

A Portrait of Perseverance:

A Glimpse Into the Life of One Family in

Edehara, Tunisia

Kathryn Graves Tindell

December 2008

Butler University and SIT Tunisia

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	.....	3
Introduction	.....	4
Ch 1 The End	.....	6
Ch 2 The Beginning	.....	7
Ch 3 Breaking Down Again	.....	8
Ch 4 The Formation	.....	11
Ch 5 Into the Fire	.....	14
Ch 6 Layers	.....	17
Ch 7 Too Rough	.....	18
Ch 8 Back to the End	.....	19
Ch 9 Tea Time	.....	21
Ch 10 The Eldest	.....	23
Ch 11 The Youth	.....	24
Ch 12 The Return	.....	26
Research Methodology	.....	27
Limitations of Research	.....	30
<i>Appendix A</i>	.....	35
<i>Appendix B</i>	.....	36
<i>Appendix C</i>	.....	37
<i>Appendix D</i>	.....	37

Acknowledgment

I would like to first express gratitude to the SIT Tunisia program and CEMAT for making this research possible. A special thank you should also go to Professors Mounir Khelifa and Hadhami Hichad, who ensured my safety and security throughout the fieldwork process as well as for their continuous encouragement. I would like to acknowledge Professor Mohamed Kerrou for his outstanding advising for the duration of the Independent Student Research period. To my new family in Bynzerte, thank you for your hospitality and your willingness to help with all things and accepting me in as a daughter and a sister. Also, I could not forget to thank my parents who have ceaselessly told me to chase my dreams, even when it meant allowing their daughter to come all the way to Tunisia. Thank you for your desire to see me fly.

Lastly, a special thank you to my friends in Edehara. My seven days with you have truly impacted my life, and I am thankful for having had the opportunity to meet you and to have a week to learn from you. This project could not have been accomplished without you. Thank you for all of your hard work and your endless perseverance. You have taught me so much. I will not forget you. Until I see you again, Ayishek.

Introduction

As I traveled throughout Tunisia I saw many people and places, but I was never as deeply moved as by the people of Edehara, a village about twelve kilometers outside of Sejenane in the Northern Mountains of Tunisia. Upon my first visit, the women demonstrated the various steps to make their pottery, allowing us a glimpse into their work, which is quickly becoming world-famous. When I returned to the capital city of Tunis and spoke of how enamored I was with the women of Edehara or Sejenane, I was surprised that many people did not share my feelings. Many tried to correct my view, explaining that the people of Edehara are lazy and living in poverty because they lack the motivation to change. But, in that single visit, I knew I saw something other than laziness, and I became determined to find out what it was.

After spending a week in their midst, doing my best to taste what their lives are like, I now have an appreciation for how hard they work. I can conclude with certainty that the women of Edehara are not lazy, but rather persevering in the face of adversity. Over the course of the week, I collected a lot of data through observations and conversations about the women, pottery, education, and marriage. As I thought about how to present this data, I was forced to search for the purpose behind my writing. What did I want my audience, whomever this paper may reach, to glean from my week in Edehara?

My desire in writing this paper is to allow the people of Edehara themselves to demonstrate to the reader how hard they work and how little they receive in return. I want the reader to understand the changes taking place in the mindset and the challenges facing this new generation of youth in Edehara. I want those who have passed judgment on Edehara to reconsider their opinion of it before labeling it's inhabitants as lazy and the source of their own poverty.

What follows is a short story providing a glimpse into the life of Naïma¹ and her family. The entire story is based on fact, each person is real in every detail and each event described occurred; however, the sequence of events is fictionalized. For example, I did not see the pottery made from beginning to end, but rather saw different steps of the process throughout the course of my seven days. In total, I did view every step except for retrieving the clay from the mountains, but as they told many stories about this, I have a fairly accurate idea of how it would have happened had I experienced it myself. For fluency's sake, I detail the process in an orderly fashion rather than how I actually viewed it, placing the steps from beginning to end.

Also, I did not see Naïma herself doing each step of the pottery, but at times observed her mother or eldest sister. However, as mentioned in the two sections following the story explaining my methodology and problems, this is a culture where everything is learned from watching and repeating, and therefore the method for making the pottery has changed very little from generation to generation. So, it can be assumed that Naïma would use an identical procedure as her mother. In the narrative, the entire pottery-making process is shown with Naïma doing the action, again to give the story fluency.

I believe that this short narrative accurately portrays the lives of the women in Edehara I grew to know and cherish over those seven days. Following the narrative are two short sections detailing the methodology of research and the limitations of this project. At the conclusion of this paper, I hope that I will have justified my description of these women as perseverant rather than lazy or unmotivated and will have given reason to those who have previously judged them as such to reconsider their opinion.

¹ All names of the family members in Edehara were changed to protect their privacy.

Chapter 1 The End

I could not believe the words that were leaving Naïma's lips, carried by the biting wind to my ears. I concluded I must be misunderstanding the language as my familiarity with her rural pronunciation of numbers was shaky. Or perhaps I was thinking milleems² when she really meant dinars³. But, by the wetness in Naïma's chocolate brown eyes I knew I had understood completely. Naïma was leaning with shoulders slumped in a posture of defeat against the inside of the compound wall, a concrete envelope for what she called home before moving into her husband's compound⁴ after her marriage: her father's house, a small garden, a concrete courtyard, the outhouse, and the newly finished upper floor for her eldest brother.⁵

On normal mornings, Naïma greeted me with four gentle kisses and a slightly upturned grin, as her striking, toothy smile was saved for her nearly four year old son or moments of pleasure in clever comments. However, on this particular bitter and muddy morning, as she tugged me inside the compound she did not even try to force a smile, but allowed her disappointment to gloom over.

“Eight hundred milleems, only?”

All Naïma could manage was a single nod as she kept her eyes down on my mud-covered shoes. I was unsure of what to say next, and in silence allowed my eyes to flow over my new friend. My eyes settled on her hands which were resting gently on her ballooning stomach holding her second child. Her nails were short and unable to hide the dirt-orange clay staining her fingertips despite countless scrubblings. Her fingers were thick with strength from kneading clay and molding cooking-ware, vases, and animals, while her chapped knuckles bore witness to

² 1 dinar has 1000 milleems, Tunisian currency

³ Dinar is the Tunisian currency. At the time this paper was written one dinar equaled 0.72 dollars

⁴ See appendix B

⁵ See appendix C

the persistent exposure to the blistering cold winds of Edehara. As I thought back over the week I had spent with Naïma, I realized that up until this moment I had never seen those hands at rest. And all that work, weeks spent with hands deep in clay, given away for the dismal sum of eight hundred milleems, while those who had just purchased the freshly made pottery will make a profit of ten or twenty times that much just an hour or so away down the bumpy road in a world Naïma knows not of.

Chapter 2 The Beginning

The process of creating this precious pottery begins with a trek three or four kilometers from home; not along a sunny, paved road with a parasol, but up a daunting mountain where Naïma cuts her own path through the trees and shrubs as it erases her footsteps behind her. This trip from home is made about once a month during the warmer seasons to collect the red clay from the mountains of northern Tunisia. This particular clay is unique in character and has been used by the peoples of Sejenane for countless generations to create what is now world-renowned “Sejenane pottery” thanks to globalization and increased tourism in North Africa. The women face the mountain together in small groups and carry as much clay as their backs will allow them, often fifteen to twenty kilos a person. Then, with their burdens heavy laden, they return to their respective homes.

Naïma, upon returning home alone, drops her load onto a plastic tarp held in an abandoned tire, now and again the toy of her young son, Kareem. As this clay will, in time, be the source of income for her family, Naïma takes special caution to protect it from the coming winds and rains, wrapping the clay in a plastic tarp and throwing rocks down on top to secure the loot. This treasure from the mountaintop will, with much time, hard labor, and heat, become between twenty to thirty pieces of pottery destined for various domestic uses. As this glimpse

into the making of pottery falls two weeks before the “Aiyed Kabeer”⁶ in Tunisia, Naïma is solely focusing on molding the “kanoon”⁷ as it is much in demand because it will be used to cook the meat of the sacrificed sheep. But for now, the clay sits and waits for the completion of the next step before reemerging from the tire.

Chapter 3 Breaking Down Again

Naïma often begins her work around five, waking before the sun by an internal alarm. On this particular morning, Naïma sits upon an old rug, right leg tucked around her and left leg extended over the dry earth. Next to her lies the remains of a broken vase, she once carefully painted with vegetable oils to have flowers and vines winding around, among other pieces of broken pottery. She picks up the handle of the vase, looking at it gingerly before placing it on the large, yellow stone sitting before her. Did she pause for just a moment to think about the hours of work that went into making this now discarded piece, once meant for a mantel, now doomed to be crushed and scattered among the pieces yet to be created from the tire’s heart of clay? In Naïma’s right hand she holds another stone with which she begins to crush the pottery back into dust from which it came. With each forceful strike, a little more of the vase breaks off and falls around the rock. The larger pieces are brought back for another beating until the piles of brown dust around the rock lay uniform in size and unrecognizable from the vase it once was. Dawn and pottery break simultaneously around her.

She allows herself pause to fix breakfast for her hungry husband and child, perhaps taking a moment to notice her own hunger as well, and then spends some time cleaning around her two-room home. She returns to the stone, now waiting for her in full sunlight, for another

⁶ The Aiyed Kabeer is a holiday celebrated throughout the Muslim world in which every family reenacts the sacrifice of a ram God provided for Abraham in place of his son. After sacrificing a ram, many family cook “Mishwe” by grilling the meat over a “kanoon”.

⁷ The “kanoon”, كانون, is made especially in Sejenane and around the country, is in demand around this holiday. For a picture of the smaller version of the “kanoon,” see Appendix D

few hours before lunch. Kareem plays with a ball around the yard, laughing to himself as he tosses it away and stumbles across the yard to retrieve it. Naïma often stops her work to watch her son or whisper something into his ear, the stone hovering, forgotten, above the pottery shards. By the time lunch needs to be prepared, all of the broken pottery is smashed and at rest around the big rock like brownish-red hills at the base of a craggy mountain.

Once the sun has passed through half of the sky, all mouths are well fed, and the desire of the little one for a yogurt from the corner store is met, Naïma is free to return to the pottery. Some days, the afternoon hours must be juggled between baking bread and continuing the pottery, but this particular day will be focused on pottery as there is “taboona”⁸ remaining from the previous afternoon. Her younger sister Salha has come over both to keep her sister company and also to observe. Salha is only thirteen years old and is the last of seven girls in their family, not including her two brothers that begin and end the row of children. The knowledge of pottery-making is foreign to Salha’s young, thin hands, which have already spent five more years over textbooks and chalkboards than those of her older sister. While all the children start school at the impressionable age of six, opening their eyes to the world, the first four girls’ fates were chosen not by their own dreaming, but by the necessity of helping hands around the house and in the clay. Naïma’s hands only had two years to get to know a pencil and paper, and now at twenty-four her fingertips are well acquainted with the soft clay.

The well-packaged clay is brought forth from the tire and heaved into a large plastic tub cut away from a once precious water jug used to transport clean water back to the house. She moves over to the corner of the yard, filling a large blackened pot with water and placing it over a small fire-pit. She builds a fire crackling just under the water supported by three stones using dry twigs, lighting them with burning coals from a “kanoon” she uses to cook a continuous

⁸ طابونة is a traditionally Berber style of bread made primarily in the rural regions of Tunisia.

supply of black tea for her guests. As the water begins to bubble Naïma brings it over and showers the clay, creating a cloud of steam around her face. Her hands dig deep into the red-orange clay, mixing in the near boiling water. The heat is a welcomed change to the biting autumn winds, yet her face grimaces slightly as her fingers adjust to the drastic difference in temperature. The clay softens as the water digs rivets into the hard lumps, quickly melting them into a moldable paste in Naïma's palms.

Once satisfied with the new consistency of the clay, Naïma wipes the wetness onto her holey, clay-splattered skirt, donned only for the pottery-making hours of the day. She moves quickly to retrieve the red-mounds of newly created dust and spreads them into a circle on the ground. A sprinkling of dust two or three centimeters deep becomes a stage for the wet clay, which is rescued from the hot bath and thrown down in chunks until the stage is completely full. She leaves a portion of the clay in the warm water as it is destined for another act in later part of the process. Naïma grips her skirt, tucking it in around the hem to reveal legging-clad knees. Leaning over, though her protruding belly prevents her from bending down too far, her hands dive into the warm clay, steam dancing around her face briefly before being carried away on the wind. Her hands work mechanically, turning the clay over the outer edges and pulling it up into a heap in the middle. Handfuls of dust are sprinkled over the pile before it is again spread out into a circle. Gradually, the dust sticks to and coats the soggy mud in a thin black-brown layer.

As the clay has cooled and begun to harden in the blustery wind, her hands no longer have the strength required to adequately mix in the dust. Naïma's shoes are reluctantly abandoned, and the soles of her feet become acquainted with the cold earth. Ten toes, identical in color to her fingertips, curl under her feet in rejection to the sudden frigid air and hard ground. With her right foot, Naïma makes a sideways step into the middle of the warm pile, sliding

slightly through the clay. A little hop with her left foot takes her around the circle before her right foot is pulled free from the clay's grip. Another thrust of her right foot into the pile of clay forces the coating to begin mixing throughout the clay. As she continues this process of mixing with the right and hopping around the circle with her left, the clay is infused with the dust of old pottery, giving an extra aspect of strength to the clay which will help prevent the new pieces from finding themselves cracked and doomed for this process all over again.

Once all of the crushed pottery has been thoroughly mixed into the fresh clay, Naïma rolls it into three separate logs for easy storage until her next free moment. She sits briefly, right foot hidden beneath a layer of clay, her hands hold a small lump of clay, tossing it lightly back and forth. When the silence is broken for the first time, the physical rigor of mixing the clay is fully realized, as Naïma did not utter a word throughout the physical task; talking with her sister, her hands almost naturally mold the formless lump into what she is looking at. First, her clump takes the shape of her bare left foot, stretched out before her. Then, a chicken with striking similarities with the one that continues to try and gain entry into the house for a crumb that failed to be swept away by the morning's cleaning. Finally, like a period at the end of a sentence, Naïma throws the lump onto the log of clay bringing the conversation to a close. It is beginning to get dark, and she must wrap up the clay before returning to the house to begin dinner and rest for a new day.

Chapter 4 The Formation

The following day has more requirements besides just tending to her clay. Naïma must also spend a few hours over the sizzling stove making bread, soak her hands in sudsy laundry water, as well as make a trip make to her family's home to see her mother. The clay rests for most of the day in its tire, waiting for Naïma to find time for it. After midday, with her list

checked off, she selects one log of clay, and sets it beside her in the dirt. Naïma herself is again seated on the rug, folded over to cover holes worn in by many hours of use, right foot tucked left extended. But this time she also has a few small wooden boards before her, splinters sticking out of their uneven edges that threaten her fingers.

She reaches over to the log and breaks off a piece from the end leaving a puckered stump, as though the clay was reaching for what it had lost. The lump of clay, harder than the previous day, is rolled around in Naïma's palms. Knowing the perfect size from years of practice, she pinches off a smidgen of the ball before pressing it into the center of the wooden board. With her hands stiff as boards, she places her left hand on her right, and using just her fingers she begins to flatten the ball of clay into something new. Working from the middle out, a circle about fifteen centimeters in diameter and three or four centimeters thick begins to take shape. She then turns her right hand perpendicular to the ground and uses it to smooth the edge. The base of her first "kanoon" is finished.

Another piece of clay is ripped from the log, but this time rolled long and skinny between her hands. The snake-like clay is laid around the outside of the circle, balancing delicately on the very precise edge. Naïma's fingers skillfully work their way around, pressing this snake into the base while also drawing it taller and thinner, building up the sides. This process is repeated, adding height to the sides of what is becoming a "kanoon", while keeping a four to five centimeter thickness. With each snake of clay laid around the top of the "kanoon", the opening becomes wider, until the mouth of the "kanoon" is about thirty centimeters wide. It also is no longer circular, but has a faint square shape with four somewhat-hidden corners. At each of these slightly angled places, Naïma places a small nub of clay, pulling it up into a square top hat to announce the presence of the corner. Her fingers tap the top of all four, flattening them to an

even level just a few centimeters above the edge of the “kanoon”. One last chunk is taken from the log sitting beside her and is drawn out very thin in her hands. She begins attaching it just a few centimeters below the rim, adding a little decorative lip to her “kanoon”.

With a splash, the fingers of her right hand break into the water of a florescent orange pitcher beside her knee. Dripping across her knee, Naïma begins running her fingers along the edge of the “kanoon”, rounding the hard lines. Keeping her fingers moist, she uses the water to soften the clay and fuse the various snakes of clay into one continuous piece, sliding her fingers in circles around the inside and outside of the “kanoon”. Naïma smoothes the top hat style peaks so that each is continuous with the edge around it, just a hill along the rolling edge made unique by the plateau at the top. What was once the end of a log of clay, dry and cracking after being ignored overnight, is now rounded delicately into a smooth and moist “kanoon” displayed upon a splintering plate.

Startlingly, the tip of her pointer finger emerges on the outside of the “kanoon” from just beneath one of the peaks, poking a hole through the side of the “kanoon” just about five centimeters below the flattened top. Within a few seconds, her hand holds four small balls of clay which were once a part of this “kanoon” below each peak, the evidence of her seeming destruction of the once perfect pot. However, once the four pieces are dropped onto the larger body of clay, Naïma turns the board around and inspects her creation before moving the board to the side. One “kanoon” finished, an eighth of the log transformed one step closer to completion, and three quarters of an hour less in the day.

While Naïma’s fingers begin again, dragging another splintering board in front of her, her mouth remains completely still. Only her fingers move briskly, changing a nearly useless lump of clay into a piece of cooking-ware in high demand this season. Her work must stay within her

own yard, as the clay is burdensome to move more than a few feet after finding its resting place and the freshly molded pottery remains fragile until after its second trip through the fire. So, while all the women living on her husband's father's land have their hands deep in clay, as well as Naïma's own family across the street, there are only two hands at each respectful yard, unless a woman is blessed enough to have a daughter still living with her who is acquainted with clay. Her mother, Aisha, still has six of her nine children at home. However, only her twenty-seven-year-old, soon-to-be-married daughter, Jasmine, has strong, orange fingers which admit her knowledge of pottery. Aisha's two sons and three youngest daughters have all pursued or are pursuing their education through the age of eighteen with dreams of continuing farther. As Naïma has a young son and a baby growing within her, her work is solitary, unlike the days before marriage when she worked alongside her mother and sisters.

By the time Naïma must begin preparing dinner, she has finished five "kanoons", which are given shelter inside her bedroom under the shadow of her dresser. The remaining third of the clay log is heaved back into the plastic wrap, the wind's decoration of twigs and stones removed with a quick sweep of the hand, and covered for the night. As she returns to her house, the following day runs through her head, as she knows she must make time to press her hands into the clay and create between five and ten more "kanoons". The next step in completing the "Sejenane Pottery" requires too much time, energy, and wood for just today's five pieces.

Chapter 5 Into the Fire

Two days later, she has a collection of about thirteen fresh "kanoons", her fingerprints hardened into their flesh by the cold night air settling over it like a blanket. As the day is not proving to be much warmer, Naïma hurriedly cleans up breakfast only to begin cooking again. She cradles her own blackened "kanoon" full of burning embers from the most recent glass of

tea, and leaves her yard. She walks over to a black and gray oval burned into the middle of the open grass centered between three homes, shooing away the two cows to chew grass elsewhere in the yard. Setting down her “kanoon”, she moves quickly over a tower of twigs, sticks, and branches, every imaginable piece of dry wood the women could find. She embraces the pile, pressing her stomach into the twigs to reach around as far as possible before standing and bringing a part of the pile over to the oval space. Throwing it down inside the burned mark, she begins moving the larger pieces below, thinner ones on top. Nearby broken bricks and rocks are placed around the oval, decorating like a string of pearls on a young woman’s neck, and form a boundary for the soon to be fire. After building a large bed of branches and sticks Naïma turns back to her house to bring out the “kanoons”.

Gingerly picking the “kanoons” up from the bottom, she brings them out for their first trip through the fire in pairs. Placed gently upside down, they are nestled down into the wood. Once all thirteen “kanoons” have had their beds made in the pit, she collects some chaff from the nearby pile into a small bouquet in her hands. Then, scooping up a few burning coals onto the bouquet from the solitary finished “kanoon”, still cooking tea beside her, Naïma draws the bouquet near to her face. Her breath can be seen moving from pursed lips to the searing hot embers like an arrow through the cold air, and almost instantly, smoke begins to rise from the burning bouquet; a fire has begun.

As the bouquet begins to burn away, the flames licking down at her fingertips, Naïma nudges the flaming chaff down into the middle of the pile of logs and “kanoons”. She kneels down and blows into the center, and the smoke begins to grow like a string being pulled up to the sky then begins billowing into a small cloud. Almost suddenly, fire begins to emerge from amidst the “kanoons”, and the logs break and settle in the heat. Next, as the cows are not kept

nearby the fire-pit without purpose, there is a pile of flat, circular patties made from the cows' dung. Naïma picks up these brown and green disks and begins to set them onto and around the "kanoons", making a small blanket for each own. When she finally stops working and steps back, there are almost no yellow edges showing, but just a reddish glow of the fire brimming from between the edges of each sticky blanket. The oven in which the pottery will be cooked is finished: bricks for a crib, twigs for a mattress, and cow dung for a blanket.

Naïma sits back on her heels, watching the fire burn. When the fire settles, she moves around the circle inspecting each "kanoon" to ensure it is still covered by the patties. When a glowing red side emerges, she picks up the fallen patty and returns it to its post, moving a brick to support it, if necessary. The patties keep the heat on the pottery, so it is not immediately sucked away by the cold wind. The patties are not required around the inside because the walls of the "kanoons" themselves serve as a chamber to capture the heat for cooking the inside.

The "kanoons" begin to change to a deep red color as they flirt with the fire or even achieve blackened spots where they danced too long with it. After about twenty or thirty minutes of smoke billowing up, logs snapping, and eyes watering, Naïma picks up a new tool. In her hands she holds a long piece of thick iron wire, curled around at one edge like a hook. She uses the hook to swipe the patties away from a "kanoon" at the center of the oven, and then carefully maneuvers the hook under the edge of the "kanoon" and through the nearest hole. As she sees the iron poke through, she pulls the bar up and with it comes the smoking "kanoon". It is now clear that the once thought merely decorative top hats are placed there to reinforce the holes from which the weight of the "kanoon" will hang. She swings the scorched pottery around and sets it gently into a nearby rusty wheelbarrow, which within ten minutes holds all thirteen steaming "kanoons". She uses the iron hook to rescue the patties that have not burned away in

the bed of embers remaining from the soaring fire, leaving the fire to slowly burn itself out.

Wheeling the now deep red pottery back into her yard, she leaves them to cool in the wintery air, moving on to cooking, cleaning, and playing with Kareem having burned away about three hours of her day.

Chapter 6 Layers

The following day, while the taboona dough is rising, Naïma finds herself again sitting on the rug, right foot tucked left extended, but this time with a bright red “kanoon” before her. Next to her, the tub holding the remaining pure clay has had its old muddy water exchanged for crisp, warm water that begins softening the yellowish chunks. Naïma’s hand dips into the bath and selects one chunk, squeezing it slightly as the yellow clay oozes from between her fingers. She then selects a “kanoon” from the thirteen standing at attention before her and begins to coat it in a thin layer of yellow clay. Beginning on the inside, she goes back and forth, twisting her wrist around to get a full sweep of the inside with a single stroke. The palm of her hand is now a deep yellow, and she scraps the clay off of her hand onto the top edge before spreading it along using just the tips of her fingers. Once the inside and top edge of the “kanoon” are entirely yellow, Naïma dips her hand into the water and smoothes out the new layer of clay, making it even and without blemish. Setting the first aside, she takes the next and follows the same routine.

As she finishes the thirteenth inside, the “kanoons” now bear two colors, both a flamed, hard red and a fresh, wet yellow. After running her finger along the top of the first “kanoon” to ensure no mustard-yellow clay comes off onto her finger, she flips it over and continues the same process along the outside of the pottery. The final touch before setting the “kanoon” aside is to use a knife to round off the base, as it has a sharp edge remaining from the initial base formation, making the bottom smooth and harmless to more tender fingers that will handle it in the future.

Thirteen “kanoons” later, the taboona dough has had plenty of time to rise and is ready face the fire. Naïma rinses the clay from her hands, first in the now yellow water with small chunks of clay, adding to them the clay caked on her fingers, and then in a clean bowl of water to ensure no clay will be cooked into the taboona. Finally, she returns to the cooking. However, a drizzle of rain soon starts, and Naïma runs outside to move the freshly clayed pots to the porch where they will be protected from the rain. Here, they remain for the night to allow the fresh clay time to dry, giving a complete make-over to the red-cooked pottery from the morning.

Chapter 7 Too Rough for Tender Fingers

The next morning, before the sun or anyone else in her house has risen, Naïma feels around for another small collection of tools: a small rounded off stone and a few broken shells with distinctly textured faces. Once she has them hidden within her grip, she walks out of the bedroom and into the second room where she flicks on a light revealing her rug lying tucked under the table, put away from the previous day. She sets her tools down and returns outside to bring in the “kanoons”, again two by two. Sitting once more onto her rug, right foot tucked left extended, she pulls one “kanoon” into the pocket created by her right knee. Selecting first the stone, she begins to scrap across the inside of the “kanoon”, tearing through the seemingly smooth yellow clay. Her hand moves quickly back and forth across the bottom before moving to sweeping arcs around the inside walls.

The scrapping never ripes down through the yellow to reveal the cooked, red clay beneath, but rather removes only the outermost fresh layer of clay. Taking up the shell, Naïma follows the same process over the top edge and around the decorative lip outside. Finally, the stone is again used to make the same sweeping scrapes around the outside of the “kanoon”. When it is time to make breakfast, there are two sets of “kanoons”: those that have been tortured

by rock and shell to smooth out the new layer of clay, leaving them soft to the touch, and those whose rough sides still await their turn beneath the rocks. Namia's mother, who has the luxury of coming over to visit and leaving her eldest daughter to continue to work of her household, enters the house and greets her daughter before sweeping up her grandson. When Aisha comes by, she always finds a way to help her daughter as she probably remembers her own struggles during the first few years of marriage. Today, she sits on another rug and picks up a stone, continuing the process her daughter had begun. By early afternoon, the work of four hands has left all of the "kanoons" as smooth as Naïma's son's youthful cheek, making them more desirable for the tender, city hands to which they will soon belong.

The afternoon will seem to be a flashback to two days before when she first cooked the "kanoons" as Naïma will repeat the process again. Once more, the bed of sticks will be lain within the brick circle, yellow "kanoons" carefully turned upside-down on top, cow-patties placed above and around, then the whole bed lit on fire by just a few little embers and Naïma's sweet breath. The yellow "kanoons" change to a deep red as the fire heats and licks at their smooth surface. Again, once about half an hour has passed, she uses the iron hook to remove the scalding pottery from the fire. They are taken in the wheelbarrow back into her yard and left to cool. Finally, after six days worth of strenuous work, the "kanoons" are finished. They are each destined to be filled with coals producing the heat over which the sacrificed meat of the Aïd will be cooked. Naïma leaves them outside to cool, then returns inside to begin dinner, wiping the soot off of her ever-moving hands as she enters the house.

Chapter 8 Back to the End

I reached out and touched Naïma's frigid fingers with my own in a gesture of sympathy, remember the events of the past week leading up to this moment. I walked over to the doorway and peered through the blue iron rails at the truck parked at the base of the hill. It was an old truck, rust eating away at the tire-wells, but as the engine roared to life it proved in good enough condition to drive the "kanoons" far, far away. The clay from the mountains was no longer housed in the protective tire, nor kept away from crushing missteps underneath Naïma's bed, but was now cradled in the truck bed amidst hay scattered out as both cushion and blanket. The yellow hay revealed between pieces the red-orange finish of the "kanoons" held cradled within. Naïma had managed to produce around thirty "kanoons", not including the one my own clumsy fingers had broken, and now all of them were in that bed of hay in the possession of three smiling men who were also fortunate to own a truck destined for Tunis⁹.

On a previous day, while Naïma was wrist deep in clay, she had turned to me and explained that in Tunis the "kanoon" can be sold for around twenty dinar, but that here, on the street in front of her house, she will only get one dinar a piece. As she explained this to me, her voice had a twinge of anger and frustration I did not witness again during my week's stay with her. I hesitated before asking why she or her husband does not take the "kanoons" themselves to Tunis, or even just to Bynzerte,¹⁰ to sell them for anything more than a solitary dinar. She explained they are hindered by transportation, rather than willingness or motivation, as they do not own a car, and one cannot load thirty "kanoons" into the back of a louage¹¹ or rural bus.

So, stuck in Edehara, Naïma stands inside the wall refusing to watch, but forced to listen, as the men drive away with the work of her hands, not theirs. As she holds her slightly less than thirty dinar payment, I wonder if her math education allows her to calculate that, if these men are

⁹ The capital city of Tunisia. See Appendix A

¹⁰ The northernmost city of Tunisia, and one of the most connected cities to Sejenane/Edehara. See Appendix A

¹¹ The louage, a van holding up to nine people, is an affordable public transportation among cities and rural areas.

lucky, they could make almost six hundred dinars in Tunis. If she is, she isn't allowed the time to dwell on the sum of money because Kareem is running towards her. She scoops him up, planting a kiss on his dusty cheek, and walks back in towards her house. The coldest months are setting in, making pottery impossible in the blistering wind. Naïma will rest until spring settles in around her, cooking, cleaning, playing with Kareem, and stretching under thirty dinar through the icy months.

Chapter 9 Tea Time

No one wanted to think about the money or the pottery. As the sound of rocks rolling beneath the blue truck's slightly deflated tires began to fade, Naïma pulled her shoulders back, determined to move forward, and walked towards the house. I followed her into the a large, square space beneath the new second-floor addition, the extra materials from which still sit just beyond the wall: a pile of sand, bright red bricks, and iron framing. This freshly laid two-room flat will one day be the home for her eldest brother, Uthman, and his family, once a wife is found for him. (They keep hinting at this, offering me to show around the flat, and bursting with laughter.) The only light under the new house pours in through the door-less opening as the sun is just beginning to set over the green, dusty mountains just a few kilometers away. We walk over to the far corner of the room, past a mother hen tied to her make-shift nest, just an egg-crate and hay, trying not to step on the dozen or so chirping chicks racing between our legs. Everyone who is home has come together for a break, as the race to finish the "kanoons" is finally finished. Naïma and I sit on a tire, freed from its role of protecting the clay and rescued from the hands of little Kareem rolling it around the floor. Now it's time for tea.

Aisha, the matriarch of the family, sits farthest inside the room atop a browned sheepskin rug. As always, she has on the traditional Berber dress¹², this one checkered blue and black, of her generation in this rural region. The garment is a long piece of cloth, wrapped around the body, reaching from chest to ankle, then pulled over the shoulders from the back and held in place right above each breast by a “helal”¹³. Her hair is covered, not in an eastern “hijab”¹⁴ but with two flowered bandanas, one wrapping around the forehead and tied at the back of the head and the second wrapping around the crown of her head and knotted just below her chin. Her skin has a deep, permanent tan, darker than any of her daughters, and the lines stretching from her eyes and lips out beneath the scarves confess years of hard work. Even now, her tough, leathery hands are busy preparing tea over a blackened “kanoon” sitting before her. She lifts the lid of the small, silver tea pot to add two or three spoonfuls of sugar. She likes her tea sweet.

Although her body looks to be about sixty or sixty-five, Aisha has just turned fifty. They joke about her age only because she has the unusual circumstances of being married to a younger man, but only by one year. At twenty and nineteen, Aisha and her hard, working husband were married. His absence is noted more than his presence as he drives a louage from Sejenane to Bynzerte from 5:30 in the morning until about 5 in the evening, sleeping during most of the hours he is home. However, in their thirty years of marriage, they have had nine children, one boy at the beginning and the end, ages twenty-eight and twelve, and seven girls in the middle. Though at some point she must have rested during her reproductive years, during my week here she has kept busy, rising at five to begin sweeping the concrete courtyard, or taking the neighbors donkey to go fetch water from the community spigot. However briefly, she now takes

¹² الملية This is the traditional Berber dress found among all women over the age of forty, or the eldest generation in the Sejenane region.

¹³ الخلال this is a silver clasp that functions to hold the two pieces of cloth together with a silver oval and an arrow that hooks one side of the fabric against hoop and pinches the other side of the cloth against the oval.

¹⁴ حجاب A term meaning cover, refers to the Middle Eastern veil cover the hair, ears, and neck.

a break to make tea for four of her children, hands extended toward the “kanoon” to soak in the heat rising around the tea pot.

Chapter 10 The Eldest

The lives of Naïma and her eldest sister Jasmine follow in their mother’s footsteps. Naïma was married to the son of their neighbors when she was nineteen and he was twenty, though the marriage was arranged when she was only fourteen. Now five years into marriage, their first son Kareem is bouncing around the circle, checking pockets for hidden sweets or money for a yogurt, and her protruding stomach reveals another child on the way. However, Naïma and her husband are in agreement about having a small family, and plan to stop having children after this second child is born. She explained to me that they want both of their children to finish school and study in Tunis, and the more mouths they need to feed, the more likely Naïma is to have to keep her children home to help, whether a son to find a job or a daughter to dig her fingers into the clay. It is exciting to imagine that Naïma is now able to dream bigger for her children than she has ever dreamed for herself.

Jasmine, at twenty-seven, is the eldest daughter, but no one would know from her youthful face and infectious giggle. Sitting beside her mother, in the same right foot tucked left extended position, she looks like her mother with all the lines erased. Like Naïma, Jasmine only had two years of schooling, but has excelled in taking care of a home. Being the oldest girl, she bears the most responsibility in helping her mom with the pottery, and often the two of them are sitting side-by-side molding or smoothing the clay. Conversation often drifts to and settles upon her upcoming wedding this summer to a man her family happened upon at the “souk”¹⁵ in

¹⁵ سوق Arabic for market. Every Thursday there is a souk in Sejenane where fresh vegetables, meat, and used clothing can be purchased. Often, at least one member of the family will visit the souk each week.

Sejenane. Jasmine explains to me, using a kind of charades, that he is working in agriculture somewhere near Tunis right now, but will come back to Edehara in the summer to marry her.

Chapter 11 The Youth

Daughter number five sits on a short, cracked stool, just a quarter-meter high, with her hands cupped around a tiny tea resting upon her awkwardly bent knees. Wided is just nineteen, and as she laughs her chocolate curls dance around the rim of her tea, threatening to taste the sugary drink. Wided is the first girl in her family to finish school, and took her baccalaureate at the beginning of this Fall, placing into a program to study telecommunications at a university in Tunis after the Aïd. As she has only traveled to Sejenane and Bynzerte in her whole life, moving by herself to the biggest city in Tunisia is reason for some fears and doubts to arise. Prior to one of our conversations, she did not know that there were mixed-sex cafés in Tunisia, but she has such a vibrant personality it is probable that she will adapt quickly to life away from Edehara.

Since Wided is enjoying vacation from school right now, she generally is allowed the luxury of waking up after eight, lounging around until after her captivation by a Turkish soap-opera, dubbed in Arabic, that shows each morning from 9:30 to 10:30. Even Jasmine tends to clean the living room while this show is on it is so attractive to this audience in Edehara, far away from its Turkish origins. However, Wided does not leave her eldest sister and mom to do all the housework, but puts in a hand with the cooking and laundry. But, as her hands shift around the tea for warmth, her tender fingers show that she does not know the art of pottery. She will leave to study in Tunis as her elder four sisters remain in Sejenane, married, hands deep in clay. But, though these sisters have such different futures before them, in this moment, the three sisters all laugh together while simultaneously sipping away at their tiny teas.

Glancing around the circle, my eyes catch sight of the littlest child in the family, the second son, Mounir. At twelve, Mounir spends his mornings six days a week in school and most afternoons in front of the television. Twice a week he gets to travel into Sejenane for Karate class, and he often sits rolling his hard-earned yellow belt while staring at the TV. His dreams for the future are twofold: becoming an engineer and living in Sejenane. However, without some development of industry within the countryside rather than simply along the coastal regions of Tunisia, it is hard to see how these two dreams can come true.

It is odd to find Mounir sitting just beyond our circle, as tea time would normally be a segregated activity with the men lounging at the café while the women remain at home. However, this is not the first time that he has hung on the outskirts of the women's world. At twelve, he isn't really old enough to go to the cafés with the men, and he is the only man at home most of the day, so he has developed a tolerance for women's work. For example, when Aisha and Jasmine build the kiln for cooking the freshly molded pots, Mounir is bound to be nearby taking the wheelbarrow squeaking away around the house to bring a fresh supply of cow-patties for covering the clay. But, when he is questioned about other aspects of the pottery, he puts his hand up as though to halt the implication that he participates in the women's work. So, while he is willing to give a helping hand to his mom and elder sister, the limit to what he will do is clearly defined along fairly rigid gender roles.

Suddenly, two thin girls come dashing in causing the chicks to scatter, and, dropping their backpacks to the ground, they fight to scoop up their nephew Kareem. Salha and Meleeka are the two youngest girls, thirteen and sixteen, and are just returning from a full day of preparatory school in Sejenane. There are no questions asked by either the entering party or those already gathered around the "kanoon" about the other's day, or about the much needed

money from the pottery sale. Rather, an excited hello erupts from all sides before quickly returning to the conversation where it was interrupted. The two girls are quickly absorbed into the circle and conversation. Meleeka, the elder of the two, has her dream set on a doctor's coat and stethoscope anywhere but Sejenane. Unlike her younger brother, she cannot wait to escape the region she has called home her entire life, and although she has not seen anything else, she is willing to take her chances on something new. The youngest girl doesn't have any outlandish dreams yet, but enjoys her studies, always pulling out her English worksheets to practice reading with me, her only English speaking friend.

Chapter 12 The Return

More than two hours have passed since the unsatisfying sale, and the faces around me are again lit with laughter as the sun embarks behind the mountain range, leaving a dim setting around us. All responsibility has been forgotten as the hours drift away. Suddenly, the mood is broken by the hinge on the blue-iron front door whining as it is swung open. The women's chatter is left unfinished as footsteps approach the opening. The eldest brother walks up, and though backlit, his tone reveals he is happy to be home. After a quick greeting, he holds up a sagging plastic bag, announcing he brought fresh fish from the coast for dinner.

While everyone excitedly exclaims thank-you, the production of what will soon be dinner has truncated the previous conversation and brought an end to tea time. Aisha remains seated, but pours more water over the tea leaves to prepare a cup for her eldest son. Wided and Mounir head back inside to their favorite spot, eyes glued to the newest Arabic music video. Jasmine jumps up, taking the bag of fish outside to begin cleaning them for dinner. Naïma scoops up Kareem, and as his ball slowly rolls away from his open hands, she announces she must return to her own home to prepare dinner for her family. Suddenly, I'm left sitting alone on a mud

splattered tire across from Aisha hands quickly preparing the tea, and I quickly realize the break is over. Everyone is back to work.

Research Method

Before leaving for the field, I consulted the works of well known ethnographers, such as Clifford Geertz, as well as an academic journal entitled *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, for their definitions and techniques for fieldwork, building for myself an idea of what the research process should look like. In an article from *A&E* entitled, “On Critical Ethnographic Work”, the authors define ethnography as: “a range of possible procedures for structuring one's experience of a social situation and transforming that experience into a systematic account which renders the social practices of the situation into patterns through which social forms are constructed and maintained.”¹⁶ I found this to be an exhaustive definition of these different steps to ethnographic research, and used it to construct my own methodology, beginning with observation and experience, producing a written account in a field journal, and finally using the patterns that arose to construct a description of the process of making pottery and the family structure in Edehara.

The observation portion of this research can better be entitled “fieldwork.” Defined in another *A&E* article by ethnographers Murray and Rosalie Wax, fieldwork is “a process of social research in which the investigator attempts to enter into the universe of meanings and participate in the moral system of this host community.”¹⁷ In this project, I spent seven days, from the hours of nine until four, with the family, (the limitations of this short amount of time are discussed in the following section) and during the hours with the family, I participated in any activity I was able to. For example, when Naïma was crushing the pottery, I took the rock and tried the process myself. Often activities were solitary in action, but I always stood or sat by,

¹⁶ Simon, Roger I., and Donald Dippo. “On Critical Ethnographic Work.” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 17 (1986): 195-202. [JSTOR](#). Butler University.

¹⁷ Wax, Murry L., and Rosalie H. Wax. “Fieldwork and the Research Process” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 11 (1980): 29-37. [JSTOR](#). Butler University

watching attentively and asking questions. I did not carry around my notebook and camera, but rather observed and participated either physically or by asking in an attempt to make myself a participant-observer.

My visits to Edehara were split between two households, Naïma's and her mother Aisha's. When I first arrived in the mornings I would always go to Aisha's house for breakfast and tea. Then, between ten and eleven, I would ask someone to escort me over to Naïma's house, or on some occasions she would come and retrieve me. This arrangement was to prevent me from arriving at Naïma's house when her husband was alone, which would have been culturally unacceptable. There were also two days that I spent only at Aisha's house, but both days Naïma came over. Due to this arrangement, I did not see the pottery process all the way through with Naïma or with Aisha. However, as will be explained in the next section, I observed that most processes are learned from watching and mimicking. So, it can be concluded that the process of cooking the pottery is the same for Aisha and Naïma because Naïma learned it from Aisha.

While I did not take notes during the day, I took up the pen upon returning home in the evening. Often writing for one to two hours a night, I kept a detailed timeline of each day as well as a commentary of description, conversations, and questions, as well as drawing pictures to illustrate certain points. As the Wax's article explains, "Memory fades, and biases afflict us all, so that notes promptly and accurately recorded provide the best safeguard."¹⁸ Due to unexpected time restraints from travel, I often found myself writing about the previous day at night, rather than the one just experienced. This may have led to some small details being forgotten, but

¹⁸ Wax, Murry L., and Roaslie H. Wax. "Fieldwork and the Research Process" *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 11 (1980): 29-37. [JSTOR](#). Butler University

when one is dealing with such a short time span as seven days, it is not much time for big patterns and activities to be confused or forgotten.

The final step in research is the analysis and presentation of data. “As soon after the fieldwork as possible, the investigator should be prepared to devote himself or herself wholeheartedly to interpretation, analysis, and composition.”¹⁹ In this particular project, the final presentation falls one week after the conclusion of observations, so there was no delay in interpretation of the data. The process by which I analyzed my data was to read through the field journal, categorizing the observations into various categories: pottery, education, gender roles, economy, and satellite television. Once the observations were divided, I could easily find patterns within each focus or refer to my observations of a particular event or conversation in order to draw conclusions.

¹⁹ Wax, Murry L., and Roaslie H. Wax. “Fieldwork and the Research Process” Anthropology & Education Quarterly 11 (1980): 29-37. JSTOR. Butler University

Limitations of Research

In designing anthropological studies, there are many factors that can effect both the way the researcher observes the subject, and the way that the subject views and acts towards the researcher. The more barriers between researcher and subject, the harder it is to find the clear answers one is searching for. In this particular study, there are many barriers caused by a lack of fluency in the language, a short time limit, and the circumstances around the visits. Despite these limitations, as a researcher I believe there is still much to be gleaned from my visits to Edehara, from both observations and conversations. Yet, it is important to acknowledge the limitations in order to understand the means and conditions by which this data was collected and analyzed.

While glancing at another's habits can be done solely with one's eyes, being able to ask questions and inquire about the reasons behind a method allows a fuller picture to develop. As I have only been studying Derja, the Tunisian dialect of Arabic, for a little more than two months I am not fluent. Susan Davis, an anthropologist in Morocco in the early 1970s, stated, "The author can testify from her own experience, in Arabic, that monolingual women have no conception of speaking slowly or using a simple vocabulary to aid a neophyte; for them, an adult either speaks a language or does not."²⁰ I found this to be especially true with the older generations, or those over forty-five, in Edehara. They spoke quickly and did not enunciate their words making it incredibly difficult for me, with a limited Arabic vocabulary, to understand the idea that they desired to express. In most cases, another member of the family was able to translate into simple language what he or she was trying to express. This inability to understand inhibits questions directly with this generation and creates another gap between researcher and subject.

²⁰ Page 6 Davis, Susan S. Formal and Nonformal Roles of Moroccan Women. Diss. The University of Michigan, 1978. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979.

As I was unable to ask many questions, I had to rely on observations, which I found to have a few advantages. As a participant-observer, I spent a lot of time with the family, watching and participating in their day-to-day activities, rather than administering a standardized questionnaire to collect data. Having seen and experienced how the family makes pottery, cooks, and takes care of the children, I can discern the reason behind their methods which words may be less able to express.²¹ A second benefit of participatory observation is the ability to see aspects of their life that would be overlooked or assumed by a questionnaire.²² As I stay with the family throughout the day, I am able to see all of the activities and determine myself what is given priority and how time is delegated between the various activities. Finally, in spending many days with the family, I was able to develop a relationship with them. Developing a sense of trust was crucial so that when I asked questions, they were more likely to give me a true answer rather than what they thought I desired, different from reality.

Time is another factor that inhibits the extent of this research project, as I was limited to seven days visiting the family. When Davis conducted her research in Morocco, she spent twenty-four months living in the community, as well as already having spent two years there as a peace corps volunteer.²³ Not every ethnographer has previous knowledge of their subject, but spending an extended amount of time in and around the subject is considered necessary for gaining a deep understanding. Also, due to restraints from my organization, I was unable to stay with the family overnight. I lived in a nearby city and commuted to Edehara each morning

²¹ “[E]thnography can capture the dynamics of change in ways that snapshot surveys using pre-established dimensions and response categories cannot... Several presentations also made clear that an ethnographic approach can help discern the meaning of practices that people do not or cannot fully describe through verbal means.” Trickett, Edison J., and Mary Ellen Oliveri. “Ethnography and Sociocultural Processes: Introductory Comments.” *Ethos* 25 (1997): 146-51. [JSTOR](#). Butler University.

²² iii Davis, Susan S. *Formal and Nonformal Roles of Moroccan Women*. Diss. The University of Michigan, 1978. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979.

²³ ii, v Davis, Susan S. *Formal and Nonformal Roles of Moroccan Women*. Diss. The University of Michigan, 1978. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1979.

around nine and left around four. When I arrived, the women were always busy cleaning or cooking, and upon seeing the pottery set aside while they prepared breakfast, I know that there was much activity between when the women rose at five and I arrived at nine that I missed. When I left in the evenings, there was still dinner to be cooked and television to be watched. So, I had to rely on their descriptions of the mornings and evenings to get an idea of what a full day would look like in Edehara.

I also thought that integrating into their society, being accepted into their homes, would take longer than the seven days in which I had to make all of my observations. To my surprise, one member of the family began teaching me to cook bread just three hours after I had arrived, which made me feel accepted and welcomed from the moment I stepped in the door. I believe that this research would have been impossible without the hospitality I found in this community. It posed a slight problem as they continued to insist I spend the night, knowing that I was unable to. They might have seen this as an unwillingness to live without my western comforts and found it to be reason to not trust me. However, my participation in all activities during the day showed the desire I had to be with them and experience the way they live.

The final problem caused by such a short observation period is with respect to novelty. When tourists come there is an aspect of performance, or a need to glorify their way of life, and to entice the tourist to desire a piece of it, namely pottery. My desire was for the family to accept me into the community and stop seeing me as another tourist passing through. This is a very difficult task to accomplish in any length of time, let alone only a week. For example, one day we feasted on couscous and chicken, which led me to question how often they have such a large meal. Was it a special event to welcome or impress their visitor? It will be difficult to address this issue of reality versus performance in my analysis, but some activities were nearly

unaffected by my presence, like going to the weekly market, tending the garden, and making pottery. The difficulty will come in distinguishing between what of their lifestyle remained the same and what parts were embellished or changed to accommodate my presence.

Lastly, there were conditions by which I was able to visit the family. Having visitors come to their home is a source of income for these families as many tourists desire to see how the pottery is made. This type of short visit is how I discovered my own interest in the Sejenane style pottery. In this same fashion, there was a monetary compensation for allowing me to stay with them. I am aware that the money was important because the family continued to ask about the woman from my organization who made the initial payment. This monetary exchange caused me to question whether the extent of hospitality I experienced was affected by the money or if it was simply a part of their culture.

Knowing that this research was limited by linguistic ability, time, and a potential monetary drive of the subject, the effect of these problems can be addressed. As for language, the main problem this posed was in conversations about healthcare, religion, and politics, of which I had few. I was able to ask simple questions, and therefore get an idea of their views about these topics, but not a deep understanding. I never found a limitation in talking about education or pottery, two of my main focuses. Therefore, language did not impose on my research about pottery, and my capabilities were sufficient to get a general idea about other aspects of life like their family structure and balance.

While many processes I saw only once, I believe that from this I can describe the activity with confidence as one observation I made about this culture is that habits are learned from watching and repeating. As I watched various members of the family make bread, they followed the exact same technique. Therefore, habits are passed down nearly unchanged from generation

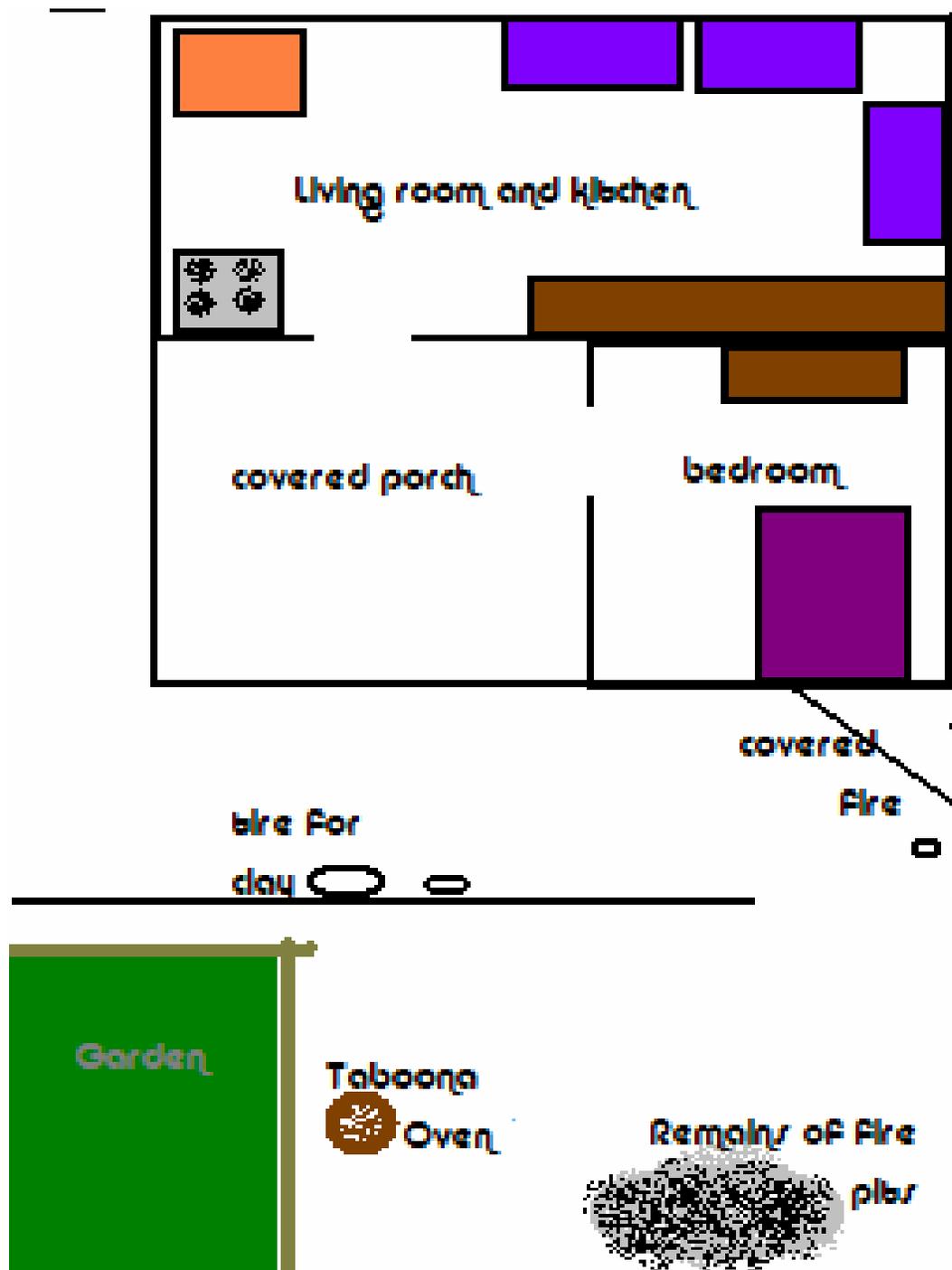
to generation, and by viewing it once I have seen how it is most likely done by all members of this society. So, due to this characteristic of their society, the limitation of time is weakened.

Finally, while it is important to note the monetary arrangement, I do not believe that it made much of an effect on my relationship with the family. I was not involved in the actual exchange of money, neither in discussion nor physical delivery, until the end of the last day. So, for the duration of this study, they did not see me as the business partner. Therefore, my relationship with the family was less likely to have been tainted by their financial need. However, I must be aware of this increased income in considering events that involved money during my stay. My visit brought a large influx of income for both homes and will not pass without effect.

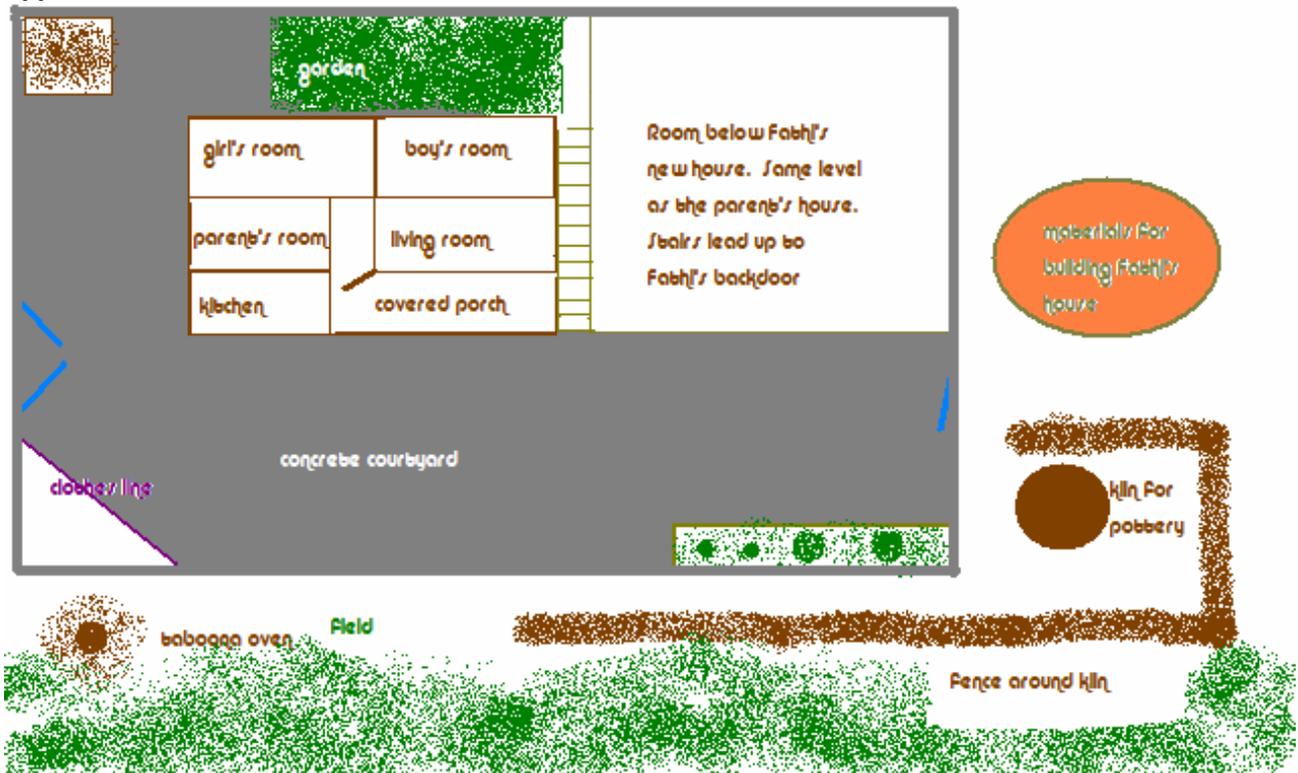
Appendix A



Appendix B: Naïma's House



Appendix C: Aisha's House



Appendix D: Pictures



1. Crushing the old pottery to use for strengthening the new clay.



2. Using her foot, she mixes the crushed broken-pottery into the fresh clay.



3. Molding the “kanoons” on wooden boards.



4. Finished “kanoons”. These are the smaller of the two version, and the two on the left have been used before, and are stained gray from the ashes. The two on the right are freshly made “kanoons”.