Negotiating Boundaries

and

Reconstructing Landscapes

A study of the Relations
between Bedouin, Tourists and the State

by

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the problematic and dynamic interaction between tourism, the State and local communities. It aims to put the social and cultural elements into perspective when planning for tourism development in countries with a similar economic, social and cultural profile to Egypt. The town of Dahab in South Sinai, Egypt, aptly depicts such interaction and has been identified as an appropriate field for the research. The thesis analyses the interaction among the three main partners in the tourism sector within a socio-geographic framework based on the premises of landscapes and boundaries. The Bedouin (the local community), the State (the Egyptian government with its various arms) and the tourists are three social players in Dahab and they have associated themselves with three physical landscapes, respectively: the Interior, the Road and the Coast. The introduction of tourism to the area resulted in the construction of landscapes and the reshaping of social, cultural and physical boundaries. The juxtaposition of these landscapes has stimulated a certain level of negotiation, interaction and conflict since each of these groups has different and usually contradictory agendas. I present these interactions by examining the inter and intra-relationships of the three socio-geographic landscapes. I will be pointing out areas of conflict and others of co-operation such as: identity, leadership, power, land ownership, economic activities, value systems and community involvement. I will illustrate the way the new socio-geographic and economic profile of Dahab has led to the reconstruction of the role of women and children. I will conclude by pointing out the way the Coast and the Road are currently co-existing and expanding at the expense of the Interior and the way the institution of tourism aided by the State constructed a landscape of exile for some and a landscape of paradise for others. I will suggest some policy and research implications revolving around the importance of a social and cultural dimension in tourism planning in order to be able to sustain tourism as an option for economic development.
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Introduction
Introduction

Tourism and violence would seem to be two contradictory phenomena existing at opposite ends of the scale of human activities. However, significant levels of correlation between these two phenomena have become evident in Egypt, as well as other countries, during the past few years. The images of Egypt as the cradle of civilisation, a country with seven thousand years of history, the land of the Pharaohs and the pyramids have been replaced by images of violence, terrorism and intolerance.

This transformation of the playground into a battle zone is a phenomenon that has captured my academic as well as personal interest. The tourism crisis in Egypt encapsulates various issues that present themselves whenever states make choices about their development paths – and increasingly tourism is a preferred choice. The interaction between tourists, locals and the state and the repercussions that such interaction, if badly managed, can have, raises questions about tourism as a development option. It has also been proved that no viable tourism development option could exist without a properly balanced consideration of the social, cultural and economic implications, (Aziz, 1995, Hassan, 1997).

Egypt perceives tourism as a vehicle to development and has adopted various strategies to allow tourism to be a main economic pillar. However, since the mid-eighties the fluctuations in tourism revenues have been so great that it has resulted in major social and economic disorders and hindered tourism from achieving its expected contribution to the economy and the society of Egypt. 1992 was the peak year in terms of tourist numbers and revenues, three million tourists and $7.5 billion
representing the highest contribution of the tourism sector to the Egyptian economy so far, (Ministry of tourism 1993). Unfortunately, such figures were not sustained for long; since 1993 the tourism sector witnessed significant drops, the decrease in tourist numbers reached 21% and in tourist revenues 38% in comparison to 1992 (Ministry of Tourism, 1996). In 1997/1998 the Luxor massacre caused a drop of 33% when compared with figures of 1997 and drop in revenues reaching $500 million (EIU, 1998). ¹

Realising that developing countries do not have the luxury of adopting various economic development options due to their involvement in economic reform programmes, the need for an economic sector that generates foreign exchange, encourages investment and creates job opportunities is very important, and tourism offers such opportunities. However, there is considerable fragility in this industry as it is controlled by a variety of factors, the majority of which exist beyond the boundaries of the receiving country. Most importantly there is the power and role of tour operators, airlines and travel agents; the power and role of media in creating images; political unrest; the discretionary aspect of tourism and the high level of substitutability. There are some interior factors that could be controlled if the development plans took such factors into consideration and these include the level of acceptance and involvement of the community in tourism.

There is a considerable lack of research that addresses the complex nature of tourism and examines the relationships between the economic, environmental, social and

¹ See Appendix One for detailed tourism figures.
cultural elements of the tourism product; this is true of both Egypt and other developing countries.

Tourism development in Egypt seems to have constructed different landscapes and created different and separate worlds and places for development, one for the locals and one for the tourists. The significant variations in the social and physical composition of the tourists' landscape and that of the locals are noted by both communities: tourists and locals. The State exists between the two communities to regulate the relationship and to promote and support the tourism sector. It is then important to understand the interaction between the tourists, the locals and the state within a physical as well as social setting.

The Research

This research observes and analyses the dynamic interactions that takes place between the main partners in the tourism sector, namely the locals (the Bedouin), the State authorities and the tourists, within the framework of socio-geographic landscapes and boundaries. The main objectives of the research are to:

- Enable better understanding of the nature of tourism development and its implications for the community
- Explore the link between the social and physical landscape
- Encourage the incorporation of social and cultural elements in planning for and assessing the tourism sector by providing a detailed analysed observation of the dynamics of the interaction between tourists, locals and the State
That would possibly lead to:

- Increasing the contribution of tourism to the actual social and economic development of the communities within whose vicinities it exists and hence its contribution to the national economy;
- Decreasing the fluctuations, instability and social tension that currently surrounds and threatens the tourism sector.

The town of Dahab in the governorate of South Sinai was identified as a suitable venue for the field research for the following reasons:

1- South Sinai has been targeted as a priority zone for tourism development by the Ministry of Tourism and the National Project for the Development of Sinai focuses on tourism as a main sector for development. Development projects and investment in tourism in the Gulf of Aqaba region amounted to LE 5624 million ($ 1606 million) (TDA, 1996) and the number of tourists reached 960,337 (South Sinai Information Centre, 1997)

2- The problems associated with tourism in traditional Egyptian destinations such as Luxor, Aswan and Cairo, the need to diversify the tourism product and the limited opportunities for macro economic development options are factors that have made Sinai a desirable new tourism destination

3- Tourism in South Sinai is not as established as it is in Upper Egypt and Cairo, therefore, the opportunity of adopting a development model that is community based and socially, culturally and environmentally aware is possible.
4- Tourism is the main social and economic stimulant in the Sinai which makes it possible to observe the interaction between the tourist, the State and locals in the relative absence of distracting factors.

5- The town of Dahab has a particular socio-geographic landscape that allows for the juxtaposition of the main partners in the tourism sector.

6- Dahab is in an important transitional stage, moving from a traditional economic and political and social organisation, to an urban state system. It is also moving from small locally owned tourism establishments to multinational ones. It is important for tourism research to register such a transfer.

**Dahab**

The town of Dahab is located on the Gulf of Aqaba, 100 kms North East of Sharm El Sheikh. The area of Dahab is 3640 square kms, and the most recent statistics estimate the population to be 2048 (82.2% Bedouin and 17.8% urban) (South Sinai Information Centre, 1996).

The town of Dahab has a long history of tourism. With its long beaches and some of the best corals in the world and with its close proximity to Israel, it became a Rest and Recreation destination for Israelis when Israel occupied the Sinai between 1967 – 1982. The number of tourists currently visiting Dahab is 46,736 per year and Israeli tourists still represent the majority of tourists visiting Dahab.

With the exception of one five star hotel that exists on the outskirts of the town, the tourism sector at the moment mainly caters for young backpackers. A range of campsites with basic rooms and facilities and coffee shops are scattered haphazardly
along the coast of Dahab. These facilities are owned and manned by Bedouin and, increasingly, Egyptians coming from the Nile valley. Recently, the tourism development authority has planned to incorporate Dahab in the Egyptian Riviera projects and upgrade its tourism to eliminate what is termed as 'cheap tourism' and introduce 'quality tourism'. Dahab has an image of being the Eastern gate to AIDS in Egypt, a major market for drugs, and lately, it has been associated with the rise of a satanic sect who have taken Dahab as a base and refuge. All these factors have led the authorities to adopt a policy of eliminating the establishment of campsites and cheap accommodation and to dig up forgotten rules that make the existing ones illegitimate.

Inhabitants of Dahab

The Bedouin of Mzeina

The Bedouin of Mzeina are one of the largest Bedouin communities that live in South Sinai. There are no official figures demonstrating how large the Mzeina Bedouin are, but the head of Mzeina gave an estimate of about 5000 Bedouin living between Dahab, Nuweiba and the valleys of the interior. The official figures point to some 1684 Bedouin living in Dahab. This figure, however, should not be accepted without questioning.

The male Bedouin of Mzeina have worked as wage labourers in nearby towns and cities. The cash they generated was used to supplement the traditional economy, which was mainly managed by women. Women stayed behind and moved with their flocks from one spot to another: it was their responsibility to look after el-halal (the flocks) and the land. The Bedouin of Mzeina living closer to the Coast were
fishermen and have a tradition of drying fish and bartering it for charcoal with communities of the interior tribes. The Bedouin of Mzeina had always had connections and links with external people, be they tourists, occupiers or Egyptians from the Nile valley. Other Bedouin in the Sinai tend to regard Mzeina as the richest, the most powerful and the one with closer links to tourists and authorities.

**Egyptian Migrant Community**

The restoration of Sinai in 1982 and the need to integrate the towns of Sinai with the rest of Egypt created a number of job opportunities that had to be filled by urban Egyptians from the Nile valley and the urban centres. Teachers, doctors, policemen, civil servants and so forth came from villages and towns in the Nile valley, receiving incentives offered to those agreeing to work in remote areas such as Sinai. The male head of the household usually takes up these jobs and move to Sinai on his own. Those coming from urban centres have never considered Dahab as a second home. It is viewed either as a punishment or a way of earning more money with lower outgoings.

After the introduction of tourism another category of workers was attracted to Dahab. Young male university and technical school graduates, who were pressurised by lack of money, scarcity of jobs and the consequent difficulties of being able to afford to settle down and have families. An increasing number of these young men were attracted to Dahab by the offer of a fast and large income, mixing and interacting with tourists increasing the opportunities to go to Europe or America, and as an escape from frustrated emotional experiences.
Research Methodology

This is a thesis in the anthropology of tourism based mainly on ethnographic primary data gathered principally by using participant-observation techniques. The field research took place between October 1995 - April 1997. I went to the field on short visits prior to the main period of research and the results of this work are all incorporated in this thesis. Although Dahab was the main setting of the research, I have travelled across South Sinai and lived and worked among members of different communities like St. Catherine, Nuweiba, Taba and the interior valleys.

Participant-observation was not always the most suitable method for acquiring specific data. For example data concerning the role of the state authorities or specific data about the tourists’ experience were not easy to gather using ethnographic methods. In such cases I used reflexive interviews, (Hammersley & Atkinson 1993). I have also relied on documents that were made available to me by the governorate of South Sinai, Dahab local authority and the Tourism Development Authority.

The data collected are organised and analysed within the parameters of a socio-geographic framework of landscape and boundaries based on the premise that there is a constant and interchangeable influence between the physical and social environment of any locality. This interchangeable influence represents itself in meanings associated with landscape, issues of identity and landscape, and the negotiation of boundaries, all of which play a major part in the life of any community, especially one in a transitional stage.
I have to make it clear that my position as a young female Egyptian anthropologist has influenced the course of my research and has given me unlimited access to certain areas that have been very advantageous. On the other hand, it has restricted my access to other areas.²

Limitations

This research specifically looks at the interaction between the Bedouin, the state authorities and the tourists as the main partners/players in the tourism sector. However, I do not address other partners that might influence the course of development in a town that is increasingly depending on tourism for its livelihood, for example, international organisations, tour operators and travel agents.

I also do not claim to present a classical anthropological account of the lives of the Bedouin. I have intentionally avoided detailed analysis of controversial issues like the notions and meaning of the tribe, the lineage structure of the community and so forth. On the one hand I believe that such issues have been addressed in the past by Marx (1977), and Stewart (1987), for example. On the other hand I have tried, as much as possible, to make this research an honest mirror of what each of the communities considers to be of significant value and of importance to their life.

The availability and reliability of the resources represented a serious problem for this research. There is a significant gap in the tourism literature and research addressing tourism from a socio-economic aspect in Egypt. Statistics are extremely unreliable, inconsistent and in many cases not available. The figures presented earlier, for ² For more details on my position in the field refer to the detailed accounts given in Chapter One.
example, although official, are no reflection of the real situation. The numbers of Bedouin are either reduced intentionally for political reasons or simply the nature of the nomadic life and the lack of identity cards or other official documents make the possibility of having an accurate census rather difficult. The movement of Egyptian migrant labour from the Nile valley to Dahab cannot be assessed as their permanent domicile remains in their own towns and cities. The urban sector of the population appears on paper to be much smaller than the real figures. The same applies to the number of tourists which on occasion are maximised for political reasons. There is no reliable mechanism of acquiring tourist figures in Dahab, as most of the tourism establishments are unclassified, which means that their records of the number of tourists are not usually accurate or up to date.

**Metaphors and Terminology**

This thesis has adopted metaphors, themes and terminology that run through its course. As explained earlier, the data is analysed and organised within the parameters of a framework based of landscapes and boundaries. The framework used is a reflection of the discourse of the various communities and individuals that exist in Dahab.

The Interior – *el Barr* is a socio-geographic landscape that represents, and is a metaphor for, the local Bedouin community;

The Road - *el Asphalt* is a socio-geographic landscape that represents, and is a metaphor for, the State authority;

The Coast/Beach - *el Shatt* is a socio-geographic landscape that represents, and is a metaphor for, the tourists;
The above mentioned terms are used alternatively in the text to reflect the social and physical components of the landscape. The term 'Egyptians' is borrowed from the Bedouin discourse meaning non-Bedouin and refers to those coming from the urban and rural centres in the Delta and the Nile valley.

The Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis falls into six main chapters organised to reflect the framework used in the analysis. Chapter One introduces the theoretical discussion that has led to adopting the framework of landscapes and boundaries as the skeleton for this thesis. I will also introduce the concept of boundaries in a social and physical sense. In this Chapter I will discuss the role of the researcher in the field.

Chapter two, entitled "The Interior / el-Barr" gives an account of the present and past economic, political and social organisation of the Bedouin of Mzeina. It illustrates their interaction with both the State and the tourist community.

Chapter three, entitled "The Road, A Mixed Blessing", falls into two parts. The first gives a historical and current account of the nature of the State intervention in the lives of the Bedouin in Dahab and the ambiguous relationship between the Bedouin and the State. The second part discusses the plans for tourism development in Dahab and the implications of such plans on the life of the Bedouin community.

Chapter four entitled "The Coast / el Shatt", explores the world of the tourists and those who are in constant contact with them, namely Bedouin children, young Egyptian workers, and a number of male Bedouin. Issues of identity, authenticity,
tourism and sex, the Coast as a landscape of transient stability and liminality are also discussed.

Chapter five, entitled Cultural Keepers and Cultural Brokers, draws on the interaction between the three identified landscapes and argues that the such interaction and negotiation of the physical and social boundaries in Dahab have resulted in the construction of a new landscape which is that of women and children. The new socio-economic system has reconstructed the world of women and children and consequently affected gender and family relations, freedom and power of women, age and value systems and the position of boundaries.

Chapter six, entitled Conclusion and Recommendations, falls into two parts. Part one attempts to tie the threads of the previous discussion and bring to the forefront issues and areas that have been re-constructed and reshaped due to the interaction that takes place between the three socio-geographic landscapes. The second part entitled "Beyond the Boundaries", discusses some policy implications and recommendations and suggests a way forward for future research.
Chapter one

Landscapes and Boundaries
Introduction

In this chapter I will introduce the theoretical framework which forms the main concern of this study, namely: landscape and boundaries. I will illustrate the relevance of the themes and the framework to the area studied and to the tourism phenomenon. I will then focus on the issue of landscapes in both its social and physical capacity and demonstrate why this study alternates in its use of the physical and social meanings of landscapes. Among the focal discussions in this chapter is the way the physical and social landscapes shape and influence each other; and the way they are constructed as a result of the economic activities that prevail within them and also as a result of the way in which they are perceived. I will then discuss the relationship between landscapes, their re-construction and issues of identity.

The concepts of landscapes and boundaries are tied together. The discussion of landscapes leads to the discussion of boundaries. As landscape is re-constructed, the boundaries that surround them are constantly reshaped as well. The issue of boundaries is presented in its wider political context; followed by a discussion on the particular boundaries that are constructed, negotiated, crossed and sometimes trespassed upon in the area studied.

Boundaries and landscapes are also of relevance to the discipline of anthropology itself. In the second part of this chapter both are used to highlight the fieldwork and the methodology, with a specific focus on the particularities of being a female working in my 'own' culture.
Part One

The problem with the Christians start, said father; as with women, when the hudud or the sacred frontier, is not respected. When Allah created the earth, said father, he separated men from women, and put a sea between Muslims and Christians for a reason. Harmony exists when each group respects the prescribed limits. Trespassing leads only to sorrow and unhappiness, (El-Mernissi, 1996).

The concepts of boundaries and landscapes are closely linked. Boundaries can only exist between or around landscapes and spaces whether in a social, physical, temporal or psychological sense. Hence, the discussion of landscapes can never be separated from that of boundaries. The issues of landscapes, spaces and boundaries are of interests to nations, regions, and individuals. El-Messiri (1998) discussed the concepts of spaces and boundaries and related them to secular and religious societies and individuals, for example. Societies that have a divine reference relate to it by separating the space of the creator from that of the created. Islam talks about the 'Boundaries of God' and instructs Muslims on how to respect and not to trespass over these boundaries. 'Do not trespass your boundaries' is a common phrase used to organise those whose behaviour is not acceptable within the Arabic and Islamic societies. In Islamic law (Sharia) and also in customary law, a person guilty of a crime or an offence who is to be sentenced will have the Boundary implemented against him/her (youtabaq alieh Al-Had). In that sense the boundary exists to separate the space of innocent from that of the guilty, as well as the space of the creator from the created. If the boundaries are respected and not trespassed upon, landscapes or
spaces will be safe.

Nations also focus on their boundaries when discussing their political and physical entity. Border forces exist to secure the borders of states and protect them from any invasion. The boundaries of formerly colonised states were crossed and their lands and spaces occupied by external forces: the discussion of boundaries and spaces in my part of the world, as well as others, of course, has a political undertone. Landscapes have been violated and boundaries encroached upon by imperialists at every point in history (see Nash, 1989 for discussion on tourism as a form of imperialism).

One of the news items on 5 July 1998 reported that a British tourist trespassed over the Egyptian border separating Egypt from Israel. A tourist was staying in one of the hotels in the city of Eilat, went for a walk on the beach where the Egyptian border forces spotted him as he unintentionally walked into Egyptian territory. An incident of that nature links tourism and politics. The tourist, by definition, is someone who crosses borders and steps into a different social, physical and psychological space. The state, however, is constantly concerned about protecting its boundaries and securing its landscape.

Fatma El-Mernissi’s father commented on both social and physical spaces. Referring to Europeans during colonial times, only women and Christians, according to him, crossed their prescribed boundaries. Both women and Europeans dreamed of widening their realm: the women crossing the boundaries of their Harem, and the Europeans crossing the boundaries of their continent. Had he lived until today, the
world to him would be sheer chaos when trespassing/crossing is not only the dream of women and Europeans, but extends to reach tourists, anthropologists, children, authorities, organisations, states and individuals. Each crosses or negotiates boundaries. Moving out of one landscape into another involves crossing over or negotiating the existing boundaries in order to realise dreams and achieve goals. The *Harem* or the continent have ceased to be the only landscapes whose boundaries are negotiated. The boundaries of geographical, political, social, economic and psychological spaces are constantly crossed and negotiated in order to realise some contemporary dreams of states, governments and individuals. Boundaries accompany the re-construction of landscapes — as the boundaries are being crossed landscapes are constantly in the process of being reshaped.

This research looks at the construction of landscapes within the context of a tourism destination. It therefore has, by virtue of dealing with landscapes, to discuss the issue of the crossing and negotiating of the boundaries that separate the social, physical and political landscapes.

**Background to the field of study**

The development plans of the Ministry of Tourism in Egypt places a great emphasis on developing the tourism sector in South Sinai. Egypt has traditionally attracted

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1 According to Oxford Dictionary, trespassing involves making an unlawful or unwarrantable intrusion on land or property, while crossing is just the simple crossing from one side to the other. The move could be crossing or trespassing depending on who perceives it.

2 Travel in the Sinai is among the oldest forms of travel in history. Sinai has been mentioned in the Old Testament as the wilderness: it is the land crossed by the Holy Family. Travellers came to the Sinai in
tourists with specific interest in the Pharonic heritage and monuments mainly located in Upper Egypt. Since Thomas Cook first organised tours up the Nile at the beginning of the century followed by the Howard Carter discovery of Tut Ankh Amoun's tomb, the Pharonic monuments have received the attention of both the public and the specialists, especially from Europe. The image of Egypt has been confined to a treasure chest of Pharonic monuments. The authorities accepted the image created by the West and used Egypt's Pharonic heritage as the main attraction. Cultural tourism survived until the late seventies when the Egyptian authorities realised the need for diversification and a change of image, (Aziz, 1991). Cultural tourism represents a very small percentage of the world tourism movement out of which Egypt only receives a thin slice.

The Egyptian authorities consider tourism as a vehicle for development and the need to increase its contribution to the national economy has become more pressing. The deterioration of the agriculture sector has led many workers to seek employment elsewhere, but the automation of industry means that it is unable to provide enough jobs for the unemployed. Therefore it has become necessary to invest in, and develop fresh sources of work and economic development. The lack of foreign currency the challenges facing the export of raw materials (especially oil) and manufactured goods has made tourism more important than ever.

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various waves. Towards the end of the last century we find the accounts of Sir Richard Burton, Ernest Palmer and C.S.Jarvis. Thomas Cook's guide to Egypt included the Sinai. As much as the history of travellers and tourism in the Sinai is a fascinating area that deserves researchers attention, unfortunately the scope of this study does not extend to include such areas.
The need was then not only to develop the tourism sector but to diversify it as well. The riots which were directed towards the tourism industry in Cairo and Upper Egypt, (Aziz, 1995) made it impossible to rely completely on the traditional tourist route.

The development of tourism along the coast of the Gulf of Aqaba became a national as well as an economic goal. The Egyptian government confirmed their presence and authority over the Sinai by investing in the tourism sector there. This has had dual benefits in that it firstly serves the government plan to diversify the tourism product and secondly it confirms and re-establishes the presence of the Egyptian authorities in an area that had been under occupation for several years.

Since the early and mid nineties the Sinai has been receiving a steady and growing number of tourists and the different towns in the governorate are currently being equipped with the necessary infrastructure for the industry: five-star multinational hotels and resorts, casinos and nicely laid out beaches. The introduction of tourism to the Sinai has altered the social structure of the area. The Bedouin have ceased to be sole inhabitants as tourism has attracted tourists, investors, and young Egyptian men suffering from unemployment in the over populated towns and villages in the Delta. The need to regulate the relationship between the various social groupings has resulted in the presence of state representatives such as a governor, head of the city council, police and providers of essential services such as schools, hospitals and so forth. The research was initially set out to assess the impact of tourism on the Bedouin community of Mzeina in Dahab. The changes and the dynamics of the
The Bedouin community of Dahab can only be understood in a wider context. The classic host/guest or tourist/local split is too simple to work with. Other social groupings like the workers from the Nile valley, the tourists and the authorities are all partners in a multi-lateral discourse. The social make up of Dahab consists of Bedouin, Egyptian workers and authorities, tourists and a growing number of foreign expatriates who are currently living in the area.

The Bedouin despite being the group with the longest history in the region has been out-numbered by the newcomers. The considerable change that has occurred in their realm has forced them to change their lifestyle. They are now leading a sedentary life in order to be able to prove their rights to land and to be able to make use of the infrastructural facilities provided by the government. Bedouin living in a settled village all year round is a relatively new feature in Dahab.

Tourists are another social group which, despite having the 'nomadic' feature of being constantly on the move, have managed to establish a stable culture. Differences in nationality vanish and it becomes irrelevant whether the tourists are British, German or Israeli – their new nationality is 'tourists'. They eat the same food, they live in the same places and their social behaviour is nearly identical.

Serving this group is a growing number of young Egyptians, usually single males. They work as waiters, drivers, tour guides, or as one of them described himself to me: "just standing here calling the tourists". They have found in Dahab refuge from the
growing unemployment of the over-populated villages and towns of mainland Egypt. In addition to this group there are civil servants that represent the authority: teachers, doctors, policemen, town planners and so forth.

Three very distinct, but linked social groupings live next to each other interacting in certain landscapes and isolated in others. The three groups exist within the overall landscape of the village of Dahab that exists within a wider landscape of the Sinai. The Interior, the Road, and the Coast are the three identified physical spaces within and across which the three main social groupings exist.

The three identified physical landscapes correspond to the three social entities identified. In this thesis the term landscape is used in a social and physical sense. The presence of the Coast as a physical landscape attracted tourists to the area. The Bedouin have always lived and travelled in the Interior. Their presence has become more evident and confined to that space since the introduction of tourism and the intervention of the state. The State constructed the ‘Road’ and this allows them to exercise control and regulate the relationship between the Interior and the Coast, as well as have access to remote areas for the development of tourism. The study looks at the interaction that takes place between the three socio-geographic landscapes that together shape an area mainly dominated by tourism.
Understanding the Interior, the Road, and the Coast

The landscapes identified have existed to an extent both in their physical and social capacities. This research looks at the interaction between the physical and social entities. It addresses the question of whether the physical landscape shapes the social entity living within it or using it or whether it is the social landscape that ascribes certain meaning to the physical one and hence is constantly involved in a process of shaping and re-constructing the physical surroundings.

Using such a framework by no means implies a rigid and static structure of the area's social and physical landscapes. It does not attempt to imply that the three social groupings that are being dealt with in this study are separate and discreet, nor to imply that the three socio-geographic landscapes are the only ones existing in the Sinai or particularly in Dahab. The study considers the three identified landscapes as the most influential in most tourism destinations, in general, and in Dahab in particular. There are other social and physical landscapes in Dahab whose role is indirectly mentioned in the study. There is, for example, the international community who have settled in Dahab as investors, and who have their own walled houses and villas existing somewhere in-between the Coast and the Interior.

There is constant interaction between the various groups, but there is also a level of variation within the one group. Some members of the Bedouin community are related to the Road rather than the Interior. The official leaders of the Bedouin community mediate between the Interior (in its social capacity), and the Road. It is in the
interrelationship of the three landscapes that the wider landscape of Dahab and the Sinai is shaped and constructed.

This framework provides a suitable method for presenting the immense amount of data gathered and for reflecting the dynamism of the area studied. The concepts of landscapes and boundaries are also a metaphor for regional and individual situations and ideas. Territories and boundaries have been historically linked with the Middle East and more recently with the Sinai as a result of the long history of colonialism.

Tourists hold conceptual images of the Beach/Coast and of the Interior/Desert. The former is associated with hedonistic holiday behaviour, while the latter brings back romantic images of the desert and Arabia. The two terms hold quite different images for the Bedouin.

The Road is an interesting metaphor; for the tourist the Road, or being 'on the road' is related to notions of freedom, travelling and exploring the world, popularised by the hippie era of the sixties, (Kerouac, 1972). Governments increasingly use Roads as signs and symbols of modernity; Roads are also used as tools of control they are paved were necessary and blocked for security reasons when necessary. The Israeli government's interest in constructing the Road in Sinai was for accessibility and security reasons. The Egyptian government's later interest in continuing the construction of the Road was mainly to confirm the affiliation of the Sinai to mainland Egypt and to be able to access and control the Bedouin in their remote land.
is also crucial to implement the government tourism development plans for the Sinai. It has made Sinai accessible to increasing numbers of tourists and investors. Roads are also tactically built or blocked to illustrate government policies and orientation. Waldren (1996) describes a different kind of relationship between the community and the Road in Mallorca (another locality mainly dominated by tourism). "The road area was a 'village space', a proper place to be seen on one's way home, to the shops, out courting, to the church, and being carried in a casket on one's final route to eternity. The process of life took place along these roads" (ibid: 217). The roads of Mallorca existed prior to tourism, however their positioning a propos the local community has changed after the introduction of tourism. The building of the highway in Mallorca, according to Waldren, required some co-operation between property owners and the government, and it was then that the relationship changed.

In the Sinai Bedouin associate the Road with authority and the loss of their freedom. However, the financial needs of the Bedouin have led to re-constructing the meaning of the Road. Most of the Bedouin in the area work as taxi drivers referring to themselves as modern day nomads.

The authorities refer to the Interior or el-Barr as an exclusively Bedouin area and the Coast as the tourist domain. The development and investment plans for Dahab reveal the conceptual framework of landscapes within which the authority operates.
The Interior, or *El Barr* for the Bedouin, refers to the area where the 'real Bedouin' live, away from civilisation. The Beach or *El-Shatt* is the place out there where the tourists are. Bedouin perceive the Beach as a world with its own morals and ethics and would, for example, refer to someone working on the Coast as someone with Beach morals or ethics. The Road/el-Asphalt has a temporal context, as well as a physical and symbolic presence, the Road is linked to the beginning of State intervention be it the Egyptian or the Israeli authorities. The Road leads to the administrative centre and separates the Coast from the Interior. Along the Road checkpoints that control and regulate relationships between the other two landscapes are scattered. For the Bedouin, the Road or *el-Asphalt* as they call it, is a mixed blessing, it links them to the world, provides them with jobs, but at the same time separates them from other worlds in certain circumstances, such as that of tourists. The Road has brought in various groups with whom they have to share the scarce resources and by whose rules they have to abide.

The power of this framework is embedded in the fact that it originates from each of the social groupings. The Bedouin, the authorities and the tourists all refer to the Interior the Road and the Coast in their discourses, for each of these social groupings such landscapes hold different meaning.

Sperber (1995) argued that anthropologists have the power to make their cultural representations meaningful for the reader and they should allow themselves a certain degree of freedom. In doing so they often depart from the details provided by their
informants, introducing new jargon and employing their own metaphors. Sperber's point allows the anthropologist a certain degree of freedom and flexibility to present data using analytical insight. I use this as my point of departure; the analytical framework that I have adopted corresponds to a metaphoric and physical framework used by the social grouping interacting in the area that this research is looking at.

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that is complicated due to the number of parties that are involved in it. Selwyn (1994) developed a diagram that illustrated the many parties involved in tourism and the relationships that exist between each of them, local people, tourists, governments, non-governmental organisations, international agencies, academics and so forth - See diagram below.
However little research in tourism, especially in the anthropology of tourism, has managed to represent the complex phenomenon of tourism in a broader perspective i.e. involving more than one party.

MacCannell (1989) and Urry (1990) looked at tourism from the tourist's perspective; Greenwood (1989) and Smith (1989) looked at tourism from the perspective of the hosts. This study looks at tourism from a horizontal, temporal and spatial perspective including the main partners in the tourism experience. Between the hosts and guests there is the state/authorities which regulate and very much influence the relationships between the two sides. The role played by the state has been rather overlooked when dealing with social relationships in tourism destination areas. The study gives a snapshot of a destination looking into the experience of the locals, the tourists and the authorities at the same time.

Crick (1994) emphasised the need for detailed ethnographic studies rather than a theoretical framework that might do little more than prematurely cast the data into ready made highly evaluative and patently lop-sided frameworks. One can argue here that the theoretical framework and the ethnographic data complement each other; in the sense that any ethnographic data is collected with the aim to uncover certain problematic areas or analyse a particular phenomenon which is a theoretical framework in its own capacity. The anthropologist is always loaded with various theoretical frameworks that s/he has normalised along the many years of research and academic work.
Marx (1984) pointed out the way anthropologists who were interested in Bedouin life went into the field reluctant to acknowledge new factors affecting Bedouin life in the modern day. In their research they failed to recognise the construction of new towns into which the Bedouin were moving indicating a shift towards a more settled lifestyle. They have also ignored the large numbers of Bedouin who were employed as waged labourers and further also have tended to deny links with the colonial administration of the past or with the present day tourist.

One of the important contributions of the relatively recent discipline of the anthropology of tourism is that it has introduced the anthropologist to settings where it becomes completely invalid to concentrate on what was once described as a bounded cultural entity. There is far more complex set of interactions involved in the tourist experience than that of the hosts and guests.

Anthropologists interested in tourism have to develop frameworks that incorporate the various players and reflect the dynamism of their relationships. In the current study these players include local Bedouin communities, the tourists, the authorities, Egyptian migrant labour, expatriates, owners, developers and others. In attempts to play their roles and fulfil their requirements, they trespass and cross boundaries of their own social and physical existence. They interact with others and construct new landscapes. The anthropologist, the bridge maker, researching such a setting has to be able to interpret and reflect this socio-geographic interactive process.
Landscapes and Boundaries: associations and constructions

In this section, the construction of landscapes and the way the physical landscapes shape and influence the social ones or vice versa will be discussed and related to previous research. The relationship between landscape, politics and identity will also be discussed. The state's protection of its boundaries and thus the land curbed within it is a sign of political integrity and illustrates the link between landscape and politics.

The works of Bender (1995) and Himdan (1996) have allowed more understanding and thorough analysis of the relationships between the physical and social landscapes. They both widen the concept of landscapes to involve social and political issues and to reflect meaning. Bender (ibid) discusses how landscapes have different meanings for different people. She describes the way contemporary Western society associates aesthetic and picturesque values to landscapes. People create landscapes through their experience and engagement with the world around them, so they are never static. People re-work, appropriate and contest them. It is part of the way in which identities are created and disputed by individuals, groups, or nation states. She also talks about the socialising of landscapes and how they are drawn into the domain of human negotiations. As time goes on social relations become increasingly dependent upon these pre-established physical structures, to which people have differential access both literally and in terms of social understanding.

3 Quotes are from recent edition of the Character of Egypt which was first published by Dar el-Hilal, 1967 (Arabic).
This research reflects on what Bender (ibid:11) described as the socialising of landscapes. The Bedouin now perceive the Coast/al-Shatt now as an ‘other’ landscape that is socially and physically shaped by individuals and organisations that relate to it. The Coast is a tourist landscape, separated from the Interior by moral, religious, social and actual physical boundaries, such as massive hotel developments that are inaccessible to the local community. Similarly, the Bedouin perceive the Road/el-Asphalt as the landscape of power and authority. The Road with its walled buildings, with gates and guards is also an ‘other’ landscape for the Bedouin. Some of its establishments are inaccessible to the Bedouin both socially and physically. Their movements on and across the Road, for example, are regulated according to a legal system with which they are not familiar. 

Himdan (1996) an Egyptian socio-geographer wrote an encyclopaedic work entitled the “Character of Egypt”. In this he explores the impact of history upon geography and the relationship between the physical and the social landscapes. The distinction he makes between the hydraulic society and the Bedouin society is one that has been of relevance to the analysis of data for the present study. He distinguishes between the desert and hydraulic societies in Egypt especially with regard to the notions of dependency and bureaucracy along which they operate. The hydraulic society that lives along the banks of the Nile and in the Delta is a very hierarchical, bureaucratic and dependent society due to the nature of its economic activity. The scarcity of water in Egypt and the variety of crops that require a lot of water for irrigation led the

Egyptian authorities rule and control the area according to their own state law, which the Bedouin are
government to intervene in order to regulate the relationship between farmers and to make sure that they all have a fair share of water. The basin irrigation system was a method that the government introduced in order to control agricultural production and avoid conflicts between farmers. Farmers in accordance with that are dependent upon those who own the terrace above them or the basin next to them in order to irrigate their land. They also have to abide by irrigation times specified by the government. The organisation of such a system requires a variety of bureaucratic procedures and entails the individual being tied to a system upon which s/he is completely dependent.

The Bedouin depend on rainwater for pasture and the little agriculture they maintain. They have lived for centuries without the need for state intervention in their means of economic production, especially as none of their products is as strategic as cotton, sugar cane or rice. Bedouin realised the need for co-operating and sharing the scarce water available and have communal rights to graze in each others land. The Bedouin of Mzeina, whom I have encountered during the field research, have confirmed the analysis of Himdan *(ibid: 58)*, and recognise the distinction he makes between the hydraulic and desert societies.

From the above analysis one can conclude that the physical characteristics of the agricultural and desert areas of Egypt have influenced the social landscape. It is clear that the agricultural society operates on a set of rules and social values different than those of the desert society. The intervention of the state to organise the agricultural
society's means of production has tainted that society with two main features: bureaucracy and dependency. The bureaucratic procedures required to organise who is growing what product at what time and the different times of irrigation, lead to a dependency on those who control the water required for irrigation, namely, the state or the owners of the terrace or basins adjacent to the farmers. In Egypt, the agricultural society forms the basis of the urban society - dependency and bureaucracy are thus features of both societies and are exercised not only in economic spheres but also in the various aspects of everyday life, relationships and transactions.

The physical landscape of the desert has to a certain extent shaped the social and legal frameworks of the Bedouin as will be illustrated at various sections of this study. Due to the absence of a government and of suppliers of services and resources Bedouin led an independent life for so long. It is now difficult for the Bedouin to be incorporated into a system so layered with bureaucracy and hierarchy. The fundamental differences that exist between the agricultural and desert societies result in misunderstanding and uneasiness in the relationship between the two. These problems are highlighted by this study, as the two communities have to co-exist in a given space.

In addition to the physical and social differences that exist between the desert and the agricultural society, Himdan (ibid: 87) also discusses the dichotomy that exists between the centre and periphery as a main component of the character of Egypt. The centralisation of power led to the creation of dichotomy between the centre / urban, and the periphery / rural whether agricultural or desert. The movement from the
agricultural rural areas to the urban centres was easy and frequent; the gap separating the desert societies and the centre only grew wider. The authorities perceived the deserts as a harsh environment with limited economic viability and so its situation as a periphery persisted. The marginalisation of the rural areas, especially the desert, has complicated the relationships between the inhabitants of the state, the urban, agricultural and desert societies.

Himdan (ibid) and Bender (ibid) presented, aptly, the different ways of constructing landscapes and the relationship between the physical and social dimensions. Their analyses complement each other, with the former presenting the power of the physical natural characteristics in shaping the social landscape of any given area and illustrating his conviction by comparing and contrasting the agricultural and desert societies. Bender (ibid), concentrates on how the physical landscapes are created by people, as people perceive landscape differently at different times and in different contexts. Landscapes in the present study are shaped by people and also shape them. It is important here to reiterate that throughout the study the meaning of landscapes alternates between a metaphoric social and cultural landscape and a physical one.

Urry (1995) links the concepts of place to that of tourism, relating the shift in the understanding of place to two processes: economic transformation and academia's attempts to understand the economic base of place. Urry (ibid) discusses the way culture and politics are central to the structuring and experience of place. Accordingly

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5 Wittfogel (1970) used a similar analysis in his book *Agriculture: a key to the understanding of the Chinese society, past and present.*
one's sense of place is not given but culturally constructed. Tourism is an industry that combines both the economic and cultural elements and it plays a major role in reconstructing places. Urry (ibid: 193) draws on the case of the Lake District and the way it has been restructured due to tourism:

There is nothing obvious or inevitable about why huge numbers of people would voluntarily choose to visit this particular place, a place that up to the eighteenth century was seen as the very embodiment of inhospitality — at the time the hills and mountains represented inhospitable terror, rather than the kind of nature that drew people to it.

The Lake District has been transformed from this barren landscape into an area that receives 17 million tourists per year. The area had to be discovered; then it had to be interpreted as appropriately aesthetic; and then it had to be transformed into the managed scenery suitable for million of visitors. The Lake District is a case in point of how landscapes are re-constructed in different spatial and temporal contexts. This is achieved through change in the physical or the social dimensions. The change of the landscape into a tourist attraction is usually done by building hotels, resorts or by changing the perception of the place so that today the remote, harsh and wild landscapes have gradually become an expression of good taste.

Tourism as a cultural and economic phenomenon has lead to the re-construction of the Sinai landscape. The Coast has become an economically viable landscape and the Interior has physically changed from a spacious territory suitable for pasturing flocks into concrete houses required for the new sedentary lifestyle.
Reconstruction of landscapes due to social and economic factors has taken place in the Sinai as it has in the Lake District and other tourism destinations. The physical and social dimensions of any given area are constantly changing and evolving as a result of dominant economic and social factors, different perceptions and associations of landscapes by various social groupings and the new construction taking place in the area. The fact that landscapes are in a constant process of reconstruction raises the important question of identity - on both national and individual level.

**Landscape and Identity**

Sinai remained for more than a decade in Israeli hands - after its restoration to the Egyptian authorities in 1982 it has become a matter of a national political identity to emphasise the presence and the power of the state over this part.

The Israeli authorities had introduced tourism to Sinai whilst in occupation. This new economic sector altered the Egyptian authority’s perception of what they had thought of as a barren space. It later proved to be a useful tool in order to emphasise state power by constructing a new identity for the area through tourism. Sinai has always had a strategic importance as the Eastern gate to Egypt, but its economic viability was never important as it is now. Sinai has been reconstructed into a destination of leisure, recreation and an economically viable space as opposed to a war zone and a harsh environment. Diversified tourism is considered to be a solution to the problems
resulting from being dependent on Pharonic monuments situated in Upper Egypt. Tourism, with its requirement for a modern infrastructure, has allowed the state to create a modern presence with hotels, resorts and golf courses reflecting a modern identity.

Carter, Donald, and Squires (1993) and Selwyn (1995) discussed the issue of landscape, space and identity. Selwyn (ibid) describes the way in which the Israeli authority attempted to create the Israeli identity through association with landscape. He explains the role of the SNPI (The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel - a government subsidised organisation) in strengthening and enforcing the relationship between Israelis and the landscape in Palestine. The SNPI runs nature tours, which aim to weave together various elements of the landscape to strengthen patriotic feelings. The general point that can be drawn from this paper is that an intentional effort is exerted to create an identity and an affiliation to a space that members of the tours (due to various historical and political factors) might not otherwise experience. It is the collaborative and selective efforts of different departments that created this identity. In addition to using affiliation to landscape to construct a sense of national identity among Israelis, landscape is also used by the Israeli State to illustrate a political stand. The relationship of Arabs and Bedouin with regard to their landscape was presented as a danger to the Israeli agriculture and its landscape.

Israelis used landscape to create an identity or to emphasise an existing one and to argue a political case based very much on ideas related to the history of the settlers in
the middle of this century and on the visual and aesthetic perception of landscape. The carefully formulated relationship to the land contributes towards the construction of national identity and to the exclusion of the ‘other’ who does not have the same ideology, history or simply does not take part in these natural tours.

Familiarity with landscape creates a natural affiliation to the land and a strong feeling of belonging, hence shaping a national identity – and vice versa. The reconstructed Coast, for example, in the form of hotels and resorts is for the Bedouin an unfamiliar territory that has created a sense of alienation. On the national level this reconstructed Coast coincides with the government efforts to establish a new, ‘modern’ national and political identity.

Carter, Donald and Squires (ibid: vii) disputed this concept by saying that “the presumed certainties of cultural identity, firmly located in particular places which housed stable cohesive communities of shared tradition and perspectives, though never a reality for some, were increasingly disrupted and displaced for all.” The relationship between identity and place is not very straightforward for those subjected to displacement and exile, for example. They argue that the forces of new technologies, globalisation and time-space compression have together created information flows, fragmentation, and pace, replacing what was perceived as stable, homogeneous community and place. Technology is experienced by all while some initiate its operation, others are constrained by it. Tourists, with the aid of technology travel and reside on the Coast located adjacent to the Bedouin whose access to
technology is rather confined.

One can argue here that in place of the old loyalties and, as a result of, and in resistance to these forces new communities with different interest and belief have developed. Located next to each other they feel the need to assert their separate identities. Places acquire different meanings for each of the different communities living there, but for some members of the locality places revert to simple being and no longer support notions of identity. The relationship between identity and landscape can take two forms. It can either create an identity through relating people to landscapes in their integral sense or by landscape acquiring different meanings for different people and therefore ceasing to be the basis of identity, or alternatively becoming the basis of multiple shifting identities.

Dahab landscape, as it existed in the past, affirmed the Bedouin identity and established a sense of belonging. The harsh nature of the area and its remoteness emphasised the Bedouin control over it, as they were the only people who were familiar with such environment. Egyptians from the Nile Valley and the authorities used to fear the harshness and the unfamiliarity of the desert environment.

As the intervention and the control of the State increases, as it occupies the central location of the Road in its metaphoric and physical sense, the meaning ascribed to

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6 See Massey (1994) on the difference between spaces and places. Spaces are different from places as
landscapes alters according to different social groupings. The Coast is the area designated for the development of tourism, and the Road is necessary for control and accessibility. The Interior, so far, remains a landscape familiar to the Bedouin, left with no other alternative they retreated to it as a place that supports their identity. Their relationship with the Coast has been shaped by what the authorities have made of it – for the Bedouin it has become a ‘space’ that supplies them with income. Issues like freedom, independence and hospitality, all intrinsic to the Bedouin identity, are currently confined to the Interior in one form and to the Coast in another.

In the process of reconstructing landscapes, boundaries are shifted, redrawn, abolished and negotiated. A wide variety of boundaries ranging from political, physical, social, moral and psychological are subjected to negotiations by different social groupings within the locality. In the next section the boundaries of each landscape and the means of their negotiations are explored.

The Negotiation of Boundaries

Boundaries and landscape are linked together, the discussion of one necessitates the introduction and discussion of the other. Boundaries are historically and contemporarily linked to and associated with the Middle East, whose boundaries are constantly in the process of negotiation and construction. The political boundaries of the meaning ascribed to them do not support the identity of the community subject to consideration.
the Middle East were of concern, and subject to the manipulation of the western world for over a century. Now the institution of tourism (which some academics perceive as a form of imperialism, see Nash, 1989) has introduced new boundaries and reinforced old ones. Tourist destinations can be seen as a microcosm of the world with the tourists living on one side and the locals living on the other - separated by boundaries.

Palsson (1990) put the issues of boundaries, landscapes and the role of anthropologists in a wider political context. The Cold War created division between 'worlds' and once there are such divisions its different spaces/landscapes have to be called something, whether First, Second and Third or, in the case of this study, the Interior, the Road and the Coast. The modern world, the world of technological sophistication has been divided into free and socialist, the First World and the Second World respectively. The residual category of the underdeveloped world was renamed the Third World. However, at the moment the interfacing happens between the 'First' and the 'Third' worlds.

Long (1989) comments on interfaces between these two worlds as characterising situations where interactions between actors become oriented around the problem of devising ways of "bridging", accommodating to, or struggling against each other different social and cognitive worlds, hence, political boundaries are negotiated in their wider sense. Hannerz (1989) suggests that if anthropologists want to contribute to the modern world they should first of all study the bridge-makers; such as journalists and tourists. The tourists could be situated in a wider political context and
their role as bridge-makers and their process of negotiating the political boundaries (among many others) is explored.

Boundaries are at the core of the tourism process. International tourists are defined by crossing international boundaries. They also cross psychological boundaries of their routine life into the holidays. Once on holiday there is the boundary that separates the tourist from the local – and within the local communities there are always another set of boundaries. Such boundaries define the existence of the community through expressions, actions and discourse and hence no static notion of the community can be sustained (Abram, Waldren and Macleod, 1997). I agree that the negotiation of boundaries is part of their functions in defining the social or physical entities contained within them.

The physical political boundaries of Sinai have always been problematic. Due to the strategic location of Sinai as the Eastern gate to Egypt, its boundaries have been subjected to trespass by various forces. Sinai became Israeli territory after the Six-Day war in 1967. After the Yom Kippur war in 1973, and in accord with the Camp David treaty 1979, Egypt gradually gained control over the area under specific conditions. Israelis, currently, have an ambivalent relationship with Sinai, for example, as they are able to come into the country without visas.

The Egyptian government has divided the peninsula into two governorates introducing an administrative border that divides the area into North and South Sinai. The new
political system within Sinai came along with novel administrative arrangements and objectives like sedenterization and organisation of land ownership. Such arrangements have introduced territorial boundaries among Bedouin communities and within the one community. It has also introduced new boundaries like those surrounding individual property. Bedouin communities have always acknowledged territorial boundaries, however, the introduction of a new political and economic system resulted in serious changes to the way Bedouin perceived and dealt with such boundaries. Bedouin communities, in the past, approved of communal usage of land, for example, an attitude which is currently difficult to carry on with given the new political system in the area.

Tourism added value to land and the different economic advantages of Coastal land has caused its value to increase. Owners of Coastal land no longer share revenues with other members of the community. This very process of privatisation has led to the creation of social and economic boundaries among the Bedouin community and created a gap between those who have and are involved in the tourism industry, and those who are not. Bedouin are constantly negotiating these social, economic and physical boundaries in order to increase their chances to get involved in tourism.

Gender boundaries are redrawn in a more rigid way as a result of the new social and economic systems in the area. The movement of women is confined to the Interior due to the presence of a growing numbers of males both on the Coast and on the Road who are not familiar with rules that protect females’ space and freedom. Children,
both boys and girls, are currently involved in generating income for the family. They have to work on the Coast, where they deal with each other and with the tourists in the absence of gender boundaries. Children are regularly involved in a process of negotiating the boundaries that exist between the identified landscapes. They move from the Interior, to the Road and the Coast and back. It is for that reason that one can describe them as cultural brokers.

Children negotiate age boundaries and move into the sphere of elders by virtue of knowledge and experience. Children’s accessibility to the Coast and the Road made them acquire an insight into the worlds of the State and the tourists. Parents and adults turn to children seeking information and advice on matters related to the Coast and the Road.

The Egyptian migrant labourers who work on the Coast are negotiating gender, moral and religious boundaries, as they are involved in a series of relationships with female tourists. Marriages take place between Egyptian men and tourist women as a step towards crossing the political boundary of Egypt to travel to Europe or America. (in an interview with one of the lawyers working in Dahab, he mentioned an approximate figure of seven marriages per day – however there are no official statistics available).

The Bedouin in Dahab are negotiating psychological boundaries – that separate tourists from guests and run parallel to the physical boundary that separates the Coast from the Interior. The visitor is a tourist on the Coast subject to the codes of the
hospitality industry, but is a guest once s/he crosses the boundary of the Coast and moves into the Interior at which stage the Bedouin treat him/her in accordance with their own hospitality rules.

Bedouin men have established a mental boundary with regard to dealing with women, which again runs parallel to the boundary that separates the Coast from the Interior. Bedouin men sit with female tourists on the beach, talk to them, cook for them while out on safaris, and appreciate their independence and courage. However, once these men cross the physical boundary of the Interior they also cross a mental boundary and their behaviour towards women on the Coast does not filter through to women of the Interior.

Boundaries surround social and physical landscapes, which are constantly reconstructed as a result of shifting, re-negotiating or crossing such boundaries. The social groupings that currently exist in the identified physical landscapes are all involved in a process of negotiating their physical boundaries in order to encompass more space. The Coast and the Road are in a more powerful position both politically and economically and that might well allow both of these landscapes to encroach on the Interior. 7

Boundaries are of relevance to the discipline of anthropology itself; the anthropologist is constantly involved in a process of negotiating boundaries. The particularities of

7 See Barth (1969) for an in-depth analysis of ethnic groups and their boundaries, issues of social and territorial boundaries and ethnic diversity
carrying out fieldwork in a tourist destination, of working in one's own society, of challenging the norm of the white Western male anthropologist, are all issues that will be raised in the next section.
Part Two

The Researcher in the Field

Field research was carried out during the period between October 1995 and March 1997. I spent most of this period in the town of Dahab among the Mzeina Bedouin. However, I interrupted my stay in Dahab with occasional visits to Cairo or Alexandria to satisfy family duties and made other visits to London for meetings with my supervisor. This was not my first contact with the Sinai. During 1994 I worked with the Hayawat Bedouin community situated in the northern part of South Sinai in Marakh Valley. The research I undertook there had a different focus, as the Hayawat Bedouin were not involved in tourism. The aim of the research was to assess their reaction towards the introduction of tourism and the ways in which they would want to be incorporated into the new social and economic system provided by tourism. 8

In this section I will give accounts of my personal experience of working in Dahab, reflecting specifically on being a woman and an Egyptian. I will also relate the experience to working in a tourism destination among more than one group and the difficulties arising from the situation. The anthropologist and the tourist are both external individuals arriving at a destination where they are interested, in their own ways, in an ‘other’ culture. So they both, on occasion step into each other’s territory. They both cross the same physical and mental boundaries in pursuit of their interests. The overlap between the roles of the anthropologist and that of the tourist are of interest

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8 See Eber and Aziz (1997) for details of this study, which was undertaken as part of the EC funded Med-Campus programme.
and deserve speculation as to whether the anthropologist/tourist operate in different territories. It is a confusing process as they both exist in the same locality and each, although carrying different identities and objectives, will be viewed by the 'other' in a similar way (Crick, 1995: 207).

During the process of the research I crossed the boundaries of my prescribed gender roles and I had to observe the borderline that separates the anthropologist and the tourist.

Callaway (1994) discusses the gender implications in fieldwork and text. In her paper she highlights issues that I encountered in the field: as my position within the community, the influence of the anthropologist’s personal profile, and the access women have to the worlds of men and that of women.

Upon my arrival in the field it was obvious that none of the groups in Dahab, whether Bedouin, Egyptians or tourists are complete 'other' to me. Both the Bedouin and the Egyptian communities considered me as an ‘insider’ to a certain extent: my looks, my language, and my culture. However, due to my urban upbringing I was considered to belong to the Egyptian community more than to the Bedouin or the tourist. Egyptians represent authority and control and this has complicated my relationship with the Bedouin, especially at the beginning.

A single young Egyptian woman living on her own in a place frequented by tourists or Egyptian migrant workers was enough reason to set me apart from the Bedouin but at the same time did not make my relations with the authorities any easier. My position was unusual by local standards and raised questions about my identity and made me the
subject of various investigations by the authorities and others. Restaurant owners would talk to me in Hebrew, suggesting that I must have some links with Israel. It is incidents like this that confuse the tourists and the anthropologists. The tourists' (most of whom are Israelis) constant presence on the Coast and their abiding to the tourists' norms and movements, prevent them from being subjected to any of this suspicion. The tourists were equally confused by my identity. I looked and dressed like a local but I did not behave like one. I could converse with them in English and French when I joined them for coffees and drinks on the Coast. My long dresses and my hair cover were sometimes an obstacle that made tourists unable to relate to me. In that respect, I shared with each social grouping a level of familiarity and a degree of foreignness that has enriched the research.

Crick (ibid) and Selwyn (1996) both point out the borderline that separates anthropologists and tourists in general situations and talk about tourists and the anthropologists as being relatives of a kind especially when they happen to be present at the same place. In times gone by anthropologists denied any links with the colonial administrator and missionaries. Similarly, they now deny any links with the tourist. Almost anywhere anthropologists go in the modern world there are tourists. In some cases it could be anthropologists themselves who lay the path for tourists to come.

Crick (1994: 2-11), discusses the boundaries and the common territory on which the tourist and the anthropologist operate. He argues that tourist and anthropologist both go to cultures where they are temporary strangers with equal magnitude of push factors from their home culture as much as the pull ones that exist in the visited cultures. They
both occupy marginal roles due to their liminal position and have restricted means of cultural communication (a different experience in the case of the native anthropologist). Their common territory also covers areas like the use of 'cultural brokers' to access what they wish to obtain from the other culture. One uses a guidebook, the other uses an interpreter, a research assistant or relies on what is known as 'gatekeepers'. Tourists leave their 'pleasure periphery' after a period of conspicuous consumption with souvenirs and photographs to remind them of the experience. Anthropologists leave their ethnographic periphery after a period of conspicuous consumption of data that is taken back again to foreign territory to be written in the form an academic study. Both of them are out of their normal space and time, so both have crossed a boundary; the tourist of the mundane day to day routine of work, and the anthropologist, though still engaged at work, is also out of the usual work pattern.

Although the anthropologist is constantly aware that s/he is not a 'tourist', the day to day maintenance of this boundary, sometimes, becomes problematic. The community, in the case of this study, has an overall tendency to categorise individuals as Bedouin, tourist, or Egyptian; an anthropologist is more likely to fit in the tourist category. Negotiating the borderlines between the tourist and the anthropologist exist on a social as well as on a personal level. On the social level it takes place to avoid categorisation by the community, on the personal level the negotiating process aims to keep the work/play spheres separate. I had often felt guilty while sitting in a café or getting involved in tourism related activities; being a researcher in an environment of leisure and recreation meant that I had to always remind myself of my role as a researcher and not a tourist.
Friends, relatives and colleagues who are not familiar with anthropological research assumed that I was going on holiday. The holiday discourse prevailed whenever I was going to the field or coming back. Comments like “Did you have a nice time? Maybe we could join you next time? Did you dive?” or “Did you take any photographs?” were constantly made. At the beginning this attitude was frustrating, there was a constant challenge to prove that what is a 'playground' to some has to be my 'work-place'.

To reach Dahab I used to take an overnight bus from Cairo. My travelling companions were either tourists or Egyptian workers from the Delta. I was usually the only Egyptian woman on the bus and my position and identity was rather ambiguous.

Moving between the socio-geographic landscapes made my position even more ambiguous – the few anthropologists who have visited the area before were mainly working in the Interior. My movements between the Interior, across the Road and into the Coast led to some complications, among which is the way I dressed or had to dress, sometimes. In the Interior I had to wear long dresses and to cover my hair, not only because that was the most acceptable dress to wear but also because it was the most comfortable. However, this outfit on the Coast was a barrier when it came to dealing with the tourists. Conducting interviews on the Road meant yet another shift in what I could wear and what I could say.

The research required spending time with tourists on the beach, with members of the Egyptian community and with representatives of the authorities. I realised that living in the Interior with one of the Bedouin families, which is what I planned to do before
arriving in Dahab, might not be the most appropriate or productive way to fulfil the requirements of my research. Spending long hours on the Coast talking to men and interviewing tourists would not have been easily accepted by any Bedouin family. It is here that being an Arab Muslim female becomes a factor, as the Bedouin would not have expected a Western anthropologist, whether male or female to abide by cultural norms. During my stay in Dahab, I have not had the 'anthropologist treatment'. No Bedouin family I met invited me to stay at their house and I put that down to Dahab being a place where hospitality is currently available for sale.  

I chose to stay in a room in a small hotel halfway between the Coast and the Interior. This allowed me to move more freely across landscapes – which was essential to carry out the research. However, my stay at the hotel did not allow most of the Bedouin women that I got to know to visit me. The same applied to the Bedouin children who were always scared to come and ask for me despite it being a small hotel with individual rooms organised around an open outside space. They always felt uncomfortable with the owners – regardless of my reassurances to them and my instructions to the hotel staff.

Another factor that has influenced my field research is my position as an Arab woman working in a mainly Arab community with very strict gender boundaries. This position did not only have implications in the field but also in my own community and family. I had to go back to my husband in Alexandria quite often. My pattern of coming and

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9 One of the families that I have been very closely linked with did offer me accommodation on the basis that I can pay them as much as I pay for the hotel. I did, however, decline that offer as it would have
going was understood by Bedouin friends and families with whom I was in contact. I was in effect adopted and looked after by a particular Bedouin family, that of Hajj Ouda and his wife Hajja Suweilma, and my adoptive mother, who even gave me a familiar Bedouin name, always encouraged me to go back to Alexandria and stay with my husband. No good wife should leave her husband behind for such long periods, she used to tell me. She would ask her son to give me a lift to the bus stop in his pick-up and she then would ring in the morning to make sure that I arrived safely. I could compare my situation to that of Gardner (1992) who talks of how members of the community where she was working acknowledged the fact that she had, at the time, a boyfriend who lived in Eilat.

Some Bedouin of Sinai have come across foreign anthropologists before and remember them whether men or women with great admiration and affection. Anthropologists who come from completely different cultures were considered to be more courageous and cleverer than I am. They managed to live under harsh circumstances that they were not used to in their home countries and to learn the language, the history and relate to local people. Bedouin realised that anthropologists like Lavie (1990) or Gardner (1992) did not share with them the same cultural and religious belief, so any attempts the anthropologist made to fit in was appreciated. I was expected to share with the Bedouin most of their religious and cultural norms by virtue of being an Arab Muslim woman. My presence in the field challenged our value system.

Being a native speaker allowed me to understand and communicate with the community complicated my access to information, see Lavie (1990) for opposite experience.
faster if not better than someone who is not. A local anthropologist would then require
less time in the field than one who is not a native speaker. 'Home blindness' questions
the advantageous position possessed by a local anthropologist to represent his/her own
community, by arguing that such familiarity could hinder an objective approach to
anthropological research.¹⁰

Palsson (1995) discussed the extent of the survival of the notion of the 'other' in the
modern anthropological discourse as an increasing number of anthropologists work at
home. Edelman (1995) questions the privileged access of the native anthropologist to
the deeper structures of social life, emphasising that the problem is not so much to
overcome home blindness, but to stress the importance of dialogue and intuitive
knowledge gained through participation. The native anthropologists thus, can play the
role of the insider and outsider at the same time. There are different levels of being
native, speaking the same language, and belonging to the same social and cultural
worlds.

The volume produced by Altorki and El-Solh (1988) is a pioneer collection of fieldwork
experiences of Arab women working in their own society. In their volume they stressed
the importance of considering anthropologists as social beings; they looked at the issues
of being indigenous Arab anthropologists and also the issue of being female in a society
that is characterised by a pervasive segregation of sexes (ibid:14-15).

¹⁰ I am aware of the various levels of locality and when I talk about the anthropologist being local it is a
relative position. Coming from a different part of the same country or culture is most likely to be more
local than coming from a completely different culture with different values and different languages.
In my case my position on the boundaries of local and foreign settings allowed me to be treated as an 'honorary man' in many situations. I was allowed to sit with men in the Majles, a position that gave me equal access to the world of men as well as to that of women.

The amount of information gathered with the help of mastering a local language and avoiding a state of cultural shock was an advantage that has facilitated my work. The ability to follow conversations that I was not part of was very useful especially when structured interviews did not prove to be fruitful, (Abu-Lughod, 1988). In certain cases my situation of being an Arab female researcher made various members of the communities I worked with sympathetic towards me. Free transportation, free meals, and the readiness to help me with my research all stemmed from my informants' various attempts to show their solidarity and support.

Abu-Lughod (ibid) discusses how difficult it is to obtain information via direct interviews even when the informants were familiar with the nature of the research – they were usually prepared to help given that they do not have to sit and be questioned. I have experienced the same reaction, and it meant spending long periods with members of the community in different situations and at different times listening to their conversations and carefully selecting a good point to join in. The main method I used during my field research was participant observation. Nevertheless, this method has not always proven to be suitable especially when working with the authorities on the Road or the tourists on the Coast.
Altorki and El-Solh (ibid) also discussed the political implications of being indigenous field workers especially in the Arab world as the researcher will always remain subject to the authorities of that country. This requirement will weigh heavily in defining priorities in research agendas as well as in decisions regarding contents of research publications. If the researcher ignored such considerations a series of complications could be expected. Even though Westerners are being increasingly confronted with the possibility that the 'natives' are in a position to challenge their research findings, indigenous field-workers in the Arab world may not easily be able to evade the social and political responsibility directly or indirectly emanating from their social findings. This was an area that has rather complicated my situation. The government policy towards tourism development and the rights of Bedouin in Dahab and in Sinai contradicted my views all the time. I had to be cautious about what I stated as my research interest in order to be accepted by the authorities.

The work done by previous anthropologists in Dahab was a great asset to me, both academically and personally. During my first months in Dahab I used to say: "I am doing the same as Smadar", it was only then that my role was understood – I often read parts of her book to Bedouin friends in Dahab (Lavie, 1990).

In conclusion, being female and being an insider (as well as an outsider in certain cases) played a role in the construction of the field research experience and the information acquired. The fact that Dahab is a place heavily visited by tourists with whom I shared
certain characteristics and experiences also influenced my field research to an extent. The political, geographical and social layout definitely made it impossible to concentrate on one landscape rather than another.

Conclusion

In this chapter the theoretical framework of this thesis, namely, that of landscapes and boundaries was discussed, with special emphasis on the relevance of such a framework to the phenomenon of tourism. The chapter also relates this theoretical discussion to the landscapes identified in this study: the Interior, the Road and the Coast and to the social groupings associated with it - The Bedouin, the State authorities and the tourists.

The main point of this chapter is to explore the relationship between the physical and social dimensions of landscapes and boundaries. It was important to address the way the physical and social landscapes are constantly changing and evolving due to social and economic factors. This interrelation between the social and physical aspects of landscapes has been analysed according to schools of thoughts. One takes the physical landscapes as its point of departure and argues that the physical and geographical characteristics of any given locality shapes the society and the community affiliated to it. While the other departs from the social elements of landscape by arguing that people create landscapes through their experience and engagement. I argue that there is a constant interaction between the social and the physical landscapes and that the physical characteristics of the desert has no doubt shaped Bedouin activities and
lifestyle at a certain time. Now the juxtaposition of the various social groupings and their interpretations of their surrounding landscapes illustrates power of the society in re-constructing landscapes. The Bedouin, the State and the tourist, each of them hold different meaning for the Interior, the Road and the Coast.

The issue of identity and landscapes was also discussed - landscapes support identity or sometimes are used to construct identity. In the case of Dahab for example, Bedouin and Egyptian identity is dependent on their position within this socio-geographic framework.

In this chapter I also argued the connection between the concept of boundaries and that of landscapes. Socio-geographic landscapes are re-constructed as boundaries, are negotiated, shifted and redrawn to be more or less inclusive. Boundaries in Dahab are constantly negotiated and the chapter presented a wide range of physical, social, mental and moral boundaries that are constantly being redrawn and the way new social, economic and political system has contributed to this feature. I argued that such system has emphasised the presence of boundaries and re-defined it for the various social groupings in the region, but at the same time, allowed for their negotiation, crossing and trespassing occasionally.

The issues of landscape, identity and boundaries are also of relevance to the field of anthropology and to the role of the researcher in the field. The overlapping roles of the anthropologist and the tourist was addressed and I argued that the borderline separating the tourist and the anthropologist is a crucial one especially while working
in an area mainly dominated by tourists. I also reflected upon my position as an indigenous female researcher and I argued that such a position is proven to be advantageous in certain areas, but nevertheless has influenced the information made available to me. As a researcher I was also involved crossing boundaries and shifting identities as I moved across the various socio-geographic landscapes.

The issues raised here will re-occur in different contexts and different meanings will be ascribed to them within the negotiated boundaries of the Interior, the Road and the Coast.
Chapter Two

The Interior – *El Barr*
Introduction

This chapter is set in the Interior of Dahab - the landscape of the Bedouin. As opposed to both the Road and the Coast, the Interior has always been the landscape of the Bedouin and they have had sole control over it. The Interior has been reshaped both physically and socially as a result of the construction of the Road and the Coast.

Issues like the spatial and social order of the Interior, its economic activities, legal system and concepts of authority and leadership are all areas that have been reshaped as a result of the intervention of the state and the presence of tourism on the Coast. The areas discussed reflect those of concern to the Bedouin rather than those constructed by myself. The chapter concludes by pointing out that the traditional Bedouin systems, whether economic or political, were all linked to each other and linked to the social and cultural systems and norms that prevailed. It also highlights the difficulty of operating any one of these systems in isolation from the others or in combination with the state's economic and political systems. In addition, this chapter also identifies the way Bedouin relate to the two newly re-constructed landscapes.

Setting the Scene:

Dahab is a small town situated on the Gulf of Aqaba. The overall area of Dahab is 3674
square kilometres of which 2500 square kilometres are inhabited. The Coastland of the town is now allocated for tourism development and the Bedouin residential and living space has been pushed back to the Interior. The current official population is 2047 consisting of Bedouin, Egyptians and other settlers in the area.\(^1\)

Bedouin communities are organised and recognised by the government in what are termed, population centres. There are six population centres in Dahab: Al Meheireg, Masbat, El-Mashraba, Assala, tourist village (known to the Bedouin as Al Gauz) and Dahab town centre. The most densely populated centres are Masbat and Assala. These two centres are closer to the Road and were hence chosen by the Bedouin to settle in when they had to in the mid-eighties. The urban population mainly lives in Dahab town centre. The government’s records distinguish between the Bedouin and urban population.

The Bedouin living in Dahab belong to the Mzeina tribe which, according to their official head, is the largest tribe in Sinai. There are an estimated 5000 Mzeina Bedouin scattered across the Sinai, but mainly concentrated in Dahab and Nuweiba. The Mzeina are perceived

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\(^1\) The last official census undertaken in Egypt was in 1986. The Social composition of South Sinai and specifically Dahab, has changed dramatically since then as the flows of internal migration have caused the population to increase. There is no system to register all the newcomers and it is therefore currently difficult to give an accurate estimate of the population in Dahab. The government has political motives to minimize the number of Bedouin and increase the number of tourists and Egyptians. See appendix 1 for details of population and tourists numbers.
to be the wealthiest Bedouin community in the area as they are the ones mostly involved in tourism. Their economic base prior to tourism consisted of wage labour, pasturing, fishing and cultivating dates. Currently nearly 90% of the population live off tourism.

The Coast front of Dahab is nearly all allocated to tourism related establishments, the hub of which is about three kilometres long and fifty meters in depth. Masbat is one of the main Bedouin centres with a population of about 215 (CATMAS, 1986). The village is physically part of the Coast, but culturally and socially is part of the Interior. The main inhabitants of Masbat are the Mzeina Bedouin; however, the introduction of tourism has changed the social layout of the area. It now includes Egyptian migrant labourers and tourists who decided to reside in Dahab for work or marriage purposes. The Coast is, in a sense, encroaching upon the Interior. Some campsites and supermarkets have been built next to Bedouin houses in Masbat.

Further away from the Beach and on the other side of the Asphalt Road is Assala, the main Bedouin centre. Assala occupies the valley at the bottom of the Sinai Mountains in the north west of Dahab. Assala’s population consists mainly of Bedouin and published figures were 915 (CATMAS, 1986).
Encounters and Landscapes

"This man appears to me like an 'appropriate informant' recalling my ethnography text books. He is sitting on the beach (el-shatt) observing tourists, children, and others. The elderly sheikh sat very relaxed sipping his tea, resting his head on a beam that supports a coffee shop or cafeteria as they are often called. The coffee shops that spread along the beachfront resemble dens from the sixties, with their music and dim lights.

The elderly Sheikh was at least in his late sixties. Old enough not to provoke any rumours that might lead to my acquiring a bad reputation. I sat on a small wall that separates the Blue Moon coffee shop from the End of the World one.

"Al Guwa Hajj, (strength) " I greeted him with the traditional Bedouin greeting.

I was wearing a long dress, a Galabia that covered me up from head to toe. My dress was not quite identical to what Bedouin women wear, but almost. I covered my hair with a scarf embroidered in a Bedouin style; after all, the anthropologist has to fit in. Being Egyptian and speaking Arabic do not necessarily allow me full access into the community. I realised from day one that my semi-Western way of dressing would be a barrier between the Bedouin community and me.

The elderly Sheikh did not look very welcoming and after a short pause he said to me:
"Which household do you come from horma (woman)? Where are your men leaving you like that wandering on the beach?"

Not exactly the response I expected. My dress did not cause any familiarity but rather created an air of hostility. I have to explain now.

"I am not from here Hajj,"

"Where are you from then?"

"I am from Alexandria,"

"Masria, (Egyptian)," he said with a smile, "what are you doing here?"

"I am writing a book about the Bedouin and their lives,"

"What are you doing on the Beach (el-shatt) then? There are no Bedouin here, you should go to the Interior (el-barr) and speak to the women. I cannot speak to you now; the policeman will come and investigate me if I do. Go to the barr and speak to the women. They know about the Bedouin life."

Opposite where we sat a policeman appeared. Despite wearing civilian clothes he had all the features of a policeman in disguise. The elderly Sheikh altered his traditional elbowed seating, sat up straight. I stood up and made my way towards the Interior - el-Barr.

Linguistically the word barr meaning Interior is the opposite of Bahr meaning sea. The
Bedouin see the two words/worlds as two opposite entities. In the past they distinguished between the two landscapes on a geographical basis; now the distinction includes social and cultural factors.

Bedouin use the word *barr* to refer to the Interior, the valleys, the desert, the mountains and above all the Bedouin homes and lands. The intonation of the word conveys a geographical image of a distant and a vast stretch of land. The nostalgia and power with which the word *barr* is mentioned also conveys a social image of an exclusively Bedouin community. Bedouin refer to the 'real Bedouin' as the one living away from 'civilisation': *haddara*, the one who lives in the Interior. Bedouin perceive the Interior, *el-barr*, as the space that contains their lives, their families, and their legal system known as “customary law”. It is also the space in which Bedouin hospitality and freedom are expressed.²

The relative isolation of the Interior (*el-barr*) helps preserve a physical, social and geographical space that is less exposed to the influences of both the Road and the Coast. As the Interior remains away from the realm of government interference, it retains its function as a refuge or a back stage for the Bedouin. Bedouin who work on the Coast treat the Interior as the safe and secure space to which they return. For elderly men and women and those who

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² The word civilization is used by the Bedouin to refer to modernity and the various aspects of urban life to which they have been recently introduced. Sometimes it is used in a strictly temporal sense referring to the construction of the Road and the state intervention. Sometimes it is used in a negative sense to refer to the different lifestyle that the Bedouin currently have. In that context, Bedouin living close to civilization are those living close to the Road and Coast and whose lives are mainly shaped by the presence of these
are not involved in tourism, the Interior is their only familiar space.

The physical distance between the Coast and the Interior (el-barr) varies between four and seven kilometers. There are no paved Roads that join the two landscapes. The vertical grid is made of tracks and dusty paths, paved by the tourists’ footsteps, wheel marks of Peugeot cars or Japanese pick-ups. Bedouin constantly use these tracks to reach the city (el-Medina), to transfer tourists and to sell water to those who reside in the Interior.

The tracks are also used by Egyptians from the Nile Valley and Arriashia (People of el-Arish capital of North Sinai) to sell clothes, traditional portable houses (Beit-Sha'ar), beads for embroidering headscarves, and cotton for the children to weave friendship bracelets for the tourists. Women do not usually use these tracks; they have their own ways of reaching a few distant spots along the Coast that they can still visit. The tracks linking the Interior to the Coast cut across people’s yards and animal barns. The tracks run through bodies of dead animals, piles of rubbish and flocks grazing on plastic bottles and paper.

The Bedouin follow the landscapes’ framework in its physical, social and conceptual sense. The Bedouin re-construction of their landscapes started when they ceased to be the sole socio-geographic landscapes.
inhabitants of the area. The newcomers resided on different landscapes; tourists occupied the Coast as it provided them with sun, sand, sea, sex and drugs. The Egyptian migrant labourers live in the newly built urban centre with its poorly designed apartment blocks. Egyptians prefer to live near government offices, schools, hospitals and other organisations that depend on them as the main workforce.

The Bedouin relationship to the Coast is not, any longer, an extension of their existence in the Interior. The change in the perception of the landscape is obvious when listening to the Bedouin talking about their relationship to the landscapes in the past, and observing them relating to the same landscapes in the present. The Coast was a natural extension of their livelihood in the Interior in the economic and social sense. The organisation of their life patterns and movement on a spatial and temporal grid gave the Coast a different meaning to the one it has at present. The Coast had an economic and recreational function for the Bedouin: during the summer months the Bedouin left the Interior and headed to the Coast to fish and also to collect dates. Women and children used the Coast as their recreational space. The Coast, now, is a distant world with its own rules, values, inhabitants and buildings; all of which are foreign to the Bedouin, (Lavie, 1990, Gardner, 1992).

Sheikh Gomaa head of the fishermen talked about his past and present perception of the Coast by saying: "The sea was there for everyone, whoever wants to fish can fish. Now it is more difficult because the coffee shops, camps and hotels are built right on the sea front."
Our huts and bungalows that were on the beach are destroyed. Why? I do not know. The government destroyed them and built hotels instead. In the past we used to catch fish, and would go and sit in the shade and empty our nets and drink our tea. Now we cannot do that, there is nothing for us there. God will sort things out Inshallah."

The Bedouin reconstructed the Coast landscape as an alien and sometimes polluted territory in an environmental and cultural sense although it has remained the source of livelihood for most of them. Some Bedouin have not visited the Coast since tourism took over in such a big way. Others are making use of the economic opportunities provided by the Coast. The first group did not relate to the Coast for ethical reasons: they consider tourists’ behaviour on the Coast immoral and hence do not intend to have anything to do with it. They might lack the entrepreneurial and negotiation skills required to make the Coast an economically productive landscape or they are ageing families with no children at an appropriate age to work in tourism. The other group realised that the only means for a better living was to make use of the Coast, which they did: selling land, renting, conducting safaris and transferring tourists. The latter group represents the majority of the population, as there are very few alternatives for earning a living in Dahab.

The cash economy generated by the Coast has replaced the Bedouin’s traditional economic
base. The very thing that has given them a source of stable income is a major threat to their value system. Young girls spend their time on the Beach away from parental supervision and protection where there is consumption of alcohol and sexual behaviour that conflicts with the Bedouin moral and value system. The permanent presence of a social group that is so different represents a threat for a community that has lived independently for so long.

Lavie (1990: 68) described the Bedouin perception of the reconstructed Coast by saying:

_The Mzeina soon found themselves in a double bind. They were attracted by the high profits and independence of their work with the tourists (at the time) but were revolted by the unexpected, despicable behaviour._

The Bedouin deal with this dilemma both in practical and conceptual ways. A minority group has isolated themselves from the Coast placing themselves in a fragile economic condition, as other means of living became very limited. Their attempts to find ways of making money include producing handicrafts to sell to tourists via a mediator. The majority, however, are fully incorporated with the Coast. They have thus re-constructed the Coast and the Interior as separate socio-geographic landscapes and have a separate presence and identity for each.

Masbat and Assala are two Bedouin villages/settlements in Dahab. Sheikh Suweiliam, a
customary law judge from el-Saal valley, once described the Bedouin who live in Masbat (the one with stronger links to the Coast) as "inauthentic Bedouin" because according to him they live close to 'Hadara: civilisation'. They send their daughters to work on the Coast and mix with tourists and men. In that way a subtle split occurred between the two main villages. Residents of the village further from the Coast (Assala) would differentiate themselves and their daughters from those of the Masbat village who are in close contact with the tourists. The split is to do with economy as much as it is to do with identity and morality; those with closer links to the Coast have a better standard of living and are obviously wealthier than those who do not maintain such links.

Assala is the largest centre in Dahab both geographically and demographically. The two sedenterized villages are surrounded by valleys inhabited by a few Bedouin families but frequently visited by others during the rainy seasons. The barr, this remote and distant landscape, acquires its determining qualities in relation to the ‘tourists’ Coast. The further away from the Road and the Coast the more "real and authentic" the Interior becomes for the Bedouin.

The Road for the Bedouin is like the Coast, a mixed blessing. "This paved Road brought us

3 According to the most recent population census in 1986 Assala’s population was 915 while Masbat was 215.
the words of an elderly Bedouin in Dahab. It also brings, according to him, people from
different corners of the globe with whom the Bedouin have nothing in common.

The Road not only offers Bedouin work opportunities directly or indirectly related to
tourism, such as taxi driving. It also facilitates communication with centres of trade such as
el-Arish, Suez and Cairo. The Road has also provided greater accessibility to medical and
other facilities in near-by towns and urban centres like Nuweiba and El-Tor. Occasional
journeys to pasturing spots are also facilitated by the Road: the flocks are loaded onto the
pick-up trucks and driven to the pasturing spots. The Bedouin were directly involved in the
physical construction of the main Road that runs along the Gulf of Aqaba from Sharm el-
Sheikh in the South to the borders of the occupied territory (Israel) and the town of Taba in
the North. The Bedouin were employed by the Israelis to build the Road, as they were cheap
labour doing the work that Israelis most likely would not agree to do. To the Bedouin this
was a source of cash income closer to home rather than travelling to Suez or El Tor to work,
prior to the presence of Israel. The Road during the Israeli occupation and under Egyptian
control represents authority in many ways. The Israelis for military and security purposes
built the first stage of the Road. The Egyptian government continued with the Road project
to encourage tourism development to ensure security and to give the government
accessibility to areas that would have been difficult to reach otherwise.
Along the main Road there are various security checkpoints built initially by the Israeli government in order to control the comings and goings of the Bedouin into Israel, especially as they were worried about the spread of drugs. The Egyptian government followed the same system when they regained power over the Sinai. The checkpoints are currently used to check the validity and availability of identity cards, driving licenses and fishing permits. Security forces at the checkpoints usually check car boots for drugs.

Social and Geographical History of the Interior

The Bedouin of Mzeina are part of the tribal alliance called Tawara, which is derived from the word Tur, referring to the holy mountain of Sinai. The Mzeina came to South Sinai from Saudi Arabia in 787 AD (Shukair, 1917). They are the largest in numbers and in terms of the land they own; recently considered to be the richest in South Sinai. Statistics are unreliable but various sources (Lavie, 1990), the head of the Mzeina, Sheikh Salem, also (Stigter, 1994, Glassner, 1974, Marx, 1985), estimated the size of the Mzeina to reach 5000 scattered throughout South Sinai. The Mzeina are seen (by other Bedouin in South Sinai) to have more access to lucrative sources of income generated by tourism (Eber and Aziz 1997).
The elderly men and women who mainly reside in the Interior are the keepers of their community history. Sheikh Gomaa, head of the fishermen, remembers the time when there was nothing in Dahab but fish, dates and trees. Most of the trees that used to be in Dahab, on the Coast or in the Interior, have now been cut down by the investors or by local people in order to build on the land. Trees like el-Homar, el-Ghargaed, el-Rimeh, el-Araf and el-Sayal are desert trees used to produce charcoal required for heating and cooking and bartered against for other sought-after commodities whether in Sinai or at the urban centres frequented by the Bedouin. Mzeina fished during the summer months, catching and drying enough fish to consume during the winter months. They traded fish with other Bedouin communities that live in the Interior with no access to the Coast.

There were only two wells in Dahab: el-Melil and el-Mashraba. The Bedouin depended on these two wells for water and they took turns in guarding them. Bedouin make constant reference to the freedom and authority they had in Dahab before the introduction of the Coast and Road in the current capacity. They lived for years without limited state intervention; the various authorities feared the desert and the Bedouin.

Bedouin dependency on rainwater for living rather than for an irrigation system made the need for an external power to organise everyday life very minimal. The very limited economic importance of Sinai, until recently, lessened the Government's interest in the area.
"In the past life was hard, much harder than now." As the elderly members of the Mzeina describe it, men used to go on camels to Suez to work. They would agree to meet at a particular valley and take the camels to Suez, a journey that would take them ten days. There they would work for the governorate or the council. The money they made was used to buy flour. In the urban centres they bartered charcoal and dried fish for maize and rice. They would go for six months and would come back with all they needed to live on for the remaining six months of the year. From June onwards they mainly fished, collected and dried dates for their personal use and trading. Meanwhile women looked after the flocks, moving with them from valley to valley depending on the availability of water and pasture.4

"Three pounds was enough to keep the family going for six months or so; there was nothing in Dahab for us to spend the money on. Food was all what we really needed. We were even able to save fifty or sixty piasters until we went back to Suez the following year," commented Sheikh Gomaa.

The history of the Mzeina highlights some of the important aspects of their lives, especially

4 The role of women in the economy is discussed in Chapter Five.
those that were reshaped by the construction of the Road and the Coast. Understanding the
nature and change in the Bedouin's economic activities is essential in order to understand the
changes that have occurred in other aspects of Bedouin life, as both the social and economic
systems of the desert communities are highly intertwined. Their economic, political, social
cultural and spatial lives were all linked together and controlled by the Bedouin legal system:
‘customary law’.

Bedouin activities and relationships in the past were all organised and controlled by
customary law. The new social and cultural lay-out of the area, and the presence of the state
have introduced a new set of codes and rules, namely the civil law of the state, which is now
the main legal system governing in the area. Most of the problems that the Bedouin are
facing now could be related to the different legal and political systems within which they are
expected to live. Customary law controls and organises Bedouin life and systems and
understanding the working of this system gives a clue to some historical and contemporary
issues of the Interior.

**Customary Law**

It is important to point out at this stage that the study intentionally imposes a significant
silence on the vexed questions and issues surrounding the notion of ‘the tribe’. The issue of
the tribe has been the centre of attention of many anthropologists, especially those with an interest in the Middle East, some of whom accepted it and others challenged it. This study accepts the approach that challenges the notion of the tribe as being a discrete and fixed social grouping. Marx (1977, 1979) states that "some 'tribes' can best be described as units of subsistence," which may come together under external pressure to form the tribe as is commonly understood. During the fieldwork the term 'tribe' was mentioned with relevance to the Interior and in relation to issues like customary law, land ownership and land use (Eber and Aziz 1997).

The fieldwork results agree with Lavie’s opinion 1990 about the Mzeina perception of the notion of the tribe. She argues that the Mzeina do not refer to the tribe and that it was outsiders who initiated the term ‘tribe’: anthropologists, tourists, and developers, “in the course of their daily life the Mzeina rarely worried about who a Bedouin was or what constituted a tribe” (1990:154)

Sheikh Salem, head of the Mzeina, said that the Bedouin feel loyal towards the tribe to which they belong especially in cases of conflicts. He mentioned that the members of the Mzeina would collaborate to bail out someone especially if the offence was directed towards another tribe. Other than this example the Sheikh could not think of any other situation when the
tribe as a unit could be seen in operation. It is for that reason that customary law is considered to be one of the few remaining systems that distinguish the Bedouin from other communities. It is also one of the few systems that relate to the notion of the tribe; in cases of conflicts the offence is communal rather than individual. It is the family, followed by the tribe, which is responsible for settling the damages incurred by one of their members against another tribe.

Customary law, the unwritten code governing many aspects of life (and which is distinguished from the civil law of the state), clearly plays a leading role in the lives of Bedouin. Indeed it may be regarded as one of the fundamental distinguishing features of the Bedouin society, continuing, as it does, to embody major aspects of Bedouin identity. People turn to customary law in order to settle disputes even when other aspects of traditional life are disappearing. Recently this has slightly been altered as disputes increasingly occur between the Bedouin and the Egyptians. Al-Hilw and Darwish (1989: xvi) have noted that:

All individuals classes and groups of the society cling fiercely to this tradition. It thus plays a leading role in social control, for the people use it to resolve disputes arising among them. Even should these disputes come to the police stations or courts, they must also be settled through customary law, for the society respects its pronouncements and carries them out regardless of the stiffness of the penalty.

Bedouin introduced the issue of customary law during various conversations and encounters
in the Interior especially when discussing matters related to honour, women, flocks and land. Bedouin generally express disapproval of those who seek recourse to civil rather than customary law. Doing so is not only disrespectful but undermines Bedouin traditions and norms:

*Whoever does this it is felt, must want to squander his rights. Unlike state law that is characterised by the imposition of punishments Bedouin customary law provides for restitution and direct material compensation (ibid: 2)*

Customary law courts are marked by gravity, dignity and respect, as shown in the following descriptions:

*I never saw a tribunal as grave as the law-court session among the Bedouin. The two disputing sides and their partisans come to the court of the judge upon whom they have previously agreed. The court is generally held in a spacious area. The attendees arrive at the previously specified time and place and sit down in a large circle, in the midst of which is a large brazier containing pots of Arabic coffee, (al-Yamani, 1975:222).*

Bedouin customary law covers all aspects of their lives that are subject to disputes. The cases are heard before a qadi (judge) whose position is passed from father to son. The judges deal with specialised areas like land ownership, cultivation, disputes related to palm trees,
commercial activities, theft of animals, trespass, honour-crimes and blood crimes. However customary law appears to be less capable of dealing with conflicts arising from current activities such as tourism. It is only binding for those who are familiar with it i.e. Bedouin, as it is an unwritten code. Most recently the disputes have tended to occur between the Bedouin on one side and the Egyptians or tourists on the other. In such cases it is very difficult to refer to customary law. For example, one informant said:

*If a female tourist who has been harassed by a Bedouin man makes a claim to the judge of honour she can be compensated like a Bedouin. We will not go out of our way to protect her, after all it is not our honour that is at stake.*

The application of customary law within the new economic and social system is problematic not only for external issues as identified above but also for internal ones. In August 1996 I attended a Bedouin festival to celebrate the birth of the ancestors of the Mzeina. The festival is known as *zowarat alferanja* and is an event attended by all Bedouin who identify themselves with the Mzeina. During such rare events members of the Bedouin of Mzeina get together to celebrate and discuss various issues that concern them.

That evening I initiated a debate on the role of customary law in protecting young Bedouin girls who are working on the Beach. Sheikh Suweilam, a customary law judge, was very sceptical of extending the scope of customary law to cover girls and young women working
on the Beach. His view was that customary law protects women if their movements and
behaviour is within the roles prescribed by Bedouin traditions and culture: women's
movements shaped by their pasturing activities. However, other members of the Bedouin
objected to that view and expressed their desire that customary law should be flexible enough
to deal with the changes occurring in the day to day life of the Bedouin.

A number of inferences can be deduced from such a discussion. An issue of such relevance
and importance to the Bedouin as that of shame and honour is currently subject to such
controversy. This confirms the opinion previously expressed about the way they separate
their lives and values in the Interior from that on the Coast. It is in such situations that both
landscapes intersect. Customary law is currently unable to deal with new conflicts because
of the changing nature of social and cultural circumstances. This point illustrates the degree
of interdependency that exists between the various systems governing Bedouin life. Another
point that one can deduce from this incident is the way the Coast and the Road in their
current capacities lead to a lack of consistency on issues as fundamental as that of shame and
honour and customary law judgements. Such issues enjoyed immense consensus among the
Bedouin prior to tourism and state intervention.

One of the non governmental community leaders who lives in St. Catherine commented on
the position of customary law nowadays by saying that: "Customary law might be pushed to the side now, but it will never disappear. The problem is that now there are new problems that the customary law falls short of knowing how to deal with".

He also, very eloquently, described how the customary law works in a way that is more suitable to the Bedouin lifestyle than the civil law, where for example witnesses are crucial to the case. Among the Bedouin this principle does not provide enough protection, as women move on their own in the desert, Bedouin live in open spaces and valleys which have no keys or locks and their possessions are accessible to everyone. The protection of such possessions and rights cannot be ensured if the state law, based as it is on witnesses is applied. Customary law gives the victim all the rights. It is a public responsibility to follow the accused and punish him, if he has been found guilty. Justice is ensured as each case has three judges that can be referred to, which means that if two judges disagree the third will balance the case and pass a judgement that would be then accepted by both sides.

Sheikh Salem who is the government leader of the Mzeina, said customary law is gradually changing. For example, the Bedouin deal now with their pick-up trucks in the same way as they have dealt with their camels in the past. He also discussed how the marriage between customary law and the social and cultural systems among the Bedouin played a major role
in controlling and minimising the rates of crime. It used to be very shameful and socially disgraceful to be accused of a crime of any sort.

Customary law existed and functioned as a reflection of particularities of the Bedouin lifestyle. It seems unlikely that such a system will survive for much longer since the environment that necessitates its existence is gradually disappearing.

Economic Activities

The economic activities of the Bedouin is an area that has witnessed major changes in the recent years as a result of which other social and cultural systems have changed. Understanding such changes would allow a better understanding of the various changes that one can witness in the Interior.

Stigter (1994) and Lavie (1990) both commented on how the Mzeina did not correspond to images of pastoral people as fierce nomads who roamed endless deserts with their herds. The Bedouin of Mzeina have a long history of temporary labour migrations.
The desert environment has provided the Bedouin with very few resources. Marx (1985) argued that pastoral nomadism is not a feasible subsistence economy. Wage labour in urban centres became the only way of acquiring cash required to purchase food supplements like flour and rice. Bedouin of Mzeina used to work for six months in Suez, just enough to get the flour and rice needed for the summer months. Marx (1984) argues that Bedouin never lost their contact with the desert or with their kinsmen, and never felt attracted to the urban life. The tradition was that the men go to the urban centre and the women remain in the Interior to look after the flocks, the land and the children.

There are various reasons for the Bedouin not having a sense of belonging to urban life despite living and working in urban centres for the majority of their time. Bedouin possess few of the skills required for work in urban centres and for that reason they undertake menial jobs that require semi-skilled or unskilled labourers (*ibid*). These unavoidable working patterns have contributed to the negative attitudes that dominate the Bedouin / Egyptian relationship. The Egyptians (referring to those who reside in urban centres or come from the Delta) perceive the Bedouin as uncivilised and unskilled, and the Bedouin perceive the Egyptians as authoritarian, powerful and bureaucratic.

Added to that is the notion of dependency: Bedouin live their life in the Interior with a high
degree of independence and autonomy (Himdan, 1981). Although Bedouin work as wage labour for the good part of the year this has never led them to talk about themselves as waged labourers, "we only depend on God," they say. In contradiction to this independent way of life Bedouin work in the urban centres involved a high level of dependency that they did not feel comfortable with. The Bedouin engagement with menial jobs makes them liable to dismissal at short notice. They were aware of the insecure tenure and were prepared to change jobs when required. That is not to say that the pastoral economy was all that secure: droughts, epidemic and floods could destroy Bedouin life almost over night. The difference between the two situations is that the insecurity in the Interior is linked to a divine power. The social system, the kinship system and the legal system, all work together to provide the Bedouin with security and protection. The common access to territorial and other natural resources is also among the mutual assurance systems. Bedouin believe that their traditional way of life requires their adherence to these systems. One of the Mzeina said while talking about their support system in land usage:

"It might rain in my land this year and in my neighbours' next year, given our way of life we need each other's support, and we need a system that supports us"

"In the Interior we feel safe, and we prefer our families to stay here,"

Bedouin, prior to tourism invested money in buying more land or livestock, and in time of
need they fell back on their traditional economy. Their interdependence in issues like the
pursuits of pasture made them foster the kinship relationship.

The changes occurred from 1967 when Israel took control of the Sinai desert - it was then
that the Bedouin of Mzeina (as well as other Bedouin communities) became wage labourers
without having to go far. Under the Israeli occupation they worked on Road maintenance,
construction work, street cleaning and so forth (Lavie, 1990). Tourism to Dahab started
around the same time and Bedouin opted to settle and work independently by providing
accommodation for the tourists in semi-portable huts.

Tourism became the main source of cash income. Tourists introduced Dahab to various
consumerist items, and thus the need for cash became increasingly important to purchase
discretionary goods. Bedouin were grateful that they did not have to fetch water and flour and
that they had electricity, but they found the requirements of such an open life hard to cope
with.

Sheikh Salem of Mzeina says that in the past the sources of wealth were known to every one.
Bedouin either traded in fish and charcoal, sold goats and sheep, or worked in Suez. The
variations in what each individual owned were minimal. One would have one camel the
other could have two. Now there are many products available and there is continuing
pressure to possess new symbols of status.
The need to accumulate wealth from different sources became a differentiating factor among members of the Mzeina: houses with a satellite dish hoisted on the roof, houses with coloured television and video sets and others with cordless phones. In addition to that there is the wide range of cars. The head of Mzeina is driving a four wheel drive, others have modern Peugeots while the majority have Japanese pickups as it is easier to transport tourists and even flocks if necessary. Lavie commented on the same process and said the was evident in the shanty settlements that appeared in the oasis of Dahab and Nuweiba which she described:

*Each new settlement was physically divided into quarters by degree of wealth, ranging from rich to middle-class to poor. This new form of residential organisation emerged due to the differentiation between individuals in their ability to accumulate cash* (1990:69)

Tourism has made available various means of acquiring cash whether legal or illegal, including selling land, owning a coffee shop or a campsite, driving taxis, or drugs.

The cash economy is now the base of the Bedouin economy rather than a subsidy to their traditional economic base in the Interior. The urban life that the Mzeina men had to live while working for cash in near-by cities and towns has come closer to home. The separation
between the two lives increased as the traditional economy ceased to be feasible. Instead of investing money into buying more land Mzeina men sell their land to the investors. The economic base of the Bedouin has become increasingly dependent on an industry as fragile as tourism.

The system of land usage is one that has witnessed significant changes in the new economic and social order. Tourism as an economic activity is divided along the borders of the different tribes. As opposed to pasturing, members of one tribe do not run safaris in lands belonging to a different tribe. Previously Bedouin approved the common usage of land and grazed their livestock in each other's territories.

Now that tourism has become the base of the economy this has changed; most of the tourists facilities are within the territorial boundaries of the Mzeina which is mainly Coastal; other Bedouin communities are deprived of all the benefits generated by tourism. Hence the Bedouin altered their notions of land usage in order to ensure that each tribe has a share of the benefits generated by tourism. Tourism has in that way reinforced territorial boundaries and made them more fixed.
The changes that have occurred in the economic base of the Mzeina have, as discussed above, influenced other aspects of their lives in the Interior. The negotiations of boundaries between the Coast and Interior, between the traditional and modern and between communalism and individualism reshaped certain notions and categories that are of concern to the Mzeina, like the notion of space.

The Organisation of Space in the Interior

The organisation of space in the Interior used to reflect the social, cultural and legal systems that prevailed. Sacred space, pasturing space, fishing space, gender space, seasonal dwellings, justice space: Majles (customary law courts), guests space: Maga'ad. The construction of the Road and the Coast have altered and disrupted the long established spaces.

The vast Interior allowed the Bedouin to organise their various bounded places and move between them freely. Recent changes in the Sinai have led to the emergence of new places allocated for tourists, Egyptians, security and military forces. The emergence of new spaces that do not relate to the Bedouin lifestyle confined their movements and occupied spaces that they originally used for living, working, and recreation.
The *Maga'ad*

Bedouin used to organise their dwellings in a semi-circular shape with a *Maga'ad* (meeting place) situated in the middle. In the *maga'ad* male members of the community gather to discuss matters of personal and common concern. It is also where law courts are convened and where guests are received and is regarded as a place of safety for those seeking shelter.

The importance of the *maga'ad* is illustrated by its central position in the valley where the Bedouin settle. Its surrounding boundaries and entrance path are clearly marked by stones. Formerly the leader of the community (the sheikh) owned the *maga'ad*. In the centre a circle of stones marked the stove area with a teapot boiling all the time, an old poetic metaphor for hospitality and generosity. If a visitor is seen approaching, a long narrow hand-woven rug is spread and it used by the guests for sitting or reclining around the embers. Strangers are expected to head to the *maga'ad* and not to the houses, since doing so would be to cross gender boundaries and violate women and children's space.

Although the *maga'ad* is out-of-bounds for Bedouin women, this rule has not applied to me at any time. In many cases I was treated as an honorary man, received in the *maga'ad* and allowed to talk to the men.
The importance of maga'ad as a physical and a social space and the result of losing such a space was expressed by a number of members of the Bedouin community, including ones who are benefiting from tourism:

*Now our houses are concrete and there is no maga'ad. When a guest arrives they would have to knock on a door. One would then ask who is there, and what do you want. It is a house, you know, women and children are inside you can not just let anybody in. So now you can see that what was unquestionably offered, is now offered on request. The change in the layout and the shape of our houses is not only a physical change. It meant the gradual disappearance of our identity. People think this is development and progress, it is not. Hospitality and generosity are part of being a Bedouin. Where would a stranger or a guest/Deif go to now when they find themselves in the middle of the desert? God provided the people of the desert with goods and blessings, and one asks why? All these goods should be available for the guests, for the sake of strangers and for the travellers who pass by here. If people here forget the rights of guests/strangers they will end up nowhere. After all we are all guests in this life. We are the guests of God.*

These comments highlight the intertwined relationship between the spatial system and the social and cultural and even environmental ones. The allocated space of the guests is a reflection of the position of guests and passers-by in the Bedouin culture. The guest is directed towards the maga'ad and offered hospitality. Now the guest has become a tourist and hospitality is the biggest commodity offered for sale. The minimisation of public space
is the result of two factors: the presence of social groups who are not familiar with the social and cultural traditions and norms of the Bedouin, and the restrictions imposed by the government with regard to land ownership. The *maga'ad* which is by definition an open space, usually constructed of goat hair or card boards, i.e. non permanent construction and in that sense it did not ensure territorial ownership. The *maga'ad* was hence re-constructed indoors.

This development has meant a change in its role as a refuge – currently the *maga'ad* resembles the 'living room'. The television is placed in the centre and various members of the family gather around it. If a guest knocks on the door or walks in, it is time for women to move to other rooms.

Sheikh Gomaa head of the fishermen recalled the transfer of the *maga'ad* from the public to an enclosed space:

*There used to be a maga'ad here next to my house. I had to knock it down and instead I built a concrete room with a lock and a door. The maga'ad is an open space and every one went in tourists, Egyptians and even Bedouin; they used it for drugs, sex and all other kinds of sins. Maga'ad as an open space is now only available in the 'Interior'. In Masbat, there are a lot of strangers who do not respect this open space so they do not deserve to have it.*

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**El Dar (The House)**

The change from the portable house made of goats' hair to the concrete fixed house was a necessity as urbanisation, tourism and the state started to have a presence and an influence in the Interior. Bedouin had to provide proof of ownership acceptable by the State’s law in order to be able to keep possession of the house: they had to have a concrete house close to the Road to make use of the facilities provided by the state.

An aerial picture of Masbat and Assala would look like an area that has just come out of war. Half-finished houses, building material all over the place, no roads or even clearly identified paths or tracks. Concrete houses are the main residential units as opposed to the portable traditional houses woven from goat hair.

Houses are surrounded by low walls in irregular forms. This tradition devolved as a result of the Egyptian government rule regarding land ownership (details of land ownership laws are discussed in Chapter Three). In order for Bedouin to claim ownership of their land they are required to have a concrete walled house. Such walls were built in different shapes and forms in order to contain as much land as possible. There are no addresses, street names or house numbers.
Not having addresses was not a problem until very recently. Bedouin started to possess television sets. Quiz programmes broadcast on television (a recent acquisition for the Bedouin) raised their aspirations of winning thousands of pounds or a trip to Mecca. Competitions organised by various companies expected participants to enter the draws by sending empty packets of washing powder or chocolate wrapping paper. The television crew would then visit the winners. Khadra, Hajj Ouda's eldest daughter sat watching television late one night in Ramadan. The programme crew was visiting people in their houses in different parts of Egypt, handing them prizes that were usually large sums of money. Khadara turned to me and said: "How would they find us here in Dahab when we do not have an address?" The issue of television and media is of great significance about the relationship between Bedouin and the State. Television is now a part, of nearly all, Mzeina Bedouin pass-time activities and household equipment, however, nothing portrayed on television is even remotely related to their life and circumstances. Fair skinned actresses and beautiful bathroom suites advertised constantly were a source of envy and some times irony by my young Bedouin friends.

The houses scattered in Masbat are all built with concrete bricks; most of the houses are unfinished. The inside rooms are usually painted in bright blue, yellow or pink. All the houses have a shaded open space used by the family and to receive their guests. Bedouin refer to this open space as 'maga'ad'. This is different from the old traditional maga'ad that
used to be situated in the centre of settlements or valleys.

The few rooms that over-look the yard are sometimes used as bedrooms but are usually used to keep valuable possessions like the television, fridge, sewing machine and telephone away from the sun. Most of the time the Bedouin sleep outside, especially men, because of the heat. Selouh, one of the Bedouin women living in Assala, was once sitting in the outside yard of her concrete house, in the shade of the traditional Bedouin portable house (*Beit Sha'ar*). Her husband was in the process of building another concrete house in the empty courtyard.

Selouh looked at the house and said:

> God, only knows why he is building this house. Neither me nor the children will ever sleep under a concrete roof. What about earthquakes? (This was just after the earthquake that hit Egypt in November 1994). "I saw it with my eyes on television, people were just buried under the rubble. Do you think I will ever let my children sleep under a concrete roof? My husband can sleep there if he wants.

The insides of the rooms are usually decorated with posters of famous Egyptian or Gulf singers, good-looking fair skinned girls and well-built men. There is also the kitchen (*el-Garia*) and a very small room tucked in the corner where they can go to the toilet. Bedouin yards are cultivated with vegetables and usually there are one or two palm trees. Some
Bedouin families have a well and a pump to water their vegetables. Their potable water is usually purchased from the city council or they buy it from pick-ups driven and owned by Bedouin. The houses are built very close to each other, with very little space left between them. Goats and sheep are left to graze on plastic bottles and waste papers outside. Most of the houses in the area have wooden gates that are secured by a piece of string tied to a nail. Bedouin hardly use locks or keys when visiting neighbours or friends one is expected to untie the string and enter. An elderly Bedouin man recalls the move from having an open and accessible residential space to the introduction of doors, keys, and padlocks:

_We had to put a lock on our house after it was broken into twice in one week. The attacker in both cases was a young Bedouin who is a drug addict. Although we would rather deal with any offence or crime ourselves, according to our customary law, the family of the young addicted Bedouin reported him to the police. We are not used to this kind of problem; there is no chapter in our customary law that deals with drug addiction. We never heard about drugs like this heroine or cocaine in the past, only after tourism these drugs were introduced. We have to adapt our lives to the new changes._

The Interior public and private spaces have been subject to changes since the construction of the Coast and the Road. The lack of shared understanding on the organisation and usage of space between Bedouin, Egyptians and tourists has lead to the disappearance of public spaces in some cases and to the comodotisation of private spaces in other cases.
The transformation of houses from the traditional portable house to the fixed concrete house was not just a transformation in the physical shape and layout of the Interior. Bedouin became less able to move or observe their pasturing activities. The threat of thefts or the confiscation of land made the Bedouin conscious of not leaving their houses for long stretches of time.

Houses that are close enough to the Coast open their doors for tourists looking for an authentic experience (Lavie, 1990). The Bedouin realised the tourists' interest in the 'authentic Bedouin life' and some of them have opened their houses for tourists: they show them everything in the house, make them tea on the fire in the traditional style, bake them Bedouin bread, play some traditional music, tell them stories about the desert. On the way out tourists pay not less than ten Egyptian pounds ($3).

Mosques and Sacred Spaces

Little has been written about the provision of mosques and religious care for the Bedouin community whilst under the Israeli occupation. When the Egyptian government regained the area they built governmental mosques as part of the infrastructure they provided for the area. This was an initial step to establish goodwill on the part of the government. In addition to the governmental mosques, wealthy Bedouin build small mosques on their land. This
enhances their status in the community and allows them to acquire a better position religiously, and hence an elevated moral ground and respected social status.

In order to curb the rising Islamic movement since the 1980s and that has accelerated in the 1990s, the government attempted to control private mosques on the assumption that that is the place where the violence is preached. The State constantly tried control issues like the delivery of the Friday preaching (*khotba*) and assigned Imams from Cairo and other urban centres to deliver the speech in both the governmental and private mosques.

Elderly members of the community who used to be in charge of the religious care in the community are not comfortable with the increasing intervention of the state. One Bedouin informant built a mosque that the government is planning to put under the control of the ministry of *Waqf* (the ministry responsible for religious affairs). He expressed his concern by saying that the Bedouin community is constantly changing. Bedouin have specific problems that need to be addressed especially in light of the current social and economic changes. Imams coming from Cairo or other urban centres are unable to address issues that are of concern to those working and living in the community – most importantly the relationship with tourists and tourism.
The religious services provided by the government have proven to be inadequate to both Bedouin and Egyptians living in Dahab. There is a general feeling among both communities that the governmental mosques have failed to address problematic issues that have arisen from the changing physical and social structure of the area. Mosques still preach the basic fundamentals of Islam but people are left to sort out for themselves problematic areas like serving naked women, approving of illicit sexual behaviour, and serving alcohol to tourists. The confusion extends to areas like marriage between Muslims and tourists and the means of bringing up children in accordance with the Islamic principals in an environment that is becoming more and more dominated by foreign value systems.

Abu-Lughed (1987) described the relationship between religious and social systems and how they both intertwine by saying that Islamic belief and practice represent the highest ideals of Bedouin society. In that respect identification of the prevailing social system and status quo with Islam is inevitable - it accords the society legitimacy. Religious ideals are then confused with social ideals and social honour comes to depend on conformity to both.

The traditional social and economic systems provided little if any obvious challenges to the Bedouin's religious values. Behavioural patterns and religious values that have represented, for long, an integral and unquestionable aspect of life are now subject to negotiation and
interpretation. Mzeina Bedouin have different standpoints to the religious and social codes depending on their position within the newly constructed landscapes. Religious values are preserved and followed in the Interior and separated from the Coast.

The institution of tourism challenged the Bedouin’s religious values during the Israeli times as it does now. Dahab was the nude Rest and Recreation beach for the Israeli army. Such practices led some Bedouin leaders, at the time, to invest money in building permanent mosques. Lavie suggested that the building of permanent sacred spaces was a response to the presence of tourists and their trespassing on sacred spaces of the Mzeina. In the past Bedouin used to pray anywhere as they did not need to have concrete built mosques. They would make use of stones anywhere to identify a space, either in the Interior or on the Coast, within which to pray. Bedouin in the vicinity would all recognise this sacred space and make sure it was unpolluted. Tourists did not recognise such sacred spaces and they would just walk in with their shoes on or sit in such exclusive sacred spaces to take drugs or have sex. Bedouin realised that such spaces needed to be protected and bound.

*All Westerners whether tourists or soldiers, Israeli or Europeans, Jews or Christians intruded into and challenged their privacy. In response the Bedouin categorised these intruders (even Palestinians tourists) by means of the general term al-Yahud (the Jews). The dichotomy between “us” and “them” was stated by the Bedouin in terms of “We are the Muslims, they are the Jews (1990:72).*
Reactions to tourists' behaviour in Dahab took the form of organised delegations going to plead with the Sinai military governor to put up signs requesting tourists to wear bathing suits. The authorities at the time did not take much notice. The Egyptian authorities, later, acted with religious conscience and erected signs prohibiting nudity on the Coast.

The lack of any source of income other than tourism in Dahab led the Bedouin of the Mzeina into drawing a clear boundary between themselves as traditional Bedouin/good Muslims and themselves as workers for the "sinful tourists". The Bedouin established a new boundary to separate their social and religious life in the Interior from their economic life on the Coast.

The Bedouin’s local pilgrimage sites are among the sacred spaces that have been subject to influence by the tourists. The Zuara is the Bedouin’s local pilgrimage to ancestral tombs. Local pilgrimages take place once a year and it is one of the few occasions during which the Bedouin who identify themselves with Mzeina act as one group with a shared history. Mzeina Bedouin pull their resources together and sacrifice a camel to the saint buried in the place where the Zuara takes place. They also pray in a group, which is a very favoured ritual in Islam.

Traditional Bedouin portable houses are erected in the valley of Faranj, a Maga’ad is created
in the middle of the crescent shaped houses. It is centrally located and prepared to receive the senior and elderly members of the Mzeina. Traditional music and dancing in the space known as Al-Melaab is the peak of the event. It is a physical and social space where various performance arts take place: poetry recitation, music, and dancing. In the evening women put on their special Gonaa (a piece of embroidered black material that covers them from head to toe), and they dance while men stand around them in a semi-circle. The Zuara is both a sacred pilgrimage for the Mzeina, and also a social event in which men and women meet in a setting that is different from their day to day encounters. Women and young girls prepare themselves for the event months beforehand. Men and women perform their Dhia (traditional dances) by the light of a full moon. The music, the dances and the moonlight create a sensual atmosphere.

This pilgrimage site is now on the tourist itinerary. Bedouin prepare themselves to receive tourists who stop at the Zuara every year on their way to St.Catherine. The travel agent's representative explained that they pay the Bedouin to allow the tourists to attend the event and watch the slaughtering of the camel and the dancing. Bedouin women bring with them some handicrafts and items of jewellery to sell to the tourists. Sheikh Suweilam, el Faranj Valley, described these changes by saying: "We, the Bedouin have become a cinema for the world, a performance for people from all over the world. You come from Alexandria to watch us and other people come from Europe...."
Mosques, sacred spaces and the religious system have been reshaped as a result of both the Road and the Coast. Bedouin have separated their religious values from their working life on the Coast. Mosques and an adherence to the values and morals of Islam have become a feature of the Bedouin life in the Interior. Sheikh Suweilam's comment indicates a level of dissatisfaction with the staging of some of these aspects of Bedouin life. It also indicates that the Bedouin attempt to keep the Interior under their control and away as much as possible from tourists. This aim does not seem sustainable under current circumstances.

The Political System: authority and leadership

The relationship between the Interior and the Road, in political terms is moderated through the role played by the Bedouin leaders. The leaders have a dual capacity as representatives of the state authority and also representatives of the community. In that sense they provide the link between the Road and the Interior. State representatives that were appointed after the introduction of the Road now share the authority of the Bedouin Sheikhs and leaders. Sheikhs of the Bedouin communities, elderly men, and representatives of the state authority are all possess power that exists and operates on various levels.

Egypt, as of 1982, implemented governmental administrative policies, and the need to have some kind of representation from the Bedouin community in addition to the government representatives became clear, mainly to put Sinai on equal footing with other governorates
with regard to the local and national authorities. The Sinai Peninsula has been divided into
two governorates: North Sinai and South Sinai. Governmental representatives are a
governor, a secretary general and a body of administrative officials who are situated in the
capital El-Tor. The town council consists of government representatives and Bedouin
community representatives. The authority in the area is split between urban and the local
leaders, with their different social and legal systems.\textsuperscript{5}

The Mzeina Bedouin elect, or communally have a consensus, on a leader who is known as
the Sheikh of the Mzeina. If the state approves of him, he could be registered as the
official/governmental Sheikh. The Sheikhs in the past represented the Bedouin and looked
after their welfare. In the context of these newly constructed landscapes the Mzeina Sheikh
plays a dual role as a representative of the Bedouin in the Interior and of the State. The
Sheikh, once approved by the State, becomes an agent of the government and a force for
implementing its rules and regulations. He works closely with the head of the town council
and other officials within the locality.

The job of bridging the gap between the Interior and the Road is complicated. The gap exists
not only between the Interior and the Road but also between the governmental Sheikhs and
the community they originally represent. The governmental Sheikhs find themselves tied to

\textsuperscript{5} The town council is called in Arabic \textit{Majlis al-Medina} meaning city councils. However the urban centres
in the governorate are mostly towns rather than cities. The issue of the state administration system is
discussed in Chapter Three.
a rigid structure and a bureaucratic system that is different from the Bedouin system. They also have to perform within a legal, political, and economic system that is novel to them as well as to the Bedouin community they represent.

According to some Bedouin informants, the head of the Mzeina Bedouin who lives in Dahab, is a rich man married to three women in different parts of Egypt so he is rarely in town. Many Bedouin expressed their doubts about his ability to actually represent Bedouin interests. One of them said: "Sheikh Salem is hardly here as he is busy looking after his women and properties all over Egypt, or he is busy with administrative issues at the city council." Others regard the Sheikh as a land dealer, and this is how he became so rich. His knowledge of the Bedouin dynamics and his authority over the Bedouin do not necessarily work to their advantage. Once the Sheikh is close to the State, it becomes as important to please the authority as much as it is to look after the Bedouin's interests. There have been rumours that the head is buying the land of the Bedouin at cheap prices and selling it to the investors at inflated prices.

The governmental Sheikhs until very recently had not noticed any problems or conflicts arising from their relationship with the government and its officials. The Sheikhs and other influential Bedouin have adapted to the new economic and social life. They are involved in
the tourism industry through the selling and buying of land and have managed to establish a good working relationship with the government. After a presidential visit to Dahab in October 1996 the situation changed and the new plans for Dahab have raised many question marks for the Sheikhs. Now investors are being encouraged to come to the area and build four or five star tourism establishments. The head of Mzeina expressed his concerns by saying:

_The government cannot follow the same policy of developing the whole Coast as they did in Sharm el-Sheikh. This town has people living in it, and it always had. We have the evidence of our palm trees and our water wells. We are not going to allow the investors to take over._

His concerns are about losing power over this very important issue of land ownership. Once investors from mainland Egypt or foreign investors come over to a destination, competition for land will become very high. Not only will the Bedouin not be able to afford the high prices, but they are also not familiar with the complicated procedures required to buy or even to prove ownership over a particular piece of land.

Elderly men with knowledge and wisdom whose opinion is taken and their judgements respected by various members of the community are another category of community leaders. Bedouin consult these informal Sheikhs on various issues and refer to them for the settlement
of disputes over land, flocks or fishing spots as official Bedouin leader are seen by the Bedouin to be in favour of applying the state regulations.

The non-governmental Sheikhs have local respect and trust but have limited power on the official level. Given the new structure, they are unable to negotiate Bedouin rights before the government and its various bodies. The same applies, but to a lesser extent, for the governmental Sheikhs who still have not fully understood the legal and political system of the Egyptian authorities.

The division of power between the official/governmental and popular/informal Sheikhs has created a split within the community itself. In a very general way one can see the affluent Bedouin who possess land or are prepared to work in the tourism industry working closely with the official Sheikhs and the government. The less affluent Bedouin who are not willing to or are not able to work in the tourism industry consider the official Sheikhs to be weak and distant from them and their problems. The Sheikhs are torn between the requirements of the community and the rules of the government which in most cases conflict. The weakness of the official Sheikhs (as seen by some members of the community) comes as a result of their lack of power to oppose governmental decisions. The co-existence of this dual legal system in which the State holds more power weakens the position of the local leaders as they are
unable to implement the customary law even when convinced that it is fairer to the Bedouin.

The following incident illustrates the confusion that results from the dualism of the legal system and the loss of power experienced not only by the average Bedouin but also by the official community representative. One morning while sitting with my adoptive family, a friend of their youngest son Saied, arrived at their home to announce that Saied had been taken to the police station because he had not produced an identity card at a check point on his way to a fishing spot. Hajj Ouda, the father and a fisherman, was surprised because Saied was only fifteen and Identity Cards are issued at the age of sixteen. Hajj Ouda went with Sheikh Hemaid (one of the governmental Sheikhs of the Mzeina) to the police station in the city centre el-Medina (a three-kilometre journey) to clarify the situation and they took with them Saied's birth certificate. The police officials at the station did not accept their argument and Saied remained in prison accused of not possessing an ID card. The family returned home very disappointed and the mother said to me: "Sheikhs are now useless as they cannot sort out any problem. Can you go to the police station and talk to them?"

Incidents like this illustrate how the Sheikhs are gradually losing their authority and their power to make decisions and changes. They sometimes talked to me as if I held more power than they did, simply because I am an Egyptian from a big city that is "progressive", or as
they refer to it, Mutqaquadma. Sheikh Hemaid complained to me about the problem of rubbish dumping in Dahab. He said that the rubbish is now dumped in Connection Valley, which is an important valley for the tourists. He mentioned the increasing numbers of flies which proliferated there and which cause children's eye diseases and which has led to the death of large numbers of animals. He said that the only way to combat this problem was by treating the rubbish differently. He asked me if I could write to the papers or if I could talk to the Egyptian authorities about it. He felt they were bound to consider my opinion and take it into consideration.

One might have thought that Sheikh Hemaid in his current position as a member of the local town council would have some power to raise such an important issue. Despite the official representation of Bedouin in the city council, the Sheikhs feel that the separation between Bedouin and Egyptian still exists. The stereotyped image held by many Egyptians about the Bedouin as ignorant nomads affects the actual relationship and minimises the role played by the Bedouin leaders even though the Egyptian authorities have in principle accepted them on board.

Although deserts form the majority of the area of Egypt, they have always remained isolated and feared by the Egyptians from the Delta. Waves of national migration have always been
from the rural to urban centres because such moves implied upward mobility. The development of tourism along the Sinai Coast has created a new direction for the migrant but Egyptians from the Nile valley and Delta realised that they were unable to control the desert. They also perceived the Bedouin as a backward and unprogressive community. These beliefs made the move to the desert socially and physically undesirable and thus, until the development of tourism, the Bedouin remained isolated from the majority of the Egyptian society.

It is possible that this level of autonomy and independence was also maintained during times of occupation whether it was the British or the Israeli forces. The occupier believed in the power and knowledge of the Bedouin and feared them. Bedouin were allowed to carry on leading their traditional life without much interference from the occupier except for some rules that were enforced for security reasons.

After the restoration of Sinai to the Egyptian government in 1982 it was important for the government to impose itself in this previously neglected area. The two landscapes with their different definition of power, authority, dependency and freedom have to co-exist. The governmental administration came to Sinai with its bureaucracy, dependency and non-flexible policies. Since the new government has its own forceful laws and procedures the
Bedouin were expected to give up their autonomy and independence and merge into the newly introduced system. That is not to say that the Bedouin constantly perceive the Road as a negative source of power; they appreciate the facilities that the Road has provided them with, as is discussed in the Road chapter.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to explore the Interior which is the Bedouin’s socio-geographic landscape as it is being shaped within the parameters of the re-constructed landscapes surrounding it, namely the Road and the Coast.

The Bedouin of the Interior of Dahab are the Mzeina Bedouin, the largest in number and in terms of territory and also the wealthiest. Their land encompasses large areas of coastal territory, which is now allocated for tourism. Tourism with its opportunities for economic and financial prosperity is now within reach.

My argument is based on two premises. The first is that the Bedouin have re-constructed the Interior as a landscape where ‘real’ Bedouin live. They perceive tourism as a necessary evil
that threatens their social, religious and cultural values and traditions, but at the same time provides some of them with lucrative sources of income. Bedouin separate their lives and behaviour on the Coast from that of the Interior and this is their means of achieving economic prosperity without sacrificing their values and tradition.

Bedouin have also reconstructed the Coast from a mainly recreational landscape with some economic value particularly fishing, to an area that sells recreation and hospitality to others and provides them with their main and only source of income

The second premise of my argument in this chapter is that the various systems and spheres within which the Bedouin live their lives have been remarkably changed by the Coast and tourism, and the Road and the State. The Bedouin’s economic, political, legal, social, spatial and religious systems have all been subject to change.

The Mzeina Bedouin perceived certain issues to be of major importance to them at the time the research was conducted. These issues and their importance were reflected in the conversations and the topics raised by the Bedouin. Among such issues, for example, is the move from the communal way of living to an individualistic one. This is illustrated in the changes that have occurred in the area of land usage. Communal use of land was approved
when pasturing was an important aspect of the Bedouin life activity and denied, as tourism became the main source of income.

The change in the economic system has meant a change in most other social, cultural, political and spatial systems of the Interior. The shape and style of Bedouin settlements has witnessed significant alterations, as the Bedouin are now living in concrete walled houses. Thus issues of communal security, for example, became irrelevant. This arrangement has also reshaped the relationship between Bedouin and guests – and altered the tradition of hospitality that Bedouin consider as a core part of their identity.

The Road, which represents the state’s authority, has reshaped the relationship between the Bedouin and their leaders, re-structured their lifestyle and weakened the power of customary law: an effective means of social control. Leaders’ interests are divided between their community and the State that currently pays their salary. The Bedouin seek their rights on an ad hoc basis alternating between the legal and political systems of the Interior and the Road.

The Road exists between the Coast and the Interior. It controls the Bedouin’s movements and activities and provides them with facilities and work opportunities. The Road, as it
represents the State authority, adopts a political and legal system that the Bedouin perceive as threatening to their well being. The Road for the Bedouin is a mixed blessing.
Chapter Three

The Road - *El -Asphalt*
Introduction

This chapter explores the ambiguous relationship between the Bedouin and the state. The Road metaphorically represents the state throughout this study.

The Road in this study is the main Road that runs parallel to the Gulf of Aqaba linking Sharm al Sheikh to Taba, cutting Sinai vertically for about 231 kms. Although there are a number of other roads that cut Sinai horizontally, linking Dahab to St. Catherine for example, they are not the subject of discussion in this chapter, as they do not have the same significance to the social groupings in Dahab.

The Road for the Bedouin is a mixed blessing. The intervention of the state has offered them opportunities with the one hand and curtailment of their freedom with the other. The Bedouin appreciate the various infrastructural amenities that have ameliorated their lifestyle such as health, water, electricity and education. However, the State offered these services with certain strings attached, and these include their capacity to intervene in and organise the Bedouin's day to day life. The Bedouin's rights over land, their local administration and leadership, security and their relationship with tourists and tourism are now all subject to State intervention and control. This has resulted in the Bedouin losing power and control over their own lives.

The Road's ambiguous effect on Bedouin life has resulted in it taking control over them and separating them from the tourists' world which has provided them with opportunities for work and income. Bedouin work, for example, as taxi drivers
transferring tourists between the various towns in and along the Gulf of Aqaba. They both use the Road and fear it at the same time. The presence of the first backpacking tourists in the Sinai, was a signal to the authorities that the place held an opportunity for tourism development. If it were not for tourism I doubt that the level of State intervention and presence would have been so great.

Part One

The Asphalt

The construction of the Road, known among the Bedouin as the Asphalt, coincides with the intervention of the state; first the Israeli and then the Egyptian one. Because of their desire to control the Bedouin as well as have access to various towns and valleys in the Sinai, state authorities built an Asphalt road.

As the road was built, checkpoints to control the comings and goings of tourists and Bedouin were established. Tourists are generally “protected” by their tanned bodies, their foreign languages and currency. Despite having their passports scrutinised at the checkpoints they were rarely subjected to any hostility or denied access to any destinations. Bedouin are requested to present the authorities with identity cards, fishing permits, and driving licenses. Bedouin fear the Asphalt, as for them it is a symbol of the control and power exercised by the Egyptian authorities.

With the restoration of Sinai to Egypt, the geopolitical borders of the area as an
integral part of the republic have become clear. Emphasising complete physical and social integration of the Sinai with mainland Egypt was a necessary step after years of occupation by the Israeli forces. On the social level, the Egyptian authorities aimed to settle the Bedouin and integrate them into mainstream life. On the physical, economic and political level the aim was to turn South Sinai into a massive tourist resort.

This has undoubtedly contributed to the emergence of physical and social boundaries both of which have affected, and continue to affect, the lives and activities of the Bedouin.

The road is physically and metaphorically centrally located between the Interior and the Coast and in that capacity it separates landscapes and linkis them. For the Bedouin the Road symbolises control and power; for the tourists, the Road has always been a metaphor for freedom and brings back images of being 'on the road'. It is an underlying theme of this thesis that the tourist's freedom is at the expense of the Bedouin's confinement.

The road encouraged the arrival of large numbers of Egyptian workers who helped to establish an administrative government system with schools, police, hospitals and other facilities. When the Road was completed, Dahab became an attractive centre for unemployed young graduates from the Nile valley's over-populated villages. Egyptian workers, both in the tourism sector and government sector, are the newcomers. They tend to reside in the town centre or live very close to the Road. It is a landscape that they have become familiar with and over which they have a certain
level of power. The Road has thus become associated with Egyptian workers and the Egyptian state.

Bedouin appreciate the positive role of the Road: “Since they paved this road life has progressed. Food and water reach us where we are and so our lives are much easier than those of our ancestors”.

They describe their neo-nomadic life in relation to the Road by saying that taxi drivers are the modern day Bedouin: “Just like the past but instead of the camel, it is the Peugeot or the pick-up with everything in the boot, and we just travel from one spot to the other with the tourists” It is in this context that the camel, once an important part of Bedouin life and identity, has acquired a symbolic rather than an actual value.

The major road in South Sinai is the highway that runs parallel to the Gulf of Aqaba from the Israeli border and Taba in the north to Sharm el-Sheikh at the Southern tip of the peninsula. Nevertheless, there are other roads on the Sinai map, most of which serve an administrative as well as transportation purpose. One road runs from the Coast into the Interior; from the west of Taba towards the Suez Canal. This road in effect divides Sinai into the North and South regions that form the two governorates. The tunnel that runs beneath the Suez Canal linking Suez to Nuweiba (a town north of Dahab) is another route that links Sinai to the rest of Egypt.

Along these roads there are various Bedouin communities. As the role of the State increased so settlement became more permanent. The Israeli authorities had fewer
restrictions regarding where the Bedouin settled and their land use. As an occupying force they wished to maintain an amicable relationship with the Bedouin in order to assure their loyalty. The Egyptian State regained control in 1982 and around existing settlements they built small urban towns with apartment blocks, local authority headquarters, and other administrative resources. The flats available in towns such as Dahab are the main incentive for Egyptian workers to come and settle, as they offer jobs and resolve their housing needs, something that is a chronic problem in Egypt.

In this way the Egyptians and Bedouin occupy two different and distant landscapes: the Bedouin in the Interior and the Egyptians on the Road. This affects their relationship.

Relationship with Authorities and Individuals

Prior to 1956 there was minimal presence of the Egyptian State in the Sinai. The Egyptian government did not implement policies that affected Bedouin life. As related earlier, it was the Bedouin themselves that initiated relations with the wider, urban society because of their need for labour during the winter season.

The Bedouin talk about the time when there was barely a soldier that bothered about them. They organised their own access to water and land internally without outside interference.
The introduction of development policies in the Sinai have always been as a reaction to destructive conflict and war. Development plans were implemented following the 1956 war - known as the Suez war - during which Israel occupied the Sinai for the first time. In 1957 the Israeli forces withdrew and were replaced by international forces. The State authorities then established more permanent relations with the Sinai. The first section of the Road was built linking Sharm el-Sheikh to Suez with a principal objective to facilitate the transfer of Egyptian troops in case of conflict with Israel.

During this period economic development was mainly concentrated in the extraction of petroleum and minerals from the north west coast along the Gulf of Suez. These projects attracted a working force from main land Egypt suffering from unemployment. Lavie (1990) commented on how the job opportunities provided by such projects attracted Sudanese workers for the heavy manual labour and Egyptians for the better paying skilled jobs as they had acquired the necessary qualifications. Bedouin found few opportunities in such projects that did not conflict with their traditional values. Working as night watchmen for example, appeals to Bedouin who opt to work as wage labourers, as it does not require them to conform to office hours and office dress and because of their familiarity with the desert environment.

Smuggling has also played a part in the relationship between Bedouin and the Egyptian authorities. Although my field research revealed very little information about the smuggling activities of the Bedouin either in the past or recently, the work
of Lavie (*ibid*) referred to this and how it affected the relations between the two parties. I assume that narcotic dealings have been curbed due to the constant presence of the relevant authorities, although it would appear that because I come from the mainland I was associated by the Bedouin with the authorities, and so such issues were not discussed freely with me.

The Egyptians have tried to eradicate smuggling but have been unable to do so for various reasons. Firstly, most of the areas used for planting hashish are hidden away in the Interior, making it difficult to reach and secondly, the Bedouin have limited alternative opportunities for income. Recognising this, the Egyptian authorities have attempted to integrate the Bedouin by providing them with an infrastructure and other facilities in order to integrate them in to the overall development plans. They started building schools, clinics and food stores along the north west coast of the Gulf of Suez. This brought scarcely any change, they employed another tactic and endowed the office of the Sheikh with more authority. They became responsible for the distribution of food as a bi-monthly charitable activity called *sadaqa*. The Sheikh of the Mzeina was to collect basic staples like oil, flour and sugar and distribute it to members of the Mzeina.

The Sheikhs, as described before, acted as mediators between government officials and the Bedouin of Mzeina. Giving official authority to the Sheikhs had a negative rather than positive effect on the government's attempts to build ties. It created a three-tier relationship of the Bedouin community, the Bedouin Sheikhs and the Egyptian authorities and thus began a system which has resulted in the alienation of
the Bedouin leaders from their communities as they are considered to be allies of the government and its policies.

The tradition of distributing aid or sadqa still continues. It is now distributed by the social affairs agency directly to heads of nuclear families. Members of the Mzeina comment on the inefficiency of the system. Bedouin whose names were given to the government in 1956 are the only recipients of such aid. The population lists drawn at that time have not been updated. One of the elderly members of the Mzeina commented on how tourism has changed the entire economic and social structure of the Bedouin. Those who once deserved the aid are not the same ones who deserve it now. The community is in constant change and he realised that there is need for research to be done by independent bodies to identify those in need.

The Bedouin relationship with the State refers at different times to the Egyptian and the Israeli authorities. The main concern in this chapter is to look at the relationship between the Bedouin and Egyptian state. However, there are certain phases of the relationship between the Israeli authorities that are of significance.

After the Six-Day war in 1967 Israel gained possession of Sinai again, and began certain infrastructure projects. One of these projects was the Road linking Sharm el-Sheikh and Eilat. This construction was approved by both civilians and military developers. From the military perspective, the Road would allow fast and immediate movement to strategic points. From a civilian perspective, the Road would stimulate tourism and facilitate the Bedouin's accessibility to various locations.
Drugs and smuggling were as worrying for the Israelis as they were for the Egyptians. The Israeli authorities were concerned about the spread of drugs so used the Road to control drug trafficking. As security increased, the Bedouin became more engaged in blue-collar work, something Israeli citizens preferred not to do. The main project at the time was the construction of the Road on which large numbers of Bedouin worked.

Lavie (ibid: 66) described the relationship between the Bedouin and the Israeli authorities who adopted a tactically different policy than the Egyptian authorities were to take later. Israel did not want to settle the Bedouin, as they intended to motivate Israelis to settle in the Sinai. "Some of them were also motivated by the Zionist ideology of supporting one's country by populating its frontiers, even when those frontiers lay in territories belonging to other states".

On the other hand the Israeli forces aimed to have an exemplary relationship between themselves and the Bedouin in order to cleanse their conscience which was troubled by resistance in the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Such policies were actually designed for the benefit of the Israeli settlers rather than to maintain the freedom and the traditional lifestyle of the Bedouin of Mzeina.

After the 1973 war Egypt regained the Northwest coast between Suez and Abou Rodeis. Six years later Sadat visited Jerusalem and signed the Camp David Treaty,
according to which Egypt would gradually regain the rest of the Sinai Peninsula. By 25th April, 1982 the whole of South Sinai was returned to Egypt except for Taba, which was liberated in March 1989.

Formal relations between the Bedouin and Egyptian state, as they exist now, began after April 1982. Plans to integrate Sinai into the mainstream social and economic development process were drawn up. This included sending educational and religious missions to ‘re-construct’ a religious and national identity among the Bedouin.

Development projects required land. Lavie (ibid) documented one of the first conflicts that occurred between the authority and the Bedouin as a result of building a ferry terminal in Nuweiba. According to her, one of the Mzeina Bedouins lost his land as a result of the construction. The authorities defended their actions by saying that desert land had always belonged to the government according to Law 104.

The Egyptian government elected to adopt an agricultural policy for South Sinai. This policy was a consequence of the fact that most Egyptians in the governing authorities came from farming communities and hoped the development of agriculture might attract more people from the Nile valley and ease the over populated villages and towns. Accordingly the government announced a land reclamation policy. Both this policy and the development of tourism have lead to the displacement of locals from their lands and jobs.

There is a gap that exists between Egyptian policies and the groups affected by them.
The various elite groups who formulated policy were always quite distinct from the working class, peasant and Bedouin groups affected by it. Implementation should have taken the form of dialogue and negotiation between the administration and the population targeted for development. Popular protest succeeded only if the target population managed to unify itself and gained access to the national media. In the absence of protest, state policies were carried out unchanged and hence tended to benefit only the national elite. The case was particularly true for the Bedouin of South Sinai whose land had been allocated for 'reclamation'. The reclamation, the resettling, and the plan to turn South Sinai into a mass tourism destination were initiatives obviously directed to attract Egyptians from the Nile valley region; resulting in an increasing number of Bedouin displaced from their land and jobs (Lavie, 1990).

Such a problem is not unique to the Sinai. Issues of land, displacement and tourism have proven to be problematic in other parts of the world, especially among nomadic communities (Monbiot, 1994). The case of the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania is a classic case of this sort of conflict in the literature available on tourism development.

The increasing numbers of urban people moving to towns such as Dahab and others in Sinai, has resulted in fewer job opportunities for the Bedouin. With very little, if any, education and a limited knowledge of the dynamics of agricultural society and its legal and administrative systems, Bedouin have found it hard to compete with the new arrivals. Informants said that whatever they tried to do, Egyptians could do better. One of the Bedouin girls on the beach complained to me about how the Egyptians and
the Sudanese had started selling friendship bracelets in the shops. Up until then, it had been the sole preserve of the Bedouin girls. Tourists prefer buying crafts from shops, which are usually owned by Egyptians, and so the children earn less money. It is likely that the situation will become more difficult for the Bedouin given the plans to upgrade tourism in Dahab. The attempts to change Dahab from a back-packer to an organised tourism destination, will only mean fewer opportunities for the Bedouin, unless this is coupled with other policies which stipulate that a percentage of local Bedouin are employed in any newly developed tourism project.

Political Structures:

Local government and traditional political structure

The local administration law was passed in Egypt in 1960 and it has been introduced to the Sinai in 1982. The founding basis of the local administration law is the distribution of the administrative functions between the central government and a locally elected council that enjoy a certain level of independence from the government and at the same time adopt and practice government policy and recommendations. The Local government has two arms. One is a locally elected council (local town council) and the other is the executive council. The political structure of the Sinai is multi-layered so in addition to a local government headed by a governor and an executive and local council there is a traditional political structure to which the Bedouin belong and are familiar with.
These structures are to ensure a high level of local participation and to allow local communities to have a say in the running of their own community. It is also to ensure the availability of the services required by such communities and work on developing its economic, cultural and social conditions. Local governments have an administrative as well as a developmental role that takes into consideration the social and cultural values and norms of the community. They are also seen to play a political role since the members of the local town council are elected, and thus their opinion is a reflection of public opinion and it might influence government policy. The role of the local town councils in Dahab, and in other areas of Egypt is an administrative one: such councils do not possess legal or juridical authority.

The local town council with its elected members works closely with another administrative body known as the executive council which implements central government policy in accordance with the opinions and recommendations of the local town council. Although the two councils complement each other, this system leads to a level of friction. The local council accuses the executive council of being bureaucratic and non-responsive to the needs of the community and the executive council believes that the elected local councils are unfamiliar with the laws that regulate their relationship with the authorities.

Community leaders have a role to play in the current political structure. A number of them are elected to become members of the local council, but the majority remain as unofficial or non governmental leaders. Non governmental community leaders consider the local town council as a body which limits and weakens their political
authority. The elected members, who would usually be supported and put forward by the government, would not necessarily champion community needs. For example, if the elected member was originally from mainland Egypt, his agenda for the community could be very different from a local non-government leader's.

It is a vicious circle as once a local leader becomes closely associated with the local government, the Road, he gradually becomes alienated from his community. The problem of land ownership illustrates such conflicting interests (see the section on land ownership in this Chapter). The newly introduced political structure in the Sinai has carried a number of changes to the existing structure. The division of Sinai into two separate governorates, the border line cuts across tribal land, and thus makes some tribes politically affiliated to the North Sinai administration and others affiliated to South Sinai. This has created certain problems, particularly in relation to land ownership. Some tribal land crosses the border and it is illegal to register as a landowner in both governorates.

The governorate is the local government and is the main representative of the central government. It is headed by the governor who is equivalent to a Mayor.

There is an elected local council on the governorate that consists of 112 members representing the nine towns that together form the governorate of South Sinai: Abou Redis, Abou Zenima, Ras Sedr, al-Tor, St. Cathrine, Sharm el-Sheikh, Dahab, Nuweiba and Taba (together). Each of these towns have a local town council that comprises twenty four members, fourteen of whom represent their respective towns at
the governorate council and each of them has an administrative body as in a local authority and is headed by an appointed head.

Members of both councils are elected and must be registered on the town's electoral lists. There is nothing in law that necessitates Bedouin presence on either council. The justification for this is that representations are open to all Egyptians who can prove that they belong administratively to Dahab. Tribal heads, Sheikhs, are not considered members of the town council or representatives of their local authority even if there is a consensus among the community on their position as leaders. The community leaders have to be approved by the governorate and the town executive council.

During the period of my fieldwork I encountered a number of incidents linked to the elections that are of significance to the relationship between the Bedouin and the State. Egyptians, including those in the urban centres, have a low turn out rate at any general election. It is expected that a similar proportion or fewer Bedouin would take part in the state elections. The electoral and voting system are relatively new in the Sinai and hence most Bedouin are not familiar with it. One of the members of the Mzeina showed me a letter he received from the police station fining him sixty Egyptian pounds for each member of his household who did not take part in the elections. This seemed like a rigid but effective policy to ensure the full participation of the local community. According to the "mixed blessings" rule the Bedouin find themselves in a state of limbo. They realise that they should be part of the new political and administrative system currently functioning in the Sinai, but at the same
time their limitations in terms of education and general understanding of the new political system hinders them from fully participating. The imposition of a penalty for not taking part in the election is seen to be rather unusual even by urban Egyptian society standards, which is more used to the State's administrative and political systems.

As pointed out earlier, the landscapes are not rigid and the boundaries are more in the shape of ripples that allow members of the different landscapes to move freely in and out of the them or to even reside in others whose structure seems to fulfil their needs and aspirations. Bedouin with entrepreneurial skills are increasingly associating themselves with the Road. When there are local town elections Bedouin governmental leaders have been seen talking to the head of the town council and presenting their credentials for the elections. However, they are unable to compete with the Egyptian civil employees who know how to manipulate the system. Egyptian employees with identity and voting cards issued from the civil service, registered at their towns and villages in main land Egypt are now in the process of changing their residential addresses to Dahab in order to be able to run for election. Such people receive support from the officials at the town council. The more Egyptians there are on the council, the less likely it is that there will be resistance to implementing government tourism plans. This situation is set to change as the level of education increases and Bedouin feel less inhibited about being part of the system either by standing for election or by taking a more active part in the voting process.

In cases of disputes or problems the Bedouin currently find themselves lost in a
multilayered political structure. The governor, the head of the town, the governmental leaders and the community leaders. Members of the Bedouin community find themselves at the moment obliged to refer to the government leaders in order to get their voices to the executive council and hence to the governorate. However, they feel that government leaders are separated from the community and are not actually aware of its needs and problems. As long as the government plans and policy remain detached from the majority of the population the issue of representation will remain problematic and ineffective.

Security

The police force is the government arm that attempt to maintain control and social stability within the cultural domains depicted within these socio-geographic landscapes. The main police station, like most of the other governmental bodies, exists in the town centre. According to the police officers, disputes over land ownership, problems such as selling land to more than one buyer at the same time and drugs are the most common cases reported to them. Tourism is the driving force behind such problems as more and more investors come into the area and the demand for land increases. In the past, land available for this purpose was abundant and there was no need to regulate the relationship between man and land. Once the area became a tourism destination, land started having a greater value and a different meaning.

On the Coast there is a special division of the police: the tourist police. This division is responsible for the coastal area. The main concern for the tourist police is to
regulate the relationship between the Egyptians and the tourists. Although there is no law that stops an Egyptian man from accompanying a tourist woman (with all the various interpretations for accompanying), the tourist police aim to stop such practice. Whenever the police find an Egyptian man accompanying a foreign woman they are stopped and the man is asked to present an identity card and a sound justification for accompanying the tourist. He is normally taken to the police station. AIDS and theft are the two main reasons for controlling the relationship between Egyptian men and tourist women. Coverage in both the official and opposition press describe Dahab as the Eastern gate of AIDS to Egypt. This has alerted the police and led to imposing a new set of rules, applied only in Dahab, to regulate the relationship between tourists and the locals.

According to the tourist police this is to protect tourists as much as locals. There are many cases of theft reported to the police by tourists accusing Egyptian partners with whom they have had a relationship. With other cases of theft, Bedouin children are usually the first to be accused of stealing tourists' belongings. For the tourist a holiday place is 'paradise' where theft should not occur and where they treat their belongings in a more casual way than if they were at home.

It is issues like these that the police attempt to eliminate by exerting tough controls, but officers commented on how difficult it is to impose this in the case when two parties are willingly involved in a relationship. Methods undertaken to eliminate such relationships have taken various forms, including a decree stating that unmarried couples are not allowed to share hotel rooms. Egyptians and tourists have managed to
avoid such obstacles by legalising their relationships and undertaking 'paper marriages'. Zawag Orfy, which is a marriage pertaining to a secular legal practice as opposed to a religious one Sharii and is referred to legally as Customary law while in Dahab it is referred to as paper marriage. This practice is legal practice, but has only recently become popular between Egyptian workers and tourists, such practice is not at all common among Bedouin. Couples in Dahab resort to paper marriage to avoid any inconveniences that may occur because of government control. A paper marriage is a contract signed before a lawyer and is valid for forty days, after which it must be registered with the civil registrar.

Dahab has become a centre for paper marriages. Law graduates and unemployed lawyers from the big cities are attracted to Dahab because of the opportunities it holds to certify such marriages. The actual marriage contracts are held at the hotel and campsite receptions, in case of an unexpected security check.

In most cases these marriages terminate before it's time for the official registration. Before departure the couple destroys the paper that represents the marriage contract and the relationship ends. Neither the police nor the authorities favour these marriages, but there is nothing that can be done legally to terminate relationships once they have reached the stage of marriage.

A transient relationship that ends when it's time for the next leg in their round the world tour is what many young women tourists visiting Dahab long for. The behaviour of female tourists, as perceived by the police, could confirm the pre-
existing stereotypes about Western women: hedonistic, indulgent and sexually liberal.

Trading in and using drugs are among the most common offences that the police are concerned with. Trading, using or bringing drugs into the country come under the criminal law. The tourist police find it difficult to deal with tourists and their use of drugs: most of them use drugs and arrest could lead to many problems. The police, although legally forced to arrest tourists for drug consumption, perceive this act as premature if the supplier has not been identified. Tourists are in fact only arrested and detained in serious situations when they are thought to be trading and smuggling drugs into the country. The tourist is then reported to the State security and can be imprisoned up to four days, when the case is sent to court. The accused tourist usually leaves before the court case is resolved. However, if found guilty the tourist can be black listed. A number of government embassies have taken responsibility to warn their citizens about the legal consequences of consuming or smuggling drugs. The Israeli authorities distribute a leaflet at the Taba entry warning its citizens and those crossing into Sinai that consuming or trading drugs could lead to imprisonment.

However, Bedouin and Egyptians feel that tourists get away with drug related offences. Arresting tourists can become an international political problem, something the government prefers to avoid.

The police in Dahab believe that crimes and offences that take place there are not that much different from any other tourism destination. Dahab is a small place with direct interaction between tourists and locals whether Egyptians or Bedouin and so offences
and crimes are magnified. However, the authorities and the police agree that most criminal and civil offences in Dahab are linked one way or another to tourism.

The most common and complex problem for the police is land ownership. This results directly from the introduction of tourism and new investment in land. The second part of this chapter will address the issue of land ownership.

The presence of the State is not exclusively about control and curtailment of freedom for the Bedouin as could be concluded from the above. The State is a 'mixed blessing' in a very real sense, as the infrastructural services offered provide them with opportunities that might not have been available otherwise, such as health care.

**Health**

The Egyptian authorities undertook practical steps to integrate Sinai into the national development plan and extended some basic infrastructure and facilities to the region. On the health front the government built hospitals in various towns and cities in South Sinai. Local hospitals are usually situated (like other buildings and organisations affiliated to the government) in the newly built urban centres. For many Egyptian doctors going to the Sinai is like going into exile, and so the government can only supply these hospitals with interim doctors who are obliged to serve in the public sector for a year. Most of these doctors are inexperienced and reluctant to be in Dahab in the first place. Their background and education does not provide them with sufficient knowledge about Bedouin communities. In addition the hospitals are big
concrete buildings and their location in the urban centres hinders the access of many Bedouin, especially women, to medical care. Despite the government's obvious efforts to provide each town in South Sinai with its own hospital, their performance, according to the Bedouin, leaves a lot to be desired. This has created increased alienation between the Bedouin and the authorities. Doctors are constantly criticised for prescribing Aspirin for almost every illness and pain. Bedouin perceive this as lack of care on the doctors' side. However, most of hospitals have a limited supply of medicine.

The Bedouin always refer back to the medical care they received during the Israeli times. The Israeli force attempted to maintain the Bedouin as allies and exerted every possible effort to impress them with their care and concern. The story of transporting pregnant Bedouin women to Eilat hospital in a helicopter is a well-documented and frequently mentioned example.

Hospitals are built to provide the Bedouin with medical care and to strengthen the relationship between the State and the Bedouin. Currently because of the expansion of the tourism industry, hospitals are mainly catering for tourists. A very well equipped hospital (also built on the Road) was opened in Sharm el-Sheikh in 1996. Tourist development in Sharm is mainly concentrated in five star resorts and the establishment of such a facility was a priority to provide tourists with high quality medical care. It is difficult to imagine Bedouin approaching the new hospital with its glass pyramid structure and high walls. Nevertheless, it would probably serve the Bedouin in cases of emergencies.
At a local hospital in Dahab I met with one of the doctors who confirmed my boundary framework. He said that the community in Dahab is divided into three groups, each of them has different needs: the Bedouin, Egyptians working with government agencies and in the tourism industry and the tourists. Most cases are tourists injuries related to diving or motorcycles accidents and anything more serious is always referred to hospitals in Nuweiba or Sharm, as at Dahab there is no operating theatre. Bedouin rarely go to the hospital, as it is situated far from the Interior.

According to the doctors at Dahab, tourism has arrived with its own health hazards, particularly AIDS. The hospital conducts check-ups at irregular intervals on a random sample of six individuals working in the tourism sector. Most supermarkets in Dahab sell condoms secretly to both tourists and locals. AIDS awareness is problematic in a predominately Muslim society in which extra-marital relationships are not supposed to occur in the first place. Such issues highlight the problems between different social and religious groups. The hospital sees raising awareness about such matters as the responsibility of the mosque.

Bedouin and Egyptians lack religious and moral support from the mosques which do not address the problems that society is currently facing. The religious leaders come from outside the community and hence are not aware of the specific moral dilemmas that challenge those who live within and across the different landscapes. There are four mosques both privately and State owned. Due to various political problems directly related to religious issues, the government is gradually trying to control the
mosques by providing State Imams. Religious leaders are sent from Cairo and other urban centres. Bedouin men and Egyptian workers in Dahab who frequent the mosques, especially for the Friday prayer, are unhappy with the quality of the sermons which fail to address problematic issues such as local relationships with tourists.

Housing

Housing is an important area where the Bedouin and the State have been in conflict. Policies that were meant to have offered a better opportunity for housing for the Bedouin have resulted in some of the community benefiting more than others. The housing projects were not specifically designed for Bedouin who have specific requirements, for example, space to keep their flocks.

When the Egyptian government regained control over Sinai they built a city/town centre in the areas previously inhabited by the Bedouin but away from the Bedouin settlement areas. The town centres have concrete apartment blocks supposedly built for the Bedouin. They refused to live in such apartments, as they were small with no space to keep their animals. In the few cases where the Bedouin did manage to acquire such flats they often rented them out and continued to live as they had done, in their huts and shanties. In addition to perceiving the flats as inappropriate to their lifestyle, they also assumed that by agreeing to live in them they would lose their rights over lands and plots they already possessed. Nevertheless some Bedouin informants talked about the difficulties they face if they do want to acquire one of the
flats in town: "Lots of forms to fill and long bureaucratic procedures. The
government say that it is built for the Bedouin but no Bedouin live there."

Lavie (ibid: 82) discusses the housing policy of the Egyptian government and used the
landscapes metaphor by saying: "The administration had a strong interest in settling
these semi-nomads and keeping them near the main Asphalt Road so they would be
easy to reach and control." This policy contrasted with the Israeli policy according to
which the Bedouin were not to build any permanent residences. They did this to allow
larger numbers of Israelis to settle and to keep the Bedouin shanty huts away from the
tourist routes. Israelis also wanted to keep the Bedouin shanty dwellings as relics of
Moses' forty years in the Sinai.

According to the Egyptian administration, dwellings that the Bedouins were allowed
to build would be considered permanent if built of cinder block or red blocks rather
than any other material. This also applies to hotels and other tourist accommodation
in the Sinai. Bedouin started building houses and the walls surrounding them with
cinder block, as they feared the government would reclaim any land not built on.

The flats in the town were useful to cater for the Egyptian workers who preferred to be
closer to the town centres, the various government bodies and the Asphalt road. Thus
the two communities became separate: the Egyptians living in the newly built
apartment blocks next to the Asphalt and the Bedouin living in their houses/huts in the
Interior with limited interaction between the two.
Education

Education is a domain where Bedouin and Egyptians are in constant contact. Education throughout Egypt is compulsory until the age of fifteen. Primary and preparatory schools are affiliated to the Ministry of Education. Some of the schools are religious, usually run by Al-Azhar which is the principal religious body in Egypt and others offer the conventional national curriculum which includes a religious education. The schools are built on the Road, although some are purpose built within easy access to pupils from the Interior. There is one primary and one preparatory school built in the town centre. Egyptian students attend schools in the town centre and Bedouin children those situated closer to the Interior. A secondary school has recently been built in the town centre and both Bedouin and Egyptian students attend it. The Egyptian government is strict in implementing the obligatory education system, something that some Bedouin consider rather oppressive.

In addition to mainstream education there are conscious efforts to eradicate illiteracy. The government has opened a number of classes with this objective. Classes are open both in the town and in Assala and Masbat. Children, especially girls, attend the classes, which are generally full if there aren't many tourists on the beach. Mothers find it difficult to follow up their children attendance.

Females represent the majority of those attending literacy classes as, following puberty girls are not expected to go to the Beach, and they keep themselves occupied by going to the classes. The link between tourism seasons and the rate of attendance
at schools and literacy classes is very clear. During October 1996 there were few tourists due to the high level of tension between the Israelis and Palestinians and the attendance rate at the literacy classes increased. Men hardly ever attend such classes; for girls the consider that the only acceptable reason to leave the house. Girls expressed their willingness to follow up their education, saying that they had enough of going to the Beach and being chased by Egyptians from the coffee shops. They are making less money because shops are now selling the friendship bracelets that they used to make and sell to the tourists.

The government is concentrating its efforts in finding local female teachers. Their plan was to absorb 15% of the number of illiterate people per annum: this figure applied for 1996. In order to realise such a percentage a literacy class for males has been established in the town centre and has nine attendees. Nearer to the Bedouin villages there are four classes, two for females, one mixed and one for males. Only twelve males are studying in the classes closer to the Interior, as opposed to 76 females. Literacy classes (especially ones in the Interior) are mostly attended by Bedouin.

Education was of special interest to me during the course of the study, not only because of its central role to the course of development, but also because schools are recognised points of intersection between the Road and the Interior. The Egyptian government view schools as the best medium for communicating policies and establishing feelings of belongingness and nationalism. By their very structure of having teachers and headmasters from the Nile valley, schools have confirmed the
dichotomy that exists within the community in Dahab. In schools close to the Interior, where the majority of the students are Bedouin, there has been a lot of hidden and explicit tension according to the teachers there.

There are four schools for primary, preparatory and secondary. The majority of the students attending preparatory and primary schools are Bedouin. A high percentage of Bedouin students drop out of the education system due to their tourism work. Teachers pointed out one or two Bedouin who have been involved in drug trafficking, have been dealt with by the police or have been imprisoned. According to one of the teachers at the preparatory school students fail to come to school due to lack of family support and control. On the other hand Egyptian students come from families which have long been used to adhering to education systems while for the Bedouin this is a novel trend. Teachers inform parents or the head of the tribe about student absences, but the teachers are thought to be unreasonable and fussy. One Bedouin recalled the story of his son not being allowed to attend school without him (father) going along. When he went he discovered that the problem was that his son had been caught smoking at school. The father could not understand the problem with his son’s behaviour other than thinking that when Egyptians are in control they make things difficult for the Bedouin. Bedouin boys are used to smoking, even in front of their parents, from about twelve. It was a classic situation where the two systems clashed because of their different value systems serving different purposes, with no space for mediation.

Most of the teachers come from the Nile valley towns and villages with their
stereotyped images of the Bedouin. Teachers describe the Bedouin as incapable of following any system and as lacking in education. They are perceived as being used to freedom and without the patience to sit in classrooms. They also perceive them as being disloyal to Egypt and having no sense of belongingness. They qualify this by saying that very few Bedouin succeed educationally.

One can understand how this level of misunderstanding can exist, even within the context of education, which in principal is the ideal environment for better understanding. The education system for all levels of education is identical throughout Egypt and requires considerable discipline on the part of students, something that is alien to Bedouin children. Given the limited resources and the lack of teachers who are willing to leave the comfort of their cities and towns and the company of friends and families to work in an environment like Dahab, it is hard to think of alternative method of teaching. The situation is further complicated because it is the teachers and headmasters themselves who impose discipline, which can include physical punishment, something considered unacceptable by the Bedouin, especially when imposed by Egyptians.

Despite the negative image of the Bedouin portrayed by teachers, girls working on the beach are keen on education and they are performing better than boys at school. They see education as the best way out of their hard working lives on the beaches. Schools are a better option than staying at home once they are not allowed to continue working the Beach.
It is clear from the above discussion how the various development and administrative policies adopted by the government to serve the Bedouin and integrate them within the wider Egyptian society is a double edged sword offering opportunities with the one hand and control with the other. Although, this case is arguably not exclusive to the Bedouin communities, it is more evident in their case as their relationship with the authorities is comparatively recent.

The Bedouin are not only affected by the policies that are linked to the Interior but with policies and plans that are developed for the Coast. The Interior's relationship with the Road is also shaped by the Road's relationship with the Coast.
Part Two

Dahab in the Tourism Development Plans

Dahab is situated 100 kms north of Sharm el-Sheikh the main tourist centre of South Sinai. The two towns are distinctively different with regard to tourism development and the tourist profile. The Bedouin of Sharm el-Sheikh have a significantly noticeable absence. The authorities as well as the Bedouin of Dahab, both agree that the Bedouin community in the area of Sharm el-Sheikh never used what has now become the hub of the town for any purpose. The environment of Sharm el-Sheikh is harsh, according to Sheikh Salem of the Bedouin of Mzeina. It has only one well and no palm trees, both being two natural proofs of land ownership. Their absence signifies the absence of any Bedouin settlement. For that purpose the relationship between the Bedouin and the authorities in Sharm el-Sheikh is different than that currently existing in Dahab.

The geographical and social circumstances of Sharm el-Sheikh have made the construction of mainly five star-resorts a desirable development option for many private investors (48% of South Sinai tourism resorts and hotels exist in Sharm el-Sheikh). This option for development has received the blessing of the government and the tourism authorities: 60% of the hotels and resorts identified by the governorate of South Sinai are four and five stars. Tourist arrivals reached about 370,000 in 1996, the majority of which were Italian, Germans, and rich Israelis attracted to the
gambling there that is not available in Israel due to pressure from the religious parties. Sharm El-Sheikh has a number of casinos and golf courses as well as an airport and it is very close to Ras Mohammed National Park, a diving and wildlife paradise. Such a profile allows Sharm to offer what is termed as quality tourism and to cater for the high spending tourists.

The authorities perceive Sharm el-Sheikh as a development model to be followed. Egyptians look at Sharm el-Sheikh with admiration as it possesses all facades of modernity and development. The aim is to develop the Gulf of Aqaba Coast in the same way. The majority of the area between Sharm el-Sheikh and Taba at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba, nearly 300 Kms, has been divided into seven priority development zones, most of which are already sold to private investors. The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) has adopted the development project known as Egyptian Riviera, (Ministry of Tourism, undated).

Tourism, Development Plans and the Community

The National Project for the Development of Sinai (NPDS) is a master plan covering the period from 1994-2017. Although the project did not officially start until 1994, the government interest in increasing the opportunities for development in the Sinai began when the area was regained in 1982. Capital was injected into the Sinai specifically for tourism, agriculture and transport. El-Salam Canal (transporting the Nile water into the Sinai desert) is the backbone of the NPDS as it will change the
economic and demographic structure of the area.

The NPDS has broad frameworks within which it operates and also has specific targets for each of the sectors that together form these frameworks. Tourism receives most of the attention as it is considered the main development option and a promising economic sector.

The interest in developing Sinai as a tourism destination came about as a result of a combination of factors. Tourism in the more traditional destinations in Egypt has suffered a significant decrease since 1993 and most recently in 1997, due to the violence directed towards tourists in places like Luxor and Aswan in Upper Egypt, (Aziz, 1994). Government attempts to change the image of Egypt from being the treasure chest of Pharonic monuments into more of a sun, sea, and sand destination is mainly to direct attention away from the more traditional destinations. Leisure and recreational tourism are seen to be more linked with obvious landmarks such as golf courses, marinas and five star hotels, all of which are striking evidences of modernity. In the current economic and political climate, Egypt attempts to give itself a modern image rather than one based on Pharonic heritage. In addition, there is only a relatively small percentage of international tourists dedicated to seeing culture compared to the large numbers of leisure tourists.

The Ministry of Planning regards tourism as a priority sector in the development of the Sinai: it has high linkages with other economic sectors, as well as being a labour intensive industry. This is important to the government as it aims to attract three
million people from mainland Egypt to live and work in the Sinai. It also aims to increase the participation of the private sector in the development process and tourism has a capacity to do that.

According to the NPDS, increasing work and housing opportunities are not just meant to serve the community currently living in the area but to attract people from other parts of Egypt. One of the stated aims of the project is the role of such investment to solve the problem of over population in the Nile Valley area. The aim of the settlement programme is to achieve a balanced demographic distribution between urban and Bedouin communities. Although the project specifically argues that it does not aim to eliminate the Bedouin presence in the region, Bedouin themselves feel otherwise. Egyptians from the Nile valley and the small international community who are currently living in the Sinai, and specifically in Dahab, are more capable of understanding the system which has been designed for and based upon urban principles. Despite the fact that the plans for the development of Sinai do not consciously attempt to exclude the Bedouin, they are not a category that particularly benefits from it.

The NPDS is a large document covering the development plans for the various sectors prepared by the Ministry of Planning (Supreme Ministerial Committee for the Development of Sinai, 1994 - See Appendix One: 7-8 for investment plans for the different sectors). The tourism development plans have received a lot of attention from bodies like the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Development Agency. Private investors have also undertaken feasibility studies and a number of private
consultancy houses have undertaken studies which have guided the government in its plans. (Dahab Company for Tourism Development, Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Development Authority, 1992, El-Sadek Samir, 1993, Dornier System Consult, 1995).

One of the development plans designed for the area has gained international approval and the recognition of bodies such as the European Union (EU). Given the history and the geography of the region the EU believes that regional co-operation is the best way to consolidate peace in the Middle East. Underlying this is the belief that economic interdependence would lead to better understanding between countries in the region. A Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG) has been set up under the EU’s guidance to ensure that this objective is achieved.

A tourism project adopting an integrated approach to the region, including Egypt, Israel and Jordan has been proposed and received approval from the EU. Although this project has never seen the light of day, it highlights the importance of tourism as political tool and the extent to which tourism is a system that reflects national and international strategic plans and political agendas (Dornier System Consult, 1995).

Although the plans for tourism development covered most of the towns and cities along the Gulf of Aqaba, Dahab did not receive as much attention as its counterparts. The history of Dahab as the Rest and Recreation resort during the Israeli occupation was the foundation stone for the industry in the area. Backpackers made Dahab a main stop. The tourism demand shaped the tourism supply; non star-rated tourist camps and sea front coffee shops furnished with rugs on the floor were sufficient for
Dahab's tourists. Such facilities are of a standard that can be provided by individuals, whether Bedouin or Egyptian migrants. The Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Planning and the local authority are, however, dissatisfied with the status quo in Dahab and found that such trends would be rather difficult to alter in order to fit the targets specified by the NPDS.

In order to reach the goals set by the NPDS, a consortium of investors produced a number of publications outlining the options for tourism development in the area, (Dorra, undated). According to their documents, planning for tourism development in Dahab has very little to do with the local community. The development plans are set out as if in a deserted area. It is interesting how they are designed along the boundaries and landscapes previously identified, with the majority of projects clustered along the Coast.

Interviews with the Under-Secretary of the South Sinai Governorate and the head of the city council, as well as observation of government officials on the coast, reveal that the main aim is to upgrade tourism facilities in the area in order to be able to promote Sinai as the Egyptian Riviera. Plans for the area include low rise white bungalows, with an allocation of 20% built space to allow for large lawns and gardens.

The Tourism Development Authority reported official concern about the presence of the Bedouin community. "It will be cheaper for us, considering the kind of development that could take place in the area, to send the Bedouin to live in the
French Riviera, was one of the very eloquent and sarcastic comments that summarised such policies towards Dahab, referring to the increasing value of land in Dahab. The only way to achieve the kind of development that the government desires is to move the Bedouin from the coastal areas. To achieve that the government can refuse to renew contracts for land ownership or land usage that were issued to the Bedouin in the past.

Officials at the governorate and the head of the town council explained the investment rules and regulations that aim to encourage the participation of the private sector. Private investors currently own infrastructure projects including roads, airports (Dahab airport is owned by a private investor), desalination plants and electricity plants. Private investors will invest in infrastructural projects, which aim to serve the tourism industry. It is difficult to think how such projects will serve the needs of local community. The Interior and the Coast are separate landscapes and it is difficult to imagine infrastructure projects built to serve the tourism industry could have any benefits for the Bedouin.

The private investors, whether from overseas or Egypt, have preferential treatment when applying to purchase land from the government. The transaction of buying and selling land takes place away from the Bedouin. Investors who want to buy land must approach the authorities that provide them with various financial incentives.

The government policy to encourage tourism has indirectly caused a major area of conflict between them and the local community. Officials in the town centre, Bedouin
and the police perceive land ownership as the main area of conflict between the authorities and local people. It is an area where Bedouin interest conflicts with the national project that perceives Dahab as a tourist city and all investments directed to that as a priority. According to the authorities, tourists have to be next to the beach, and therefore all effort is extended in that direction. If the way to achieve this is to move the Bedouin to a different locality, the authorities are prepared to do so. This prospect has complicated the relationship between the Bedouin and the state.

Conflicting Issues: Conservation, Land ownership and Land usage

The issues of land ownership, land usage and land rights are not unique to the Mzeina Bedouin. In many parts of the world traditional communities, especially pastoral communities, have found themselves in a difficult position to claim ownership of land, once their areas had been opened up for development and external interests. The issue of displacement by tourism has received the attention of many organisations which support local communities in their struggle to protect their life and their culture from certain unfair practices, (Tourism Concern Campaign: Our Holidays their Homes 1995, Monbiot, 1994).

The triangle of local people, authorities and tourism investors have been problematic in places like Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burma, India. What these places have in common is the almost complete economic dependency at the national level on tourism as an economic pillar. Governments in these countries support private investors in
their desire to develop tourism, either by allocating land to build tourism resorts and
golf courses or to declare entire areas as national parks or conservation areas.

The Bedouin in Dahab are among the few groups in South Sinai who partly depended
on fishing for their livelihood and partly on pastoralism. After the introduction of
tourism to the area fishing was forbidden, and those who wanted to continue the
practice had to seek permission and travel far away to find a fishing spot. Coffee shop
owners forbid Bedouin from fishing off their shore and also new environment laws
made fishing in coral areas an offence. Local Bedouin, especially Sheikh Gomaa, the
head of the fishermen, said: "We have been fishing here before tourism was invented.
Tourists now after decades of fishing are still impressed with the coral and the
government has suddenly issued laws to protect it. It cannot be the fishing that
harms the environment, it is all this rubbish that the tourists and the coffee-shops
throw into the sea, that does all the harm."

Notions of conservation have altered traditional ways of life in the Sinai, in Kenya and
throughout Africa. Local people have understood that there is a link between the rise
in the environmental movement and tourism development. Conservationists believing
that local people are a threat to fragile environments, especially those carrying
wildlife, have encouraged policies that separate those who have often been the
custodians of their environment from direct contact with it. Frequently tourists are
then encouraged to view the pristine environment, often now identified as a protected
area. The Bedouin feel alienated from their environment and realise that it has to be
preserved at whatever price for the tourists to gaze at.
However, South Sinai has witnessed some positive initiatives in conservation. Nabq National Park, 70 kms away from Dahab, has been designated as a national park ever since the Israeli occupation in 1967. The area has mangrove trees, rare species of wildlife and coral reefs. Unlike many other conservation areas, the Bedouin community which used to live there is allowed to carry on living within the boundaries of the national park, but Bedouin from outside of Nabq are not allowed to settle there. They are entitled to get weekly fishing permits. The Environmental Affairs Agency which runs the National Park has employed some local Bedouin to work with a team of geologists in the area. Bedouin women bake bread and sell handicrafts to the tourists. The running of Nabq, according to the Bedouin of the area, is the ideal way to establish a conservation area that blends well with their lifestyle.

Tourism has directly contributed to the emergence of new phenomena like conservation areas and national parks, which in certain cases are bound to conflict with the land rights of the local people. The development of tourism and the intervention of the authority in the Sinai have also complicated the issue of land ownership and land rights for the Bedouin. The state interest in developing tourism in the area has added a financial and an economic value to land in the Sinai.

Abou Zeid (1970) has addressed the issues of sedentarisation and land problems. He argued that: "The governments of countries in the Middle East and North Africa have always attempted to deal with the social and economic problems of their nomadic and semi-nomadic tribal groups and to integrate them into their respective national
communities.” His work sheds light on a problem that has existed long before the emergence of tourism.

The government’s attempt to provide the Bedouin with services and infrastructure conflicts with the Bedouin way of life. In order for Bedouin communities to be fully integrated with the wider society, and make use of the services and facilities they have to adopt a more sedentary life style. Some families have realised the importance of education for their children and can afford to become semi-nomadic or completely sedentary. The Government considered spontaneous sedentarisation to be very slow and had to force the Bedouin to settle. The aim was that once settled, Bedouin could have access to vital infrastructure, become part of the general census and be enrolled in the military service.

Abou Zeid (ibid) defined sedentarisation as: “A social process that leads to the emergence of a new society, new institutions, new values, and new patterns of behaviour.” Hence sedentarisation is a social and a political decision rather than a purely technical operation that envisages settling certain groups of people to a certain area of land in which they undertake rural activity. The issue of land tenure became the cornerstone of the sedentarisation process. In Abou Zeid’s study, sedenterisation was linked to land reform and land redistribution.

The traditional system of land tenure is the root cause of the conflicts between the Bedouin and the government and the issue of land ownership has been a radical point of conflicting interests across our three identified landscapes.
Issues of land ownership are traditionally dealt with by Bedouin customary law, according to which ownership is proved by the recognition and the testimony of local people and neighbours. Evidence and proof such as historical accounts of usage and ownership could be brought before the judge of land ownership in cases of disputes. After the restoration of Sinai to the Egyptian government in 1982, the governmental decree No. 632 for the year 1982 was issued in order to identify the basis upon which the Bedouin have the right to gain their land. Before that time the Bedouin ownership and usage of land was a laissez faire situation as the government was not officially present in the area, and the Israeli forces had a different agenda. The decree stated that palm trees, cultivated lands and water wells could be taken as evidences of ownership, only if they dated back eighteen years or more. An engineer from the town council is the only person able to confirm such evidence. The authorities would recognise concrete houses as a proof of ownership but tents, kiosks and huts are not recognised as proof of ownership. This decree accounts for a series of conflicts between the government and Bedouin and has been the driving force behind a series of changes in the Bedouin lifestyle. Bedouin have to move from the Interior closer to the Coast and the Road and build concrete houses, surrounded by a large wall, in order to be able to prove ownership. They obviously chose to move closer to the Road in order to be able to benefit from the services and facilities offered and promised by the government. Given the limitations of space on the borders between the Interior and the Road, it became very difficult for the Bedouin to maintain their herds so most of the households possess very few goats and sheep. Having a built house with possessions that suit a sedentary life makes it difficult to be nomadic or semi-nomadic.
any more. The communal space and common usage has been replaced by market economy values—private ownership.

The change in land ownership in accordance with civil law has resulted in considerable change to the Bedouin's life style. Bedouin now depend less on their own cattle for meat or milk due to the lack of pasturing land. The goats and sheep graze on tourists' leftovers and on waste generated by the coffee shops. Their meat and milk taste so differently that Bedouin now buy long life milk from the super markets.

Without proof of ownership it is illegal for Bedouin to live on the land or use it. If they possess any evidence of ownership that is recognised by the government they then have to go through a long-winded bureaucratic process. This involves purchasing land for a minimal amount of money from the local authority, registering it and signing a contract. This contract then become the only acknowledged proof of ownership by the local authority. If they want to have a little café or campsite they have to get permission from various administrative authorities, some of which are in Cairo or Al-Tor. One of the Mzeina Bedouin spoke about the history of purchasing a piece of land and how he had to pay a lot of money to buy his own land. When I asked him about the contract he said that he never collected it from the town council. This story was confirmed when I asked an official member of the local authority how they were going to develop the land if the Bedouin live on it. He replied that the Bedouin do not have contracts.
Bedouin are displaced by bureaucracy as much as by tourism. The various forms they have to fill in and the trips they have to make to Cairo and other major cities are likely to go wrong at any stage; in which case they would then have no rights to their own land, as they would not have a contract recognised by the government.

A lawyer currently working in Dahab commented on how the Bedouin, the Egyptian authorities and the investors have different reference points in civil law and customary law. Bedouin who manage to own their land find it very difficult to follow the bureaucratic procedures and prefer to rent the land or sell it to investors for very cheap prices. The Bedouin's lack of awareness of their civil rights make them victims of the system.

The clash existing between the civil and customary law, has not only resulted in a gap between the Road and the Interior, but also within the Interior itself. Some governmental leaders have manipulated the law and used their knowledge of traditional land ownership to buy the land from the Bedouins very cheaply as speculators and sell it on to investors at inflated prices. Another major change has occurred in land usage. In the past, Bedouin groups approved of common usage of land and allowed their livestock to graze in each other's areas. The reciprocity was largely determined by the very essence of their economic activity, seasons, rainfall and the scarcity of natural resources. For example, if it rained in an area belonging to one particular tribe one year, then all the other tribes were allowed to use this pasture. This was established on the basis that rain or the lack of it is a decision of Allah, and the following year it will rain in a different location.
As the economic activity shifts from pasturing to tourism, the understanding of territorial possessions among the Bedouins themselves is changing. Boundaries have become more fixed. Unlike pasturing, members of one tribe do not run safaris in the Interior to land that belongs to a different tribe. Once the territorial boundaries, known to all Bedouin, have been crossed tourists are handed over to members of the tribe that own that land. Such a territorial concept, driven by economic need, influences social relationships between the Bedouin of the area.

**Conclusion**

The focus of the analysis has been shifted from the Interior to the Road to bring to the forefront the role played by the State in Dahab and the relationship between the State and the Bedouin.

Roads are a symbol of both authority and modernity in the Sinai. Roads have the power of shaping the image of the place and of taking both tourists and locals to where the government wants. Roads can also be blocked and opened to tourists and locals depending on political circumstances.

The ambivalent nature of the state's intervention in Dahab is the core of this chapter. The ambiguous relationship with the state started after the construction of the physical construction of the Road. It is ironic that it is the Bedouin who built the Road under
Israeli control. The Road at the time was a source of income generation. It still maintains that role as Bedouin men's main occupation is as taxi drivers.

The Road as a symbol of authority is not a product of this study – it is the way the Bedouin perceive it. All the State buildings and arms are built on the Road including, Shiekh Salem’s house, the official head of the Mzeina. The Bedouin relationship with the Road is a functional one, they do not have any feeling of belongingness to any of its physical or social components. It is a source of income and a symbol of authority, and that explains the absence of women from the Road.

The State’s good intentions have made infrastructural services available that provide the Bedouin with opportunities that would not have been available otherwise. Education, health, electricity, water and Roads are services that the Bedouin themselves appreciate. Such services cannot exist in a vacuum and they are offered within a regulatory framework that the Bedouin are not familiar with. This unfamiliar legal and political system curtails their freedom and imposes an alien medium for the relationship between them and the State. Thus, when the issue of settling the Bedouin was introduced; the State could not offer the Bedouin infrastructural services if they continued with their nomadic lifestyle. The conflict of land ownership is an example of how the Bedouin's legal and political system clashes with the State one.

The Bedouin legal and political system is incorporated in their economic and social structure. This means that the changes that occur in one affect the other. The change from the nomadic life style into a settled one has not been a smooth transfer from
movement to settlement as it entails social, economic and legal changes. The transfer of the communal use of land to private use came as a result of the transfer of pasturing to tourism. Such a practice has affected the solidarity between members of the community and created significant economic gaps between them.

The social organisation of community is currently subject to the state intervention. For example, one member of the community who was divorced prior to the Road is now required to present the authorities with papers that prove she is divorced and looking after a family if she wishes to be entitled to government social support systems. Also with regard to education, parents must present schools with their children's birth certificates in order to be able to enrol them. There were no registration of births prior to 1982. Lots of people were issued with birth certificates in 1982 and this has lead to confusion in the education system when people were aged six on paper but were effectively twelve.

The government opted for tourism as the one and only development option in Dahab. It is only through tourism that Bedouin can find employment. The domination of one economic sector as fragile as tourism does not provide the Bedouin, who for social and religious reasons might not feel comfortable working in tourism, with other alternatives. The development of the tourism sector is mainly dependent on private investors. The governorate even suggested that private investors could provide the infrastructural services required by their own projects, such as desalination plants, power plants and means of sewage treatment. It is therefore likely that the provision of infrastructural services for the Bedouin might suffer.
Although the Road can be seen as a landscape in between the Coast and the Interior and should in ideal circumstances be linked equally to both landscapes and act as a mediator, the reality is different. The relationship between the Road and the Coast is a political and economic choice. It is in the Coast that the authority invests and on which its relies for economic and political prosperity. The Coast holds opportunities for better economic and developmental circumstances for the State, while the Interior represents a pressure and threat to expansion plans. It requires capital rather than generates it. The relationship between the State and the Interior is one of mistrust and misunderstanding. The strong affiliation of the Road to the Coast is clear when examining the allocation of investment according to the NPDS, and the accompanying maps that illustrate the areas allocated for development.¹

The state objective is to address chronic problems that hinder the development process such as deficits in the balance of payments, overpopulation and unemployment and the repositioning of Egypt and specifically the Sinai on the world political and tourist map.

It is in the collaboration of the Road and the Coast, rather than the Road and the Interior that such objectives could be achieved.

¹ See Appendix One and Three for maps and tables produced by the NPDS.
Chapter Four

The Coast – *El Shatt*
Introduction

This chapter explores the Coast, or *El-Shatt* as it is known to Bedouin and Egyptians living in Dahab. The Coast is the socio-geographic landscape designed for and embracing the tourists and those who are in constant contact with them.

The Coast is a powerful catalyst and its construction has caused remarkable social, political, and economic change to both the Interior and the Road. Examples of such changes are illustrated in earlier chapters, including land ownership, issues of women, children, values and employment patterns in the Interior. The Coast as it is now highlights the issue of boundary negotiation and illustrates the distinct but linked relationship between the three landscapes in Dahab.

The Coast, not only embraces tourist society but actually embraces sectors of the Bedouin and Egyptian societies and is the melting pot for all these partners. Tourists are the social group that affiliate themselves with the Coast, their presence is transitional but their culture is stable. Tourists are transient travellers who are constantly on the move, such a transitional existence has created a stable culture, that of the backpackers and it precedes them to the Coast. Although the social structure is very transitional and non-cohesive, the cultural structure is stable, and I am thus able to use the Coast as a counterpart landscape to the Interior and the Road. The cultural structure of the Coast has became so stable that it has developed its own codes, values and ethical rules and these apply to all those who are on the Coast or relate to it for their living.
My original research plan did not include the Coast as my interest lay in the Bedouin and the changes that have occurred to their livelihood as a consequence of tourism. I would at this stage also say that my proposal was influenced by previous research in the area carried out by other anthropologists. Such studies impose a significant silence on tourism and tourists despite being a distinct and important new element in Dahab. Tourism and tourists were mentioned in the works of Lavie (1990), Wickering (1991) and Gardner (1992) but not as a separate entity and mainly from the Bedouin perspective.

It was difficult to see the tourist landscape as an independent socio-geographic space on equal footing with the Interior and the Road. Both the Interior and the Road have more or less permanent or stable communities, which are the Bedouin and the Egyptian migrants to the Sinai. The Coast community is a mobile and transient one – its composition and members are constantly changing. On average no one group of tourists is likely to be on the Coast for more than one week at a time. Despite that, the Coast has formed an independent landscape with its “neo-nomadic” population of tourists and travellers. I agree with MacCannell (1992) that tourism is a primary ground for new cultural forms. In that respect the Coast is presented as a counterpart to the Interior and the Road. Its social structure is fluid and fabricated but nevertheless, its cultural and physical landscape are stable. It would have been then a mistake to marginalise the presence of the Coast given its significant influence on the Interior and on the policies and plans of the Road.
In this chapter I focus on tourists and their activities and the various consequences: shifting identities; Dahab as the meeting point; sex and tourism and consuming cultures. The interaction between the Coast, the Road and the Interior is again of interest but in this chapter the tourists and their landscape are the point of departure. The Dahab Coast illustrates concepts of liminality, and communitas (Van Gennep, 1977 and Turner, 1974). I will also explore the world of backpackers and give an account of their relationship with the local communities and among themselves. I will alternate the usage of the Coast and the Beach depending on the context.

The Semantics of the Coast

The word *Shatt* means Beach in Arabic, while Coast is *Sahel* which is a geographical, classical Arabic term that is rarely used by Bedouin or Egyptians in their day to day discourse.

The Beach and the Coast, like *Shatt* and *Sahel*, are both landscape terms referring to the land next to the sea front. Beach: the shore of the sea – Coast: the side of the land next to the sea, the seashore *also* the border of a country, borderland (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1970).

The word beach, however, has a social and recreational connotation. The Coast becomes a Beach once used for recreational purposes and frequented by holidaymakers. I have chosen to use the geographical term the Coast to refer to the physical and natural environment rather than the social and recreational term the
Beach. The Coast, however, usually encompasses other activities undertaken by the local community in the area, like fishing and trade, for example.¹

For the Bedouin, the increasing number of tourists in Dahab and the confinement of the Coast activities to tourism has lead to its disappearance and its replacement with El-Shatt, the Beach. Once the activities on the Coast became exclusively linked to tourism, Bedouin started referring to the Coast as El-Shatt. Their mental mapping of the Coast location differs between those who are linked to the Coast for economic or social reasons and those who are not². For those who are not involved in tourism the Coast is a distant location and is rarely used with reference to Bedouin life or activities. It has become synonymous with a world on its own with its own inhabitants, morals, values and activities.

The Shatt is now a distant and alien space for the Bedouin although it is not physically more than one kilometre away from the Interior. A female Bedouin informant, was unable to recognise El shatt as we were going through some pictures I took of the Beach. She commented: "I never go there now. There is nothing for us on the Shatt. It is all for the tourists."

¹ See Shields (1991) Places on the Margin: Alternative Geography of Modernity. In this volume the link between the social and physical aspects of coasts is explored, with especial relevance to the British seaside. In this study I will alternate between using the word Beach and Coast depending on the contexts but both refer to the socio-geographic landscape that is identified in the study.

² See Gould and White (1974) on Mental maps
History of Tourism in Dahab

Dahab, as discussed previously, has been a tourism destination since the Israeli occupation. Israeli officers and soldiers spent their Rest and Recreation period in Dahab. The Mzeina Bedouin have always lived close to the Coast and used it for fishing and recreational purposes as well. When the Egyptian authority regained Sinai in 1982, Dahab has already had some form of tourism, basic as it was, and it was difficult to change.

Lavie (1990: 67) gave a vivid description of what tourism was like and how the Bedouin related to it under the Israeli occupation:

During Jewish holidays, rows of colourful camping tents would stripe the coast of the Gulf of Aqaba, and clouds of smoke from portable barbecues would darken the horizon of sea and sky. After each holiday, the rows of colourful tents were replaced by organised linear rows of Bedouin men walking side by side to stuff all dirty toilet paper, used tampons, discarded tin cans, and other trash into huge plastic bags. Goats would scatter along the beach camp-grounds, chewing orange peels, rotten tomatoes, newspapers, and other organic refuse that the tourists had left behind. Herding activities and East Coast migration cycles were modified to take advantage of the heap of trash now available.
After various encounters with tourists, Bedouin realised that collecting their trash should not be the only link they have with the Beach. They also recognised that tourists would pay for food, drink, and shelter in a constructed ‘authentic’ Bedouin hut, and that tourists would even pay them just to take an ‘exotic’ picture.

The Bedouin constructed and rented out huts in a fake Bedouin village they established between the Coast and the edges of Masbat. They basically provided a shelter and saved tourists carrying their own tents when coming to Dahab. For the tourists these inauthentic huts were sufficiently authentic. Women in the Interior baked pitta bread and some form of Bedouin doughnuts that young girls began to sell on the Coast. They also sewed cotton trousers that the tourists tend to wear. Tourists to Dahab increased, as Bedouin hospitality was available for sale. The beaches along the Gulf of Aqaba soon became an internationally famous pilgrimage site for naked sun worshippers. It was then that the Coast was transformed into the Beach. The Bedouin relationship with the Coast was similar to their relationship with the Road: they played a role in the construction of both these landscapes and then had to cope with the consequences. The Beach became yet another ‘mixed blessing’ landscape, providing the Bedouin with cash income, replacing money that they used to earn from wage labour, and at the same time challenging their values and using their land. Bedouin found themselves in a position of serving nude, sun bathing women and they not only accept but also facilitate their sinful behaviour.

The construction of the Beach (El-Shatt) landscape was a result of the introduction of tourism. Before tourism, the Coast was an extension of the Interior, embracing Bedouin traditional economic and leisure activities. During the summer months and
upon their return from the urban centres, between June and August, they would spend the time fishing and collecting dates from their orchards that were very close to the Coast. May, June, July and August were the best season for fishing. According to Sheikh Gomaa, the head of the fishermen, in the village of Masbat: “There was nothing on the Coast, except some huts that we set up to provide us with a shaded space, where we can sit and empty our nets. The sea was there for everyone, whoever wanted to fish could fish. We used to fish in al-Mashraba and Wadi Gunnai.”

Both of these areas and many others are now stacked with coffee shops built right on the waterfront, which makes it impossible to fish. Even in areas where tourism has not yet arrived the government has demolished the huts and the Arishas (a three sided and roofed shelter providing shade for fishermen) that the Bedouin have erected.

The Female Coastal Space

The Coast was also an extension of the female space. Women used to frequent coastal areas that are off the beaten track to collect seashells and squid. They would also go swimming or line fishing. During my time in Dahab I went on a trip with some Bedouin women friends, which for them was like an extract of a past life. We were driven by pick-up to what is known to the tourist as the Lagoona and to the Bedouin as Al-Gauze. The driver was a Bedouin who refused to charge us, which much impressed my friends, comparing him with Egyptian drivers who would never stop for a Bedouin and would rather transport tourists. The Lagoona is an area about 3 Kms south of the Bedouin's village that is not currently developed for tourism but is
considered as one of the priority zones identified by the authorities. We were five women and my friends fished, cooked and sang traditional songs.

They talked about the President's last visit to the area in October 1996. He recommended that it should be developed for tourism. They wondered what was going to happen to their father's fishing hut. It was very surprising to hear the women and young girls' points of view on such political debates. They talked about how fast the Lagoona would change once tourism begins. They discussed the problem of compensation; and how difficult it is to compensate the Bedouin for their lost land. They said that it might be their last trip there as the area would soon be allocated for tourism, similar to the situation in Masbat, Mashraba and Malil (three Bedouin Coastal areas which are now heavily devoted to tourism).

A number of Egyptian men, mainly drivers, were around. We were instructed by the eldest of us not to go anywhere near them: "People would talk if they see us even walking near by. That is why we should stop coming to the Coast, people see us here and they will talk."

The picnic we made to this part of the Coast was, according to my Bedouin women friends, was how the whole of Dahab used to be before the introduction of tourism: a free, long Coast available for Bedouin recreational activities and fishing. The Lagoona is one of the very few remaining spots where traditional Bedouin Coastal life is still maintained. It is a space that is currently witnessing the physical and social transformation from the Coast to the Beach. The presence of Egyptian men and the attitude of the government towards land ownership and allocating land for tourism
development, constrains the movement and the freedom of Bedouin women (and men) on the Coast.

A Snapshot of the Coast

The Coast of Dahab town stretches for 25 kms within the borders of Dahab and for another 70 kms on its outskirts, touching the boundaries of Nuweiba to the north. Most of the development plans for Dahab are concerned with the entire area. The scope of this study, however, is focused only on the Coast facing the Bedouin villages of Masbat and Mashraba which currently caters for the majority of tourists visiting Dahab. The Coast front that faces the Bedouin villages is about 3 kms long and ranges between 250 to 3000 meters in width (the distance between the Coast and the Road).³

The entire coastal line is built up of a string of coffee shops or as they are known in Dahab, cafeterias. They are lined up one after the other right on the sea front. They look like dens from the 1960s, lit with dim blue and red lights. The coffee shops are separated by palm tree trunks and tie dye materials. They are furnished with rugs, cushions and low tables. The cafeterias are identical in architecture and menus. Pastas, pizzas, pancakes and milk shakes are the main ingredients of the tourists’ cuisine. Most of the cafeterias offer daub and some other kinds of grass. Tourists smoke water bubble pipes especially in the evening. They most likely contain some kind of narcotic drugs. This has become a traditional promotional tool used by most

³ The distances given here are approximate. The Bedouin and the authorities give different names to different areas, so it is difficult to know exactly the distance between any two given points.
of cafeterias on the Beach to attract tourists. Most of them are not licensed to sell alcohol, and if they do, it is done illegally. The cafeterias are only differentiated by name: The Laughing Buddha, The Fighting Kangaroo, The Crazy Camel, Al Capone, and the End of the World.

Cafeterias are supposed to be built at least 30 meters away from the sea front but not one of them abides by that rule. They build the kitchen at that distance, while the seating area, built with natural and transferable material goes right to the sea front and, as it is not fixed, gets round the thirty meters regulation. Although Bedouin own some tourist enterprises on the Coast they are culturally and socially owned by the tourists. Tourists stay in accommodation known as camps – as most tourists are backpackers. The Bedouin, together with other Egyptian investors, have built campsites which are mostly concrete rooms with mattresses on the floor and shared toilets and showers. The rooms are not built to fit any given specifications but maximise the space available. Rooms are rented for a price that ranges between 5–20 LE (£1-4) and they are considered non-classified establishments. Souvenir shops, body piercing/tattoo shops and supermarkets are also scattered along the Beach. Supermarkets mostly sell imported consumer goods and they are shared ground for Bedouin children and tourists. Bedouin children visit the supermarkets to buy the cotton they need for friendship bracelets, and to buy ice creams, Coca-Cola and sunglasses. Bedouin women use supermarkets that are close to the Interior to buy their daily requirements of canned food, oil, rice and so forth. Supermarkets and their stock are part of the Coast culture and they are set to meet tourist need. Fast food, biscuits, snacks and canned food are all imported and sold at inflated prices. The supermarkets sell security to the tourists by providing them with Mars bars and Walls ice creams. They
identify tourists as their main customers and this is reflected in their prices. A supermarket owner said: "We are not here to sell to the Bedouin we can only make money by serving the tourists."

The relationship between the Bedouin who are not fully integrated into tourism and the Coast is rather symbolic of their overall relations to the tourism sector. An old woman who lives in Masbat roams the Coast and visits the cafeterias every afternoon to collect food leftover from the tourists like bread, pizzas and expired vegetables and fruit for her goats to graze on. There is no organised system for rubbish collection and most businesses on the Beach dump their rubbish in the Interior. This rubbish generates flies and mosquitoes but at the same time serves as pasturing ground for the Bedouin women and their flocks.

One corner of the Coast is occupied with camels stacked together, helplessly and desperately waiting for a tourist interested in a ride. The camel, once a companion to the Bedouin and an irreplaceable asset, is now a tourist companion. The camel is now of no use except to tourists, and this view was held by the majority of Bedouin encountered. Bedouin with camels, not otherwise involved in tourism, rent their camels out through agents, usually an entrepreneurial Bedouin, or they send their boys to the Coast with them. Camels are clustered in small spaces on the Beach waiting for a tourist seeking the 'authentic' experience of a camel ride. A camel ride usually does not extend further than a kilometre along the Coast, an experience lasting fifteen minutes at most, for which they are charged between 15 –20 LE. (£3–4) Camel attendants are usually young Bedouin boys or Bedouin men.
The areas of Masbat and Mashraba are the hub of tourism activity in Dahab. 65% of the total tourist arrivals and 55% of the total number of tourists facilities such as cafeterias and accommodation units are in this area. 67% of the total number of labour in tourism related jobs are on the Coast. The income generated in the area is estimated to reach 5.5 million dollars per annum, Information Centre, the Governorate of South Sinai (1996).  

Dahab receives 15% of tourists arriving in South Sinai (numbers reached 690,337 in 1996). The majority of tourists are Israelis with growing numbers of Germans and Italians.

There are about 220 establishments on the Coast, the majority of which are linked to tourism: cafeterias, bazaars, accommodation units, supermarkets and so forth absorbing between 400-638 workers, mainly from mainland Egypt. As previously mentioned, statistics available are very unreliable, especially in the case of the labour force. The owners of the various establishments avoid registering the labour force working for them, to avoid paying social insurance. The numbers provided above reflect only the workers registered with the social security and it is likely that there are more migrant workers working in Dahab that is documented (Dahab local authority, undated report).

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4 See Appendix Two for number of tourist arrivals to Dahab.

5 Statistics sought from different sources have major discrepancies between them. I can not guarantee exact numbers and they should be used only as indicators.
Bedouin children have a significant presence on the Coast. The most recent census in 1996 indicates the presence of 438 Bedouin male and female children between the age of 6 and 12. The majority of these children are involved in tourism in a certain way. Children are involved in the production of tourist souvenirs and are considered to be one of the main generators of cash income to their families.

Changes in the Coast Layout

Changes are taking place on the Coast in an attempt to transform the overall image of the area from one which mainly attracts backpackers and cheap tourism into one that will bring in quality tourism with high spending power. The plan is to encourage more investors to come into Dahab and build four and five star resorts. In an attempt to realise this plan the town council, with the aid of the tourist police, began to implement rigorous procedures with regard to the layout of the Beach. Tourist police have forbidden the spread of rugs and seating of tourists on the ground, for example. They insist on the provision of tables and chairs and the police raid the cafeterias and collect all the rugs and cushions used by tourists for seating and sunbathing.

The authorities, represented by the police and the local authority, are strictly applying the thirty meters rule. This has lead to demolishing a number of tourism establishments on the sea front, which were given planning permission by the authorities beforehand.

The authorities have a strong hand on the issue of land ownership on the Coast. Some of the land on the Coast is owned by Bedouin and rented out to investors from
mainland Egypt. The reorganisation of the Coast has raised concerns with regard to Bedouin rights to Coastal land. Some Bedouin have not been issued with contracts that prove their ownership. Most of the Coastal areas were not built up when the Egyptian authorities regained the Sinai in 1982, as the Israeli forces forbade the Bedouin from building on the Coast. The lack of concrete buildings deprives the Bedouin of their right to own land. The authorities are now reviewing each case of land developed along the sea front, in an attempt to redistribute it and allocate it to investors capable of providing the superior kind of tourism establishments required by the Sinai National Development Project.

The Coast as it exists (or as it will exist if the government plans to upgrade tourism in Dahab are implemented) will remain a tourist landscape, an entity distinct from traditional Bedouin life and values but linked to their economic well-being. The Bedouin, the authorities and the tourists have each re-constructed the landscape of the Coast in their own way – to reflect their own objectives.

**The Coast: A stable Transient / Liminal Landscape**

The Coast landscape has been identified as a physical and social entity and placed on an equal footing with both the Road and the Interior. However, there are a number of factors that set the Coast apart and actually make its existence an interesting and an unusual social structure. The Coast is the most economically productive landscape of the three – to the extent that the economic well-being of both the Interior and Road is dependent on the presence of the Coast. The social groupings associated with the
Coast are mobile and transitional. Both the Interior and the Road have social groupings that are permanent and create physical surroundings that reflect their cultures. The Coast has the transient and mobile tourist as its social grouping (they are far more mobile than the Bedouin nowadays), and hardly any of them stay more than a week or ten days at one time. Although the social component of the Coast is mobile and unstable, the cultural, ideological and physical structure of that Coast is stable. The Rap and Metal music, the tie dye T-shirts, the dens, the camp sites, the drugs, and the sexual relations are cultural products and concepts that are there for the tourists or even the locals to consume upon their arrival to the Coast. The Coast as a place, possesses its own culture but does not possess its own people. The transient-stable nature of the Coast could be compared with that of liminality.⁶

The word liminality is derived from the Latin root *limen*, which means threshold or boundary. The term liminality was originally used in relation to pilgrimage, especially as pilgrims moved from the separation stage to the transitional one during which the rituals of the pilgrimage are performed in a rather liminal setting, (Turner, 1974, Van-Gennep, 1977). Liminality is a stage where no rules or codes apply, so it can be understood as a stage (both temporally and physically) of change and instability. Some tourism researchers compare pilgrimage with tourism and the liminal transitional stage to the tourism experience. The tourist life on the Beach can be understood as a classic example. Graburn (1983, 1989) and Selwyn (1994) have discussed the similarities between pilgrimage and tourism. However, I argue here that the Beach is a space with a stable cultural and ideological layout, and such a layout precedes the tourist's presence. The institution of tourism is so powerful that all

parties, the tourists, Bedouin and Egyptians are expected to abide by the rules and codes of the Coast's culture.

The Construction of the Coast by Bedouin

The Bedouin constructed the Coast landscape in a way that allowed them to benefit economically from it and at the same time maintain their value system. The Coast for the Bedouin is a distant landscape with its own set of values and morals, and they must follow these whenever they cross the boundary that separates their world, the Interior, from that of the tourist.

Bedouin currently allow for and accept the behaviour and attitude of fellow Bedouin and Egyptians even if it is not in accordance with their traditional behaviour and views. Such behaviour and attitudes are usually termed as Beach morals. A Bedouin who charges his fellow Bedouin when giving them a lift into the town centre is someone with Beach morals. Beach morals also apply to Bedouin or Egyptians who 'are all talk', or who are pretentious. Bedouin and Egyptians who fail to respect the Bedouin codes protecting women's honour and freedom of movement are also considered to have Beach morals. However, Bedouin who get away with having Beach morals on the Coast are shamed if they start behaving in the same way in the Interior.

Bedouin perceive themselves as belonging to two categories: 'real' (el-Bedawi al Haq) and 'touristy' (Bedawi.el-Shatt). The real Bedouin are those who live in the Interior
and minimise their links with the Coast. The closer the Bedouin get to the Coast socially or physically the less real they become. The real Bedouin refuse to send their daughters to the Beach to work. Bedouin families that do, separate the economic sphere from the social and moral ones. The girls are sent to the Beach to make money and their parents and fellow Bedouin see their presence and behaviour on the Beach as completely separate from what is expected in the Interior.

Young girls are allowed to go to the beach to sell friendship bracelets to the tourists, to sit with them and talk to them away from the eyes of their mothers and fathers. They get involved in arguing and bargaining with the tourists and behave in an outspoken way as they compete with each other in order to return home with the maximum amount of money. Tourists describe the young girls as aggressive, bold and pushy. In the process of selling the bracelets to the tourists, young Bedouin girls argue with men whether tourists or Egyptians, sit next to them and join them for drinks in the cafeterias. Parents are either not aware of their daughter's behaviour or accept it as long as such behaviour does not extend to the Interior. A couple of families forbid their girls from going to the Beach for fear that they might be attacked by the police and accused of stealing tourists' possessions. Such boycotting is from fear of possible attack by the police rather than for any moral or behavioural values.

The Coast culture allowed encounters and interaction between locals and tourists in a way that is not accepted in other landscapes. Husbands and fathers whose wives and daughters are friends of mine would talk to me on the Beach, but would not even greet me if they met me in the Interior. During my visit to the Nabq National Park I was accompanied by one of my friends who came to visit from England and also by two
Bedouin men who were our guides for the day. They were responsible for driving us, cooking for us and basically keeping us company. I had met Hassan and Hajj Mohammed a number of times before and they knew very well that I was not a tourist. Although it was obvious that we would want to be able to have time to swim and be away from the company of men (a concept considered to be the norm in Bedouin culture), they did not suggest leaving us alone. Hajj Mohammed and Hassan were surprised that we did not wear our swimming costumes to sunbathe and swim. Hajj Mohammed said to me then: "You are on holiday, you should be liberal and free like all those tourists you see on the Beach."

Tourism brings changes, some of which are positive such as the involvement of men in certain activities that have remained women's activities for centuries. Cooking and interacting with women tourists are among the activities that Bedouin men find themselves taking part in whilst on the Beach. The girls on the Beach teach Bedouin boys how to weave bracelets when these kind of handicrafts used to be exclusive to women. The changes in the behaviour of Bedouin men and young Bedouin boys do not go beyond the boundary of the Beach and it is tied to the liminality created by tourism. Men on the Beach cook, weave and interact with women, but once back in the Interior they fall back into the prescribed gender division. This dual role played by men with regard to women has consequences on the relationship between locals and tourists. Female tourists find Bedouin men to be ideal: they maintain an image of the man of the desert with both dress and attitude, but at the same time combine it with features of the Western man.
Shifting and Playing Identities

Playing with identities is a principal feature of the Coast landscape. Bedouin men and children on the Coast play with identities as they cross the physical and psychological boundaries that separate the Interior from the Coast. Men who cross the Interior/Coast boundary also cross the gender boundaries prescribed in the Interior, and allow themselves to interact with, work for and admire women tourists and their behaviour. So they become 'less Bedouin' in one sense but they also become 'more Bedouin' in another. The Bedouin realise that tourists come to Dahab to look for the 'authentic Bedouin' with the traditional dress and traditional way of life. The Bedouin working in tourism play with their identity to meet tourist expectations. On the Coast they wear impeccable traditional dress and perform in a 'staged authenticity' fashion on the front stage, namely the Coast, (MacCannell, 1989, Cohen, 1988). Playing with identities is very clear when linked to Bedouin dress: Bedouin wear jeans and trainers when dealing with the Egyptian authorities on the Road, as the Egyptians tend to look down on Bedouin wearing galabia. By wearing urban dress, Bedouin guarantee themselves a better service with the authorities. On the Coast, Bedouin are guaranteed a better service when wearing their traditional Bedouin dress as it meets tourist expectations. It is quite normal for Bedouin men to be seen with layers of clothes that they alternate between as they cross the boundaries between the landscapes and identities. Commenting on the issue of dress and identity, a Bedouin man said to me:
Tourists now are interested in the Bedouin dress and style and this is why they come to Sinai, but we are also linked to progress (haddara). We were among the first to wear Bell Bottom trousers, to have a fringe and to wear sunglasses.

All of this falls well within the debate that links authenticity, staged authenticity and the commoditization of culture. Are Bedouin, by playing Bedouin for the tourists, commoditising their own culture as they present on the front stage an image of their day to day lifestyle and culture?

Children also play with identities and shift them as they cross the boundaries between the Interior and the Coast, work and play and childhood and adulthood. Children on the Coast play as adults as they take on board the responsibility of providing cash income for their families. Just like a breadwinner of a family, children feel the responsibility of earning enough money to pay for food and pay off some of their mothers’ debts. Children shift from adulthood to childhood after a long, hot working day on the Beach. They strip off their clothes and reward themselves (both boys and girls) with a swim or a boat ride. The Beach shifts from being the working space for the children to becoming their playground.

Riley (1988) discusses the way travellers and tourists play with identity, as they temporarily liberate themselves from work ethics, dress codes and social habits approved of by peers of their social class in their home environment. Tourists in Dahab sleep and sit on the floor, wear clothes that do not reflect their social class and construct relationships with individuals that are outside of their normal social circle in their home environment.
The Egyptian workers from mainland Egypt would not choose to associate themselves with Bedouin culture anywhere else but on the Beach. These men wear traditional Bedouin dress and head cover (galabia and okal), in their work with tourists, claiming to be Bedouin. One Egyptian employee working in Dahab makes extra money by organising an authentic Bedouin trip (a safari) in the mountains offering barbecued chicken, opportunities for sex in the open air, and a lot of drugs. The trip was allegedly supposed to be in one of the remote valleys of the Interior. The safari was only a few meters away from the Coast and is simply an extension of its ethics and values.

The anthropologist also plays around with identity. Personally, I had to wear different outfits in order to be accepted on the different landscapes across which I was moving all the time. Wearing a long traditional dress that would make me acceptable in the Interior presented a barrier while talking to and interviewing tourists on the Beach and talking to members of the Egyptian government on the Road.

The Construction of the Coast by the Tourists

Tourism in Dahab is mainly for the backpackers, the majority of which are Israelis or coming through Israel. The kibbutzim and moshavim are main stops for travellers in the region. Australians and New Zealanders usually travel for a year or six months after university, the rationale being that Australia and New Zealand are so far away, it is difficult to travel long haul once enrolled in the routine of a nine-to-five job.
Travelling for long periods of time is a tradition as well as an expectation for young Australians and New Zealanders. Lots of them have a travelling phase that separates them from their student life and prepares them for a fresh start with a job. In addition to the established stops for budget travellers like Goa in India, Samosir Island in Sumatra, Dahab is becoming a well-known stop for travellers in the region. Graburn (1983) described such backpackers or budget travellers as performing a rite of passage. He sees this kind of tourism to be long term and usually take place in conjunction with major changes in status such as adulthood, divorce or career changes.

In Dahab tourists arrive to find everything they need. Tourists on the Coast arrive with preconceptions of what they need to buy and consume. Their travelling culture has created for them menus that they expect to consume and handicrafts such as tie dye T-shirts and friendship bracelets that they are willing to buy. Cafeteria owners and the children on the Beach became providers of a culture with which they have nothing in common. The entire Coast population, Egyptian workers, children, and Bedouin are mobilised into the production of material cultural icons for tourists. I disagree with the prevailing argument that budget travellers and backpackers have a better relationship with the local community and have a better understanding of and respect for local cultures and traditions. My observations, interviews and contacts in Dahab revealed the opposite. Tourists create their own culture and the locals become responsible for providing it and produce items of material culture that do not relate to them. Tourists are willing to interact and communicate with the Bedouin within the familiarity of the Coast culture in what I term as ‘coded encounters’. Tourists find it normal and exotic to talk to Bedouin in cafeterias, during safaris or on a taxi ride –
these are considered to be safe and familiar interacting settings. Contacts that take place outside the boundaries of the Beach are difficult for the tourist to deal with. During an outing with some female friends of mine to a remote ‘off the beaten track coastal area’ a male traveller did not respond to the little conversation that one of the Bedouin girls attempted to have with him. This tourist/local encounter fell outside the codes already specified by the Beach culture: such encounters usually take place on the Beach and the local is most likely a man.

Riley (1988) and Adler (1985) both address the issue of budget travellers known as “Youth on the Road” or those who belong to the “Road Culture”7. They compared this relatively new phenomenon to the historical traditions of the Grand Tour for the elite and of tramping for young, working class men. Tourists in Dahab fall somewhere between drifter and explorer, (Cohen, 1972). My observations tend to confirm the views expressed by Cohen (ibid) about the link between budget travellers and the consumption of drugs. During my first days in Dahab I encountered two tourists, Italian and English, who described Dahab as: “A Paradise, which is even more than a Paradise if you smoke,” referring to daub and grass that are readily available. Others have said their main reason for visiting Dahab was for the drugs; according to a number of interviewed tourists Dahab is one of the cheapest places to buy drugs. Riley (ibid) disagreed with an existing relationship between budget travellers and drugs. Her findings confirmed that they do not use drugs more or less than their non-traveller counterparts.

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7 As mentioned previously in the introduction, the Bedouin and the tourists see the Road Culture from two completely different angles. Here the authors address the Road from the tourist perspective.
In addition to drugs, diving is another attraction for the tourists. Diving courses are very cheap and it is relatively easy to get a diving licence. Mixing drugs and diving has on many occasions caused problems. There have been reported cases of death while diving and some of the diving instructors believe they relate to the over consumption of drugs.

Theft is a problem that tourists face as much in Dahab as in any other similar tourism destination. Tourist police identify theft as one of the main issues they have to deal with on a daily basis. Riley’s (ibid) research points out that half the travellers interviewed in the study reported being victims of a crime, which in most cases is petty theft. Tourists go for a swim or a dive leaving their expensive camera or diving equipment unattended. Such behaviour would be unlikely to occur in a non-holiday place. Tourists construct a Paradise of the Coast, a ‘Paradise’ where evil does not exist, and when theft occurs it is a problem of the locals.

The kind of tourists that choose to stay in Dahab avoid places like Sharm El-Sheikh in the Sinai where development is mainly based on big hotels and five star resorts. This kind of development limits and institutionalises the interaction between the tourists and the locals. Tourists on the Coast of Dahab have pride in mixing with Bedouin, the ‘real local people’ and in having an ‘authentic’ experience. They are proud of the friendships that they manage to establish with some Bedouin they met on the Coast. Few of the tourists on the Coast are knowledgeable about Bedouin life in the Interior.

Two Dutch tourists stopping in Dahab as part of their tour of Egypt, said that although the set up of a place like Dahab supposedly makes it possible to interact with the
locals, they learned nothing about the community and never met any Bedouin women. The only men they met were either taxi drivers or waiters, and as for the children they perceived them as pushy and very commercial. The interaction tourists have with local people always take place in a commercial setting. One of the female tourists interviewed expressed to me how useful she thought it was for the Bedouin to see women in bikinis, as this would teach them that there is another way of life elsewhere. Frustration about the interaction was expressed to me by some young tourists. As they were walking along the Beach an Egyptian waiter started talking to them in a very friendly way. They entered his restaurant and had a very personal conversation with the young waiter and shared their feelings and experiences with him. They went away and the following evening the same waiter again started talking, failing to recognise that they were the same people that he had met before. This incident confirms my argument about tourism facilitating coded commercial encounters between the Bedouin and tourists.

Tourists of all nationalities mix together, share each other’s food, accommodation and experience. It was particularly interesting to watch the interaction between the Israeli tourists, Egyptians and Bedouin on the Coast. Riley’s research confirms the possibility of intense relationships between the travellers as they mostly travel alone and are eager to share their experiences and adventures. The global society of the tourists is one with no geo-political boundaries and conflicts. During the transitional stage tourists live in a ‘communitas’, a society of shared experiences and strong solidarity existing only within the boundaries of the Coast.
Dahab: Endings and Beginnings

The first, and to a certain extent one of the most important of the many interactions and relationships on the Coast, is that between the tourists and the Egyptian migrant workers who mainly work as waiters or helpers in the many cafeterias scattered on the Beach.

Reports from the local authority indicate the presence of something between 200 to 650 Egyptian migrant workers from different villages in the Nile valley. Like their co-players on the Beach (the Tourists) they are also on an escape route. Unemployment, poverty, boredom with their little villages tucked in a corner of the Nile valley, uncompleted engagement projects and fragmented love stories hit by the reality of material needs. Some of them are actually on an escape route from minor offences and some kinds of crime. There are lots of Sudanese escaping their problematic situation with the Egyptian immigration authorities. Dahab is a meeting point for the endings and beginnings of youth from various corners of the globe. Tourists escaping routines, work pressures and relationships see Dahab as the end, the earthly paradise where they would theoretically like to stay forever. To Egyptian migrant workers, Dahab is the beginning of a better life, jobs, income, sex and the stepping stone to the outside world.

All the Egyptians workers interviewed viewed Dahab as a stepping stone to Europe and America. They have been informed about opportunities of travel abroad, work and sex by friends or relatives from the same village or nearby villages who already
found what they were looking for in Dahab. The Egyptian workers tend to come from a number of small villages or rural towns in the Nile valley and Delta. The cafeterias and campsites on the Coast employ mostly Egyptians. Their income is in most cases a percentage of the income they generate rather than a fixed salary. There are no specific working hours nor health or social insurance and there is a high level of labour turn over. Egyptian workers in Dahab make between 200–700 LE per month (£50 – 120) depending on what they do for work.

Mohammed is a young Egyptian from a rural town in the Delta. I met him during his first week in Dahab. He was talking about the money he hoped to make and send to his parents because life is very difficult in his town. Only a few months later Mohammed was in his shorts and an American flag patterned scarf wrapped around his forehead. He told me about the number of girlfriends he managed to have in such a short time. He fell in love with one of them but the next day saw her walking on the Beach arm in arm with another Egyptian who she said was her husband. He explained to me how he has moved very quickly from earning 100 LE to 700 LE. It was then a Muslim feast and I asked him whether he was going back to his village. He said he wasn't because this would mean giving his family money and buying lots of presents, when he now wanted to make something for himself.

The issue of sex and tourism receives the attention of Egyptian workers, Egyptian authorities and tourists. Sex is a main attraction offered by Dahab to young Egyptian workers. As sex out of marriage is a taboo in Egyptian and Islamic cultures and marriage is nearly an impossibility given the lack of financial resources for the majority of young men, Egyptian workers find in their coded and transient relationship
with the tourists an outlet for many frustrations. The Egyptian authorities don't allow Egyptians to unofficially accompany tourists, especially females. There are a number of stories about young Egyptian workers who have been seriously attacked by the police for accompanying tourists. A tourist police officer said that the female tourists come to Dahab looking for sex because they are impressed by the virility of the Egyptians. The only way around the problem of sex and the authorities is through a 'paper' marriage. This is a contract between the female tourist and the proposed Egyptian man, with whom she wants to have a relationship. The contract is signed in the presence of a lawyer, (a lucrative source of income that has attracted a number of lawyers from different parts of Egypt) and two other witnesses. This contract is valid for forty days, after which it should be registered at civil authority in either Cairo or al-Tur. Tourists would also need to get this contract registered at their embassy in Cairo if the marriage was meant to last. Many of these marriages do not survive the forty days: there is no intention of a long-term commitment on either side. It is a useful piece of paper to present to the police in case of trouble. One Egyptian worker told me that he has been married up to twelve times. This might sound inflated, but the majority of the workers encountered on the Coast have been married at least once or twice. The foreign embassies make it difficult to register such marriages as they realise that the intention is to have a licence to travel abroad. Lots of Egyptians are left behind on the Coast waiting for a letter of invitation that their beloved tourist has promised to send upon her return to her country. Some of the Egyptian workers I encountered on the Coast have expressed feelings of comfort with the idea of marriage rather than just accompanying a tourist. Marriage decreases their feelings of guilt.

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* See Glenn Bowman's paper on Passion, Power and Politics in Palestine, in the *Tourist Image: Myths and Myths making in Tourism* edited by Tom Selwyn, Wiley 1996.
about being in a sexual relationship out of marriage. They feel that a marriage, even of that sort, retains aspects of their culture and religion.

The only marriages that last within the realm of such relationships are those taking place between Bedouin and tourists. In Dahab, there are currently only two or three such couples. Bedouin don't have the same ambition to travel to Europe. If they marry a tourist, the relationship is usually more serious and permanent than those between Egyptians and tourists.

However, such marriages are not well favoured by the Bedouin community. Elderly members of the Bedouin community see mixed marriages as a cultural and religious mistake. Bedouin do not approve of getting married to Europeans who are generally atheists or non believer, even if they say they have converted. Sheikh Suweilam, one of the main non-governmental leaders of the Mzeina, said that those who believe in a religion understand shame and honour and know about heyya (a combination of a respectable behaviour mixed with shyness particularity applicable to women). According to him a foreign woman would never stop wearing shorts and would not opt for wearing a long dress or an abayaa, (a black over coat that covers Bedouin women from head to toe).

It is not intended to project the female tourist on the Coast as a completely passive player subjected to local exploitation. The Egyptian workers usually express sympathy for female tourists who come from a shattered social structure lacking family ties, warmth and friendship. The female tourists in Dahab seemed to consider the sexual experience as part of their holiday experience. Holiday romances - Shirley
Valentine style - exist in every destination. The crossing of class, nation, and status boundaries is always linked to the crossing of a boundary on the emotional front. One Bedouin informant described these relationships as *marriages of atmosphere*. Female travellers get attracted to the Bedouin life, the traditional Bedouin dress and the stories about the desert and the Interior (most of these aspects are staged and fabricated by the locals both Egyptians and Bedouin to meet the fantasy of the tourists). This fascination is part of tourist life on the Coast – it soon disappears when they return to their country back to a boyfriend or a fiancé who has been marginalised by the travels. There is an element of prostitution taking place in Dahab, Sex is sometimes offered in return for drugs or accommodation.

The Coast culture with its codes and morals applies to the Egyptian workers as much as it does to Bedouin and tourists. The workers perceive their behaviour as acceptable only on the Coast with the tourists. They all fall back to their own culture and traditions once they return to their Interior. The Coast after midnight becomes the workers' landscape. They stay up until the early hours of the morning cleaning up the mess produced by the tourists. During that time the stereos that were playing Rap and Metal music is used to play tapes of the Holy Koran. Most of the workers attend Friday prayers. During the fasting month of Ramadan (the most sacred time of the year for Muslims) one of the workers told me he never fasts while on the Coast. He said he could not, that nobody could, whilst on the Coast – but he fasts when he goes back to visit his family. The contradiction between their traditional religious and social culture and the Coast culture is difficult to handle.
Conclusion

"Those whose Paradise is on earth can do anything" Sheikh Suweilam, August 1996

I find the above comment a very apt description of the Coast culture; tourists have their paradise on earth, for them the Beach is the end. Tourism destinations are considered to be an earthly paradise and a ‘Promised Land’ offering people recreation, fun, learning experiences and sex.

The earthly paradise or the playground of the tourist is the work place for Egyptians and the Bedouin, it is the beginning of a better lifestyle and the generator of income. The Beach culture is confined by its boundary and is not applicable outside of it for any of the actors.

Both the tourists and locals (whether Egyptians or Bedouin) realise their dreams by getting involved in a series of activities such as marriage, sex, drugs, and producing and selling cultures and playing with different identities.

Playing with identities is an important aspect of the Coast culture, where Egyptians become Bedouin; and the Bedouin become even more Bedouin; and tourists play with their social and cultural identity. Children play adults on the Beach and alternate between a work space and leisure space when they take off their clothes and jump into the water.
The Bedouin children on the Coast have a heavy presence on the Coast. They are very sharp in identifying what they can offer the tourists, they have learned from Sudanese visitors how to weave friendship bracelets, a cultural product sought by the backpackers. The children occasionally wonder between themselves what the bracelets mean to the tourists, but this in no way prevents them from producing these items of material culture which do not relate to them. They very cleverly realised that Italians are better tourists than the Israeli because they spend more money, and learned phrases to attract Italian tourists coming to Dahab on quick tours to the authentic experience. Young Bedouin girls surround the tourists buses that stop at the Beach entrance shouting through the windows: "I amo Bedouino". They are like their elders who put on their traditional dress to meet the fantasy of the tourist: they are both offering for sale intrinsic aspects of their identity. The difference is that adults have the experience of the pre-tourist culture and what they offer front stage - the Bedouin dress or the Bedouin tent - was once real and meaningful for them, and might still be. The children on the other hand, relate to their culture and identity from an economic angle, their Bedouin identity is experienced via the tourists' interest in it.

The issue of authenticity and commoditisation becomes rather confusing as the Bedouin move between the front and back stage and between real and staged authenticity. MacCannell(1989) and Goffman (1959) both aptly address the issues of authenticity and back and front stages in a way that is of great relevance to the current discussion and structure of this thesis. The back stage in their argument resembles the Interior and the front stage bears relevance to the Coast.
The Bedouin originally lived in tents, as this was the only domicile that suited their economic activities. Responding to pressures from the government to settle and in order to prove their right to land they had to abandon the tent and live in a concrete house. The tourists arrive seeking an authentic other - a Bedouin living in a tent - so the Bedouin have responded to economic pressures, and have reconstructed their tents on the Coast for the tourists. The same happened with Bedouin traditional dress that was abandoned in search of modernity and reconstructed to offer some kind of staged authenticity.⁹

Tourists also penetrate Bedouin life in the Interior and attend Bedouin festivals and events that are not designed to attract tourists. The tourists, however, attend such events uninvited and pay for the hospitality offered to them.

Hospitality is another intrinsic aspect of the Bedouin identity and this is offered for sale by the hospitality industry. After the establishment of the Coast, the Bedouin had to distinguish between the Guest and the Tourist. The Guest is encountered in the Interior and is offered hospitality according to norms and values of the Interior. The Tourist is encountered on the Coast and pays for hospitality.

It is clear that the backpacker paved the way for more institutionalised tourism. The authorities are tightening their control on the Coast and are attempting to demolish the cafeterias and to resell the land to big private investors who can build first class hotels and resorts. A wall has now been built along the Coast to mark the 30 meter limit to building. In early 1997 the government attacked a group of young Egyptians accused

of belonging to a satanic sect; Dahab was identified as their base. The press at the
time portrayed a negative image of Dahab hoping that this would be an excuse to
demolish the present style of tourism for planned reconstruction.10 Such a
transformation which would entail replacing the current small-scale businesses with
large multi-nationals will eliminate the opportunities currently available to the
Bedouin and Egyptian workers.

The Coast at the moment provides the community with economic opportunities that
will not be available if planned changes in tourism take place and international
investment monopolises the Coast. The boundaries between the Coast and the Interior
would then be impossible to negotiate, as is the case in Sharm el Sheikh.

10 See the Youths and Future Science magazine 1997
Chapter Five

Cultural Keepers – Cultural Brokers
Introduction

The previous chapters discussed the dynamics of the three identified socio-geographic landscapes, the Interior, the Road and the Coast that together construct the wider landscape of Dahab as a tourist destination. The social groupings of the three landscapes co-exist and in order to do benefit from the situation people crossed and negotiated the boundaries of their landscape, redrew them and thus constructed new landscapes. The landscape that has most obviously been re-constructed after the introduction of the Coast, as an agent of fundamental social change, was that of women and children.

I have made it clear in the previous chapters how tourism gradually replaced the Bedouin traditional economic activities: pasturing, fishing and wage labour. Wage labour used to be part of Bedouin economic life, especially with regard to cash income. However these activities, despite being undertaken by men, were not considered to be the backbone of the economy. Bedouin saw wage labour as a means to increase real assets in Bedouin life: the land and the flocks, the tools for pasturing. The land and the flocks were always the women’s responsibility as they were left behind while men were working in nearby urban centres. The women in that sense were economically productive, were guardians of the Bedouin culture and identity and responsible for the well being of family life as they had to look after the children and organise the domicile, movements and settlements.
Tourism has changed the economic and social life of the Bedouin and reshaped the women's landscape that had been traditionally and historically linked with that of the children. Men are engaged in wage labour on the Coast while women and children remain in the Interior. Although the position of women does not seem that much different from how it was a decade or so ago, their role has completely changed. Women have ceased to be economically productive however, men still consider women the cultural keepers of the community. There is no land to look after, no flocks to pasture and no seasonal movements.

In light of the recent developments the landscape of women was reshaped to ensure their safety and protection. This meant that women remained in the Interior with very limited opportunities to cross the gender, social or physical boundaries that separate them from both the Coast and the Road. The children, as was the case in the past, remained with the women, and non-gendered as they are, they became their mother's arm and eye into the other landscapes. The children are the cultural brokers who run between the Interior, the Road and the Coast. They have transgressed all traditional community and family rules and have become economically productive and hence socially and morally independent. The mothers rely on the children to retrieve the fragments of their economic independence that they lost when the shift towards tourism came. This chapter explores the re-constructed socio-geographic landscape of women and children and the ways in which they carry out these new roles.

The changing roles of women and children have not only influenced their own private lives but also influenced the nature of gender relationships within and across the socio-
geographical landscapes. The relationship within the Bedouin family including that between husbands, wives and children has significantly changed in the light of the new developments in the area. The relationship between Bedouin and Egyptian men on one-side and women tourists on the other is one that deserves close analysis. This is discussed both in this chapter and in the Coast chapter. The relationship between the children and tourists is of prime importance to this thesis, as it aptly illustrates the role of children as cultural brokers and gives indicators of the social and cultural future of the Bedouin community. All these relationships are the result of the crossings and negotiation of gender, cultural, religious and physical boundaries.

Bedouin women have been the focus of considerable anthropological research especially that undertaken by women, Wickering (1991), Gardner (1992), Lewando-Hundt (1985), Abu Lughod (1985) and Lavie (1990). Few of the researchers looked at the landscapes of women and children together and explored the link between them and the importance of their roles. Male dominated ritual and political roles obscure the importance of the female role in the economy and culture of the Bedouin community. Children are always seen as dependent on and followers of their parents and families. Bedouin have very clear age and gender boundaries that are unlikely to be crossed and hence women and children were and are separated from being fully present on all landscapes and their roles and powers within their communities are relatively shadowed.
Women as Cultural Keepers between the Past and the Present

The position women occupy among the Mzeina Bedouin seems to be quite contradictory from certain perspectives. Despite occupying a secondary position on the political front, women played a major role in maintaining the Bedouin culture when traditional economic and social systems prevailed. This role of culture-keeping altered after the introduction of forms and techniques of power that are characteristic of modern states and capitalist economies, tourism being an example in the case of the Mzeina Bedouin.

Two decades ago the social and cultural organisation of Bedouin life was mainly shaped by their prevailing economic activities which were pasturing and wage labour. Within this economic social and cultural structure the woman's role as cultural keeper was realised in two forms. The first, and the one which gave women power, lay in them being in control of the most valuable asset of the Bedouin - livestock, land and kin-group relations. Secondly, women shoulder the responsibility of realising or demolishing concepts of shame and honour.

Prior to tourism, Bedouin men frequented nearby urban towns and cities to work as wage labourers for six months each year. The cash income generated during this period was to supplement the pasturing economy that Bedouin consider their main and stable source of income. The Bedouin community used to perceive land and flocks as a symbol of Bedouin identity and culture - members of the community would look down upon a man without a
flock. An elderly member of the Ahyawat Bedouin near Taba complained to me about his son who did not have any flocks and thus was unable to demonstrate hospitality (usually by slaughtering a lamb or a goat).

Marx (1985) stated that Bedouin men, regardless of how wealthy they get in the urban centres, do not approve of their status as being dependent on or working for an Egyptian individual or organisation. The land and the flocks were the security belt and the base to which they eventually return. Bedouin men always made a point of keeping their flocks and land and invested any extra money into expanding these assets.

Women, during that time, remained in the Interior pasturing and moving with other fellow women from one spot to the other and bringing up the children; the main sources for honour for Bedouin men. In that sense they were the keepers of the economy and culture at the same time.

Secondly, the concepts of shame and honour among the Bedouin are associated with women, (Peristiany, 1966). The presence of Bedouin men is obvious on the political and legal front of the community and in the relationships between their social grouping and others. It is, hence, natural that their honour and that of their social grouping is determined primarily by their (men’s) achievements and also by the behaviour of their women for which they are fully responsible. Thus women play a conspicuous role in determining the honour of their family and their social group as their behaviour, especially with regard to
gender relations, could bring shame on the individual and on the group level (Abou-Zeid, 1991). Women are shouldered with a heavy responsibility and become the keepers of honour or bearers of shame, as will be explained in detail later.

From the above it is clear that women in the Bedouin community, and in that case among the Mzeina Bedouin, are and were responsible for some main components of the Bedouin culture. Mzeina Women were responsible for the flocks and the land that were considered the main economic assets. They are also responsible for child rearing and maintaining the honour or bringing shame to men and the community by their behaviour. Although men attempt to protect their honour by having very strict rules embedded in their customary law to regulate gender relationships, their control over this is very minimal as they are physically absent from the women’s landscape. In the past they worked in the urban centres and now they are constantly on the Coast.

Both the Road and the Coast have imposed certain restrictions on the movement of women. The change in the economic system and the move towards capitalism/tourism deprived women of the prime role they used to play. The government policy to sedentarise the Bedouin tied the women down to one spot and to a concrete house. Women’s movement has become very restricted and their presence on both the Road and the Coast is now nearly non-existent. The Road and the Coast embrace within their boundaries men from mainland Egypt or from abroad who restrict the movement and the freedom of women. Women’s

\[1\text{Refer Chapter Three for details on the government’s sedenterization policy.}\]
space and freedom is protected by customary law, which is known to all local Bedouin. Men from outside the community are not familiar with such rules, so in order for women to protect their honour they have to avoid moving on landscapes where they are likely to encounter such men. It can be seen that government policy together with the introduction of tourism as the main economy has heavily influenced the position and the role of women in the community.

The government policy to sedenterise and limit Bedouin ownership and usage of land made it impossible to pursue a nomadic or semi-nomadic life with an economy based on pasturing. In order to prove ownership of land Bedouin were required to build a concrete house and, once owning a concrete house it becomes impossible to abandon it and go on seasonal movements. They feared that the government or an investor would come along to occupy the land and demolish the house while they were away. The settled life has increased the Bedouin tendency to possess valuable household equipment that is difficult to move and unsafe to leave behind for fear of theft. After sedenterisation, the space available to keep flocks within the family domicile became very limited. It became impossible to keep, within the boundaries of the house, a flock that would make pasturing an economically feasible option. The limitation of space not only exists within the one family house but also across the Interior, as most of the Bedouin families who were dispersed across vast space of land had to cluster together within the political and geographical boundaries of Dahab. The Interior is just a big collection of houses with hardly any space between them. The possibility of keeping a large flock is therefore not possible.
The need was not just to supplement an existing economy with cash income but actually to construct an economy based on cash income. The tourism industry that exists just across the Road on the Coast provides Bedouin men with opportunities to work in wage labour without having to go far. Most men work on the Coast in different ways: by either renting a piece of land or running a campsite or other business, by fishing or by spending their day on the Coast wearing their traditional dress and attempting to make money from tourism somehow. The majority of men work on the Road as taxi drivers. Within this new economic order women stopped being economically productive and have become dependent on their children who can run across the landscape and make money directly from tourists. While men and children negotiate all physical, social and gender boundaries, women are confined to the Interior as keepers of a culture aspects of which are discontinued.

Male informants in the community say that women are responsible for maintaining Bedouin culture and identity. It is the women who keep the history of Mzeina and are capable of recalling it to others and it is they who bring up children in accordance with Bedouin social, cultural and religious norms and rules. It is also up to the women to observe their children’s performance at school; a new responsibility that has appeared since the emergence of the Road. Male informants see the ‘real’ Bedouin as the one who lives in the Interior away from ‘civilisation’\(^2\). It is the women who live away from ‘civilisation’ in the Interior.

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\(^2\)Bedouin have constructed the term ‘civilization’ in their own discourse — and it alternates between having negative and positive connotations depending on the situation. Sometimes it is used to refer to Egypt or to facets of modernity that have not been there before. Some of them would like to proclaim that they fully understand ‘civilisation’ and others stress that the real Bedouin are the ones who stay away from it.
Women, who are seen in other contexts as the source of shame, are kept away from rituals, political and legal practices, are now perceived by their male counterparts as cultural keepers – as 'real' Bedouin.

This situation confuses the elderly male members of the Mzeina who are now shouldering the women in the Interior with the responsibility of protecting the culture, although they do not declare that. Women still retain symbolic aspects of their traditional life, especially with regard to maintaining the little that is still available of the flocks. Women are not confronted directly with the new style of living. They are aware of the life on the 'Coast' but they do not attempt to fully cross the boundaries that separate them from it. Their contemporary lives are always linked to the past in many forms, among which is poetry (Lavie, 1990 and Abu Lughod, 1987).³

Women are also involved in the process of shifting identities (see the Coast). Their position in the Interior means that their conflicting identities are not on display as with the men. I recall here an incident that occurred while being with some young Bedouin women that illustrates their conflicting identities. Bedouin women still wear their traditional long dresses that cover them from top to toe, a black beaded veil or tarha that covers their hair and face except for the eyes and a black abaia like a shawl that they wear on top of their dresses.

³Civilization for the Bedouin is one of the mixed blessing terms.
³Both Abou Loughd (1987) and Lavie (1991) allocated substantial sections of their research to the study of Bedouin poetry and the way women and also men sometimes use poetry to express feelings and emotional incidents that they might not be able to express in the day to day discourse.
Kamla and Salha are both seventeen and do not go to the beach. They stay at home to help their mothers with housework and watch television. One of them attends literacy class at the social unit while the other goes to school. They seem very comfortable and confident in what they wear and what they do. They said that they were too old to go to the Beach and had never done so because girls from Assala never do.

I went to visit them one day and they were both wearing their brothers' trousers, loose clothing and were uncovered. They had a camera and we took pictures of each other. Before we left the room they changed into their daily dress and then we went out to sit in Kamla's yard. In photographs, women wear trousers and put on lots of make up and have a fringe, influenced by the television presenters with whom they spend most of their day. The way women present themselves differently in photographs is an interesting phenomenon. As opposed to men who move across the landscape and alternate in the way they dress accordingly, women are confined in the way they can express their conflicting identities. Photographs are semi-realities that women use to express the confusing aspects of their identity.

The previous discussion forms a background to the social landscape of women in the past and the present and sheds light on various points that shape that landscape. Most important is that of women's space, women's role and power, women and identity and women and the concepts of shame and honour. I will analyse some of these points in detail and explore the
way the new economic, social and spatial order has re-shaped their social landscape.

**Women and Concepts of Shame and Honour**

Members of the Bedouin community have had a level of consensus on the understanding of shame and honour. The emergence of the Coast has caused confusion and discrepancies among them about the meaning of such concepts.

Women have always been associated with honour and shame, even to the extent that women are referred to as shame (aar) among certain Bedouin communities. Women are responsible for both shame and honour. I perceive women to be powerful as they are shouldering the responsibility for making or breaking such fragile and focal concepts. Women are not shameful in themselves but they may bring shame to their families and communities. Strict social, religious and legal codes (according to customary law) exist to curb any shame occasioned by women's behaviour from being associated with the Bedouin community.

Female genital mutilation is one of these symbolic acts that illustrate the difference between men and women in their affiliation to honour. Male circumcision is a rite of passage, when a boy (usually between the age of three and six) is circumcised it is a big celebration and animals are sacrificed. Circumcision for men is meant to enhance their sexual virility. In this respect male circumcision is related to honour in their community, as men take pride in
the number of their offspring.

In the case of women, it is no occasion to celebrate. The operation itself is undertaken by one or two recognised women in the community, fathers and other male members are not involved. The mother and some other women could celebrate by slaughtering a chicken and eating it among themselves. "Men would not eat it," commented one of the informants, "Men do not eat any animal slaughtered by a woman." As opposed to male circumcision, female genital mutilation is meant to stop women's sexual desire that could lead to shame for the family and the community. It also provides women with endurance and patience until they get married. Both men and women share this view and women believe that such a process is a religious requirement. Bedouin women perceive any women who has not been circumcised as impure to the extent that they would not share a meal with her. An uncircumcised woman is a woman who is more likely to bring shame to her people.

Tourists or Westerners belong to the world of no shame (Lavie, 1990). Tourists/Westerners, according to the Bedouin, know no shame, as their behaviour, especially with regard to sexuality. According to the Bedouin, one belongs to the world of shame if shameful acts are acknowledged. Social, as well as religious codes, become the borderline between what is shameful and what is not.

Abou-Zeid (1991) addresses the issue of shame and honour among the Bedouin of Egypt. He argues that the two concepts are more complicated and confusing than they seem to be.
This is because the same attribute or action may bring honour or shame on the performer and his kinsmen according to the particular situation or context. Shyness, for example, is generally appreciated in the woman and is taken as a sign of fine breeding and good manners. It is also the sign of a solid character in a man when dealing with women. However, it is shameful for a man to be shy in the society of men. Shyness as a social behaviour and its relation to shamefulness is further illustrated when discussing the morals and ethics of the Coast. Abou Zeid (1991) differentiates between 'eib and 'aar which are two forms of shame among the Bedouin. The former befalls the performer only, while the latter befalls the community. He differentiates between a woman wearing short clothes as being 'eib, an action that does not require the severe intervention of the society as a whole and any response is usually directed against the wrongdoer herself. The wrongdoer could be blamed or mocked. Adultery or rape are considered to be actions of 'aar that brings shame not only on the performer but also on his/her kin as well as on the victim and his/her kin.

As for the concept of honour, for which the Bedouin use the word sharaf, the same principle of communal versus individualistic shame applies. The honour of a woman has a separate exclusive term which is 'ird and is used only in connection with female chastity, prudence and continence. This is another example of women Shouldering the responsibility for maintaining such a complicated and important value concept.

Abou Zeid (1991) specifically discusses the role of women as cultural and honour keepers. He argues that women, who occupy a secondary position in relation to men, are always
regarded as something sacred and to be protected from desecration. In fact much of the
honour of the nuclear family and the wider community to which the woman belongs
depends on observing this sanctity and in this sense the woman plays a vital and unique role
in preserving the honour of her family and her social group. The reputation of a woman and
her social group thus depends mainly on her willingness to observe the rigid and severe
rules governing sexual relationships and on her ability to preserve her chastity.

The concepts of shame and honour again highlight a disparity between the roles of men and
women. The main contribution a woman makes to the honour of her people is through the
passive role of preserving her chastity and purity. On the other hand, a woman’s conformity
to the rigid rules does not necessarily enhance her status or her people’s status.

In terms of Bedouin identity, women’s honour, ‘ird, is a separate category to honour, sharaf.
As opposed to honour (sharaf) which could be acquired and augmented through the right
behaviour, of men, a woman’s honour (‘ird) can only be lost by a misconduct. It is lost for a
woman as an individual and also for her people. When a woman’s honour is lost it cannot
be regained, and according to Abou Zeid (ibid) a Bedouin woman, in previous times, could
be killed by her people in retaliation.4

Abu Zeid (ibid) emphasises that Bedouin distinguish between ‘individualistic’ and
‘communal’ connotations of honour and shame, i.e. between the honour or the shame of the

4 In a popular proverb the Egyptians and Bedouin compare women’s honour to a matchstick that can only
be lit once.
person as an individual and that of the group, but he also argues that the distinction is rather arbitrary. The good or bad behaviour affects the reputation of the one Bedouin community, and on the other hand the individual acquires much of the social standing from his kinsmen.

During the field research the concept of communal shame and honour and its association with women rather than men became more evident when observed in the context of landscapes. After the introduction of the Road and the Coast as socio-geographic landscapes, men now operate according to a value system that differs from their own; and hence concepts of shame and honour are reshaped. Women, whose contact with the newly constructed landscape is limited, handle these concepts according to the traditionally established value system. Their restricted and confined presence within the boundaries of the Interior emphasise a rather passive but still important role in preserving the honour of the community. In the past women's work in tending the flocks or fetching water or firewood meant that they were often far from home, family and neighbours. In such situations and within such a vast space, the protection of women's honour used to be more difficult than it now is.

Men's honour is achieved through fulfilling their responsibility to help the needy, to defend the weak and to protect and support the oppressed within their own lineage and to a lesser degree their own clan. Failing to comply with these binding duties brings shame on him and on his immediate beit family (Abou-Zeid, *ibid*: 252).
The changing concept of shame and honour for men within the new system is already evident. Sheikh Gomaa's (one of the elderly members of the community) sister is the only older woman to be seen on the Coast. She sells bracelets and beads and collects the tourists' leftovers to feed the goats. Members of the community have normalised Hajja Selima's presence on the Coast, justifying it by the fact that everyone has to find his rezq (income). Life is difficult and expensive and each one is hardly capable of supporting himself and his immediate family. The majority of people I met from the community did not consider the presence of Hajja Selima on the beach shameful but rather a necessity due to her personal circumstances. She does not have any young daughters whom she could send to the Beach and her husband an old man of 85 has been paralysed for years. The woman herself says that even her two sons cannot support her as they have to look after their own families. Selling beadwork and bracelets is the only way that Hajja Selima can get six or five pounds a day hardly enough to provide for her and her husband. The story of Hajja Selima sheds some light on the changing notions of honourable behaviour for men and also on the new responsibility that some women find themselves forced to undertake.

Power and Freedom among the Women of Mzeina

The previous discussion highlighted certain aspects of women's life, their role as cultural keepers and their link to concepts of shame and honour, all of which constitute pieces of the jigsaw that make up women's landscape. The issue of the power and freedom of women is
another aspect of women’s life that has often been overlooked and which has witnessed significant change. The social and economic system that prevailed in the past provided women with power and freedom, the nature of which has been altered due to recent changes.

Male domination of ritual, political and legal roles in day to day life often over-shadowed women’s roles and powers. The absence of women from the men’s space and mediums of interactions created the prevailing stereotyped image of the oppressed, powerless and passive woman. As Abu Lughod (1990) argued the reality is completely different and women have different forms of resistance that indicate their power. She writes about the ways in which women used secrets and silences to protect the inviolability of their sphere. Lavie (1990) and Abu Lughod (1986) both talked about poetry as being the most important subversive discourse in Bedouin society. Both of them illustrated the way women use poetry to express sentiments that differ radically from those they express in their ordinary conversation. Lavie (ibid) discussed women’s ability to assert their domestic power and manipulate their men by granting or withholding sexual favours, for example. Field research among the Bedouin women of Mzeina confirmed such aspects of power and also revealed the way the new systems altered this.

In the past, the most significant aspect of power among the women of Mzeina lay in their role as the backbone of the pastoral economy. The fact that such an important aspect of Bedouin life was left entirely in the hands of women illustrates the power of women and
their role as cultural keepers.

The system as it existed also involved freedom; women were free to move on their own or with other women friends from one valley to the other. Women's freedom and power were recognised and feared by men, (ibid:124). Many young men expressed fears and insecurity as they did not know whether their wives would be there waiting for them. The absent Bedouin men recognised that women had the freedom that would allow them to leave if they so desired. They realised the power women had among themselves but did not declare that.

Female informants encountered during field research talked about their lives in the Interior. They were nostalgic about their lost freedom and their power that had been reshaped. Hajja Suweilma and her mother, an old woman who lives by herself in a nearby house, sit together to remember the past. In a very nostalgic way they talked about different aspects of their lives and how it used to be. Hajja Suweilma would mention a topic and the mother would tell a story about it.

"......the black house, mother?"

"We had nothing but the black house, I loaded it on the camel, and moved from one valley to the other searching for pasture for the goats and sheep."

"......and the food, mother?"

"dates and fish, we had nothing but dates and fish,"
".....and the wedding, mother?

".....eight pounds is what we got for her," said the mother pointing at her daughter

".....and the men, mother?

"Where were the men? They went off to Suez and Cairo for six months, and we would be here on our own. It used to take men ten days to reach Suez on camels. Men from nearby valleys would leave for Suez together on camels to keep each other company. They would leave in January and come back in June. They would work for the government or something and they would get less than one piastre per day. They would sometimes sell charcoal and dried fish. Men would come back with maize and rice and very little cash that would be enough for the whole family until they went back the following year. We ground the maize and wheat that they brought and we lived off it together with fish and dates. We did not need money as there was nothing for us here to buy. In August we would come here to Dahab. It was time to collect the dates, dry them and store them in the caves, and also we would go fishing in areas near Dahab. Dried fish and dried dates would be stored in the caves. Each family had a cave in which they stored their food. Some of the dried dates and dried fish would be taken to tribes and families that live in the Interior and bartered for charcoal. The goats and the girls would remain in the Interior while we came for the dates and fish on the Coast. Now where is the Coast?"

Mahmouda, Hajja Suweilma's sister-in-law, lives in the house next to her mother-in-law. Verses of poetry from the old times were written on the walls of her house. Mahmouda's house is a meeting point for neighbourhood women, especially as she has a telephone and a
television, and she could play the *shababa* (a musical instrument that resembles the flute) and recite poetry. Mahmouda plays the *shababa* and sings in the way she used to when she was a girl. Songs and tunes to which the goats would elegantly roam the desert eating whatever green stuff they could find, as if the desert was destined to be barren. One can easily imagine Mahmouda leaning on a rock playing her music, or weaving herself a new head scarf (*tarha*), or sitting with her friends on the ground in a circle chatting. "*My happiest moments were when I arranged to go out with other girls from nearby houses.*"

The girls would start off at five o'clock in the morning and would be herding the goats until sunset before starting the journey back. She added. "*I would have something between forty and fifty goats and sheep they did not all belong to my household. I would look after our neighbours' goats if they did not have young girls to go out with them.*" Mahmouda carried on telling her story: "*While herding,*" she said, "*I might spot a man on the horizon, he would see me too, but he would never come closer - it is a shame.*" Mahmouda explained that a man who dared to approach her while herding could be taken to *Majles Arab* (customary law court). She added that it used to be very safe and the girls could stay as long as they wanted in the Interior (*barr*) as no man would bother girls while they were herding. Even when they know that the head of the household was then working at Suez or Cairo.

Mahmouda, Hajja Suweilma, and the mother are three generations of women who spoke constantly about space, freedom and power. They spoke about the way the legal system protected their freedom and power.
Women, Space and the Legal System

This freedom of movement enjoyed by Bedouin women, makes the dichotomy of private and public spaces, and the association of the former with women and the latter with men misleading. These two spaces suggest a gender division of labour, which is linked to a spatial order in which women are confined to their homes. Abu Lughod (1987) disagrees with this notion of space arguing that the divisions of everyday life in a man's and woman's world do not consist of a rigidly demarcated ecological separation between home, or the private space and the public space. She also argued that the division of space is relatively informal and flexible, and segregation depends on mutual avoidance and separation of activities.

The Mzeina women's stories suggest that the traditional argument of the private as the domestic space and the public as the space where control and power are situated is not applicable. As the previous discussion suggests the power of women lies in the management of the house and control of their families and the economic system (Stigter, 1994). It also lies in the freedom the women enjoyed to carry out their duties. Women's space in the past was not private; on the contrary the space within which women moved was public as it contained the main assets of Bedouin life. Within this public space there were pockets that were strictly allocated for women rather than for men.

The extent to which the spatial order of the Bedouin was influenced by women's way of
living and role within the community is yet a further manifestation of women’s power. Space was not organised in a way that excluded or confined women to a particular location; the spatial order was set according to women’s movements. The Bedouin usage of the word *beit*, which literally means house, and among the Bedouin means tent. This space was often referred to as a sanctuary and regarded in that sense as a sacred space where outsiders were not allowed to cross its boundaries without the permission of its members (Abou-Zeid, 1966). It is the stranger who is asked to respect and not to violate the women’s territory. So it is the case of mutual avoidance as described by Abu Lughod (*ibid*) rather than a case where women are prevented from using or entering into a space used by men for example.

Women's style of living has also influenced the spatial organisation in its general and wider context. The huts/tents in the old encampments were organised in a semi circular form and in the middle was the *maga’ad* which is a three-sided tent to receive guests. Its surrounding boundaries and entrance path are clearly marked by stones (Al-Hilw and Darwish, 1989). The idea behind such organisation was to provide women with the privacy of their own space. There was no attempt to alter the women’s freedom of movement but rather to alter the movements of the male hosts and guests and direct them towards the *maga’ad*.

When relating this issue of the freedom of movement to concepts of honour and shame it is obviously difficult to protect women’s honour and safety and consequently the honour of their family or community. Women’s safety and honour are protected by strict rules determined by the customary law and there is a special tribunal for women’s honour. The
judge who has the authority over cases of honour is qadi al-manshad (honour-crimes judge). Informants from the community see a woman as not only enjoying an extent freedom and space, but her rights to such freedom are respected and protected by customary law. If a woman was approached while away grazing or herding, and she shouts for help or informs her elders, the offender would be taken to court. According to informants: "If a man touches, attacks a woman or rapes her, she can report him to her father or elderly members of her community. Her father and his father will sit in a maglis (meeting) with a qadi and each one puts down a kafala (deposit). The judge decides on an amount of money for compensation, which the accused has to pay. It is shameful for the plaintiff's father to forgive an affront to his daughter's honour - the case has to go before a judge and appropriate compensation settled. Then, if he wants, he can refuse the compensation. Without going to court, he will be looked down on and 'lose face'. Honour must be satisfied"

Other informants confirmed the fact that women's life style within the Bedouin system necessitates the presence of a legal framework that was designed to cope with such a lifestyle. Women spent long hours in the Interior pasturing on their own away from protection or surveillance. There is always a possibility that women are hassled or harassed. The customary law gave the woman the right to report such events. The woman's word in such cases is accepted without question and any man reported approaching or harassing women is looked down upon by members of his community.
Abdel Samieh (1991) discusses the impacts of ecological conditions on customary law. Even though he was not tackling the issue from a gender point of view, he still presented the way women's issues were dealt with within the customary system as a marriage between the ecological, social and legal systems. He notes that the degree of punishment depended on the time of the day at which the offence took place. The punishment is heavier if the offence happened in daylight and while the woman is grazing or herding. During daytime women are expected to be out on their own grazing but women are not expected to go out at night by themselves. If that happens the woman would not be protected by customary law. In other words, the rules of the legal system were set to protect women within a familiar and approved social and economic system. It is, by the same notion that young Bedouin girls are completely unprotected on the Coast as elderly members believe that customary law is not there to protect women and young girls in such an environment.

The degree of punishment also depends on whether the woman screams at the time of the attack. If she does then she is definitely not conspiring with the man and it is not a case of love strife. The man accused in such incidents is generally considered guilty. If the accused man's family asks for *gira*, (the right to be protected) the case is taken to court, but if they do not then the woman's family have every right to take his money and flocks and there is no compensation if they kill him. When *gira* is requested, the case is taken to the Manshed judge who is the honour-crime judge. A tribunal usually consists of three judges, each side choosing one and the third left to balance the situation. During the session the accused and his family do not speak and they are asked to pay a huge bail, especially if the offence took
place during the day rather than the night.

Abdel Samieh (*ibid*) argues that the ecological conditions influenced the economic and legal systems. This discussion of legal systems and women’s space illustrates the level of freedom and the amount of space that women used to enjoy and the deployment of a legal system that protected this.

**The Re-constructed Landscape of Women**

The landscape of women refers to the social and geographic space for women, that has been, as discussed earlier, shaped by ecological, economic and social factors and protected by the legal system. This landscape has been reshaped reflecting the new factors that occurred in Dahab.

The construction of the Road necessitated a sedentarisation and a land ownership policy that was implemented according to the state legal system but which bore no relevance to the lives of men or women in the community and has, since, changed them remarkably.

The critical problem in the order was one of land ownership; the State law did not recognise the traditional proofs of ownership such as palm trees or wells. The Bedouin found their livelihood at stake with the incursion of newcomers represented by Egyptian migrant
labour, investors and tourists. The way round this problem was to prove their ownership of land with evidence acceptable to the State: a concrete house. That was the beginning of the reshaping of women’s socio-geographic landscape.

It was only then that women’s space became private/domestic space and the urbanisation and sedentarisation processes together restricted women’s movement. Lewando-Hundt (1984) described the way these two processes resulted in a greater segregation of gender roles: they have re-constructed and curbed women’s space in the Interior. The spatial order has altered women’s role from a mainly productive to a consumerist one.

The symbolic move from the portable house as the main domestic space to the concrete house was accompanied by significant change in the overall social life. The problems over land made the move away from the house for long periods for pasturing rather risky. Any uninhabited house in a prime location was under threat of being taken over by the government or an investor.

The government introduced various services that were desirable for the Bedouin, such as medical services, schools, education and electricity. The need to be next to such facilities made the Bedouin settle closer to the Road. Most of the Bedouin families clustered together in the two villages, Assala and Masbat, and as opposed to having vast spaces around their domiciles, the space available became very limited and the idea of keeping a flock inside or outside the house not very feasible.
The facets of modernity introduced by the Road and the presence of Egyptians and tourists made the option of possessing valuable household equipment a necessity rather than a luxury. Most Bedouin houses possess a radio, television, washing machine, fridge, gas cooker and a sewing machine. Such items are hard to move and risky to leave behind.

These circumstances made pastoralism a non-viable option. The processes of urbanisation and sedentarisation have nearly put an end to pasturing and grazing as an economic base and entering the cash economy therefore became vital. Men now work on the Coast within the tourist economy. Although they have become physically closer to their families their lives are more distant as they are associated with the Coast, while the lives of their women have become more confined to the Interior. With the growing dependency on the cash economy and the fading importance of pasturalism, women ceased to be productive and lost the power over the economy and the freedom they had had before the spread of tourism.

The arrival of large numbers of newcomers to Dahab has further altered and restricted women's movement. The presence of Egyptian workers from the Nile Valley and tourists who are unfamiliar with the Bedouin culture and social rules made the process of protecting women's freedom, safety and space quite problematic. The protection of women's space is based, as discussed earlier, on mutual avoidance between the genders and knowledge of the repercussions, whether socially or legally, of harassing a woman while grazing. These rules are embedded in the local culture and a newcomer is not likely to abide by them. Given the
new socio-spatial order, women avoid moving across the Beach or the Road. Such actions are now considered to be shameful.

The changes that have occurred in the economic and spatial order among the Bedouin of Dahab have altered other related systems such as diet, for example. The few goats and sheep available in each household are left to graze in the surroundings of the house. Plastic water bottles, paper, rubbish and tourist leftovers are the only pastures available for them. It is very rare that Bedouin women feed their families on the meat from their own flocks. Once the flocks stop grazing on greenstuff the meat is distasteful and of very bad quality. Women shop at near-by supermarkets for tins of corned beef and vegetables. Some, however, still use dried fish in their daily consumption of food.

The constant presence of men on the Coast has caused women immense insecurity. Women used to able to use sex as a manipulating tool that gave them power over men. The construction of the Coast and the day to day interaction between female tourists and Bedouin men weakened this power. Selouh, a woman informant who is fairly powerful among her female friends and neighbours, was surprised to see construction work for a new house in her own backyard. Her female friends teased her by saying that her husband is probably building this for his new wife who he has chosen from the Beach. The availability of sex and other forms of relationship on the Coast have given Bedouin men the opportunity to experiencing new forms of gender relationships and to break out of marital boundaries.
Gardner (1992) argues that the restriction of women’s movement has burdened them with new forms of urbanised domestic work which does not require any power or freedom. The Mzeina Bedouin women spend hours in front of the television that bombards them with commercials about various consumerist items. Bathroom suites, dresses, corned beef, tuna tins and make-up. Bedouin women aspire to possess such items. Possession of items other than the flocks has become a novelty and a sign of status; items from shops and supermarkets need to be purchased with cash rather than bartered with dates or dried fish. Women who were previously in charge of the economy no longer are. Husbands provide wives with food and household items, and women are then left to satisfy any other discretionary consumerist needs. It is because of this that they now rely on their children who can easily run across landscapes and cross the various boundaries to bring back the cash required by their mothers.

Children as Cultural Brokers

Available data on Bedouin children or even about children and their involvement in the tourism industry is limited. The anthropological research that has taken place in Dahab and other Bedouin communities has hardly focused on the children’s lives and roles. It is only after tourism that children started to play a major role in the life of the community and have become the cutting edge of change in Bedouin life.
Lewando-Hundt (1984) writes about children being one of the principal resources of Bedouin mothers. They use their children as information gatherers and messengers. Both boys and girls prior to puberty have a degree of physical and social freedom which women do not have. Their mothers utilise this: they send children to female neighbours and request information or invitations. Children are sent to pick up material from their aunts, to tell their married sisters that their mother is ill or that certain guests are expected. Mothers also keep themselves informed about the identity of guests and topics of conversation in the guest section by sending their young children to fetch and carry and at the same time observe and report on who has arrived and what is going on. Thus, mothers utilise their children to keep in contact with each other and to be informed about events occurring beyond the confines of their domestic spheres. She adds that mothers are also responsible for the care of the young children, especially as men are wage labourers all year round and women are solely responsible for the running of the home and the care for the children.

In the newly constructed socio-geographic landscape of Dahab, children have acquired new responsibilities and have become resourceful in a variety of ways. They are able to cross the boundaries between the landscapes as non-gendered cultural-brokers. They live in the Interior, they go to school on the Road and they work on the Coast.

The presence of children on the Coast has accompanied the arrival of tourism and increased with its development. Young girls used to go to the Beach at the time Dahab was still under
the Israeli occupation. They sold locally produced household items such as pitta bread, doughnuts and cotton trousers. Girls of this generation are now young mothers in their early and mid-twenties. Latifa, a young mother in her early twenties talked about her experience on the coast and described it as the best experience of her childhood as it was of any other girl. She confirmed that when her son, who was one at the time of this research, grew up it would be equally important to send him to the Beach as well as the school. Children on the Beach learn different languages, acquire social skills, become more experienced and generate cash for their mothers.

Dahab is now one of the many stops on the circuit undertaken by young travellers. The Coast culture has produced the handicrafts specifically for them. The young backpacking tourists in Dahab are not interested in buying souvenirs that represent the local culture but rather items of material culture that represent their own culture, among which are tie dye T-shirts and friendship bracelets.

Children visit the Coast regularly either as part of their movements across the landscape or because they are encouraged by their mothers to do so. During these visits they have identified ways they can make money. They have mastered weaving the friendship bracelets and plaiting tourists’ hair. Friendship bracelets are not a traditional but a tourist product that has been imposed upon the culture they visit. Children sit in the yards of their houses with their mothers watching them and not fully comprehending what they are doing. The children teach their mothers how to weave the bracelets. The mothers complain that
their children do not want to learn beadwork or carpet weaving as such items are time consuming and not in demand by the tourists.

The cash economy is necessary to purchase discretionary items now considered essential by mothers and children. Since the construction of the Road (in a physical sense) traders from different parts of Egypt have found a good market in the newly constructed centres. Trucks loaded with beads, materials, creams, perfumes and other 'modern' products drive into the Bedouin population centres either in Masbat or Assala. They use a speaker to advertise their products; women whose needs have been shaped by television or by what other women in the vicinity buy, purchase goods from these trucks. Women do not usually possess the cash required to pay for such products and therefore buy them in instalments. The cash required to pay back debts is generated by the children on the Coast. Children feel under pressure to go to the Coast in order to help pay their mothers' debts, knowing they can only return home when they have earned the amount of cash needed by their mothers. The traders threaten to complain to the husbands if their wives have not paid their instalments on time.

The presence of children on the Coast is tied to the tourist calendar. Children well know when it is Passover, Christmas, Easter and other important holiday times – peak periods in which to make money. They work either individually or in mixed groups; both boys and girls work together with no gender boundaries. Boys saw the girls making money from selling bracelets and asked the girls to teach them. They have now learned to weave and
produce handicrafts that were traditionally produced by girls and young women.

Concepts of autonomy and competitiveness are obvious between each group of children. Each group is associated with one particular coffee shop and no one group is allowed to switch between coffee shops. The importance of the coffee shop to the children is gauged by the number of tourists who frequent them and also by the attitude of the Egyptian owner towards Bedouin children. There is a monopoly by some groups over the most resourceful coffee shops.

The workload is distributed among the groups as follows: girls who are not attractive or witty are the bracelet weavers and those with more social gifts are the sales people. The profits are divided among the children of the one group. The children are also experienced enough to identify and segment their market. For example they prefer Italian tourists to Israelis, as they are more generous.

Shifting and negotiation of Bedouin moral boundaries takes place on the Coast. What is shameful for a girl or a young woman to do in the Interior is not equally shameful if it takes place on the Coast. A moral quality like shyness that is integral to a woman’s honourable behaviour in the Interior, is not observed on the Coast. Tourists (both male and female) describe the girls’ behaviour on the Coast as pushy and aggressive. Girls argue and negotiate with the tourists over prices and are in physical contact with them. Children’s behaviour on the Coast, especially that of girls would be considered shameful if it took
place in the Interior.

Children have a network of complicated relationships on the Coast, both with the Egyptians who work in the coffee shops and with the tourists. One of them expressed her feelings towards the tourists by saying: "I only like the tourists if they buy things from me, but I do not want to be like them, I do not like them. They are Jews (referring to the Israelis); do you like the enemy, the atheists?"

Children have to exercise their sales skills and initiate a friendly relationship with the tourists on the Beach while holding well-founded prejudices about them. Such a dichotomy results in confining the children\tourist relationship, and to a certain extent the Bedouin\tourists relationship, to a commercial one.

Most of the children talked about the suspicious relationship that existed between a particular German male tourist and a group of girls who work on the Coast. They went to his camp and he bought them presents, other groups of children looked down upon the girls who were in contact with that tourist. No one would tell exactly what went on between him and the children who visited him. Children on the Coast avoid talking about it but they all confirm it. However no adult mentioned it. In many areas of the world, where poverty exists, there has been a growth of child sex tourism. The issue has not been publicly raised in Egypt.
Children on the Coast have strained relationships with the Egyptian owners and waiters in the coffee shops who constantly try to keep them from "bothering the tourists". Coffee shop owners put bracelets and seashells on sale for the tourists to buy and thus, minimise the opportunities the children might have to sell their own products. The owners kick the children out and refuse to give them water to drink: the children play a game of hide and seek with the owners in order to avoid being beaten or sworn at.

Shadia and Ria are two of the girls who work on the Beach. Their fathers have recently asked them not to go any more. The reason had nothing to do with the Bedouin moral and ethical codes that are difficult to observe on the Coast, but rather fear of the Egyptian police. According to Shadia: "When anything is stolen from the tourists on the Beach, the police come round and imprison all the children who were around, that is why my father does not want me to go there." Ria and a number of other girls who were in the same position told me the same story.

The juxtaposition of the Coast, the Road and the Interior, each of which has its own system, has put the Bedouin in a weak position to seek their rights. Their limited knowledge of the Road's legal system has led them to avoid situations that might lead to conflicts with the authorities. Avoidance of conflict is not always possible, especially at this transitional stage of the Bedouin community in Dahab, where there are at least three different landscapes each with its own rules and codes co-existing in the same place.
The legal system that provided women with safety and security is not suitable for protecting young girls as they go to the Beach to pursue a completely different economic activity from herding the flocks. Their work on the Coast put the young girls in contact with Egyptians and tourists in different contexts; their working hours might extend beyond daylight. Once working under such circumstances, elderly members of the community and the judges of honour are in doubt about these young girls’ safety and honour.

During the field research I witnessed a discussion that was of great significance about the way women fell out of a system designed to protect them. Although selling bracelets to the tourists or herding the goats both require young women being away on their own for lengthy periods of time, the law that protects women’s space in the latter is not applicable in the former. Sheikh Suweilam Eid a customary law judge from El Sa’al valley considers customary law as an essential system without which the Bedouin could not function. The issue of tourism was brought into the conversation and the group attending the discussion disagreed over this controversial issue that is rarely discussed by members of the community. The split was over whether customary law protects a girl who gets attacked on the Coast. Sheikh Suweilam said that the girls who leave the Interior and mix with men and naked women on the Beach are not supposed to be protected by the same legal framework that was set up to protect women while observing a ‘respectable’ traditional way of living. He added that if a man chooses to send his girl to the Beach then he should not expect me as a customary law judge to protect her. He also added that customary law only works when all members involved in any interaction understand it: those who come from outside the
community can not be made accountable in terms of customary law.

Those taking part in this conversation got rather angry and disappointed, their argument being that the majority of girls in Dahab now go to the Beach to work. The money they make is important for the subsistence of their families. They are disappointed that their own legal system does not protect the women in their new setting. Another senior member of the community like Sheikh Salem, the head of the Mzeina, perceives the situation in a different light, understanding that people are obliged to send their daughters to the Beach for economic reasons. Confused and contradicting views were widely expressed. Bedouin’s pride and belief in their traditions and clear definitions of what is acceptable and what is not stands against their full appreciation of the scale of change that is currently happening. On the other side there is another group of Bedouin who are driven by their economic needs and are constantly present on the Coast.

The presence of children on the Coast and their contribution to the household budget has influenced the relationships within the Bedouin family.

Money made by the children on the Beach is mostly given to the mother. Between the mother and the children there is a secret economy from which the fathers are excluded. Children make between 10 - 70 Egyptian pounds ($3-25)- a day depending on the number of tourists, the nationality of the tourists and the season. They use some of the money to buy ice cream, sunglasses or rent a water-paddle. The rest of the money goes to the mother who then uses it to pay off her debts and saves some to buy new clothes for the festivals.
Fathers are excluded from this secret economy and refuse to acknowledge the fact their daughters spend their days on the Beach. Fathers are generally unable to exercise authority over their daughters' movements as they are constantly absent from the family set-up.

The children's role as the cultural brokers and money earners has led to them acquiring social and economic power within the family setting. Children, principally the girls, are becoming more powerful and forthright. Traditionally children are followers and subordinate to their parents, but their time on the Coast and on the Road has given them power and knowledge not available to their parents. The children have become their mothers' window to the outside world, and selectively provide them with information in a way that feels appropriate to them.

**Conclusion**

This chapter discusses the role of women and children within the newly constructed landscape of Dahab. It argues mainly that Bedouin women are the cultural keepers and Bedouin children are becoming the cultural brokers.

I argue here that the role of both women and children has been significantly altered by the economic and social changes that have occurred since the construction of both the Road and
the Coast. I have discussed the concept of the landscape of women, by which I meant women's spatial, social and cultural space, comparing women's life within the new and the traditional economic and social systems. I challenge the concepts of private and public space and the on-going assumption that women's position within the pastoral communities was more in the private and domestic space. The role that women played when the Bedouin of Mzeina lived in a mixed economy – pasturing subsidised with cash economy – was mostly carried out in public space. Women's presence, freedom, space and honour were all protected by strict rules of customary law. These rules were known by all members of the community and operated as preventive rather than as a punishment tool. It was considered very shameful for a man to be accused of harassing a woman whilst herding. The same applies to concepts of honour and shame in which the conspicuous role of women in the realisation of these two concepts tends to be over looked. It is women's behaviour that could make the entire community shamed. I believe that the position of women prior to the construction of the Road and Coast as more empowering, women being the cultural keepers shouldering the responsibility for the main factors that together form Bedouin culture: land, flocks, children, shame and honour. This powerful role has influenced the legal system and the spatial order of the Bedouin.

The confinement of women to one particular space, that is, the Interior, only occurred after the introduction of the market economy sedentization and urbanisation. Bedouin men perceive women as keepers of symbolic facets of the Bedouin culture. Women's presence in the Interior away from both the Road and the Coast and the way they appear less
obviously affected by 'civilisation', in their dress for example makes them capable of
representing the Bedouin culture. A Bedouin man who worked on the Coast said that he
only feels that he is still a Bedouin when he goes back on occasional visits to his family in
the Interior.

This new role of women has made them use their children as resources in a financial and
cultural sense. Children are now the main contributors to family budgets. They bear the
responsibility of returning home everyday with a substantial amount of money. Their non-
gendered situation makes them capable of running across the landscape and crossing and
negotiating range of boundaries. The responsibilities they shoulder make their ability to
move freely across the landscapes an experience not as enjoyable as it sounds. The Beach is
their workplace that they long to quit.

This discussion also identifies the major changes taking place both at the level of the
community and also at the level of the family. The children are, for example, becoming
more powerful than the parents. They have access to all the landscapes which provide them
with knowledge about the various systems and they are also financially independent.

Finally, this chapter illustrates the power of the Coast and the dependency of the Bedouin on
the cash economy. The definition of shameful behaviour and the role of customary law as a
controlling force are all now subject to individual interpretation. This causes a drift in a
community that for long approved of morals and ethical codes.
Chapter Six

Conclusion and Recommendations
Introduction

This thesis started by raising issues and asking questions concerning landscapes, boundaries and the relation between their social and physical entities. We gradually moved from a theoretical conceptual discussion of these issues in the first chapter to their practical and factual existence in the chapters that followed. In this conclusion I hope to tie together the analysis of the observations and arguments made throughout the text and to summarise what we have encountered during the journey across the landscapes. I will link the theoretical framework discussed in chapter one to the arguments and the material presented in the chapters that followed. I will mainly discuss landscapes and boundaries, their re-construction, their relevance to tourism and identity, and the main social, economic and political features that have been reshaped.

The section entitled 'Beyond the Boundaries' offers a vision beyond the limitations of this research. It includes policy recommendations based on the main findings, mainly calling for higher correlation between the social and economic objectives driving the pace and quality of tourism development in Egypt. It will also indicate some areas that deserve further research, namely the sociology and anthropology of tourism, education and training for the tourism sector.
Part One

Tourism: the Shaping of Socio-geographic Landscapes

The three socio-geographic landscapes that have been identified in Dahab, namely the Interior, the Road, and the Coast, coexist in a complementary way although this co-existence is fraught with contradictions that constantly raise tensions.

The social and physical landscapes surrounding the lives of the Bedouin, tourists and Egyptians have been re-constructed and reshaped due to the interaction and negotiation of boundaries. People's lives in Dahab have been re-constructed as a result of the introduction of tourism and the shift that has occurred in the economic base.

The discussion of landscape followed in this study started out by proposing two approaches. One was the approach of Himdan (1996) which takes the physical component as its main point of departure, the other is the approach of Bender (1995) which departs from the social component of landscape. One cannot deny the influence of the physical environment in shaping the psychological, social and economic characteristics of the Bedouin at a particular time in history. However, it is difficult to extend and generalise such a view now, not least because of the increased power of man and technology over the given physical environment. The existing landscapes of Dahab that has been constructed by the various social groupings and the constant process of constructing and re-constructing the landscapes led to ascribing new meanings and affiliations to them.
As a result of tourism the entire region of the Sinai has been reconstructed. It has ceased to exist as a military zone and a war front – the image of a distant desert and annexed part of mainland Egypt has been replaced by the lively image of a tourist destination. The area became accessible by various means of transport to tourists, civil servants and migrant workers.

The Coast, is now a world exclusively for tourists; in the past the Bedouin, both men and women, used the Coast as a recreation space and a supplementary source of income i.e. fishing. In the early stages of tourism encroachment on the Coast, it remained as an extension to the Bedouin life and landscapes. Bedouin were the main labour force available in the area, and they took it upon themselves to establish a staged facet of their life on the Coast to attract the tourists. The Coast is currently shaped by the State and the tourist agendas – the State now requires concrete built coffee shops at a thirty meter distance from the coastal line. They have to be equipped with plastic tables and chairs instead of cushions and rugs that have been used so far. Fishing is currently legally banned by the State in certain areas and individual coffee shop owners who are increasingly Egyptians. In that sense the Coast has physically been reshaped and separated from Bedouin life.

As much as tourism has shaped the Coast physically it has also shaped the social dimension of the Coast. It has its own social composition that consists naturally of the tourists who perceive the Coast as their paradise and as the end of their escape route. The Egyptian migrant labour take refuge in the Coast, for them it is also an escape route. The Coast offers opportunity for a life away from the daily routine and family responsibility. There they can find a job that pays double the salaries they get working
as a government employer or a teacher. The Coast landscape makes available opportunities of meeting young female tourists for short holiday romance or for a marriage that they perceive as a passport to the outside world. Some of these young graduates are on the run from obligatory military service, or other personal or family problems. The Coast also embraces members of the Bedouin community who are willing and capable to be part of it.

The Road, prior to and post tourism, has been in one way or another linked to power. Israeli authorities used Bedouin to build the Road in order to control the region and to have access to different part of the Sinai. Under Egyptian rule the State interest in widening the roads network is a means of control and sign of modernity and progress. The Road is the location for check points, police stations and all other government buildings like schools, hospitals and so forth. The Road or the Asphalt as the Bedouin refer to it, with its black well-bounded physical presence acts as a border to both the Interior and the Coast by being so physically different.

Once on the Road the Bedouin and the tourist to a certain extent realise that they have to abide by the rules of the State, they make sure that all their paper work is readily available for inspection like Identity Cards and driving licences. Roads can be opened and blocked to locals and tourists according to the government political agenda.

The Road has also shaped roles of those affiliated to it. Egyptian State officials, civil servants and the migrant labour have a strong presence on the Road. They work in establishments that are physically situated on the Road, and they live in apartment blocks built close to the Road for security and accessibility. The Bedouin relationship
to the Road is a functional one, they do not have any feelings of belonging to any of its buildings or systems. The relationship between the Bedouin and the Road is represented in the members of the Bedouin who are currently working as taxi drivers and Sheikhs who are absorbed by the State. That is not to say that they do not appreciate the benefits that accompanied the establishment of the Road like education, electricity and accessibility – the Road for the Bedouin is a mixed blessing. The Road has also shaped the tourists movements as they can legally go to wherever the Roads extend and not beyond – at the same time the Road brings back images of freedom and travelling to the back packers.

The Interior has also been physically and socially shaped by tourism. Bedouin consider the Interior as the landscape that embraces the real Bedouin and keeps them away from ‘civilisation’. Nevertheless the Interior now bears very little resemblance to the world of the Bedouin. There are no spaces available and it is all gradually being built up; concrete houses with walls surrounding them have replaced the old traditional houses made of goats’ hair. The spaces left for communal use are disappearing because of the new arrivals who have no understanding of the usage of such places and due to the government implementation of strong regulations aiming to claim land that does not have individual owners. Places like the maga‘ad or pasturing places are currently absent from the Interior landscape.

Bedouin perceive the Interior as a space in which the physical environment reflects, to an extent, their social and cultural identity, despite the enforced rules of settlement that have altered the physical economic, social, and political arrangements. The Interior has become a landscape that embraces those who cannot or are not allowed to
become part of the new system, namely elderly men and women. It has become a pilgrimage site for Bedouin men who spend all their time on the Coast and the Road with tourists. They see in the Interior relative separation from the other landscapes a symbol of their past life with its familiar spaces and systems.

The research reveals that the re-construction of landscapes in Dahab did not occur in a way that allowed equal importance or power to each separate landscape. There has been a process of 'Roadisation' whereby the Road has developed increasing power specifically because of the presence of the State. The State, as represented by the Road, plans to extend its presence and that of the Coast. The affiliation between the Road and the Coast is greater than between the Road and the Interior. The Coast holds the opportunity of generating foreign exchange and absorbing an increasing percentage of the unemployed, whilst the Interior appears to hinder the smooth implementation of national objectives.

Tourism has reconstructed the landscape of Dahab and has shaped the various social groupings affiliated to it in many ways. Identity and landscape is another area to which the tourism system as it exists has contributed a lot.

**Issues of Identity**

Field research has revealed in an interesting manner the way the identity of both the tourists and the Bedouin overlap. Intrinsic aspects of the Bedouin identity like freedom and hospitality are reshaped by the presence of tourism and the State. Freedom for the Bedouin represents an integral part of their identity – although not by
choice. Freedom was a necessity in order to pursue their nomadic life and their prescribed economic activity. They had to move across plains, valleys and coastal areas in search of pastures and grazing land. This has made the importance of open landscape and the freedom to move through it a basic requirement to the Bedouin daily life.

'El-Bedwaii hur' or 'the Bedouin is free' is a statement with which the majority of Bedouin encountered describe themselves. Bedouin encountered during the field research in Dahab and its surroundings associated the 'real' Bedouin with the 'free' Bedouin and described them as the ones who live away from 'civilisation' in the Interior. An elderly Sheikh of Mzeina commented once on the way life has changed since the borders where drawn: "In the past we used to move freely in the desert, into Palestine, what is now Israel and even Saudi Arabia. Once the hudud (borders) started our life changed."

Tourists are also by definition seekers and consumers of freedom in its various forms and shapes. The issue of freedom is as much a defining factor for the tourists' identity as it is for the Bedouin. Tourists on the Coast break out of their mundane and routine boundaries and behave in a way that is not bounded by any rules. Their consumption of sex and drugs is a case in point. Tourists search for a different and authentic life that takes them into the Interior for safaris or to attend Bedouin feasts. In that sense their freedom is not confined to the boundaries of the Coast.

The State, as represented by its various arms, has a role in co-ordinating this freedom with the objective of making Dahab a better place for the tourists. The authorities turn
a blind eye to the tourists' behaviour and allow them to be free of rules and restrictions as much as possible. However, the need to regulate the tourism industry on the one hand and to implement civil laws on the other, has restricted the Bedouin's freedom of movement and independence. The Bedouin's movements, activities, and even living spaces are subject to the state's civil law, by which the majority feels oppressed and which they consider to be biased towards the tourists' needs.

The economic pressure to both modernise and develop the tourism industry in Dahab has resulted in increased freedom for the tourist and more control over the Bedouin community. The Bedouin consider the state's implementation of an inflexible settlement policy that undermines their culture and identity as partly due to lack of understanding of the Bedouin culture.

The issue of hospitality is of particular interest in the discussion about tourism development, Bedouin community and identity. Like freedom, hospitality is of integral value to both Bedouin and tourists, but the overlapping meanings of hospitality have led to some fundamental changes among the Bedouin of Mzeina. The relationship between tourists and guests is one that is of concern to the Bedouin.

Bedouin consider *karem el Diafa* (hospitality) as an integral part of their identity: guests, strangers and passers-by have rights and the Bedouin consider hospitality as a duty. The ability of the man to be hospitable and generous with strangers and guests is linked to his honour and that of his community, (Lavie,1990). Bedouin hospitality was a necessity rather than a luxury: the geographical and economic environment made hospitality a means of survival.
The harsh environment and lack of food, water and services for others made the issue of welcoming strangers, passers-by and guests a reciprocal duty. The only way to survive the desert in the past was through this reciprocal arrangement of food and lodgings. One of the Mzeina Bedouin explained the process: if a Bedouin received a guest with a warm welcome and offered him food and lodging then it is expected that the guest would offer the host the same hospitality another time. The Bedouin also believe that strangers and passers-by are guests of God and by serving them they would be fulfilling a religious duty and will be compensated for it at some stage. Guests, strangers and passers-by have various mentions in the Koran and in the sayings of the prophet – and it is believed that one is closer to God in such a status. Traditionally a passer-by, a stranger, or a guest is allowed to stay in one’s house for up to three days provided with food and drink, without being interrogated about any aspect of his life or about the purpose of the visit.

Bedouin customs determine that guests, whoever they are, are offered hospitality and protection. As the visitor approaches the tent or house, rugs and cushions are laid out and water and firewood are brought as a sign of welcome. A fire with a full teapot has always been used as an image of generosity and hospitality for the Bedouin of the Arab world. When they lived in encampments, their tents were organised in a semi-circular shape with a Maga’ad situated in the centre. This design was justified by one of my Bedouin informants in a way that demonstrated the status and the importance of the guest. I was told: “The situation of the Maga’ad in the centre of the encampments meant that if a stranger or a guest approached the encampments he would know where to go – the path to the Maga’ad was marked with stones and the guest would
be directed to go there ...". He carried on: "Now we have closed doors, guests and strangers have to knock and be asked to declare their intentions. Hospitality is asked for rather than offered."

The hospitality industry in that context is rather complicated as it takes place in a society which traditionally places high moral values on the issue of hospitality. Tourist or guest - Saih or Deif - is now an important and confusing classification the Bedouin of Mzeina are concerned with. The difference between the guest and the tourist presents itself as an important factor in the dynamic relationships that exist in Dahab, and one that is influenced by the paradigm of landscape, the main concern of this study. During a trek up St. Catherine Mountain I stopped to have a cup of tea at a little kiosk half-way through the trip. Having finished my tea I asked the young Bedouin manning the kiosk how much it was. He asked for three Egyptian pounds, which is almost as much as one would pay in a five-star hotel in Cairo. I was rather surprised by the price, so I said to him half jokingly: "Is this Bedouin hospitality?"

The young Bedouin was so offended by my comments that he responded to me in an aggressive manner by saying: This is a tourist place and here you are a tourist, you are a client. If you want to experience Bedouin hospitality come and visit me at my house in the Interior..."

The classification of whether one is a tourist or guest is dependent on the landscape where the encounter happens. If the encounter takes place on the Coast (a tourist landscape) then the stranger is classified as a tourist or a client for the hospitality industry. The reciprocity or the exchange is in the form of a monetary transaction. If the encounter happens in the Interior then the stranger is a guest who will experience hospitality in its traditional form – with all the cultural, religious and moral values that
Lavie (1990: 287-288) discussed hospitality among the Bedouin of Mzeina: "When the Mzeinis pondered how they ought to relate to the Israeli or Egyptian soldiers, military governors, the civil administrator, and the international tourists, they were faced with the dilemma of adapting traditional hospitality to quite untraditional 'visitors'"

This confusion between traditional hospitality and the hospitality industry is not unique to the Bedouin community. Zarkia (1996) discussed the issue of hospitality in the case of the Greek Island Skyros. She discussed the way islanders coped with the transformation of the stranger from the state of guest xenos, to the state of tourist or client. The relationship between the client and the locals is one that is ruled by the laws of commerce, and the guest/client is now in a superior position as s/he has money.

Field research demonstrated a level of confusion among the Bedouin as a result of the overlap between traditional and commercial hospitality. Bedouin no longer see the need to offer what is available for sale. Tourists who are the clients for the hospitality industry are keen to experience the traditional Bedouin hospitality and are able to visit Bedouin families in their homes, drink tea and listen to folk music. On the way out they pay for their staged hospitality.

I have personally been faced with the changing notion of hospitality among the Bedouin. Towards the end of my field research, one of the families invited me to stay...
with them, but unlike the classical anthropologist I was expected to pay the going hotel rate.

Bedouin classify visitors into tourists, on whom they are dependent for a living, and guests whom they are obliged to welcome and accommodate. Consequently, the growing need for cash income minimises the latter category and maximises the former.

Freedom and hospitality are two main features of identity that have been significantly changed due to tourism. They are not however the only reconstructed parts of that identity. The town of Dahab is witnessing a constant process of shifting and playing identities. This process is clearly noticed when observing the way Bedouin men dress: they dress in urban clothes (mainly jeans and trainers) when dealing with Egyptian authority on the Road – as Egyptians tend to look down on Bedouin wearing their traditional dress the galabia. They are guaranteed a better service when they abandon this determining aspect of their identity. They, however, realised that wearing their traditional dress on the Coast is an attraction for the tourists and it is that image of the Bedouin that the tourists expect and hence favourably deal with. On the Coast Bedouin wear the traditional galabia and hair cover. Egyptian workers on the Coast are also involved in a process of shifting and playing identities; they pretend that they are Bedouin in order to appeal to the tourists – tourists would prefer to go on a safari with an ‘authentic Bedouin’ rather than with an Egyptian. Egyptian who in other occasions would not associate themselves with Bedouin find that within the tourism context they are involved in playing with their identity to maximise their financial gains.
Tourists themselves play with and shift their identity once they cross the boundary of their usual place of residence. Backpackers' lifestyle in Dahab may contradict their social class at their home countries. Children's identity also shifts as they move from being children in the Interior to being ungendered adult brokers on the Coast.

From the above discussion we can conclude that the issue of identity as it relates to the various social groups is very much linked to the paradigm of landscape that has been developed for this thesis. One can also recognise the reshaping, the shifting and the playing with identities as a feature of Dahab.

**Reconstructing Political and Economic Domains**

The introduction of tourism coincided with the involvement of the state in the Sinai and simultaneously in Dahab. The Road and the Coast has each in its own way reshaped the political and economic domains of the Bedouin community.

Tourism as a main economic activity for the Bedouin differs in many ways from the semi-nomadic life that they lived before. Although their pastoralism was constantly subsidised by other sources from the cash economy like wage labouring, it was a way of life to which all Bedouin of Mzeina had access to and knowledge of. The social, political, residential, legal and value systems were all a reflection of such a way of life. Bedouin encountered in the field said on many occasions that the nomadic way of life was a necessity rather than a choice. They are appreciative of the facilities that are made available as a result of a sedentarisation process such as electricity, availability
of food supply, education, roads, and water.

However, the sedentarization process and the new economic system are currently causing a number of social, economic and political problems as illustrated earlier in the thesis. In order for the Bedouin to be involved in tourism in a way that is economically viable requires an ability to adjust and bend to the State’s rules and systems.

Tourism at the moment has become the main source of income for the Bedouin in Dahab. Those who have managed to become fully incorporated in it are satisfied by the level of income they are generating – others feel restrained from being incorporated in an economically viable way. On the one hand powerful members of the community are generating large sums of money by being involved in buying, selling and renting lands. They also buy land from the less powerful at a price below its value and sell it to the investors for large sums of money. On the other hand less powerful Bedouin work as taxi drivers, night guards and occasionally in fishing to supply the restaurants and the coffee shops. Children of less affluent Bedouin families are responsible for generating income for the family by selling handicrafts and by offering various services to the tourists. The new economic system has divided the community on the basis of financial ability. Bedouin used to share the resources that were available to them in the past and to have equal access to it. At the moment the ability to have a better financial status depends on the closeness to the authority and the ability to comprehend and deal with the newly introduced political and economic system.
There are no social or developmental plans aiming to maximise Bedouin contribution to and involvement in the new system. Bedouin attempts to create a niche for themselves in the new economic order have been left entirely to their personal initiatives and to the extent they have managed to comprehend the State's laws and work with them. Governmental Sheikhs and leaders got involved in buying land from the Bedouin and selling it on to the investors. These practices have caused a rift between the majority of Bedouin and their leaders and resulted in wide economic discrepancies among members of the community that have lead to grudges, jealousy and lack of co-operation.

The problems associated with land ownership and land usage illustrate the way the new system has caused conflicts among the Bedouin and between them and the State. The traditional system of land tenure was in the past dealt with according to the Bedouin customary law. In the absence of contracts and paperwork the testimony of neighbours and local people was a valid proof of possession. After the introduction of the state law it has become difficult to prove ownership of their own lands and due to the increase in land value it has become difficult to purchase land for development.

On the occasions when the Bedouin had the right documentation they were faced with a difficult bureaucratic procedures based on the State law. Their inability to follow the required steps and fill in the necessary forms is an obstacle that is usually difficult to overcome.

The changes in the economic system and the rules governing land ownership led to significant changes in land usage among the Bedouin and to basic social and
economic values that used to prevail. The issue of territorial boundaries within the
one community and across the different Bedouin communities was blurred in the past
as pasturing and grazing were not restricted by such boundaries. The harshness of the
physical environment and unsystematic distribution of water necessitated a high level
of co-operation. Bedouin survival in such circumstances depended on a high level of
reciprocity. Tourism as a system based on capitalism and individualism has no space
for such co-operation. The community is divided between those who happen to be
within easy access to tourists and those who are not. Bedouin who take tourists on
safaris in the Interior hand the responsibility of tourists over to the tribe on whose
territory the tour takes place.

The political system in Dahab has altered as a result of or to support the changes in the
economic system. The changes in the political system took place on various levels.
The involvement of the state in the Sinai since 1982 has led to certain administrative
changes like the division of Sinai between north and south and the introduction of new
administrative positions occupied by urban officials like the governor and the head of
the city council. The State also appoints governmental sheikhs from within the
Bedouin community. The Bedouin have a system of consensus agreement on a leader
who is responsible for managing their affairs – the problem occurs when such a leader
is chosen by the government to be a governmental leader. In this context the Bedouin
leader plays a dual role as a representative of the Road and the Interior. The unequal
distribution of power gradually leads to a strong affiliation between the leader who is
ideally supposed to look after the welfare of the Bedouin community and the State

Bedouin are gradually losing faith in the governmental leadership and as a result are
choosing other leaders whose judgement and loyalty they trust. However, this non-
governmental leader has no power to solve any problems that occur between the
Bedouin and the state. This multi-layered political system has led to problems of
representation and the lack of trust between the leaders and the Bedouin community.
The same occurs with regard to the political system - as the system moves towards
complete reliance on the state legal system the customary judges (although still
consulted by the Bedouin) have lost their power and authority.

The tourists feature also in the new political system as they are perceived by the
government to be the tool to implement the state economic and developmental
agenda.

**Tourism, Boundaries and the Bedouin Community**

This study is about boundaries as much as it is about landscape and in a way the
construction on the landscapes is a result of constant negotiation and shifting of
boundaries whether physical boundaries, gender and age boundaries moral boundaries
and others.

There has been a significant shift and negotiation of gender and age and moral
boundaries that has led to the construction of the landscape of women and children.

Gender boundaries are redrawn in a rigid way as a result of the new social and
economic system. As opposed to the pre-tourism circumstances where women's
movement was free and it was the responsibility of men to observe the female space,
movement of women is now confined to the Interior due to the presence of a growing number of male newcomers on both the Road and the Coast who are not familiar with the rules that protect female space and freedom. Women now have a very limited role in the contemporary lives of the Bedouin other than being keepers of a culture that has ceased to exist. They thus became isolated from the hub of economic activity rather than being the backbone of it and this has reduced the women to a subordinate and powerless position.

Bedouin children physically run and hence cross the boundaries between the Interior, the Road, and the Coast and their lives are being divided between different worlds and different values, each only valid within the boundaries of its prescribed landscape. They cross the boundaries between the Interior and the Road when they comply with the education policy of the State. Schools are situated on the Road and children in many cases willingly and enthusiastically attend school and act as a bridge between the Bedouin and the State landscapes. They also cross the Interior and the Road to the Coast on which they are actively involved in the world of the tourists by selling handicrafts and offering the tourists various services.

In that sense children cross another boundary and shift its historical and cultural position: it is that of age. Children became knowledgeable and experienced due to their unlimited ability to run between and across landscapes which have allowed them an insight that is not readily available to other members of the community. Children also cross age boundaries by sharing the position of the breadwinner for their families with their fathers. They have in that sense become cultural brokers while their mothers occupy the rather passive position of being cultural keepers.
Children and Bedouin men’s involvement on the Coast has led the Bedouin to construct a moral and mental boundary that separates the Coast from the Interior. Fundamental values like those of honour and shame have different meaning and application on the Coast to that of the Interior. Bedouin perceive the Coast as a world of its own with its own set of moral and ethical values. Young girls, Bedouin men and Egyptian workers have their own morals and values when working or living on the Coast, but these values are not acceptable in the Interior. Egyptian workers also negotiate moral and religious boundaries when they allow themselves to have relationships with female tourists as long as it exists on the Coast away from their home villages and towns where such behaviour continues to be condemned.

Bedouin have constructed a mental boundary that runs parallel to the Interior/Coast boundary in order to enable them to distinguish a tourist from a guest who is entitled to hospitality and generosity.

In short then, the theme of boundaries is very much linked to tourism as it exists in the community. Tourists, the State and the local community are all involved in negotiating and shifting boundaries and are constantly involved in constructing new landscapes.
Part Two

Beyond the Boundaries

This section aims to move beyond the boundaries of the current study and to put the discussion of tourism, community and the state in its wider context. I will consider some policy, education and research recommendations in the light of the previous discussions.

The Tourism Development Agency (TDA) documents for tourism development in Dahab reflect the framework of landscapes and boundaries. The development is confined to the Coast and Road with no linkages to the Interior. The suggested development options are formulated as if Dahab, and in many cases the majority of the Sinai, is terra nulla, an area without inhabitants. When Bedouin are taken into consideration, very little attention is given to their specific traditions, abilities, values and history. This is illustrated by the absence of a museum or a cultural centre in South Sinai devoted to Bedouin history and culture.

The Egyptian government has for a long time adopted the slogan “tourism- a vehicle to development”. In the process of implementing this slogan and under pressure to maximise revenues and realise economic prosperity, tourism is not often tied to the needs of the people and their specific requirements. Tourism should mainly be a vehicle for the development of the people who are affected by it and who live in its vicinity. I argue that the tourism development model adopted in Upper Egypt, in addition to other factors, has caused serious social and local economic problems that have resulted in violence directed towards the industry. Needless to say, this has hit
the tourism industry in a very hard way, and caused serious decline to both arrivals and revenues. Although, there is a tendency to project these acts within a framework of Islamic fanatical movement I believe that a closer investigation of the events could prove otherwise.

The need to tackle economic problems on the national level might divert attention away from tackling local economic and social problems. It is as important to measure the contribution of tourism to the very community within which it exists, as it is to measure the wider contribution of tourism to the balance of payments and foreign exchange earnings.

The increasing move towards privatisation appears to be a necessity for countries like Egypt tied to internationally created economic reform programmes. If this is the case, then the role of the state as a controlling and regulating agent should be directed towards providing public services and infrastructure, (Jenkins, 1995). This would minimise the gap between the level of development in an industry like tourism and the general level of development for the people who live next to it.

As the move towards multinational, organised and enclave tourism increases in Dahab the Bedouin of Mzeina will be deprived of the little they get out of the industry at the moment. There is a lot to be said for regulated community based tourism implemented by encouraging small and medium size locally owned enterprises. The Social Fund for Development (SFD) has experience of working with communities in different parts of Egypt and with young graduates on similar projects.
The terrible crisis that has been facing the tourism industry in Egypt is a problem that is worth investigating. Terrorism directed towards tourism is the symptom of a problem, not a problem in its own right. Careful planning and more consideration of community involvement in tourism could avoid similar problems occurring in the Sinai (Aziz, 1995).

Tourism is a seasonal activity, fragile and controlled by forces that exist outside the country. The Gulf war and the recent attacks directed towards the tourism industry are lessons from which policy makers can understand that an economy that is over-dependent on tourism will not be a stable one. The Egyptian government has in fact recently realised this and Sinai is witnessing a number of projects in the agricultural sector such as El-Salam canal and Sheikh Zayed canal that will provide the area with water. A new cement factory currently being built in the middle of Sinai is another sign of a move towards a diversified economy.

Needless to say, the social factors that are so highly intertwined within a development option such as tourism need to be addressed both in the education and research environments. The training and education systems which provide the tourism industry with its workers should provide quality graduates that can handle the complexities entrenched in the tourism sector. There is a need to graduate policy makers and planners capable of maximising the economic benefits from tourism and able to create appropriate collaboration between tourism development and the overall social and economic development of society.

There are a number of issues that have risen from this thesis like that of material
There are a number of issues that have risen from this thesis like that of material culture and tourism or commoditisation of culture that still deserves more attention from researchers. This study points out the constant need for research that links the social and economic cost / benefit contributions of tourism to the community and the State.

The town of Dahab on the Coast of the Gulf of Aqaba represents a microcosm of global forces. The dynamic and processual juxtaposition of the Interior, the Road, and the Coast is not only demographic and geographic but also social and ideological. Each sphere is shaped by its separate set of ideas and values, but the boundaries between the spheres are in the process of dissolving and reconstituting themselves in different forms. In this period of flux and change, some categories of people are finding new economic and social niches for themselves and are deriving certain benefits as a result.

In the longer term, however, there may develop a new and significant boundary. This may divide those who are included in the maintaining of the new capitalist / tourist economy and those who are excluded from it. It is by the degree of sensitivity towards this boundary that the success or otherwise of future tourism planning will be judged.
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Appendix one

Statistics
### Number of Tourists

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>Arabs</td>
<td>618331</td>
<td>822899</td>
<td>895402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans</td>
<td>193065</td>
<td>228896</td>
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<td>Europeans</td>
<td>524030</td>
<td>1811000</td>
<td>2321032</td>
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<td>Asians</td>
<td>73219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1423251</strong></td>
<td><strong>3133461</strong></td>
<td><strong>3895942</strong></td>
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</table>

**Source:** Central Agency for General Mobilisation and Statistics

* The tourist movement increased by 120.2%
* The Arab tourist movement increased by more than 33.1%
* The European movement increased by 245.6%
* The Asian tourism increased by 199.6%
### Tourist Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>In Million Pounds</th>
<th>In Million Dollars</th>
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<tr>
<td>82/1983</td>
<td>252.10</td>
<td>304.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>83/1984</td>
<td>238.70</td>
<td>288.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84/1985</td>
<td>339.70</td>
<td>409.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>85/1986</td>
<td>424.30</td>
<td>315.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>86/1987</td>
<td>518.10</td>
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<td>87/1988</td>
<td>1922.20</td>
<td>885.90</td>
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<td>89/1990</td>
<td>2303.80</td>
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<td>90/1991</td>
<td>4937.00</td>
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<td>93/1994</td>
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<td>94/1995</td>
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<td>2298.90</td>
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<td>95/1996</td>
<td>10215.90</td>
<td>3009.10</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Central Bank of Egypt

### The Development of Tourist Revenue in millions of Egyptian Pounds

1982/83 to 1995/96

![Graph showing the development of tourist revenue over the years](graph.png)
Tourist Nights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabs</td>
<td>4413391</td>
<td>6586877</td>
<td>6322242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans</td>
<td>1191794</td>
<td>1462502</td>
<td>1470667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>3348370</td>
<td>10744418</td>
<td>12968455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>304317</td>
<td>1380073</td>
<td>1433260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>43518</td>
<td>277494</td>
<td>1570017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9301390</td>
<td>20451364</td>
<td>23764641</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Central Agency for General Mobilisation and Statistics

* Tourist nights recorded an increase by 119.9%
* Asian tourist nights recorded the highest rate by 353.5% followed by European tourist nights with an increase of 220.9% and Arab tourist nights recorded an increase of 49.2%
Direct Employment in the Tourist Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Establishment</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>Until June 1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Establishments</td>
<td>22,636</td>
<td>116,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Establishments</td>
<td>51,800</td>
<td>84,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Agencies</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>18,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops and Bazaars</td>
<td>3,562</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guides</td>
<td>935</td>
<td>3,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>82,133</strong></td>
<td><strong>263,600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Tourism and the Tourist Chambers
Hotel Capacity (according to type of establishment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Establishment</th>
<th>1982 Units</th>
<th>1982 Rooms</th>
<th>1982 Beds</th>
<th>Until June 1996 Units</th>
<th>Until June 1996 Rooms</th>
<th>Until June 1996 Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>17105</td>
<td>33276</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>44844</td>
<td>89133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Villages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>10920</td>
<td>21883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floating Hotels</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>10947</td>
<td>21748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>18864</td>
<td>35285</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>66711</td>
<td>132764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Tourism

* Increase in number of hotels of various categories
* Number of tourist villages increased by 42.5 times
* Number of floating hotels increased by about four and a half times
### Hotel Capacity (according to category)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1982 Units</th>
<th>1982 Rooms</th>
<th>Until June 1996 Units</th>
<th>Until June 1996 Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five Stars</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>19939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Stars</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4388</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>10356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Stars</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3071</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>14316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Stars</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>6043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Star</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Renovation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>13091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>18864</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>66711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Tourism

* Number of hotels from one to three stars increased by about three times to cater for the increase in middle-class tourism
* Five and four stars hotels multiplied by about double and a half
# The National Project for the Development of Sinai

## Investment Costs per Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1431</td>
<td>4422</td>
<td>6410</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry/Mining</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>2940</td>
<td>4800</td>
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<td>8180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Development</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>4700</td>
<td>15385</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity &amp; Energy</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2405</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2250</td>
<td>2950</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade &amp; Banking Services</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water &amp; Sewage Services</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>3150</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>6600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education Service</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>1203</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Services</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural &amp; Media Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Labour Force</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth &amp; Sports</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>480</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6414</strong></td>
<td><strong>23597</strong></td>
<td><strong>44667</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>74678</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Project for the Development of Sinai - 1994
National Project for the Development of Sinai
Total Investment Costs per Sector

- Urban Development: 28%
- Industry/Mining: 13%
- Tourism: 11%
- Agriculture: 16%
- Transport: 8%
- Education Service: 2%
- Water & Sewage Services: 0%
- Trade & Banking Services: 1%
- Religious Services: 0%
- Health Services: 1%
- Cultural & Media Services: 0%
- Training & Labour Force: 0%
- Social Affairs: 0%
- Youth & Sports: 1%
- Security: 0%
- Justice: 0%

The pie chart illustrates the distribution of investment costs across various sectors.
### Development Projects & Tourist Investment from 1986 to 30/6/1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number of Projects</th>
<th>Area (thousand sq. meter)</th>
<th>Capacity Rooms</th>
<th>Cost (Million/L.E.)</th>
<th>Job Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gulf of Aqaba</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>33296</td>
<td>47433</td>
<td>5624</td>
<td>96355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Sea</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>63086</td>
<td>78801</td>
<td>8731</td>
<td>176570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras Sedr</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3423</td>
<td>6877</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>10315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El-Ain El-Sokhana</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>26043</td>
<td>40080</td>
<td>5477</td>
<td>56244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arich</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4712</td>
<td>5176</td>
<td>737.8</td>
<td>7764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>396</strong></td>
<td><strong>131560</strong></td>
<td><strong>178667</strong></td>
<td><strong>21613.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>347698</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Egyptian Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

---

### Tourist Investment 1986 to June 1996 (Projects)

- Gulf of Aqaba: 37%
- Red Sea: 26%
- Ras Sedr: 6%
- El-Ain El-Sokhana: 29%
- Arich: 0%
- North Coast: 2%

### Tourist Investment 1986 to June 1996 (Cost)

- Gulf of Aqaba: 26%
- Red Sea: 41%
- Ras Sedr: 4%
- El-Ain El-Sokhana: 25%
- Arich: 1%
- North Coast: 3%
### Estimated Population Figures for South Sinai - 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Urban Figures</th>
<th>Rural* Figures</th>
<th>% of Urban Population</th>
<th>Female Population</th>
<th>% of Rural Population</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ras Sedr</td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>5748</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3924</td>
<td>3542</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abou Zenima</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>2767</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>2313</td>
<td>1595</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abou Redis</td>
<td>3252</td>
<td>4120</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>4876</td>
<td>2496</td>
<td>33.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Catherine</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>3900</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2367</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>45.6</td>
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<td>Tiran</td>
<td>5609</td>
<td>2833</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>5233</td>
<td>3209</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharm el Sheikh</td>
<td>1123</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>1573</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dahab</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>1684</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuweiba</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>2161</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14770</td>
<td>24239</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>23659</td>
<td>15350</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate

* Urban refers to the migrant population from the urban centres and agriculture centres in the Delta and the Nile Valley area

** Rural refers to the Bedouin population of South Sinai
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>Arabs</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>57,264</td>
<td>6,805</td>
<td>98,326</td>
<td>162,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>129,196</td>
<td>3,333</td>
<td>124,254</td>
<td>256,783</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>127,258</td>
<td>7,768</td>
<td>280,830</td>
<td>415,856</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>167,604</td>
<td>9,125</td>
<td>271,265</td>
<td>447,994</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>186,780</td>
<td>8,127</td>
<td>347,105</td>
<td>542,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>186,150</td>
<td>6,444</td>
<td>440,847</td>
<td>633,441</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>181,560</td>
<td>7,489</td>
<td>501,288</td>
<td>690,337</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,035,812</td>
<td>49,091</td>
<td>2,063,911</td>
<td>3,148,818</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate

**Tourist Figures in South Sinai**

![Bar Chart](chart1.png)

**Tourist Figures - South Sinai**

![Pie Chart](chart2.png)
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

Sharm el Sheikh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>Arabs</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of Tourist Nights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>23,762</td>
<td>5,339</td>
<td>38,999</td>
<td>68,100</td>
<td>196,389</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>38,906</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>56,383</td>
<td>96,745</td>
<td>319,970</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>37,265</td>
<td>2,760</td>
<td>99,482</td>
<td>139,507</td>
<td>667,578</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>53,807</td>
<td>4,354</td>
<td>111,781</td>
<td>169,942</td>
<td>677,170</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>65,049</td>
<td>4,331</td>
<td>155,715</td>
<td>225,095</td>
<td>1,101,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>69,610</td>
<td>3,309</td>
<td>207,408</td>
<td>280,327</td>
<td>1,580,264</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>59,431</td>
<td>4,791</td>
<td>276,327</td>
<td>370,549</td>
<td>1,916,840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>377,830</td>
<td>26,340</td>
<td>946,095</td>
<td>1,350,265</td>
<td>6,459,311</td>
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</table>

Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate
### Tourist Figures in South Sinai

#### Dahab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>Arabs</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No.of Tourist Nights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4,481</td>
<td>5,248</td>
<td>9,786</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>3,671</td>
<td>34,973</td>
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<td>5,432</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>20,122</td>
<td>25,976</td>
<td>48,114</td>
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<td>7,207</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>24,053</td>
<td>31,482</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>6,791</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>25,171</td>
<td>32,395</td>
<td>76,787</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>9,987</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>37,259</td>
<td>47,868</td>
<td>106,521</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>10,538</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>35,665</td>
<td>46,736</td>
<td>142,587</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>71,951</td>
<td>2,305</td>
<td>150,422</td>
<td>224,678</td>
<td>476,982</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate

#### Tourist Figures - Sharm el Sheikh

- **1990**: Egyptians 4,000, Arabs 3,500, Foreigners 2,000
- **1991**: Egyptians 3,000, Arabs 3,000, Foreigners 1,500
- **1992**: Egyptians 2,000, Arabs 2,000, Foreigners 1,000
- **1993**: Egyptians 1,000, Arabs 1,000, Foreigners 500
- **1994**: Egyptians 500, Arabs 500, Foreigners 250
- **1995**: Egyptians 250, Arabs 250, Foreigners 125
- **1996**: Egyptians 125, Arabs 125, Foreigners 62

#### Tourist Figures - Sharm el Sheikh (Pie Chart)

- Egyptians 32%
- Arabs 67%
- Foreigners 1%

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Page 12
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

Nuweiba

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>Arabs</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of Tourist Nights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
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<td>1,392</td>
<td>46,953</td>
<td>78,915</td>
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<td>1,554</td>
<td>40,629</td>
<td>65,412</td>
<td>137,206</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>35,404</td>
<td>4,498</td>
<td>93,436</td>
<td>133,338</td>
<td>186,054</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>49,512</td>
<td>4,425</td>
<td>61,827</td>
<td>115,764</td>
<td>182,887</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>46,381</td>
<td>3,106</td>
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Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

St Catherine

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Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governate
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

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Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate
Tourist Figures in South Sinai

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Source: Information Centre, South Sinai Governorate
Appendix Two
Maps
Priority Zones for the Development of Tourism in Egypt

Source: Tourism Development Agency

Map 1
Priority Zones for the Development of Tourism (Sinai)

Source: Tourism Development Agency

Map 2
Gulf of Aqaba Tourist Sectors

Source: Tourism Development Agency

Map 3
Suggested plans for the Development of Tourism in Dahab

Source: Dahab Co. Tourism Development

Map 4
Distributions of Bedouin Tribes in Sinai

Source: Bailey, C (1991)

Map 5
A Sketch of Dahab Town

Map 6
Appendix Three

Photographs
An overview of the Masbat village (close to the Coast), March, 1997
An overview of Assala village in the Interior
March, 1997
Connection Valley where the Coast’s rubbish is dumped
October, 1996
An overview of the Road with the secondary school in the background
The entrance to Dahab Town Council
Dahab Social Unit on the Road
The unit offers various social services for the Bedouin and the Egyptians and behind it is the preparatory school
The apartment blocks originally built for the Bedouin in the town centre
A tourist four-wheel drive arriving at a Bedouin local festival venue near St. Catherine
A group of tourists sitting with Mzeina Bedouin during alfrernja Bedouin festival
An overview of Dahab Coast
One of the coffee shops on the Coast
A restaurant on the Coast
Egyptian workers on the Coast
Santa Claus Supermarket on the Coast
An old Bedouin woman collecting tourists' leftovers from the Coast
Some children sitting on the Coast, in the shade of a parked fishing boat, weaving friendship bracelets
A young Bedouin girl selling a bracelet to a tourist on the Coast
A Bedouin boy and a Bedouin girl working together on the Coast
A Bedouin girl weaving a friendship bracelet on the Coast
Children buying sunglasses at the end of a long working day on the Coast