op of Al-Ahram, local butchers and grocers. A black-market dealer takes over whenever there is a shortage in a particular commodity. Few "wealthy" families in Rashed depend upon their cultivated crops and the dairy products of the home bred animals. They consider that as akl nadif (good food).

We note the concentration of the commercial activities and services in the ground floor of the houses lying on the main streets of Rashed. There is also a heavy concentration of car repair mechanics along the main entrance of Rashed and at the external fringes of the community. This illustrates that a substantial part of the residents are engaged in the informal sector. Public activities lie in the geographical heart of the settlement. There lie the CDA, nadi ash shabab and the soccer field which is considered the main gathering space of the community.

### Entertainment and Social Services

There are three mastabahs (large hall) situated in the oldest parts of Rashed. These were provided by the a'ilat in order to serve as gathering space for the elders of the community. They are mainly used in Ramadan nights, in wedding and death ceremonies. The majority of the youth in Rashed depend upon nadi ash shabab (the youth sports club) for their entertainment. The Community Development Association provides other limited indoor activities: .e.g. library, a video club in addition to a few Ping-Pong tables. However, these two institutions did not seem to fulfil the youth's need for recreation. The alternative source of entertainment was provided by the opening of "cafeterias", mat'am (restaurants) and video clubs. These were situated near the workshops at the entrance of the community.

Rashed has five mosques where prayer is actually practices in addition, to two others "under construction" in Rashed El Cedidah. The latter are only "signs" now, but looking at Rashed's history in finance and resource mobilization, one would expect a construction initiative to take place soon. The importance of mosques, in addition to their religious function, lies in their being a source of finance for the CDA, which takes a share of the continuous donations made by people for building these mosques.

More important is their circumspection in the establishment of lay hold on land. The government rarely pulls down a "house of God". Another reason is that the location of the newly constructed mosque is usually at the fringes of the new



community under construction. As religious buildings are given a priority in the supply of services, building a mosque guaranteed that the whole area would soon be supplied with the services it requires.

There are also two religious institutions in Rashed. They both belong to the non-governmental organization of El Gam'eyyah El Shar'eyyah. These associations provide integrated services for the whole community. They include education, health services and day-care centers in addition to their initial religious role in the area.

Rashed has one elementary school which was built by the EAJP (the Executive Agency for Joint Projects) as part of the services offered by the upgrading project. There are also two day-care centers, one at the CDA and the other at nadi ash shabab.

#### Infrastructure.

Rashed was first supplied with potable water in 1958, when public water taps were installed in the area. Water and electricity networks were extended to Rashed in 1966 and 67 respectively. Networks for water supply were established in 1964. These networks did not cover every house in Rashed. Only those who could afford to pay the required amount for connections enjoyed these services.

The sewage system in Rashed was based on the trench system for the disposal of both liquid and solid wastes. These, however, often overflowed due to the high rising water table in the area and the inefficiency of the dumping cars. The recurrence of these accidents resulted in the muddy appearance of the streets in

Rashed. As a temporary solution, women get rid of the grey drainage by throwing it on the periphery of the settlement.

In June 87, the network for potable water and the sewage system in Rashed were completed in partial fulfilment of the upgrading project services in the area. However, the use of the sewage system depends on its connection with the main sewage network in Helwan.

#### SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF RASHED.

The population of Rashed consists of two major categories : the a'ilat (families) vs the aghrab (strangers). The settlers of bedouin origin refer to themselves as a'ilat, thus emphasizing the difference between their status and that of the migrants who arrived to Rashed without their families. The name given to the category of aghrab was kept by the two categories despite the fact that many of the migrants have lived in the area for more than 20 or 30 years.

The a'ilat consists basically of the descendants of the 'Ayaidah tribe. This category rarely included persons of different bedouin descent considered as equals to the 'Ayaidah. For example: 'Arab El Ghamazah and El Haggarah were respected for their being bedouins, but were held at a lower status by the 'Ayaidah.

The category of the aghrab includes four subgroups. The first subgroup consists of Sa'idi migrants coming from Upper Egypt in search for work at the nearby Cement factory. When they established themselves after the Industrialization Plans in the mid 50's, they sent for their families and settled in

Rashed. The second subgroup consists of Bahrawi migrants. They arrived in Rashed, shortly after the installation of the Textile factories in Helwan in early 60's. The third subgroup consists of "Fayyumi" migrants, who arrived to Rashed in the mid 60's. The latter stand in a middle position, status wise, between the Sa'idis and Bahrawi migrants thanks to their tribal origin.

Being aghrab, the three above mentioned subgroups of newcomers, were not allowed to lay hold on land. This was a right strictly exercised by the original bedouin settlers of Rashed. They took advantage of the migrants' need for shelter and sold them pieces of land of 500 m<sup>2</sup>. The relationship between the Bedouins and the migrants went beyond the land selling contract. The bargain was concluded on terms of mutual obligations binding the two parties: subjugation of the newcomers to the 'urf (customs) of the bedouin owner in exchange for the giwar (rights of protection) and the integration of the newcomers into the 'Arab community.

These deals not only strengthened the supremacy of the a'ilat land-owners, but also helped the structuring of an internal hierarchy in Rashed. This patron-client relationship was solidated, when the migrants began to receive their Baladyyat (migrants of the same origin) and accommodate them in rented rooms in their own houses, something the a'ilat would never do. This act was considered a violation of home privacy in their 'urf. The renting of a room was seen to undermine the status and respectability of both the house owner and room tenant.

The above mentioned migrants constituted the majority of the Rashed population for almost three decades. Finally, inter-Cairene migrants found their way to Rashed, and became the fourth subgroup of the aghrab. They were mainly people whose houses had been demolished and cleared by the government in Boulaq Abou El `Ela and `Eshash El Torgoman.

These inter-Cairene newcomers tended to form a sub-community in Rashed. They were clustered together in its western triangle, a place referred to by the Rashed dwellers as Ezbet Fayez. Giving this area a separate name implied the discriminatory attitude of community members toward these inter-Cairene newcomers. Although not manifested in the physical structure, a social distance was observed by the Rashed dwellers vis-a-vis new incoming inter-Cairene migrants. People even looked down on Hagg Fayez, the original land owner, who "sold land to whoever came" for money without consideration of virtue.

For the inhabitants of Rashed, both a`ilat" and aghrab, the unselective nature of these deals afflicted the whole community and made it appear like a "polluted area in a clean body". Cairene migrants were considered as people without "ethics or religion" since "they had no respect for the living or for the dead". Cairenes looking for a home had even built their houses on the land of the old cemetery of Rashed. Their women were despised because of their "vulgarity". Their youth were seen as "thieves, drug dealers and addicts". The original Rashed dwellers often repeated that "before their arrival (meaning the Cairenes) Rashed was safe and clean".

This antagonistic attitude was reciprocal. The inter-Cairene migrants viewed themselves as original inhabitants of the capital and consequently of a superior status than the peripheral and rural dwellers of Rashed. They thought that they had to accept "this bitter life" because of their need for a home. Nevertheless, they still refuted the deal that meant "subjugation in return of Giwar rights" (or the patron-client relationship) saying: "it is our LAND, we paid for it".

The advent of the inter-Cairene migrants to the area was synchronous with a nation wide increase in land prices. In the case of Rashed, these migrants represented an additional reason for the decrease in land supply. At this point, the market forces of supply and demand overruled the traditional bargaining terms. This change marked a shift toward purely contractual relations between the land proprietor and the buyer.

#### SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN RASHED.

The various origins of the Rashed population resulted in an internal hierarchy, recognized, respected and maintained by its various component groups (except for the inter-cairene). The a'ilat, or the inhabitants of tribal descent, occupy the top spot of this hierarchy. They are consecutively followed by Sa'idi, Fayyouni and Bahrawi migrants. At the bottom of the scale lie inter-cairene migrants. That the ranking of the various groups in the social hierarchy follows the order of their arrival to the area could lead one to think that seniority is the major determinant for the acquired status in Rashed. However such criterion could hardly have persisted over decades unless

favoured and supported by other socio-economic conditions.

The analysis of the emergence and development of Rashed shows two interrelated factors for the maintenance and enhancement of its stratification. The first factor is the basic ethnic differentiation between the a'ilat and the aghrab. The second concerns the impact of such differentiation on access to power and resources. In the following section the impact of these two factors will be discussed, not only in terms of their effect on the ranking system, but also as a factor that conditions community actions.

#### Tribal Consciousness and Nobility of Descent

The supremacy of the original inhabitants of tribal descent is not only based upon the nobility of their bedouin "race", as it was often put to me, but it also relies on its contrast with the humbleness of the peasant "race" of the new comers. A recurrent answer to my questions concerning this differentiation was that the peasant was Hammal (neglectful and vagabond) by nature. He left his family and his home village, and in some events even sold his own house. These acts were considered to be degrading in the bedouin 'urf. Moreover the long history of the "submission of peasants" to higher authorities, either in corvee labour or in feudal settings in contrast to the "free 'Urban life" (bedouins) was often referred to in the bedouin stories of Rashed as further evidence for such differences and differentiation.

While the inferior status of the peasants was maintained as a part of the a'ilat legacy, the higher status of those of nomadic origin was reinforced by their access to both power and

resources. The a'ilat main access to resources was expressed in their monopolization of ownership of land in the area, which enabled them to impose their terms on newcomers in need of shelter. Newcomers had to accept the whole bargain. By buying a piece of land, they had to recognize their inferiority and their identification with a patron leader.

This situation is recognized and accepted by the two categories : a'ilat and aghrab as a de facto situation. Both have often repeated to me that "He who has no elder ought to buy one". In fact this is more of a literal than a metaphoric situation. Newcomers do BUY land and protection in return for loyal dependence.

The younger generation also came to be critical of this situation. They resented this submission of the newcomers to the a'ilat. This new perspective was probably a result of the difference in social encounter, and in education i.e. these youth have had better access to education and to more contact with urban life, thus acquiring a different way of understanding their social reality.

The loyal dependence of newcomers to the land lords was reinforced by the assumed responsibilities of the latter in getting services needed by the community. They used their contacts with government employees to serve the community and strengthen their position as patrons. Moreover, the engagement of the original inhabitants in the guardianship of factories and in the police provided them with an extra access to power. The combination of resource and power associated with the existing

ethnic differentiation in Rashed represents an important factor in the maintenance of the internal hierarchy of the community.

#### Drawbacks of the Disparity in Access to Resources

The disparity in the access to the resources, not only maintained the internal ranking of society, but also continued to be the basis for the reproduction of this hierarchy. The migrant children were often forced to leave school (education was free) and find a job in the neighbouring factories in order to support themselves and to generate a new income for the family. The migrants had two options: either to rent a room, or to send their children to work....Both meant that they will still retain their low status.

In the meantime, the a'ilat could afford to send their children to school without making any sacrifices in return. A large majority went to technical school. They were more privileged in the period of "infatih" (opening) that followed. They had better chances to find jobs abroad as skilled labourers in the Arab oil-rich countries, or as small scale local contractors. All in all, the children of the a'ilat had a better chance in life by virtue of the privileged position of their families.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF RASHED.

##### Origin and Development:

The settlement of Rashed is named after Rashed Mahmoud El Sane'e, a member of the 'Ayaidah tribe. The origin of the title El Sane'e has two interpretations. The first is El Sane'e (the manufacturer) because Rashed was the first 'Arab to work in a



factory. The second possibility is that it is a distortion of "Al San'ai" (in reference to San'aa the capital of Yemen). Tracing the line of descent of the 'Ayaidah and the official documents suggest that their first tribal origin is of the Kahtani tribes who migrated to Egypt from Yemen after the Islamic conquest by Amr bin el As. El Sayed describes their journey to Egypt, from their first nomadic existence in the eastern Hawf around 1400 A.D., and their later dispersion out to Mid-Sinai up to the Eastern Nile Delta, the areas that are today known as Sharkiah, Dakahliah and Menoufiah governorates (El Sayed: 1935).

The common belief among the original settlers of Rashed about their tribal origin does not go that far. For the majority, the history of the 'Ayaidah begins with their settlement around Helwan El Balad in the 19th century. Others with higher tribal consciousness and more interest in genealogy believe that the descent of the 'Ayaidah goes as far back as to their nomadic existence in Sinai and the Eastern Desert.

According to the descendants of the 'Ayaidah, the tribe settled around the village of Helwan El Balad and Ezbet El Waldah Pasha, where they engaged in agriculture in the rented royal land of al khassah al malakiah, and in herding on the outskirts of these villages. This occurred around the turn of the 19th century.

The early twenties witnessed the first signs of the industrial invasion of Helwan. In 1921 Labib Nessim founded his grinding colour factory, followed by the Helwan Spinning and Weaving Co. in 1927, and the Danish Portland Cement Co. in 1929. As he was familiar with the desert and its roads, Rashed Mahmoud

was appointed as Sheikh El Ghafar (chief of guards) for these factories. He was given the responsibility to choose guards from among his fellow tribesmen. Since then and for a few decades afterwards, guardianship in the area remained within the domain of the 'Ayaidah. This tradition persisted even after the establishment of the Police station in the early 1940's. The acquired status of the 'Ayaidah being in direct contact with the authorities provided them with a valuable access to services, which led to their supremacy during the subsequent years.

The neighbouring factories underwent a process of successive expansions during the period of World War II which proved to be a potent stimulus to the expansion of the Helwan industry as part of the Egyptian industry. During that period, the 'Ayaidah strengthened their acquired status as guards for the factories and the Police force. They gradually moved into the vacant land situated between the factories where they resided in dispersed houses made of Bous (reed material) and Kheish (cloth). Most of them kept their rented agricultural land, as they depended on their cultivated crops for living.

Meanwhile, the successive waves of rural migrants seeking job opportunities were absorbed by the expanding industries in Cairo and in Helwan. The majority of the rural migrants who headed for Rashed consisted of Sa'idi labourers employed by the Cement factory. These migrants used to come alone, leaving their families in their home village, because of war conditions and also their meagre wages. They were lodged in barracks (dormitories) provided by their work-places.

### The Flood

In 1946 a flood swept the Helwan desert and destroyed all houses and huts in low lands between the factories. The afflicted families were transferred to a higher place: Rashed's land, under the auspices of Al Helal Al Ahmar Association (The Red Crescent) presided over by Princess Fawziyah. Following tribal customs, Rashed welcomed his relatives and affines to stay on His land.

The families were indemnified by the Helal Association, on the basis of 5 L.E. per destroyed room, to rebuild their houses. The transferred families began to erect strong solid houses on large areas ranging from 1000 to 2000 square meters. They used Dabsh (random stone) and Tawf (cement dust) in building the walls. The roof was made of dried straw covered with a layer of cement dust and mud mixture. Their courtyards were surrounded by fences of dried straw. The erected houses not only protected them from further disasters, but also marked their transition from Arab kheish (travelling bedouins) to Arab heit (sedentary bedouins), and hence their recognition by authorities as an existing community: 'Arab Rashed. The settlement was named as a gesture to the host who acted as a "Real 'Arabi". Many of my informants, especially the older generation said, that God made Rashed's name immortal by this designation since he had no son to carry his name.

The flood not only grouped the dispersed houses, thus promoting the physical existence of the settlement, but also initiated its integration into the surrounding environment. In

their previous existence, the ʿAyaidah were often deprived of their civil rights and duties. The ʿUmdah of the neighbouring villages ignored them for their being Shayyalin-Hattatin (carriers and settlers). They also did not have access to any of the three documents of citizenship, birth and death certificates and military services papers. This new existence as "settlers of a recognized community" was strengthened when some of the migrants began issuing birth certificates with "Rashed" as a place of birth. They were having these certificates issued to apply for government jobs in the nearby factories and/or the Police force. These birth certificates were later used when the issue of land ownership was brought up. They came to be as proof of their being true natives who had been in the area for a long time.

#### Migration To Rashed: 1950's-1980's

After the 1952 revolution, the new government initiated new steps toward the industrialization of Egypt. These promising circumstances encouraged the old migrants working in the Cement factory, to bring their families and get settled in Rashed. The rural exodus became more intense after the declaration of the first Industrialization Plan in 1957, which gave Helwan recognition as an industrial city. The rural-migration flow covered the whole area of Helwan. In the mid sixties massive investments for the Five-Year Plan for Industrialization created new job opportunities in the new, often heavy industries. This further increased the inflow of rural migrants. The low income housing provided by the government for the incoming labourers

failed to meet the increasing demand. This resulted in the invasion of the area by small scale squatters. Rashed, privileged by its location half way between el massakin el sha'abiah (low income governmental housing of Helwan) and the new factories, attracted a large number of new comers.

However, the impact of rural migration to Cairo on the formation of Rashed's population declined severely after the 1967 defeat. This was mainly because of the redirection of investments from production to war requirements, which led to the heavy recession in the industrial sector (Ikram: 1980). Moreover, the prolonged military service of youth weakened the migration motion to the urban areas.

With Nasser's death and Sadat's assumption of the presidency of Egypt in 1970, the government acquired a different orientation. The restrictions imposed on external migration were lifted with the declaration of the 1971 constitution. This new government attitude affected migration in both rural and urban areas. In Rashed, where a large percent of the population were skilled labour and craftsmen, many tried their chances and travelled to at least one of the Arab oil-rich countries. The younger generation who acquired professional training in technical schools were more prompt to take the initiative. However, rural-urban migration persisted as a result of internal and complex factors. Those who still migrated to Cairo were those who failed to travel abroad, due to their lack of skill and/or due to their unsuitable circumstances. Examples from Rashed substantiate this.

Om Ashraf and Safeyah are two cases, among many others, who arrived with their husbands to Rashed during the seventies. Abou Ashraf, due to health reasons, was not able to travel to any of the Arab oil countries. Having no land, he migrated to Cairo with his family, hoping to find a solution for his economic problems. Zakariah, Safeyah's husband, went through almost the same conditions. He spent eight years of his life fulfilling his military service. When released, having no skill, he worked as a ticket collector in public transportation. They both feel stuck but can not return to their home village.

In our review of the physical description, modes of social stratification and historical context of Rashed, we illustrated the complexity of the setting and explained the evolution of various forces and sets of relationships that bear on the dynamics of collective action and housing production. In the following chapters, the two concepts will be thoroughly discussed in the light of the definitions and explanations provided by this chapter.

## End Notes

1. Article 52 established migration, either temporary or permanent as a citizen's right. The presidential decree no 73 of 1971 was designated to encourage migration and the removal of bureaucratic and administrative restriction to ease migration. The encouragement of external labour migration was more pronounced after the Oil Boom following the October War in 1973. This coincided with the release of thousands of young Egyptians from military service in mid 1974, the shortage in employment opportunities and housing crisis etc.... The result was a massive transfer of highly trained and skilled manpower (Ibrahim:1978).

## Chapter Three

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN RASHED

In this chapter we shall consider the nature of community participation as exemplified in Rashed. By taking a closer look at power relations and politics of community participation we hope to show how the concept of community action is shaped and defined by the nature and history of the community in question as well as by the socio-political context in which it exists.

The intention of this chapter is not to evaluate the community participation in Rashed in any way. Rather, in analysing the dynamics behind sets of relationships which go to produce community action, we hope to shed light on the forces and factors that govern its directions and goals.

We shall first redefine political and social participation by examining their "reality" as practised by the inhabitants of Rashed. Both types of participation are oriented towards the procurement of services by individuals which has become a main function of major patrons as they are defined by the community, thus instilling and maintaining patron-client relationships as a dominant characteristic of community organization in Rashed. We shall then observe the process through which these relationships were perpetuated in different socio-political circumstances.



## SOCIO-POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN RASHED

Much of the literature concerning community participation defines this concept as a wide spectrum of collective work which has social participation at the one end and political participation, at the other <sup>1</sup>. Although such distinction exists in many suburbs of third world countries, it does not apply to a considerable number of squatter settlements that emerged and existed under centralized authoritarian regimes.

Rashed was not an exception to this observation. Its history, as far as community participation is concerned, does not suggest the slightest distinction between social and political activities and therefore between social and political institutions. These institutions have, for a long time, proliferated from one another. The questions of distinction, motivation and affiliation were seldom raised in this community where "action" was undertaken by an elite. This elite, by the procurement of services, strengthened its social status in this community.

In the following section, we shall examine the main institutions that emerged in Rashed as a result of a collective effort of the members of the community. By looking at the forces and factors that favoured their emergence, transformation and perpetuation, we hope to shed light on the devices used in the community of Rashed in order to adapt itself to new transformations operating at the macro/national level. Hopefully, by closely examining these devices we shall illustrate

the motivations behind competition for monopolization of services procurement.

#### The Foundation Of Nadi Ash Shabab: 1968-70

We have previously described the historical context in which Rashed emerged and developed since 1946 and how the massive waves of migrants who arrived there in search of work opportunities at the adjacent factories shaped the environmental characteristics and power structure of the community.

The fact that the community of Rashed owed its existence to the factories newly installed by the government bestowed the new comers with mixed feelings of appreciation and gratitude toward the government. Having a stable job and a house as well as schools for their children were more than satisfactory conditions for the first generation of these new comers to Rashed. A rather similar attitude was adopted by these migrants toward kibar-al-a'ilat who, as patrons, provided services necessary for their clients survival. Although these services did not exceed the building of some public water taps or the connection for electric current, these fulfilled the needs of this community for almost a decade.

In the mid 60s, a generation of youth emerged in Rashed. This generation was not satisfied anymore with the living conditions in which they had grown up. The youth, of both migrant and bedouin origin, shared common traits and aspirations. Many of them had left school at the age of fifteen when they received their e'edadiyyah (middle-school certificate). Their parents could, through their contacts, help them to join work at

one of the nearby factories. There, they were introduced to a "new life" where services --especially sports and recreation-- were available. The proclamation of the Socialist Youth Organization (SYO) in 1962, though mainly of a political organization, attracted many members of this young generation as it represented an important means of attaining a number of public services outside Rashed. Many of them were members of the sahat el sha'abeyyah (popular playgrounds) where they developed a network of relations with the youth of the wider community of Helwan. These new conditions helped to bridge the gap--at least temporarily--between the youth of both a'iliat and aghrab background, and united them toward the realization of common goals in their community.

Back home, these young men used to gather informally at a street corner, or in front of someone's house to exchange their newly acquired views and experiences. They had but one organized activity which they valued and maintained: the soccer team of Rashed. This team came to be the seed of the very concept of collective activity in the community.

In 1968, two factors precipitated the transformation of the informal youth gathering into an "organized" form of collective participation. The first factor was the construction of a garage for vehicles for public transportation that was undertaken by the government on the land where the youth used to play. This deprived the youth of Rashed of their own playground and the space where they used to meet. The second factor concerned three 40x40 meters basins separated by two heavily planted gisour

(retaining wall) found in Rashed. These were used as uncovered sewage disposals for the entire district of Helwan. With their new aspirations, the youth of Rashed could no longer accept the presence of these basins with all the hazards and diseases they caused to the community.

The youth of Rashed wanted to "hit two birds with one stone", they wanted to fill in the sewage basins, thus rescuing the community from the hazards they caused, then get an approval from hayy (district) Helwan to use this land for the foundation of nadi ash shabab (youth club).

This plan was presented to kibar-al-a'ilat, who were uptill then responsible for obtaining services for the community. They totally rejected the plan as they considered it to be an offence to the norms and traditions of their community. No one could accept "young men playing around in proximity to their houses". As a luxury service, this plan was considered an effort not worth making since no "good" could come of it.

Members of the soccer team had no alternative but to directly meet with the officials of the hayy. They formed a delegation that--according to them--"represented" the community of Rashed. They conveyed their proposal to the head of the district of Helwan who at the time was a high ranking army officer in charge of the hayy after the 1968 purge. He did not object to the idea on condition that the work was to be carried out in two weeks time without the requirement of government interference, or else the proposal would be cancelled.

The preparation of the site in such a short time was a challenge which the youth of Rashed met. They had two main obstacles: to organize the work and fill in the basins in time and to uproot the trees--which were considered a form of lay hold on land--from the gesour separating the basins from each other. The filling-in of the basins, which were, after all "no man's land" did not really preoccupy the youth since they knew they could do it with their "good will" and "organized effort". However, it was the second obstacle that put them in a critical situation since theirs was a community where respect for land property was a governing norm. The suggested solution was the assignment the youth of the a'ilat to cut down the trees of their own families. This solution was thought of so as to eliminate revenge attempts and to spare inter-family confrontations within the community of Rashed.

Since most of the members of the soccer team were workers in factories, filling-in of the basins had to take place in shifts. Money was collected from the team members in order to buy the necessary tools for the work. They worked at once without any government interference, except for the removal of trees. During the process, they needed the protection of the police to avoid the occurrence of any drastic confrontation.

In a period of two weeks, the site was prepared for use as a playground and a construction site. The soccer team of Rashed played a match with one of the teams of Helwan. The whole neighbourhood was invited to attend the opening ceremony during which the head of the district declared the Ministry's approval that the "new land" was the "property of the youth of Rashed".

This event initiated controversial reactions within the community.

Encouraged by their success, the youth of Rashed started to take steps towards the legalization and realization of their newly found institution. At this time the budget of nadi ash shabab consisted of membership subscriptions in addition to some donations offered by some of the wealthier members. The site was ready for the beginning of construction. Meanwhile, an engineering student was assuming the responsibility of preparing the architectural drawings of the youth club.

In contrast to the youth of Rashed, the a'ilat were deeply offended not only by the de facto situation they found themselves in, but they also disliked the successful attempt made by the youth to "act independently". The fact that a group of "young newcomers", not only violated their norms and traditions and imposed their new vision of life and needs, but also attracted their children to their side, threatened their status as kibar<sup>3</sup> --in other words as patrons of this community.

#### Rashed At The ASU: 1975

Despite their work organization and newly acquired contacts, the youth of Rashed could not provide their community with the needed services. Meanwhile, they realized that other communities with less potential in terms of collective action, enjoyed basic services due to the presence of a political representative from their respective communities.

At this time, 1975, Rashed, along with seven other communities constituted the dayerah (electoral unit of) Helwan El

Balad at the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) . Although Rashed, as a settlement of a relatively dense population, provided the bulk of voters necessary for the triumph of a candidate, it did not have a representative of its own at the dayerah. That is to say that Rashed was not using its voting power to gain access to the (ASU) through the actual election of one of its native sons. Such virtual representation did not allow the population of Rashed to benefit from any of the procured services in this dayerah since the representatives of the other settlements preferred to grant the limited obtained services to their home communities in search of more support.

The shabab of Rashed decided, then, to enter the field of politics in search for more services. Being aware of their lack of political experience, the shabab chose to make a compromise with the ASU representatives of their dayerah. They requested to have four representatives out of a total of fifteen candidates comprising the ASU unit at Helwan El Balad. These four candidates were a decisive voting power in the decision making process. The initial representatives objected and did not accept the compromise. With the failure of their negotiations, both parties agreed on leaving the result of the next elections to decide who the winner would be.

In order to prove their capabilities to the members of the other communities, the youth of Rashed decided to run in the elections and take over the fifteen seats that comprise the electoral unit. This was a new challenge they had to meet. Since they had "no alternative but to win", a well planned

strategy had to be formulated. Salem Tamma'ah, a young man of bedouin origin who was held in high esteem by both a'ilat and migrants, assumed the responsibility of "planning the game". He began his career as a worker at the silk factory along with many of his fellow migrants. Later, he was appointed to work as an official in hayy Helwan, a post through which he developed a wide network of contacts and relations that backed him up as a leader of this community. He was also an active member of the board of directors of nadi ash shabab.

Tamma'ah and his fellow members at nadi ash shabab agreed upon the "unification of all efforts" within Rashed to face "the outside enemy". They formulated a strategy which relied on two complementary aspects: the successful choice of candidates and the organization of the electoral campaign.

It was with this concept in mind that the candidates were able to run in the forthcoming election. The choice was made so as to represent as much as possible the various groups in Rashed--especially the a'ilat. This distribution of representation along group lines was meant to minimize the conflicts within the community and thus to guarantee the participation of all groups in the election. The inclusion of kibar-al-a'ilat in the representation was a successful tactic as it served several purposes. Inside the community, their inclusion would make up for the offence created by nadi ash shabab. As patrons, they would not object to the new ideas introduced by the youth in exchange for their integration in the new political patronage. Outside the community, their previous contacts and networks of relations with the kibar of the neighbouring



communities would give weight to their presence and enhance their representation.

The organization of the electoral campaign mainly relied on the efforts of nadi ash shabab in raising the electoral consciousness among the residents of Rashed. Their propaganda was based on the importance of "winning" the elections for the acquisition of basic services needed by the community. Beside loudspeakers, informal gatherings in open space and at the mastabahs of the a'ilat, the community activists thought of doubling the number of voters in Rashed by encouraging women voters to register. Free transportation to and from the police station was granted by nadi ash shabab for women voters to issue their cards, thus increasing the voting share of Rashed in the forthcoming elections.

The day of the election, the fifteen candidates of Rashed triumphed, thus exclusively retaining the seats allocated for dayeret Helwan El Balad. Only one of the candidates resigned, upon the request of the ma'mour (police officer), to give place for an educated representative from Helwan El Balad who might be of help to them. This representative was Dr. Mohamed Aly Mahgoub, now the Minister of Awqaf. Proud of their triumph, the population of Rashed was encouraged to set ambitious future plans for the procurement of services. The ASU headquarters was informally located at nadi ash shabab which, inspite of its non-political nature, provided a public gathering space where active members of the community could meet and discuss their problems.

In 1975, the ASU, after a long period of decline since Nasser's death, was dissolved. Pluralist policy was officially introduced by the government and political manaber (tribunes) were created to express left, middle, and right wings. As this new system was "transitional" by nature, and since the activists of Rashed needed a relatively long period of time to adjust, little action was taken during this period of time. One year later, the multi-party system was proclaimed. To no one's surprise, many of the members of the ASU in Rashed joined the National Democratic Party (NDP) which represented the middle wing i.e. the party in power. The NDP headquarters in Rashed, which now constituted an independent shiakhah was, again, nadi ash shabab.

The NDP, was in its first years as a "new political institution", but it maintained the characteristics that had caused the failure of the ASU, at least in being "too bureaucratized". It was only with the proclamation of el maglis el mahali (the local council) as a part of a decentralized policy that the activists of Rashed began to renew their efforts. Tamma'ah, who wisely planned the "conquest" of the ASU, was recruited by the people of Rashed to represent them at the maglis of Helwan. In addition to his credit as "the loyal son of Rashed", his former experience at hayy Helwan favoured his new position at the maglis. The supervisory nature of the latter eased the access to many of the services provided by hayy Helwan.

Through his new position, Tamma'ah provided Rashed with a number of services. These included small funds for building new extensions to nadi ash shabab, two generators for electricity,

the expansion of the water network to cover more houses, and more important was his putting an end to the "coercive measures" of building regulations applied by the hayy officials. However, the most significant contribution of Tamma'ah to Rashed was the foundation of the Community Development Association (CDA), an institution which proved to be of great importance to community action in Rashed during the following years.

#### The Community Development Association in Rashed: 1978

In 1977, the head of the Social Affairs unit at the district of Helwan suggested to Tamma'ah that a CDA be founded in Rashed. Tamma'ah in turn proposed the idea to his fellow members at nadi ash shabab. Together, the shabab proceeded in the preparation of the new institution which was seen by them as a steady means for the acquisition of services in Rashed.

The board of directors were recruited, following the successful tradition used in the ASU elections, to represent the various groups residing in Rashed. This board consisted of fifteen members who were almost the same candidates of the ASU in 1975. They were 7 from the a'ilat, 4 Sa'idis, 1 Bahrawi, 1 from Fayyoun and 2 from the Haggarah. The latter were also from a bedouin origin, but did not belong to the tribe of the 'Ayaidah. It is worth noting here that the total number of voters of bedouin origin was nine out of fifteen members. The general assembly of the CDA consisted of forty members who were at the same time members at nadi ash shabab. Tamma'ah was appointed chairman of the CDA, as it was considered the result of "his own effort".

The budget of the CDA, at the stage of formation consisted of an annual membership subscriptions of L.E. 1.2, in addition to some donations of the community members. The temporary location of the CDA was still at nadi ash shabab. A piece of land used for garbage disposal was allocated to serve as the permanent headquarters of the CDA. Work groups from nadi ash shabab were organized for the cleaning and preparation of the construction site of the CDA. One year later, i.e. in 1978, the CDA was officially declared as a semi-autonomous institution of a non-political nature.

In 1979, the CDA initiated its activities by offering services that would fulfil immediate needs of the community of Rashed at its new location. The CDA founded a nursery in one of its poorly erected rooms. The same room was used in the afternoon as a classroom to tutor young students in elementary school. Although these services were limited in terms of resources, they were positively impressive to the population of Rashed.

At the national level, a number of factors that did not exist before 1981 had a strong impact upon the nature and scale of activities undertaken by the CDA. Since Sadat's death in 1981, the Ministry of Social Affairs allocated large sums for the funding of socio-cultural clubs in order to prevent the youth--especially in low-income areas--from getting involved in activities with religio-political tendencies. The share of the CDA in Rashed from these funds was L.E. 7000 to be used for the aforementioned purpose. Meanwhile, foreign development agencies were forging new links through the Ministry of Social Affairs for

the assistance and improvement of the existing services and the creation of new ones at the community development associations in low-income areas. Moreover the upgrading project, co-sponsored by the GOE and the USAID started its activities in Rashed through the CDA, which by its "representativeness" to the community was the origin of most of the services offered to the community of Rashed. These favourable conditions coincided with a governmental campaign for the encouragement and praising of al gohoud al thatiyyah (community self-help) and al musharakah al sha'abeyyah (popular participation).

It was in the aftermath of these events that the crisis between the CDA and nadi ash shabab occurred and resulted not only in the separation of the two institutions, but also have led—for the first time in Rashed—to the factionalization of popular participation. Nadi ash shabab, which now came to represent mostly youth of migrant families constituted a front of opposition in the face of the CDA whose supporters were almost exclusively from the youth and elders of the s'ilat.

The situation was further aggravated when the members of the CDA, privileged by the position now occupied by their association, began to look down on the members of nadi ash shabab who had been until that time their equals. The contrast between the sustained manual work, undertaken by the members of nadi ash shabab in return for small funds, and the "clean" bureaucratic work undertaken by the CDA members who were now "muazzaffeen", receiving diversified large funds, crystalized the inherent contempt of manual work felt by the community. This transition

from manual to paper work was per se a symbol of upward social mobility.

Before we move to the examination of the dynamics of these new conflicts within the "communal participation" of the settlement, let us first take a look at the services offered by the community to both parties. Since 1981 and up to 1987 the CDA extended the scope of its services to the following:

- a nursery; which at the time of my field work in 87 consisted of three classrooms. It is sponsored by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Neighbourhood Urban Service Project (NUS) and the CDA itself.
- a youth club: which was mainly an afternoon activity, had some 120 members. It consisted of a library, a video club<sup>5</sup>, 2 tennis tables.
- a women's club: where women were trained for tailoring and dress making. The products of this club were mainly a part of the program of "productive family" sponsored by the Ministry of Social Affairs. There were also some computerized knitting machines and industrial sewing machines offered by the NUS to the woman's club.
- a vocational training center: this center constituted one of the major achievements of the upgrading projects in Rashed. It was totally sponsored and directed by EAJP (Executive Agency For Joint Projects). Its ownership would be transferred to the CDA when the duration of the upgrading project is over.

-A clinic: Totally equipped by the NUS.

While the CDA was flourishing due to the newly initiated services within its boundaries, nadi ash shabab was agonizing at the other side of the soccer playfield that separated the two institutions. Nadi ash shabab was under the supervision of mudireyet el shabab wal reyadah (directorate for youth and sports). It had to rely on the limited budget granted annually by the mudireyyah, in addition to the members subscriptions. These scarce resources could hardly perpetuate the existing activities of nad ash shabab. These activities were as follows:

-A nursery: which consists of two classrooms.

-A soccer field: it is situated outside the boundaries of nadi ash shabab. It is used as a public space for the whole community.

The difference in scale and nature of the services offered to the community of Rashed by the two institutions shifted the balance of power in the direction of the CDA. The question to be raised now concerns the origin of the conflict between these two institutions that were previously united for the welfare of their community. It would be quite reasonable to expect that the weaker party would be at the heart of this competitive situation. Paradoxically, it was the CDA--despite its varied resources and potentials for service procurement--that stood in competition with nadi ash shabab. This conflict will be further examined in order to understand the logic behind the procurement of services and the strategies used for their perpetuation.

### CONFLICT AND COMPETITION IN RASHED

As a heterogenous community, Rashed tended to minimize conflicts between the various groups that constitute its broad frame as a "cohesive community". This minimization was not necessarily achieved by the elimination of the origin of the occurring conflict. In Rashed a three fold strategy that aims at the reduction of conflicts within the community occurred in the following sequence; compromise, threat and abolishment.

Incorporating kibar-al-a'ilat as ASU candidates and as members of the board of directors of the CDA, as well as the proposition of redistributing the seats of the electoral unit at Helwan El Balad were all examples of the risk minimization strategies within the community of Rashed. However, the conflict between nadi ash shabab and the CDA remains the best illustration for this strategy.

As previously mentioned, the CDA received an amount of L.E. 7000 from the Ministry of Social Affairs for the foundation of a socio-cultural club for the youth of Rashed. A proposal to join the efforts of the CDA and nadi ash shabab was presented to the general assembly of the CDA. The latter was until then attended by the members of the two institutions. The proposal consisted of using the building of nadi ash shabab as the new socio-cultural club of the CDA. In exchange, the budgets of nadi ash shabab and the newly found club would be joined.

This proposal was refuted by the members of nadi ash shabab, since the budget of the socio-cultural club at the CDA equalled twelve times the budget of nadi ash shabab which did not exceed



L.E. 800 annually. Members of the latter considered such disproportionality in funding to inevitably lead to their subordination to the CDA. To an outside observer, this proposal of joining the two activities would seem as an attempt to avoid the duplication of services within the same community while leaving room for more activities to be introduced. Members of nadi ash shabab viewed this proposition as a complete take over of both past and future achievements. The shabab could not accept that the two rooms that they previously constructed with their money and effort would, so easily, become the property of the new socio-cultural club of the CDA. They also feared the control of the CDA over any further activity in nadi ash shabab, regardless of their contributions in its realization.

When the opposition of the members of nadi ash shabab became quite loud at the general assembly of the CDA, the board of directors started a process of "isolating" the shabab who constituted an opposing party. A few months later, their membership was withdrawn from the CDA.

Dismissed members, and many other members of nadi ash shabab tried, unsuccessfully, to be re-admitted by the board of directors of the CDA as active members. The latter not only rejected their request but also ridiculed them in the community. The episode ended dramatically. The chairman of the CDA was beaten in public by some of the members of nadi ash shabab, who found in this act a rescue of their self respect in the community.

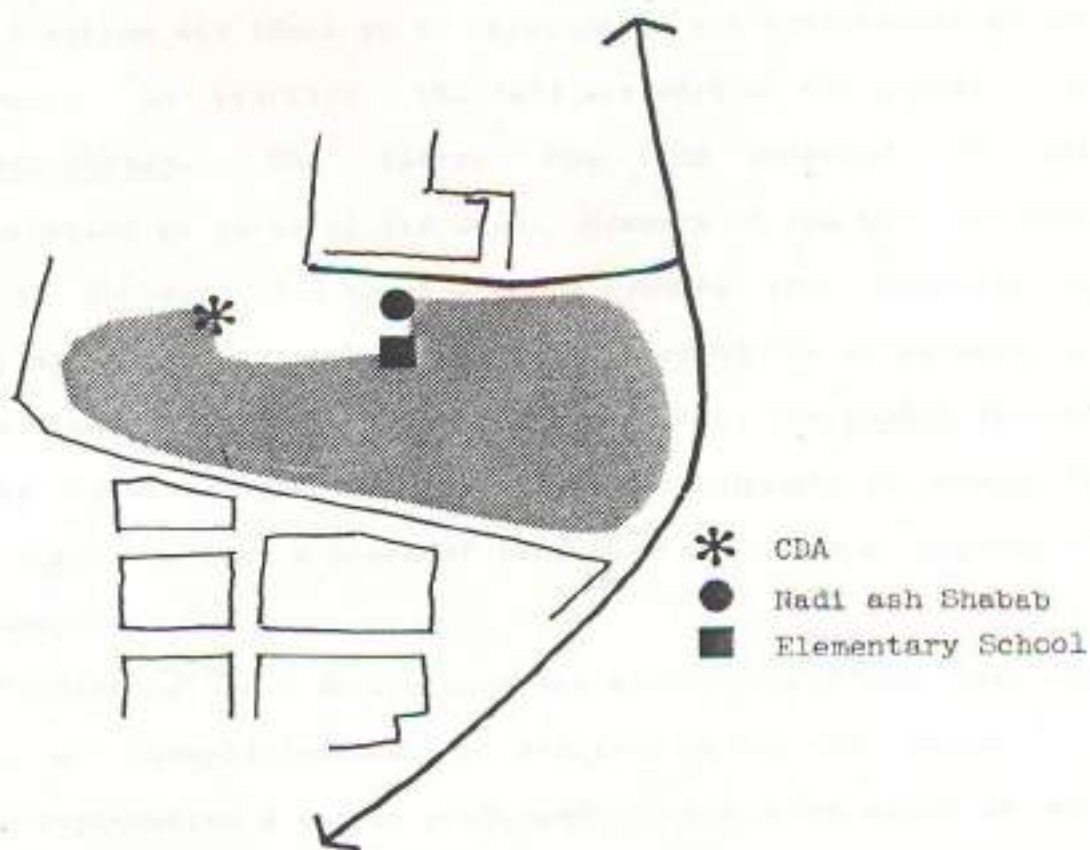


Fig. 5 Sketch Showing The Location Of the CDA, Nadi ash Shabab and the Elementary School.

A second conflict between the the CDA and nadi ash shabab illustrates how the threat to provoke people was an effective device for pressuring nadi ash shabab. The conflict resulted from the allocation of land for the erection of the elementary school in Rashed by the upgrading project <sup>7</sup>. The land was chosen by the consultant of the upgrading project. In making his choice, he was guided by the information offered by the chairman of the CDA about the vacant lands that could be used for the erection of the school (fig.5). The allocated land was close to the two small classrooms previously built by the members of nadi ash shabab to be a nucleus for a self-help school. For the project consultant,

that location was ideal as it represented the preferences of the community. In practice, the land was part of the property of nadi ash shabab. The latter had long objected to the appropriation of parts of its land. Members of the CDA insisted on that location and threatened to provoke the community by declaring that nadi ash shabab was hindering the fulfilment of such a vital activity in Rashed. Reluctantly, the shabab yielded to the threat and gave up the land. They thought it would be much wiser to lose a piece of land than to lose the support of the community.

"Isolating" as a device used for abolishing of the opposing party, as exemplified in the attitude of the CDA toward the shabab represented a rather prolonged process which aimed at the imposition of a monopoly on service procurement. It also attempted to limit of the circle of the kibar in Rashed by excluding other aspiring youth who stood in opposition to their projects. This process was manifested in two complementary ways: weakening nadi ash shabab while at the same time enhancing and strengthening the patronage of the CDA over the community of Rashed.

The attempts made by the CDA in order to weaken the position of the shabab relied mainly on taking advantage of the vulnerability of the relationship between the individuals involved in a collective activity and the community they represent. This attempt was complimented by cutting off supplies

to nadi ash shabab in order to hinder its future involvement in collective activities, thus preventing the emergence of an alternative elite in the community.

The suspension of the membership of the shabab from the CDA illustrates the devices used by the CDA in order to exclude the shabab from participating in any collective activity in Rashed. By their withdrawal, the shabab were unable to participate in the process of service procurement, and the CDA became the only channel through which any collective activity could take place. Consequently, the shabab found themselves suddenly excluded from the circle of the kibar, and unable to pursue any activity of their own.

Exclusion from the circle of the kibar was followed by a few attempts, on the part of the CDA, to reduce the status of the shabab in the community. These included preventing the shabab from benefiting from the services offered by means of the CDA as well as hindering their attempts to acquire their own services using their own effort. Thus we see how the CDA was not only aiming at weakening the status of the shabab but also actively discouraging members of the community from joining nadi ash shabab.

The building of the nursery of nadi ash shabab is an illustration of the attempt of the CDA to exclude the shabab from benefiting from their services. When the CDA inaugurated its nursery in 1979, members of the community were all encouraged to get their children enrolled. However, this service was denied to the shabab. The latter decided to found their own nursery. Their attempt to acquire funds from both hayy Helwan and the

Ministry of Social Affairs was blocked by the chairman of the CDA. He claimed at the local council, that a new nursery in Rashed would be an unneeded service and a dissipation of public wealth. A year later, the shabab acquired a small fund from the Directorate of Youth and Sports with which they furnished one of the two rooms of the nadi. It became the new nursery which was then placed under the responsibility of the treasurer of the nadi.

### Strengthening the Patronage of the CDA

#### Over the Community of Rashed

The CDA, because of its direct contacts with the authorities (the officials of the government, the upgrading project and the foreign development agencies) formed a buffer zone between the community and the outside world, and was the major channel through which information to and from the community was mediated to the outside world. This monopoly was, in itself, one of the columns on which the CDA relied to strengthen its image as a patron of the community. The following examples will illustrate how such control on the flow of information enhanced the image of the CDA.

For reasons of mere practicality, all requests concerning the digging of new cesspits, paving a street or repairing a broken water connection were to be presented to the contractor in charge through the CDA. In order to put more emphasis on its role, the CDA insisted on having written petitions for every request and that petitions should be signed by two of the

members of the board of directors of the CDA. The request to have a loan for home improvement went through almost the same procedure, in addition to a recommendation letter issued by the CDA to guarantee the eligibility of the applicant.

These two examples illustrated how paper work and routine were used to underline the efficiency and importance of the work of the CDA. However, obligatory donations or administrative fees as they were called at the CDA, represented a more material manifestation of the latter practise.

The fees were mandatory on every request made to the CDA by a member of the community while members of the CDA were exempted from these fees. These requests covered the evacuation of sewage tanks, the application forms for the enrollment of children at the nursery as well as many other services provided by the CDA. According to the chairman of the CDA, these fees were mainly imposed for an "educative" purpose. He claimed that members of the community, unless they pay for the services they get, would not preserve, value and maintain the services they were being offered. He added that the payment of these fees, really underlined the distinction between an "average" community member and a member of the CDA: a distinction that should be maintained between the service procurer and the community.

The very same idea of benefiting from every service acquired in the community, governed many of the acts of the CDA both in and outside the community. Along its history, the CDA undertook many campaigns for the collection of funds for the building of mosques in Rashed. By doing so, the CDA retained a percentage of the collected money to be included in its budget.

Moreover, it became informally recognized as the founder of the mosque as it supervised the building process thus ignoring the input of the people in financing the construction. Such attitude was further maintained in its contacts with the officials of the upgrading project.

The story of the lockers of nadi ash shabab is a good example for this broker attitude. Only once, the members of nadi ash shabab succeeded in developing contacts with the officials of the upgrading project at the Executive Agency for Joint Projects (EAJP). The latter found that the nadi could provide the community with sports and recreation services that could not be granted by the CDA. The EAJP decided to undertake the building of a few lockers and a low fence around the soccer playground. The reaction of the CDA was rather defensive. Petitions and complaints were sent to the EAJP by the CDA. They thought unfair the allocation of parts of the funds that should be going to them to another institution in the same community. As a solution, the CDA offered to be a co-partner with nadi ash shabab to both the lockers and the soccer playground. They also asked for an official declaration that this facility was granted to nadi ash shabab through the CDA. Unfortunately for both parties, this project was never undertaken.

The following year, nadi ash shabab used all its budget to build a two meter high brick-wall around its buildings. Now, it is still striving to get the EAJP to surround the soccer playground with a fence.

These incidents did not only underline the broker attitude

of the CDA, but also marked the change of its role from a non-profit association founded for the welfare of the community to an institution acting as an investment company which continuously seeks to expand its capital and resources.

#### Strategies Used by the CDA Outside the Community

The crucial importance of maintaining and strengthening the patronage of the CDA in Rashed, have shaped its relations with the agencies involved in the development of the area. New strategies and tactics were developed in order to fulfil the expected role of the CDA outside the community. For these agencies, the CDA had to be an active and ambitious institution that represents the community of Rashed. The board of directors of the CDA were quite aware of the impact of such criterion upon the donor agencies. They developed a few strategies in order to fulfil this criterion.

In order to be "representative" of the community of Rashed the CDA formed a delegation that included many of the elders of the community. The latter were recognized by many of the project officials to be the "informal leaders" of the community. Although the role of the elders was mainly restricted to settling disputes within the community, their "recognized" role was not debated by the members of the board of directors of the CDA. Rather their presence was enhanced and used for the advantage of the community. On the one hand, their inclusion in the delegation enriched the image of Rashed and fulfilled their expected "representativeness"<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand, it spared both the government and Rashed the tension that would result from



dealing with a group of young activists initiating a collective work. In fact, the young activists at the board of directors of Rashed chose to limit their role in planning while leaving the actual implementation to the other members.

The successful role distribution helped the CDA to develop the image of an "active" institution. This image was enhanced by the remarkable increase of the number of activities officially declared by the CDA during the implementation of the upgrading projects. Since the evaluation criteria for the "efficiency" of the CDA relied mainly on the diversity of its activities, the CDA at Rashed was classified among the most active associations in Helwan. Therefore, it was granted a large budget in order to perpetuate its activities. However, the reality of these activities remained questionable.

In fact, the accumulation of services by the CDA represented one of the strategies developed in order to procure the ultimate benefit from these projects and funds. In order to diversify the sources of supply, different names were given to the same activity. For example, the nursery was at the same time hadanet el khettah (nursery of the plan), nadi al tefl (the children club) as well as the nursery of the CDA. The first named activity was sponsored by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the second was furnished by the NUS while the third was financed by the CDA itself. The same applies to the women club, the illiteracy classes and the training center for women.

Another reason for such accumulation of resources, was the limited period of the development projects in Rashed. During this period the CDA accepted to temporarily become clients to

these agencies. In return, the accumulated resources during this limited period would guarantee the patronage of the CDA to the community for a long period to come.

In brief, we can claim that these uncontrolled resources had enhanced the affinity of the CDA to accumulate funds. The needs were not anymore defined, but rather they were shaped according to the available resources. It became a "right" to take whatever was offered regardless of its goals and purposes.

### Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter was to explicate the dynamics and intricacies of so called "Community Participation" as an important index of the process of transformation of the community. We have seen the way in which the history of Rashed and its specific course of development bestowed a new meaning on "Popular Participation" at the community level. We have also seen that social and political participation are inseparable, and so are social and political institutions. The evolution of the CDA, which is by definition a non-political institution was initiated by a political decision to control the youth of the community. The diversity of roles and functions played by nadi ash shabab also illustrate the same point.

Thus, social and political participation in a community like Rashed must be redefined. This redefinition was dictated by the context in which this participation took place. Institutions, both social and political, were created through the efforts, of community members for whom service procurement has always been a

central concern. The process which brought these institutions into being, in turn transformed the persons active in this process, for these acquired the status of officials or muazzaffeen. These persons used their new institutional position, created by virtue of community efforts, in creating a monopoly on the procurement of services to their communities.

This role was performed in the early stages of the development of Rashed by the elders, whom outside observers wrongly assumed to be the informal leaders of the community. However, leadership, in the sense of the ability to mobilize people towards a defined goal, existed only during special moments of the history of Rashed. Rather than leadership, it is more relevant to talk about patron/client relations as the governing norm of this community. This type of relation was perpetuated by the persons in the socio-political institutions created by virtue of community participation.

This proliferation of the social and political realms is very clear in the case of Rashed. There were no "political leaders" as such, nor were there social institutions serving the community at large. We find political contacts being used to impose a monopoly on most aspects of the social domain.

For these reasons, it becomes hard to deal with community participation as an inherent trait of the community. Such participation occurred at specific moments in the "history" of the community and for a limited period of time. Peaks of community participation almost always co-existed with the presence of a specific goal that members of the community sought

to achieve e.g. nadi ash shabab and the representation at the ASU. In Rashed, however, a defined goal by itself was not enough as a catalyst for such participation, but other factors especially the presence of a "challenge" greatly enhanced "Community Participation". The small victories of the activists in meeting these challenges were important devices used in order to get integrated in a wider network; the aims of community participation were not only the achievement of immediate goals but were consciously used to gain more recognition from, and power vis-a-vis the government. Once a successful communal effort was exerted in pursuit of sought goals, it became institutionalized; thus losing its "participatory" and "communal" characteristics. It becomes part, no matter how small, of the state apparatus.

It is because of this vulnerability of community participation to institutionalization that it was suggested, earlier in this work, to look at another participatory aspect of the community that could be hardly exposed to the hazards of institutionalization. Housing was suggested to fulfil this function as we will find out in the following chapter.

## End notes

1. For a discussion of the meanings and possibilities of the concept of popular participation see Abdallah (1980: 201-210), Ward and Gilbert (1983: 52-66), Batley (1983: 7-12) and Gran (1983: 145-169).
2. A similar process for the emergence of community organization was found by Oldham et al. in her study of Zenin, an informal settlement around Cairo (in press, 1988). Also, cited by Lobo (1983) in her description of the social organization of a Barriada of Lima, Peru.
3. The Term Kibar, as used in Rashed, does not necessarily imply seniority in terms of age but also in terms of prestige and power.
4. The electoral unit of Helwan El Balad, in 1975 at the ASU, consisted of Ezbat El Wabour, Manshiet Gamal Abdel Nasser, Helwan El Ballad, Arab Rashed, Arab Ghoneim, Kafr El Elw and Arab Kafr El Elw. The representatives were elected from the electoral unit as a whole, not necessarily one from each community.
5. This video was stolen from the CDA. When the robbery was reported to the police and the guardian of the CDA was arrested, the chairman of the CDA arranged for freeing him and informally conducted a campaign to collect money from the residents of the community to buy a new video.
6. The chairman of the CDA was then a Sa'idi migrant who took over the responsibilities of the CDA after the death of Salem Tamma'ah.
7. A similar controversy between the older generation and the Affandeyyah was observed by Oldham (1988, in press) in her study of the informal settlement of Zenin.
8. The CDA had to be cautious by ruling out any accusation that the a'ilat which are a minority in Rashed are taking over influential posts. For this reason, the chairman of the CDA was chosen to be a Sa'idi migrant, who did not "own" a house in Rashed. His main responsibilities were to maintain correspondance with donor agencies, the EAJP, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Hayy Helwan. In so doing, he acquired an informal recognition as one of the Kibar in Rashed.

## Chapter Four

### HOUSING: THE Foothold OF THE COMMUNITY

We have seen in the previous chapter how community participation loses its "participatory" and "communal" traits by its institutionalization. At this point, this participation is rendered incapable of meeting the immediate goals and challenges set by the community, yet paradoxically it retains its initial image as a representative of an "ideal" collective concern. However, the situation is different in the case of housing considered in its social meaning as the dwelling environment and not only as an individual dwelling unit. In addition to its being an important device in the process of transformation of squatter settlements, housing could enlighten us on forms of participatory action that could hardly be exposed to institutionalization.

For Rashed, as an illegal settlement growing spontaneously, the role of housing went far beyond the provision of shelter. Being, in most cases, built by its owner and resident, a house in Rashed, expressed the inclination, motivation and aspiration of its owner. Moreover, housing as a collective activity of the overall community represented the main guarantee for the persistence of the community. It was considered the main tool to be used by the community to gain power vis-a-vis the government. The more densely built up and populated, the more the community secured the perpetuation of its existence.

Bearing in mind the centrality of housing for the population of Rashed, we could see how certain actions, which were apparently individual and sporadic, were in fact an expression of

a collective consciousness. These actions, in this light, were important aspects of the process of transformation of the settlement.

In this chapter housing will be analysed in terms of the modes of production that prevailed in the community of Rashed since its foundation. This analysis was chosen as to delimit the context in which housing took place, as well as to determine the process that governed these production systems. Accordingly, the role of housing as an aspect of the community organization aiming at securing the community in its locale, will be defined in the light of this analysis.

We shall first start by the description of a model created in order to analyse housing production systems in the suburbs of third world countries. This model was chosen in order to ease our task of detecting the variables that are involved in the production of housing systems. Then, our own model of development of Rashed will be presented in the form of sequential stages defined according to the specific historical development of Rashed.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the Rashed model. The implications of the housing production systems that proved to prevail in Rashed will be reviewed in terms of their relevance to the collective consciousness of the residents of the settlement. The extent to which these systems responded to outside factors affecting the community and its power vis-a-vis the government will also be emphasized.

THE BAROSS MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF  
HOUSING PRODUCTION SYSTEMS.

In his article on housing production systems in an Indonesian town Baross (BIE: 1979) formulated an analytical framework to be used as a tool to identify, in "concrete political and technological terms", the scope of feasible housing action that could be mobilized in the case of fringe social groups.

This framework concentrates on the ways in which housing is actually produced in a particular society and how these production systems are historically defined in relation to the general modes of commodity production in that particular society. He also attempts to interpret how various systems of housing production could determine the limits of access to resources for different income groups.

In this context that Baross developed his analytical approach for the study of housing production systems as manifested at the level of the dwelling environment. This analysis was outlined in terms of the actors involved in the development process, and the roles they played, and the methods used for resource mobilization.

To acquire a better understanding of the utility/significance of this model, we should first identify the different sets of variables which Baross deemed important for his analysis, and then illustrate why he thought these to be relevant variables. These sets of variables are: the actors involved in housing production, the components of the dwelling environment



(that are objects of production) and the resource mobilization methods used by the actors in order to make feasible their participation in the production of their dwelling environment.

The first set of variables concerns the actors engaged in the housing production and their ability to gain access to and/or mobilize resources. Those who controlled resources and those who developed mechanisms to gain access to these resources are both crucial actors in the processes of social domination and commodity production. Both played an important role in shaping the settlement's production of housing.

According to Baross's model, four categories of "controllers" and their mechanisms of control can be isolated. These categories comprise: the state, the private enterprise, the co-operative/community, and the individual family. Their mechanisms of control over resources varies according to their motivations.

As an actor engaged in housing production, the state sector responds to a political pressure that motivates its organs. The private enterprise sector is motivated by the required degree of know-how for the production of housing in a particular community. While private enterprises are mainly operating on the base of profitability the co-operative/community sector, whether formal or informal, operates on the basis of community consensus on priorities. The role of the individual family, as the fourth category of actors, is determined by the degree of control it has on resources.

The second set of variables concerns the physical components of which the dwelling environment consists. They are: land,

infrastructure and shelter. According to Baross, the location and the space arrangement of a settlement determine its accessibility to the provision of infrastructure. He considers the latter to be an important factor that influences the capacity of a particular community to provide "surplus" to be used for shelter erection and improvement.

Baross documents the social organization of housing production in a particular community by correlating the three settlement components to the actors engaged in the housing production of this settlement. The result of this correlation describes the resource mobilization methods used by these actors for the production of their environment as interrelationships between the market forces and the community organization. The obtained relations reveal the process through which the settlement components are converted into commodities. These used methods and interrelationships constitute our third set of variables.

In his description of the resource mobilization methods, Baross distinguishes between the access relationship governed by the market forces and the access provided on a non-monetary basis. While the first relationship relies upon the ability of the actor engaged in the housing process to purchase services and commodities necessary for his production from the market, the second is mainly based on kinship arrangements. These arrangements guarantee the appropriation of goods and services through the traditional ties of patronage. Self-help and mutual aid often prevail in the housing production in these communities.

His typology falls then within the market/non-market dichotomy of housing production system, where the resource mobilization methods affect the social organization of the community.

In order to increase the validity of his analysis of housing production systems in a particular community, Baross thought important to focus on the "collective features" of these systems rather than on the individual incidents that would enter the process. These collective features consists of two components. The first describes the common characteristics of the dwelling group not the individual dwelling unit. The second implies that the actors involved in the housing process are not just individuals but are parts of an organized social group endowed with the necessary technical competence to engage in this process.

#### Applicability Of The Baross Model

#### To The Community Of Rashed

As we apply the Baross analytical framework to Rashed, we will not only be defining the functions of the existing social structure in this community, but also documenting the changes and transitions experienced by this community vis-a-vis the outside world.

Baross classifies communities according to his analysis of their housing production systems. He considers factors such as land, shelter and infrastructure as the main indices for his examination of the social organization and resource mobilization methods that govern the production of housing in the studied communities. His proposed model, though accounting for the

economic factors that could influence housing production, i.e. market forces and access to resources, does not consider the socio-political context in which these factors take place. According to Baross a community is studied within "specific times and places" within which the relationship between the sets of variables are considered. Such static approach fails to consider the historical development of these settlements which provides interpretations for their period of transition.

The model, therefore, lacks a flexibility which does not only hinder the analysis of the dynamic relations occurring in a community over a period of time, but also limits the scope of the inquiry within the material dimensions emphasized by the model.

In the following section the Baross model will be adapted to better serve our understanding of the communal development of Rashed: that is by supplementing the model with relevant variables as presented in the results of the fieldwork. For purposes of analysis and clarity we shall explain the development of the community of Rashed by dividing its history into three stages prior to the upgrading project. In so doing, we shall apply the Baross model to each stage; that is by first eliciting the different variables and/or set of relationships deemed essential by Baross for the understanding of housing production systems. We shall then explain how the interaction of these variables created a certain "stage" and bestowed on it its distinguishing characteristics. It is of importance to note that in so doing we are creating our own analytical model for the understanding of Rashed's development. That is to say, we are not only providing the reader with a descriptive account of the

communal development of Rashed but also presenting an analytical understanding of the development process that has taken place in the area.

#### The Foundation of Rashed: 1946-1957

In 1946, a flood left many persons in low-lands homeless. Less than fifteen afflicted nuclear families, who lost their kheish, were transferred by EL Helal Association to the higher lands where Sheikh Rashed resided. There was plenty of land, and each family began to erect a beit (house). Building the beit as such, marked the transition of this community from Arab kheish (nomadic bedouins living in tents) to Arab heit (sedentary bedouins living in houses). This transition brought with it a distinct feeling of ownership, or rather a sense of it, to this no longer nomadic population.

The beit consisted of one or two rooms built with dabsh (random rubble stone) and tawf (crushed stone and cement dust). The roofs consisted of wooden branches, tin sheets and cloth sheets covered with tawf. These materials used for the construction of the beit were gathered from the waste materials on the site or at the neighbouring factories. Then, they were recycled to be used in the building process.

The labour required for the beit erection rarely exceeded the mutual effort of the family members. The men in each family were responsible for the collection and stacking of the building material, while the girls and the women wove the bous (reed material) to be used for the ceiling and fence.

The land used for building these beyout , was in effect a "hold on land". That is to say people , in much the same way as they used to erect their kheish wherever convenient, erected their beyout. Up until and during this stage, land had no market value and was not conceived as a commodity. As far as the legality of this land appropriation is concerned little can be said. There was no explicit law to prevent or promote this appropriation. However it must be noted that the fact that Princess Fawziah was responsible for the placement of these Arab in their new locale was enough as a recognition of their legitimate right to remain there.

The area appropriated by each family varied between 1500 and 2000 square meters. This area was enclosed by a low fence of bous. It encompassed one or two rooms where the family members lived in addition to a courtyard where sheep and cattle were kept. The beyout were dispersed here and there and were generally located on high parts of the land in order to avoid the danger of any coming flood. This space utility served to provide the high degree of privacy demanded by the life style followed by people of a bedouin origin. Land distribution among newly married couples was secured by kinship arrangements and family ties.

The beyout were left without services. Water was fetched from a small canal near Kafr El Elw, or from the neighbouring factories. There was no electricity and sewage in the settlement either.

From 1946 to 1957, the number of a'ilat increased and they became well established in the area. They came to acknowledge themselves as the "owners" of the place, and acted accordingly when presenting themselves to new comers.

#### The Beginning of Commoditization in Rashed: 1957-1972

The second stage in our model of development of Rashed started in 1957 with a remarkable increase in the speed of the settlement growth. Such increase was created by two factors. The first was the declaration of the First Industrialization Plan in which Helwan was declared the industrial pole of Cairo. This declaration stimulated a surge of migration from rural areas to Cairo. The second reason is in fact related to the specific condition of land tenure in Rashed. In 1956, law No 344 was issued. This law forbade the building of houses without licences. The case of Rashed was even more complex as the beyout of the a'ilat were erected without licences on illegally occupied<sup>2</sup> land.

In an attempt to legalize their status as owners of land and shelter, the a'ilat proposed to purchase the appropriated land. Their request for obtaining legal title of ownership was turned down, yet paradoxically this helped them pronounce their sense of "possession" of the appropriated land. As a compromise between the government and the a'ilat, the latter were granted the title of Hikr ownership. This title guaranteed their right in owning what ever occupied the allocated area while paying an annual rent to the government. The a'ilat quickly moved to

acquire as much land as possible so as to declare it officially a Hikr property with the idea of selling it for profit in the future . The compromising nature of this law, which gave the a'ilat an informal recognition of land ownership, together with the increased demand on land motivated the first transformation of land/shelter into a monopolized commodity by the a'ilat.

In order to meet the increasing demand on land and shelter, the members of the a'ilat started a process of land subdivision and began to hire labourers for the erection of the "for sale beit". The area allocated for each beit was reduced to less than 500 square meters, that is less than one third the area occupied by the beit of one of the a'ilat. Land became a valuable resource that should not be dissipated. This reduction did not only highlight the difference between the two groups, but also marked the beginning of the commoditization process in Rashed.

The daily wage labourers hired for the construction of these "for sale beyout" were mainly workers at the nearby factories who needed a house in the area. They were hired by some of the members of the a'ilat to build these houses. They only received part of their wages, while the rest remained with the house owner as a 'arboun (deposit) for buying the beit.

The quality of the shelter mattered less. However, the physical structure of the beit remained unchanged; it still consisted of one or two rooms erected with dabsh and tawf, a tin roof and a courtyard surrounded by a bous fence. The material needed for the construction was either collected from the waste sites of the neighbouring factories or bought at cheap prices from the adjacent quarries.



The question of the legality of land title was not brought up by the migrant families. The land price was paid in monthly instalments which exhausted the savings of these families. Until the instalments were completed, the migrant families could undertake few improvements in the quality of their beit. While this goal was not achieved by the migrants before the late sixties, the members of the a'ilat had been going through this process many years before.

During this stage, the houses grew by increments as the family members acquired funds to buy materials for construction or were able to salvage them. These improvements were mainly confined to the substitution of the short dabsh and tawf walls by relatively taller red brick walls. The roofs were then rebuilt using transversal wood girders covered with tawf. These improvements necessitated a higher skill. The beit owners had no choice but to hire semi-skilled labourers for the execution of these improvements. In order to economize, the family members and kin and neighbours provided the needed unskilled labour. The women and the girls brought water from the public taps while the boys served as apprentices for the hired bannah (construction workers).

The amount of money required for the purchase of materials for construction and hiring of bannah came from the family savings from the monthly earnings of the head of the family and/or loans granted by the employer--usually a factory. However in many cases, these resources did not cover the required expenses so that the families often resorted to a Gam'eyyah (a

savings co-operative) among their Baladyyat (informal group from the same village), kin members as well as neighbours in a later stage.

Infrastructure continued to be unavailable in Rashed. There were only three water taps installed for public use while a few well-off families of the a'ilat succeeded in connecting their beit-s with the main water line passing through Rashed on its way to the factories. The a'ilat, privileged by their personal connections with the government officials at hayy Helwan, could easily acquire services, especially that they had the surplus cash required for this acquisition. In 1966-67, a limited network for water and electricity was installed in Rashed. The role of the a'ilat was to make the necessary contacts, while the labour and expenses required for the installation of these services were charged to the migrants. As for sewage, each family, both of a'ilat and migrants, was responsible to dig a cesspit within the boundaries of its beit. These cesspits were seldom cleared as the drainage took place through the natural absorption in the land strata.

By the end of this stage, the principle that the land/shelter had a market value became firmly rooted in the mentality of both the a'ilat and the migrants. However, the market control remained in the hands of the a'ilat. They did not only supply the new comers with land/shelter which represented a basic commodity necessary for the perpetuation of their livelihood but also provided some of these residents with work opportunities as construction labourers. Though generated for their own profit, the a'ilat claimed that these commodities were,

in fact, services to the community. This claim was strengthened by their acquisition of services for the community through their contacts and power.

#### The Institutionalization of Rashed: 1972-80

The third stage in Rashed's development started in 1972. This date, as we have seen in the previous chapter, marked the first attempts made by the community in order to be integrated in the wider metropolis of Cairo. During this stage a number of factors at both the national and community level affected the speedy growth of Rashed. At the national level, migration to the Arab oil-rich countries and the initiation of the policy of the infitah (opening) were at the heart of structural changes that occurred in the Egyptian society. Rashed's population was greatly affected by these two phenomena. Since the majority of its population was engaged in the secondary sector, they had better chances to get engaged in work abroad. This temporary migration resulted in a vast increase in the availability of cash in Rashed.

At the communal level, this stage witnessed the foundation of a number of institutions namely, nadi ash shabab and the CDA. We also find Rashed being formally represented in the NDP and the maglis el mahali. Consequently, Rashed was now, for all intents and purposes, integrated into the national socio-political structure. True this integration was still an informal one since Rashed remained, according to the authorities, an illegal settlement.

However, the creation of the above mentioned institutions and the community representation at the various political organizations existing in the country ensured Rashed's right to exist. It was a communal effort that brought into being the CDA and nadi ash shabab and which ensured the success of nominees of Rashed in the elections for the ASU and the maglis el mahali. This effort was thus institutionalized and the community was afforded the protection and security it needed to expand by having "sons" in such influential places. Members of the community were assured of its continuity and right to exist and this encouraged more investment in house improvement and reconstruction.

All these factors so far mentioned helped to strengthen the trend of commoditization that characterized Rashed during the previous stage. The land/shelter market persisted and became more rooted in the community structure. House improvements and alterations became both a basic need and a source of profit for community members.

The a'ilat continued their monopoly over lay hold on land. They appropriated more land lying at the fringes of the community. In order to meet the increasing demand on land/shelter, the area of lots allocated for sale were again reduced. The ceiling determined, as far as the surface area of lots was concerned, was 150 square meters per lot. The quality of the "for sale beit" was deteriorating since each lot comprised only one room poorly erected with dabsh and cement with a low bous fence to determine the boundaries of the lot.

The purchase of these subdivided lots was not restricted to the newly arriving migrants to Rashed. In effect, many of the migrants who arrived in Rashed a few years earlier were only able at this stage to purchase a house of their own. They were until then living in rented rooms at the house of their baladyyat. It was during this stage that "house ownership" became an important factor in determining the social status of a migrant living in the community of Rashed. House ownership gradually developed to be the most important investment a member of the migrant community could realize in Rashed.

This stage was also characterized by a heavy input in the finance for house improvements and reconstruction. While house improvements were undertaken by both a'ilat and migrant families as an investment in themselves house reconstruction was restricted to the a'ilat.

In the previous stage, the first floor of houses was fortified and upgraded. In this stage house improvement came to imply the building up of second and third stories. This was due, not only to the scarcity of land available for purchase, but also as a result of the preference of these migrant owners to invest their already acquired capital--land and improved shelter--by building one or two units for the purpose of renting them out. They also had an eye out for the future. These units were often built as future houses for their children when they get married. These additions were a sure investment as far as the size/value of their available capital was concerned.

For the a'ilat, house improvement was not a viable alternative. The renting out of houses conflicted with the norms and values adhered to by the a'ilat. Therefore, it did not make sense for them to expand their houses since this expansion would never generate an income for them. Since the size of their land holding was on average a very large one, as previously mentioned, it was a common practice to give sons who were getting married a piece of land upon which they could build new houses, rather than living in additions in the family house.

Consequently, the a'ilat chose to reconstruct, rather than improve, their own house. House reconstruction had to take place in the shortest possible time because of the legal stipulation connected to Hikr ownership. According to this stipulation once the actual house was removed, a person's right of ownership of land upon which a house had existed fell. Through their system of relations and connections, initiated and maintained by the sons of a'ilat, the former were represented in various socio-political institutions that had come into being in Rashed during this stage. The interjection of the authorities could be temporarily stalled until new houses were built in place of the old ones.

The "fluidity" of the family savings dedicated to house improvements and additions did not affect the existing patterns of borrowing and savings co-operatives. Rather, these savings were used as an effective additional resource to be mobilized.

However, it was common at this stage for many of the house owners to refrain from participating in the construction work for the new additions and improvement. The absence of many of these house owners, who were at the same time working abroad, limited

their participation into the provision of the cash required for the new constructions. The wife, who usually remained in Rashed, was responsible for the management and supervision of the building process. Gradually, this new division of labour prevailed in Rashed. It became a sign of wealth to leave the construction operation to the meqawel (small local contractor), even at a higher cost.

This newly instilled attitude, together with the surplus in savings, resulted in a remarkable improvement in the building quality of the houses. Reinforced concrete skeletons and red brick partitions were preferred by community members during this stage. Large glass and wood windows and balconies replaced the high small openings of the old houses. In brief, the houses adopted a more urban style.

This "modern" look of the houses, which required the availability of organized skilled labour, together with the absence of the head of the family, precipitated the emergence of the meqawel as a replacement to the bannah. Being a meqawel in Rashed was not an easy task. The person should have an asl (origin) to refer to in the community. This was important as he was not only to be trusted to deal with the female head of the family in the absence of the house owner, but also to manage the valuable family savings in the implementation of the house improvements and additions .

During this period of time, many of these meqaweleen were

In this stage, the settlement was better provided with social and physical infrastructure. The youth enjoyed the services offered by nadi ash shabab and the CDA. A nucleus for the elementary school was founded. Meanwhile, many of the houses were connected to the expanded networks for potable water and electricity. The inhabitants of Rashed paid for the acquisition of these services, which did not only satisfy their immediate needs but also provided them with a legal "proof" from the government that they were living in a place--sooner or later-- to be recognized as part of the metropolis.

As a result of the vast increase in the dwelling units in Rashed, the sewage became a serious problem. With time, the natural soil became saturated and could not absorb more. The sewage tanks needed frequent evacuation as they were filled rapidly or else the house would be inundated with the liquid sewage disposal.

By the end of the seventies, the trend of commoditization that prevailed in Rashed reached its peak. The migrant/owners got involved in the housing market as proprietors of dwelling units for rent. Some of them attempted to enter the domain of land speculation, which was restricted to the a'ilat, by selling parts of their own land. However the a'ilat were still in control of the lay hold on land while their sons monopolized the building sector as the local meqaweleen of Rashed.

The increased commoditization of Rashed was underlined by a change in the social values that had previously governed the community. Manual work came to be despised, especially by those



who succeeded in accumulating savings either by working abroad or getting engaged in an infitah work opportunity.

#### The Upgrading Project in Rashed: 1980-1987

The community of Rashed was subject to a number of factors that characterized this stage. At the national level, the infitah and the temporary migration to the sister Arab countries became part of the overall culture of the Egyptian society. Also, the growing interest of foreign development agencies in undertaking projects in Egypt was a characteristic of that period. In Rashed, this interest manifested itself through the initiation of the upgrading project of the environment of six informal communities in Helwan. The project guaranteed the provision of basic services to the community of Rashed in addition to some loans dedicated to house improvements.

This project brought with it new hopes for the community to get formally and legally recognized by the government, especially that the legalization of land titles of the owners was among the main targets to be met by the project.

Another factor that affected housing production in Rashed during this period was the waves of inter-cairene migrants who came to Rashed in search for a shelter. Their demand stimulated the land/shelter market in the area. Although they did not bring about basic qualitative changes in the modes of housing production in Rashed, these two factors brought to being the main characteristics of the previous stage: the control of the a'ilat over the land/shelter market and the increased commoditization of housing in Rashed.

For the a'ilat, the upgrading project was a green light which allowed them to maintain and spread their control over the land/shelter market. They moved quickly and appropriated a vast area to the East of the initial settlement of Rashed. They gave it the name of Rashed El Gedidah. They subdivided the whole area into small lots, each of less than 50 square meters each. The lot consisted of a red brick wall of 40 cm and a small room without a ceiling or windows. These lots were separated by narrow winding streets.

In order to protect their newly founded settlement, the a'ilat undertook the construction of two mosques, one to the North and another to the South. The barakah of these religious buildings was not what the a'ilat relied upon. They counted on the priority of the mosques to be connected with the water/sewage network of Helwan. This service, once installed, would allow the new owners to apply for these services in return for a reasonable fee.

House improvements took place intensively during this stage. The provision of the HILP stimulated the urge of the owners, both migrants and a'ilat for improving, adding to and reconstructing their own houses. The limited period of the project shaped the way in which many of the house owners decided the timing and scale of the needed improvements. Tempted to benefit from the offered facilities, many of them mobilized their resources in order to carry out maximum improvements in the shortest time.

These improvements required a financial input that often exceeded their existing resources, even with the use of Gam'eyyah savings and borrowings<sup>3</sup>. They finally resorted to a process of

building by "instalments". The process was to pay the available amount of money, usually mobilized as mentioned above, to the meqawel. While this amount served as a deposit for the undertaken construction, the rest of the expenses were refunded in monthly instalments from the profit obtained from renting out the units built by virtue of these improvements.

The house improvements, stimulated by the provided loans, resulted in the flourishing of the construction sector in Rashed<sup>4</sup>. The local contractors took advantage of the high demand on their work and imposed their terms. The house owner had to sign a cheque of an undetermined amount to be left with the meqawel as a guarantee. Moreover, ten percent of the total amount required for the implementation of house improvement was added to the overall cost. This addition was accepted by the residents of Rashed as a compensation of the increasing prices of the building materials. The meqaweleen of Rashed prospered not only from the abundance of work in the area but also because of their new role in financing house improvements. This role put them in the status of the kibar in their area.

Although these improvements brought about an amelioration of the housing standard at the domestic level, they were at the heart of the deterioration of the overall environment of the settlement. The average height of the houses in Rashed became two stories. This height, being disproportional with the width of the streets, deprived the units at the ground floor from ventilation and lighting. Home privacy was violated at all directions, especially with the increasing number of strangers arriving to

Rashed looking for a shelter. The population of Rashed seemed to care less for the perpetuation of their norms and traditions which distinguished them from the dwellers of the city, while looking for increasing their investment.

The installation of infrastructure became the responsibility of the upgrading project at this stage. The sewage network was implemented and waiting for its connection with the main sewage line in Helwan. Although the immediate impact of this service was not felt by the inhabitants of Rashed, this installation provided them with an additional recognition of their right to exist.

This stage ended with the completion of the project works in Rashed. However, this project left the community with new concepts and aspirations. Many of the inhabitants were now introduced and trained to live indebted in return of a living standard that exceeded their available resources.

#### THE RASHED MODEL: Discussion and Conclusion

After the review of the various stages of development of Rashed, let us examine how these stages expressed a collective consciousness among the members of the community which resulted in the production of their dwelling environment.

In the stages of development of Rashed we have described previously, we could detect the implications of the social stratification in governing the motivations and aspirations of the community as far as housing was concerned. Since the beginning of commoditization of Rashed, back in 1957, the goal of both migrants and a'ilat became how to invest their capital. The difference in the modes of investments depended upon the

accessibility of the actors involved in the production of housing to the resources to be mobilized in order to meet this goal.

The a'ilat, being advantaged by their accessibility to land, which represented the most valuable and effective resource as far as housing was concerned, were ahead in the articulation of the production of housing as a commodity. The migrants, on the other hand found in their temporary migration to the Arab oil-rich countries a means of accumulating savings in order to bridge this gap. Their savings were heavily put into improving their houses and hence their social status in the community.

The installation of infrastructure in Rashed had many implications in providing the required financing necessary for the improvement of the dwelling environment. However, its major implication remained in the community's gain of power vis-a-vis the government.

Since its foundation, the service procurement in Rashed had been conceived by members of the community as an "informal" recognition by the government of their right to exist and remain settled in the area. This recognition, though informal, instilled in the community the sense of security which encouraged its members to construct sturdier houses built up with expensive building material.

With the institutionalization of Rashed--the beginning of the works of the upgrading project--this recognition became formalized. However, the problem of the legality of land ownership was not yet settled. The government, loaded with responsibilities, came to acknowledge the efforts of the community in providing self-help solutions for their problems.

This acknowledgement saved the community the trouble of entering into actual confrontation with the government. After giving so many guarantees to the community, and thus bringing into being their sought security, the government could not, without seriously contradicting itself, threaten the right to exist of the community of Rashed.

The ambivalence of this situation was used by the service procurers for their own interests. The members of this group, though aware that they had not been actually engaged in any collective activity, were keen to preserve this acknowledged image in order to acquire further services that would perpetuate both the government and community support.

## End Notes

1. See for example the case of Sri Lanka in "The Role Of Housing in Promoting Social Integration" New York: 1978. Also see the discussion of the impact of improving houses in social integration in the physical integration in "Physical Improvement of Slums and Squatter settlements". Nairobi: 1978.
2. For a discussion of the violation of the building laws and regulations that forbid squatting and illegal construction, see Ashour 1986 pp. 28-31. Also see Shoheib: 1985 and Ibrahim: 1986.
3. For a review of the various approaches for the finance of Low-Income housing see "Non-conventional Financing of Housing For Low-Income households". New York: 1978. Also see Non-profit Housing Associations: Organization, financing and structural Integration". New York: 1975.
4. For an analysis of the sector of building and construction over the period 1974-82 see Ghoneim: 1986 pp. 345-368.

## Chapter Five

### CONCLUSION

This thesis was primarily written to explore and explain the various factors governing the process labelled "Community Participation" as an index of the process of transformation of squatter settlements. The importance of this issue rests on two factors. First is the stress which international development agencies lay on "community participation" as an alternative development approach adopting a grass-root perspective. Second comes the affinity that the government of Egypt has developed for enhancing "community participation" and the implications of such attitude. The government believed that such participation would lead the community to share the burden of supplying services. This belief was even strengthened through foreign agencies undertaking development projects in Egypt.

In an attempt to understand the reality of the process of transformation of an illegal settlement to one that has been formally recognized, we have chosen the informal squatter settlement of Rashed as our case study. The choice was made on the basis of the vital role played by its inhabitants in the creation of their environment. As an illegal settlement, Rashed grew in a spontaneous manner. This meant that the residents of the area had to group together and act as a cohesive mass in order to resist the outside threat of removal.

Housing, as a social process articulated in a physical form, is in fact an expression of a collective consciousness. People,



in controlling the production of their dwelling environment, are also adapting themselves to cope and overcome outside pressures and government impositions. As a community ignored by the government, Rashed and its people were compelled to develop its own means of survival. In effect, the physical presence of Rashed could be considered an expression of an instance of community participation since the government did not interfere or intercede in its creation and development.

In 1980, the co-sponsored project by the GOE and the USAID for the upgrading of the environment of Rashed was initiated. This project was in fact the first instance in which the government directed its efforts in a concentrated form to the community and its development. This strong informal presence had its effects on the course of community action in Rashed. Based on the available information concerning community participation, before and during the project implementation, we can trace the course and product of community participation at both stages.

Before the upgrading project was introduced, participation was temporary and goal oriented rather than being directed to long term activities. People exerted a collective effort only when faced with a problematic situation. Often enough, when the goal was reached and the situation resolved, this collective participation was simultaneously institutionalized thus losing its "communal" or grass root character.

In attempting to "develop"/upgrade the community, the government--influenced by outside agencies--sought to relieve itself of part of the financial burden of development by mobilizing the local residents, i.e. encouraging community

participation. However, its understanding of community participation proved to be very misleading when applied to this case, since the main concern of the government was to get the burden off its shoulders to whoever may be ready to take it regardless of the issue of "participation". In addition, the collective effort exerted by members of the community for the realization of public goals has proven to be an insufficient criterion for the understanding of community participation if isolated from the context in which it is taking place. The process of housing production is a complementary arena, that, if explored, might indicate new aspects related to community participation shedding light on the potential of a community in mobilizing its resources to the ultimate. In this sense, then, we can safely argue that though outside intervention--in the form of the upgrading project--yielded positive output in terms of services and infrastructure, it had negative consequences on the local politics of the community.

At the popular level, government intervention initiated a radical change in community action in Rashed. In the face of money and attention directed to the community by the initiation of the time-limited upgrading project, members of the community managed to adapt themselves and their tactics so as to maximize their benefit from the project regardless of the common good. The abundance of money and services created by the upgrading project instilled the residents with aspirations that exceeded their resources. The population of Rashed were therefore put in a situation where they could no longer act collectively to attain

their goals independently from the government or any other institution. Rather, community participation withered away to give way to individualism and a strong patron-client relationship that contradicted the "democracy" of community participation. Community effort was turned to be exerted for the purpose of laying the burden of service procurement on the institution or the government rather than the populace. Activists, who at one point suffered injustice and hence mobilized their fellows into action, became the very pivot of the institutionalization process. Having moved people to action, they are likely to assume the responsibilities of these institutions, thus becoming the new patrons of the community.

The role of patrons was quite acceptable by the large community and was only denied by those who were excluded from this patronage. That made the concept of representation, around which revolves democracy become overwhelmed by the strong patron-client relationship operating in the area, out of context in Rashed. In this sense, it is important to distinguish here between patronage and leadership in Rashed. While leadership existed in an acute form at times when truly communal efforts were made to address needs expressed, patronage prevailed regardless of crises taking place at the community level.

That is to say that whereas the upgrading project aimed at the decentralization of Egyptian local politics and the empowerment of small communities by instilling them with the ability and resources to depend on themselves, it accomplished the exact opposite in Rashed. This community, which had previously relied almost exclusively on its own resources to

develop, change and grow, was now in a state of dependence on the macro-level state apparatus. We have to repeat here that evaluating the heavy government input into Rashed through the upgrading project and other agencies, as well as their implications for the community, falls outside the scope of this work. However, it would be hard to avoid wondering about the disturbance it brought into the community, and the effects it had on community participation.

## Bibliography

- Abdallah, Ahmad. 1986. "Popular Participation in the Cairo District of Ain El Sera". Africa and the Transitional Association Network. Union of International Association. Brussels.
- Abu-Lughod, Janet. 1977. "Migrant Adjustment to City Life: The Egyptian Case". Arab Society In Transition. Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Nicholas Hopkins, eds. pp. 391-405.
- . 1981. "Strategies for the Improvement of Different Types of Lower Income Urban Settlements in the Arab Region". The Residential Circumstances of the Urban Poor in Developing Countries. Praeger, USA. pp.116-134.
- Ashour, Ayman. 1987. Al Irtiqaa Bil Bi'ah Al 'Umraneyyah Fil Madinah. (The Upgrading of the Urban Environment). MA Thesis. Cairo: Ain Shams University.
- Baross, Paul. 1979. The Analysis of Housing Production Systems: Bandung, Indonesia. Baucentrum International Education. Rotterdam.
- Batley, Richard. 1983. "Participation in Urban Projects: Meanings and Possibilities". Evaluating Community Participation in Urban Development Projects. Proceedings of a workshop held at DPU. 14th of January. Caroline Moser, ed. UNRISD Publications. pp.7-12.
- Blake, G.H. & Lawless, R.I., eds. The Changing Middle Eastern City. Croom Helm, London: 1980.
- Castells, Manuel. 1983. The City and the Grassroots: A Cross Cultural Theory Of Urban Social Movements. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Davidson, Forbes. 1984. "Ismailia: Combined Upgrading, sites and projects in Egypt". Low-Income Housing in the Developing World: The Role of Sites, services and Settlement Upgrading. Geoffery K. Payne, ed. 1984. pp.125-145.
- El Messiri, Sawsan. 1987. Al Musharakah Al Sha'abeyyah Fi Nasak Al Iwa'a Fi Misr (Popular Participation In Housing Systems In Egypt). Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Egyptian Architects. 26-28 April, 1987.
- El Sayed, Ahmad Lotfi. 1935. Kaba'il Al 'Arab Fi Misr. (The Bedouin Tribes in Egypt). Cairo.

- Ghoneim, Adel. 1986. Al Namuthag Al Misry Le Ra'asemaleyat Al Dawlah Al Tabe'a: Derasah Fil Taghayyurat Al Iktisadiyah Wal Tabakiah Fi Misr 1974-1982 (The Egyptian Example of Dependent State Capitalism: A Study of Economic and Class Changes in Egypt 1974-1982). Cairo: Dar El Mustakbal Al Arabi.
- Gran, Guy. 1983. Development by People: Citizen Construction of a Just World. Praeger New York.
- Howell, Sandra, Abdel Hadi, Aleyya and Abdellatif, Ayman. 1981 Semi Public Spaces as Affordances. Cairo.
- Ibrahim, Abdel Baki and Ibrahim, Hazem, eds. 1986. Al Irtiq'a Bil Bi'sh Al 'Umraneyyah Lel Mudun. (The Upgrading of the Urban Environment of the City). Cairo: CPAS.
- Ibrahim, Saad Eddin. 1982. The New Arab Social Order: A Study Of the Social Impact of Oil Wealth. London, Westview.
- Ikram, Khalid. 1980. Egypt: Economic Management In a Period of Transition. A World Bank County Economic Report. USA.
- Lobo, Suzan. 1982. A House of My Own: Social Organization in the Squatter Settlements of Lima, Peru. Arizona: University of Arizona Press.
- Lowe, Stuart. 1986. Urban Social Movements: The City After Castells. Macmillan Education LTD., London.
- Metwalli, Magdah. 1987. Al Musharakah Al Sha'abeyyah a Dorah Fi Tawfir El Ma'wa. (Popular Participation and its Role in Providing Shelter). Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Egyptian Architects. 26-28 April, 1987.
- Miniawy, Hani. 1987. Dor Al Mukhattet Wal Me'mary Al Misry Fi Tawgh Al Musharakah Al Sha'abeyyah Fi Mashar'e Iwaa Man La Ma'awa Lahum (Role of the Egyptian Planner and Architect in the Orientation of Popular Participation Projects for the Provision of Shelter for the Homeless). Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Egyptian Architects. 26-28 April, 1987.
- NCSCR, MOHR and USAID. 1979. Arab Rashed: A Case Study of an Urban Settlement in Greater Cairo. (unpublished report)
- . 1979. Case Study of Urban Settlements : A Multidisciplinary Approach. (unpublished report)
- . 1981. Helwan New Community and Upgrading Areas Implementation Plans. (unpublished report)
- . 1984 Housing and Community Upgrading for Low-Income Egyptians. (unpublished report)

- Oldham, Linda, El-Hadidi, Hager and Tamma'ah, Hussein. "Towards a Typology Of Informal Communities in Cairo". Cairo Papers In Social Sciences. vol. 10, Monograph 4, Winter 1987 (in press).
- Ramadan, Ramadan M. "Iskan Dhawi Al Dakhl Al Munkhafid Bayn Al Salbeyyat Wal Egabeyyat". (Low Income Housing: Positives and Negatives). Alam El Bena. Issue No. 55.
- Shoheib, Kamal Sabri. "Al Iskan Wal Tashri'at". (Housing and Legislations). Alam El Bena. July/August, 1985.
- Springborg, Peter. 1979. "Patterns of Association In the Egyptian Political Elite". Political Elite in the Middle East. George Lencowski, ed. London.
- Taher, Nadia. 1986. "Social Identity and Class in A Cairo Neighborhood". Cairo Papers in Social Sciences. vol.9, Monograph 4, Winter 1986.
- United Nations Report. 1978. Non-Conventional Financing of Housing for Low-Income Households. New York.
- . 1975. Non Profit Housing Associations: Organization, Financing and Structural Integration. New York.
- . 1978. The Role of Housing In Promoting Social Integration: The Case of Sri Lanka. New York.
- . 1984. The Social Impact of Housing: Goals, Housing, Social Indicators and Popular Participation. New York.
- UNCHS HABITAT. 1984. Community Participation in the Execution of Low Income Housing Projects. Nairobi.
- . 1978. Physical Improvement of Slums and Squatter Settlements. Nairobi.
- USAID. 1984. Housing and Community Upgrading for Low Income Egyptians. Mid project Evaluation of the Community Upgrading Component. USAID project # 263-0066. Cairo.
- Ward, Peter and Gilbert, Alan. 1983. "Comparative Government Experience: Who Wants Participation? The Government or The Community?". Evaluating Community Participation In Urban Development Projects. Proceedings of a workshop held at the DPU, 14th of January. Caroline Moser, ed. pp.52-66.
- Zakariah, Mona. 1987. Al Musharakah Al Sha'abeyyah Fi Eskan Man La Sakan Lahu. (Popular Participation In Providing Housing for the Homeless). Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Egyptian Architects. 26-28 April, 1987.