

**The Culture Of Cafes**  
**An Anthropological Study In**  
**The Way Of Life**

*Dr. Prof. Mohamed Abbas Ibrahim*

**Professor & Head of Department Of**  
**Anthropology Faculty Of Arts,**  
**Alexandria University**

## **Leisure and its specifications in the Anthropological Thought:**

**The human societies have considered for a long time ago the leisure phenomenon as the synonym included in the concept of "playing", as opposed to "working". Playing in the concept of these early simple societies indicates the group of agreed rituals and general practices that are performed in the presence of the ancestors or grand parents spirits, which differ from a local society to another one, according to its regulations and legislations. In some societies they were turned into popular festivals, then some of their agreed rituals were turned into religious feasts through which the separation limits between working and playing or having a rest were determined. Although there is a difference between the two terms, they were later included in each other, particularly after playing became a part of working, not in the meantime, but since the tasks mixed with playing started, that were performed by shamans and witch doctors. Playing for them was an ordinary and a familiar job, as one of the primitive forms of the leisure class. Here, jobs performed by shamans and witch doctors became**

magical or religious and acknowledged by the local societies.

Leisure is considered a social phenomenon just like the other social phenomena that have their positive and negative aspects, and involvement with different parts and elements of the more comprehensive social structure. It is also related to the lives of individuals and groups that form the social organization of society as a whole. Leisure is the time that can be used for society development and growth, in addition to lifting the feelings and sentiments of individuals and groups, through caring for their activities and requirements. However, this requires a thorough study of the leisure concept and its inclusions and meanings related to the social structure as a whole.

**Leisure as a phenomenon indicates to two related ideas:**

*Firstly*, time which is the period or time free of work and responsibilities, as activities performed through it are relatively free.

*Secondly*, activity which means the person's experiment and interaction with the number and type of social activities they perform. The human societies since their beginning cared for these activities. They provided methods, means, and authorities that are interested in fulfilling the needs and requirements of the leisure time for the society's benefit.

When Anthropology examines the leisure phenomenon, it seeks broadening the fields of interests, study and explanation, through its several prospective whose methodology depended on tackling these subjects in the perfection or comprehensive trend. This is how to research in the field of leisure phenomenon including the social phenomenon, indicating to its roles and functions in the social structure.

Posing questions about studying the leisure phenomenon and its relation with the café society is not just searching for the method or the way by which people spend their leisure time. But it is the necessity of wondering about the nature of relationships between behaviour patterns of spending leisure time and the different behaviour patterns that people were familiar with in the other different phenomena in their lives. There is another question, what is the nature of the

**social and cultural roles performed by the leisure phenomenon in society? In other words, what are the relationships between the social and cultural feasibility, and leisure time and entertainment?**

**Our study of the leisure phenomenon did not include valuable judgments, but the idea towards studying the leisure phenomenon invites us to consider it a social concept with expressional meanings concerning direction, desires, preferences, thinking patterns, several interests among people and groups, and their perspective for all that in their life according to their objectives.**

**Definition of leisure is difficult, particularly that its use indicates the life quality and life style as a feature of the civilized human, as well as that it is a mixture of time, activity and experience.**

**It is time that is free of work and other necessary activities, such as eating, sleeping, and playing which are considered of the routine activities and experiences. Leisure can be clearly distinguished from the paid jobs, where as it could be difficult to separate leisure from other forms of work, such as house work or volunteer work.**

As for the modern meaning of leisure, in order for leisure to become possible in most workers lives, too major conditions should be provided in society, which are:

*Firstly:* Society loses its ability to control its activities through general ritual commitments. At least some of these activities, such as work or leisure are no longer enlisted or included in the group rituals category. But they have become an individual responsibility, although the individual choice normally are still considered determined by more generalized social necessities.

*Secondly:* The work by which human earn their living is separated from their other activities, and its limits are no longer normal but controlling, as work is no longer organized by a specific method, as it can be even separated theoretically and practically from their free leisure time.

These too necessary conditions are found only in social life and industrial cultures or societies that keep pace with social and technological development. Therefore, we find that the absence of these too conditions from the (ancient) Archian cultures and the traditional cultural societies, but it means the absence

of leisure. When the leisure concept starts to be included in the rural life and modern societies, it is due to the agricultural work that is inclined towards an industrial pattern of organization and determination. Because the rural life includes urban values of industrialization, and the same can be said about the agricultural societies in the third world that exist in the shadow of their development process to the level of the pre-industrialization phase.

Eventually, and in the light of the new formation of the leisure concept, we can say that leisure time should be distinguished from free time, i.e. The time remained after the organized work, the spare time, and the time spent in travelling and going out of the work place. We know that free time includes leisure time and all other activities that occur outside the organized or profitable work. Thus, the personal needs of eating, sleeping, health care, appearance care, and religious, social, and family commitments should be taken care of by humans to be included in the range of their free time.

As for the major specifications of leisure, there are four main ones, two of which are negative because they indicate the lack of specific social commitments and the

other too are positive, as they are defined in the light of personal accomplishments. In 1953, in a survey of the leisure concepts based on a sample of French workers and white - collar employees, it was evident that, in almost every case, these four specifications were largely related in the mind of the subjects. These specifications are:

1-Freedom of commitments, as leisure is considered a result of free choice. For making sure, leisure is not similar to freedom. It is wrong to say that commitments have no role in leisure at all. Leisure does not include freedom or any freedom from a specific group of commitments. We should admit that leisure is similar to other social phenomena, as it complies to social relationships, and consequently on personal commitment such as contracting or agreement to meet an a specific time, in a specific place. It also complies to commitments imposed by any group, organization, or a sports team, to association of films, cinema and art festivals that fulfils the needs of this activity.

2 - Disinterestedness: The non-exciting feature of leisure is considered a total of results in the light of means and goals to be free of the first commitments. Leisure is not paid as an enter tainting activity like a

job nor is it a beneficial purpose like the house work. With contradiction to political or religious duties, it does not have an objective we find that teal leisure prevents using any social, intellectual or artistic activity for serving any material or social purpose, whatever its form is, if the entertainment leisure is like any other activity that complies to the laws of social and physical necessity of humans.

3-Entertainment leisure and transformation : It indicates the tendency towards the relationship between leisure and human needs even if they were the individual fulfilment that occur in the range of the individual's obedience (an obedient person) inside his group. Thus, the social and anthropological studies aim at discussing leisure as a satisfaction case which is sufficient in it self. Here, the basics are searching for enjoyment. But with considering that happiness is not merely a leisure issue because humans can feel happiness when they perform their basic makes social duties. Generally, we can say that the nature of modern society makes us seek satisfaction, enjoyment and happiness in our study which are the basic specifications of modern leisure.

**4- Leisure and structure of personality: This is when the most important aspects of the relationship between leisure and character are formed through the individual's defence for their character's integration in society where new commitments and requirements prevail, as they are imposed by the industrial urban life. When we describe a person as having a good and strong personality, it means that this person has a type of social presence that others admire. But if this character description is common, anthropologists view the human personality as a set of particular traits and features that are responsible for reactions and responses to different situations. People should have a high degree of activity and vitality, as well as diversity in interests and hobbies. Their personalities should also have the ability to deal with society and adapt with other.**

**The most important trait of the positive character is the ability to enjoy life and their leisure time. Here, leisure times are the main introduction to developing these abilities and forming character, with the opportunities of social communication and interactions with others away from work pressure. Therefore, all apparent functions of leisure have influenced the meant persons and fulfilled their individual needs according to**

**the advantages of the primary commitments imposed by the modern society.**

### **The Positive Functions Of Leisure:**

**Some concepts and terminology inter lap concerning leisure, time, free time, and entertainment. We should always start with the method people follow in renewing their experiences during their leisure time, when we determine the positive functions of leisure. The main value of investing the leisure time comes in the frame of free testing for specified hours where they feel free, fun, and happiness. Therefore, leisure is strongly connected with people's feeling of enjoyment and freedom, as well as their ability to prove and express themselves. This all has to do with the ability to deal with the entertainment process, renewing activates, and free choice of time investment.**

**Accordingly, the positive functions of leisure are as follows:**

**1-Leisure assigns the person and gives them a good opportunity to get rid of the work load. It is at least a compensation force and an opportunity to get rid of the work load.**

**2-Through entertainment whether it is allowed or prohibited by society, leisure opens new fields and real and imaginative wide worlds, in which an individual can escape from the daily boredom concerning performing a set of limited tasks.**

**3-Finally, leisure allows individuals to leave behind their imposed patterns through the main social systems with the attempt to achieve self-glory as creative human forces to face or enhance the prevailing values in their culture and civilization.**

**The most genuine meanings of leisure is performing all main functions that fulfil the human needs that are counterparts to all functions, where as leisure that fails to allow all three functions to be chosen in any time is the leisure that should be considered full of flaws as it does not fulfil human needs.**

**As for the relationship between spending leisure time and working, and the view point of owners or guests of popular cafes, cafes owners have made clear that the nature of their work does not allow them to have enough leisure time. Some cafes work by the system of "Two shifts" from 6 a. m. to 3 p.m, and from 3 p.m to 1 a.m some cafes work by the "morning" system which is the "three shifts" system, for example,**

from 10 a.m, to 3 p.m, from 3 p.m to 1 a.m, and from 1 a.m to 10, a.m, in the next morning and soon.

It is different if leisure time is dedicated for the "workers" in a café. Of course, we find that workers have specified shifts to work, and after the shift ends, the worker usually does not connect with the café, hence they have enough leisure time. The ways of spending leisure time differ according to the worker's age. For example, unmarried workers spend their leisure time in practicing some sports, such as football, going out with friends, or going to the cinema, etc. As for the middle-age workers or the married ones, they spend time caring for their families, going out with them, watching T.V at home, and practicing several social duties in the limit of their community.

As for leisure time of the café quests, some of them made clear that the café is a place to kill time and boredom from which many young people suffer, particularly in the shadow of unemployment that prevailed in our society. They see that their leisure time elongates from morning to mid-night. The time the guest spends in the café house ranges between an hour to four or five hours.

## **They spend that time in:**

**1-Playing any game they like, such as chess, dominos, or dices. The researcher found that the game that is common among guests in several case studies is chess, which require intelligence, skills, patience, and focus and takes long time to play.**

**2-Having various types of drinks, in addition to smoking water pipes or shisha.**

**3-Watching T.V, although some subjects proved that watching T.V is not an objective in itself, as many guests prefer to sit outside the café. Especially in summer, and the only way to watch T.V inside the café is to watch sports games, mainly football. Some guests come from their homes especially to watch games on T.V in the café, because the "group", as they assume, which is the grouping of a number of people to watch a game on T.V, makes it more fun to watch and gives the game more meaning than watching it alone at home.**

**Social studies, particularly the applied ones, focused on leisure studies concerning the relationship between the labor classes and the way to spend leisure time.**

Since 1956, several field studies were conducted, especially in some European countries that studied leisure in relation to work, family, culture, activities, and value systems. It is notable in all studies that leisure has demonstrated the significance of methodology diversity to achieve a better understanding of what is called "time budgets", or time balances and measurement, in addition to the following:

1-Measurement of the restrictions influencing time, social space, and money, which prevents turning free time into genuine leisure in the life of several classes, including the labour classes.

2-Evaluation of the sources available for leisure in the cultural development in human societies as a whole.

In the shadow of the industrial societies now in the wholesale consuming phase, particular problems have shown and they will continue. We find that the decrease of the value of leisure time in the shadow of popular culture imposes more problems for scientists, as they are the commitment to the leisure time values which is equal to their commitment to spiritual, political and professional value. Or is it that leisure will threaten all other values which endangers the active participation of people in directing the future of their societies?

Finally, because leisure time in itself is diverse, will the entertainment values create a new model of individual happiness and social luxury? Or on the contrary, do entertainment values play a new soothing role for people where leisure is complicated so that they encourage boredom in a new social and economic system? No doubt that the human future in the shadow of industrial civilization and the fast cultural growth are sufficient to answer these questions.

### **Café Houses and Entertainment:**

When discussing leisure as a concept that achieve the level or degree of the different system which represents an integrated part with the rest of the parts of social structure, we find that the activities chosen by people during their leisure times which are in dependent and different from other social roles.

Therefore, the leisure time is connected with other concepts and determents, such as time playing, fun, entertainment, work, earning living, culture, and others. But if we look at the leisure activities and their goals, we find that they contain the most meaning full human goal, which is proving oneself in that act, as it is the most significant phases of human expression. As

**Bortrand Bussel said, society should reward its members for their ethics, not for their productivity and ability to work only. In that regard, we find that the way for a person to make use of their leisure time and the quality of the activity they practice during this free time represents a basic criterion to judge ethics, hence a criterion to determine human and social entity.**

**In our focused anthropological study of a number of café houses in Alexandria, we found that, in addition to their role in investing leisure time of the guests, café houses have characteristics that are common in a number of café houses according to sites and districts where these cafes are. For example, if the café houses are next to commercial markets, they take a more commercial characteristic or function than its entertainment form in spending and investing leisure time, as leisure time in them is spent in commercial practices and activities, such as agreements and deals. This is applied to the café houses near to the governmental and legal administrations, particularly courts, as café guests gather in the morning, which is the courts working hours, as lawyers, defendants, agents and others meet which makes being in a café related to its geographical location.**

**In general, the café house plays an important role in investing its guests' leisure time. Café house are considered an entertaining place that is open and available for many categories of Alexandrians, without any restrictions concerning their ages, except for women who are not socially allowed to visit these cafes, but we find young people, educated people, workers, traders, businessmen, retired people and others.**

### **Urban Inflation and Development of the café Role:**

**No Doubt that there are interchangeable relationships between cultural growth and café houses, and between café houses and leisure time.**

**With the sequence of the twentieth century stages and periods, and according to the scientist's and researcher's notes, it has been clear that the facts of leisure be come more complicated, particularly that Thorstein Veblen's theory of leisure class had analyzed the different patterns of the unemployed or lazy people who can be found in the Bourgeoisie class in 1899.**

**The modern man in the contemporary society who is viewed in the light of their social personality has defined two revolutions:**

*The first one* started with the renaissance, when the man, whose social personality is described as derived from the local society, started to submit to family criteria and values, there by they become internally directed.

*The second one* started by the mid twentieth century, where total consuming, including structural consuming and structural culture started. Here, humans began to comply to criteria and value prevailed by the mass media and communication means, and, on the other hand, by peers and friends. In these circumstances, man becomes directed by others.

The goals of leisure services which are presented by the café house in the frame of a local society are determined with the contribution and participation of the citizens in supporting these services, and providing suitable opportunities to make use of leisure time perfectly on the local level. It is characterized by the social relationships, thereby leisure time will be characterized by a degree of differences related with the differences in the guests desires. In other words, there is a type of subculture that is related to the diversity of life styles, and then to the diversity of fulfilling and investing leisure time. The anthropological study about

**the café house culture between entertainment and working in Alexandria has concluded the following:**

**1-The cafes in Alexandria play an important role in entertaining their guests, as they feel that they got rid of the work load of the previous day and that they became more active to start an new working day, after they spent their leisure time in the café, exchanged friendly discussions with each other, and played their common popular games in the café, such as dizes , chess and dominos.**

**2-There is a relationship between café houses and home from the point of- view of some guests, as they find a chance to escape from their domestic arguments at home .Some see that visiting the café house as avoidance to make family encounters at home between a husband and his wife, as the husband thinks that she does not remember the house needs unless in the presence of the husband. This is expressed in the opinion of a guest who said my wife's orders got rid of the happiness I found in the café house.**

**3-Some café houses include the elite of the Alexandrian society, such as lawyers, teachers, and professors, which are the cafes that have a geographical location that enables them to perform their entertaining**

**function better than other cafes. We also should mention that there are many suggestions and decisions concerning work and administrations discussed by the café visitors who are colleagues in the same work place. When the next morning arises, these decisions and suggestions become applicable inside the official meetings in their organizations, especially if they were the leaders.**

**4-The café house plays an important role in the fields of political growth, election campaigns, sports news, and keeping pace with the local and international events. They became the central discussions of the café visitor.**

**5-Some cafes are characterized by their commercial function, as they are near to the commercial work activities where investing leisure time of their visitors is related to achievements they want to reach with their associates or peers in the same work field.**

**The café house in the Eastern society and its culture;**

**Café guests always meet, whether they are popular or aristocratic cafes that are prevailed in the eastern**

country, including Egypt, for a cup of coffee, so that discussions, seminars, jokes and talks take place. The café house in Egypt, as any other café in the world, is related to coffee. In Egypt, it is called café, cafes, or coffee house, and in other cultures and languages, it is coffee shop or café, etc.

The first man to introduce. Egypt to coffee is the Islamic religious man Abu Bakr Ben Abdullah who discovered coffee while passing by a coffee tree, Then he ate it, which made him feel active and able to stay up all night to pray. Then, he encouraged his followers to eat it, and came to Egypt on 905, the Hijri year to start the controversy about coffee, is it allowed or prohibited by Islam? Thus, people in Egypt were divided into two groups, one that is against drinking coffee, and the other supports it.

The controversy about drinking coffee was not limited to Egyptians only, but also Mekka has witnessed a huge controversy in 917, the Hijri year, about drinking coffee which led to prohibition of drinking coffee, burning the coffee bags in stores, and making it illegal. In the beginning of the tenth Hijri century, there was a controversy about the legislation of drinking coffee. Then the places that serve coffee were spread in

Cairo, which were later called "cafes" or "café houses" But it is worth mentioned that these places already existed before Egyptians knew coffee, as these places served drinks such as fenugreek and others before Egyptians knew tea which the British brought to Egypt in 1882, and it become well known and common between Egyptians since that date.

By the eleventh Hijri century, serving coffee became related to smoking or tobacco. Controversy aroused again, and the problem become more complicated, particularly that the Arab citizens of Mekka have prohibited smoking, as they saw many Moslems sit with the smoking European citizens. As for Egypt, since the eleventh Hijri century until the French crusade to Egypt coffee was served with the "Smoking net", which was mentioned in the book "Egypt Description", as a water pipe or "Shisha". It consisted of three parts, a cover, a pipe, and the coal stone shaft. The cover was usually made of fine stones, especially that it was used by rich people, while poor people used a cover made of ivory.

As for the pipe, it was used of flower wood or misque, for the rich people's use, and its length was half a meter or a meter. The pipe was covered by silk and

furnished by silver or gold, whereas poor people made it of sticks without furnishing as for coal stone shaft, it was made at first of burnt rubber with different sizes, until; the Chinese people made art out of making its types, which were known as the Chinese stones, as they were colorful. Only rich people and the elite who bought and used it, men and women. But the poor people smoked coal stones in pottery stones.

As for the café house, as mentioned in the book "Egypt Description", it was a wide place, a building of one floor that is characterized by Islamic, architecture, which has impacts reflected on making doors, windows, ceilings, and café columns. People sat on benches. Plants always surrounded cafe front. Visiting a café was not only to spend leisure time, drink coffee, and smoke water pipe, but also the café played an important role in human events, before they invent radios. Café houses were related to the news of invasions, triumph and conquers. The last story was that of El-Zaher Bebars which was spread in Cairo cafes as a result of the Osmani invasion to Egypt in 1517. In addition, the epic of "Abu Zeid El-Helaly" was spread after the defeat of El-Orabi revolution, as well as stories of "Antara Al-Absy" and "The Arabian nights". Their narration was

like watching T.V. shows for which people long to listen to as they cannot be narrated only on one night.

Some see that café houses are places where time passes by and production halts. But as for one of the old cafes, we find that old sweet times away from the crowded life and the fast life style now, as the café is a model that is updated for our crowded world today.

Bonapart said that you cannot be one of the mystical east or the civilized east, if you did not waste your time in a café or sacrifice some your life in making the magical drink.

Café houses are a place for families entertainment too. Tifino said that there are many violen players and other musicians who are hired by the café owner to play and sing during most of the day, hoping to attract guests.

Naguib Mahfouz is used to spend Summer in Alexandria. The first Arab author to win the Noble Prize meets his poet and author friends on a specific hour everyday in San Stefano and drinks coffee in the fresh air and the sea behind them.

Coffee is the delicious drink preferred by wise people. It also makes you happy, as it contains amazing

aroma with a color that look like ink. It is as beneficial as milk, only differs in color. All sadness goes away in front of a cup of coffee. It is health and makes our troubles go away; it is the fire that makes us warm. If you taste coffee you will hate wine. It is a great drink, as its color indicates its purity. Drink more coffee and do not listen to those who curse it with no reason.

Through tea, the east joins the Bourgoise societies, and through coffee, it joins minds.

The most important café in Cairo in the modern ages which played a great role in the cultural and political movement in Egypt and the Arab world is "Noubar café", where Abdu El Hamouly used to spent nights with his friends, including Basily Erian who spent half-a-million pounds in the café because he sometimes was annoyed by the visitors, so he asked the café owner to evacuate it, so he can stay with his friends only but he will compensate him for the damages. As a result, Basily was broke because of the coffee. Another important café was "Matatya Café" where Gamal El-Deen El-Afaghany, Imam Mohamed Abdu, and Saad Zaghloul used to gather, then it was visited by Abbas El-Aqad and El-Mazny. In addition, there was "El-Ketengana café" which was visited by Hafez

**Ebrahim, El-Sheikh Abdel Aziz El-Beshry and El Sheikh Hassan El-Alaty. There was also "El-Medahakkana café" in El-Saida Zeinab District, where guests were supposed to tell jokes, and if the café owner liked them, he makes them join his sittings. There were also many other cafes that included popular and cultural arts.**

**Paul Moran, in his book "The way to India", said that, through tea, the east joins the bourgoise societies, and through coffee, it joins minds. Therefore, there were many stories, myths and imaginations about the eastern café houses. Many books also include strange stories about these cafes, including Richard Bradly's "A Brief Historical Report about café Houses", issued in London in 1714, Alfons Doubee's "Monday's stories", Jane Shardan's "A trip to Persia", Edward William Lane's "The Modern Egyptians", and the book prepared by the French crusade scientists entitled "Egypt's Description", which include a section about Cairo café houses which were 1200 cafes at the time.**

## **The Ethnography of Café Houses in Alexandria: An analytical perspective:**

**The café house played an important role in Alexandria, as it is for many Egyptian cities. The role and function of the cafe is as important as the social, economical and cultural aspects in Alexandria. The circumstances of cafes introduction to Alexandria witnessed important events with significant roles that influenced the nature of performance of cafes.**

**For example, café houses influenced Alexandria, in the historical period Osmani rule in Egypt. Osmani people had an important role in that, which later reflected some of their customs and traditions on Egyptians' behavior. The Greek rule period had also another role in influencing and spreading café houses in Alexandria, as the Greek were related to this activity. However, its nature differed from the nature of a popular café house now, as the ancient Greeks served wine and alcohol to face guests, in addition to dancing singing numbers. This led some Alexandrian people to open other café houses that are similar to the Greek cafes, providing singers and belly dancers. Therefore, café houses became clubs for music, dancing, and**

singing, as the case in some cafes in El-Attareen, El-Labban, and El-Ebrahymia previously.

In the time when Greeks and Armanis viewed café houses from a professional economic perspective for earning their living in Egypt, the Egyptians viewed the café as a place to spend leisure time and have fun. Egyptians used to visit those cafes according to their categories and classes. There were cafes for the high class which looked like clubs or "Casinos", as the case for the cafes in the middle class districts which are different from the other concerning the class and category.

### **Café Houses and the Culture of Leisure:**

The perspective of the café nature was changed by Alexandrians. They became more convinced that the café plays an important role in the social, economic, cultural entertainment life, particularly after the citizens of the urban and industrial societies, including Alexandrians, realized that "Leisure" is a social phenomenon, like any other social phenomenon, that has advantages and disadvantages, and connections with different parts and elements of the more comprehensive social structure, as it is connected to

individuals and societies that form the social system as a whole. This is the result of the fact that "Leisure" and "work" are the basics on which social development and growth in any society are built.

Generally, café houses are a wide place that preferred to be open on a view of a square or a general street, and to be equipped with the necessary tools, and to be licensed. The equipment includes "the tools" which are a number of tea and water glasses, in addition to other smaller glasses used for coffee, and a number of cups, trays, water pipes and different juice glasses.

In addition, the café house is divided from the inside into two main sections, the first one is a place that have a capacity to receive guests, where tables and chairs are placed so that every person can feel comfortable and relaxed, not bothering others. Otherwise, people will think about leaving it to go to another wider café with more capacity. The café has also necessary tools to prevent fires, which is a necessity to have a license from the specialized administrative authorities. The second section called "the Counter", which is a place, at the back of the café from the inside, to prepare hot and cold drinks. The counter consists of

**"Ramallah", which is a flat piece of stainless steel that carry two taps for cold water and hot water. The counter has also a flat rectangular piece of "tin", under which there is a flame or a number of flames of fire, whether it is a stove or a smaller one with kerosene, and on the hot tin, there is a quantity of construction sands to keep heat from under the tin. In this sand, tools, utensils, and hot-water-filled pots to make coffee, tea and hot drinks are placed, in order to be prepared when the waiter calls for the order to the counter worker. On top of El-Ramallah, there is a chimney.**

**El-Ramallah is usually connected from the front to a rectangular piece of pottery or "Mazaiqo", where prepared drink are placed. There is also a big sink with a tap to prepare water glasses in it with the orders. At the end of the counter at the back, there is a sink with a water tap for washing glasses and tools. Next to this sink, there are water pipes that are prepared for guests who smoke, and next to them, there is the coal fire.**

**As for the café management and the internal social organization, the café does not represent a complicated systematic social unit alone, but it is characterized by simplicity in its management and the leadership sequence of work inside it, as the cafe owner or his**

deputy represent the superior authority in its management, as he is responsible before the governmental authorities and the general security associations concerning all café aspects. After him in the leadership sequence inside the café, there is the counter worker or the waiter, whoever in senior, then the watcher who is assigned to observe the café and to collect the empty cups and glasses to the main counter place.

It is worth mentioning that organizing work and the leadership sequence inside the café and working in "two shifts", morning and evening is characterized mostly by the team spirit. This is to perform their task in obtaining customers' satisfaction. However, the café house does not represent the perfect social and entertaining unit away from work problems. Through result of the anthropological study, café owners always complain from the absence of their waiters or workers. The reason could be that they desire to join other cafes for better salaries. Thus, the study proved that it is rare to find a cafe that pays its workers weekly or monthly, but most of them pay the worker daily.

The café house as one of the economic and social activities in Alexandria is characterized by the privacy

of its culture. Therefore, we find that there are some concepts, terminology, or the used colloquial language inside café, including:

- **Supply or materials:** which are the materials used in making all drinks, in addition to coal, tobacco, and others.

- **Profits:** The daily revenue.

- **Little sugar coffee:** coffee with little sugar.

- **Sick coffee:** coffee without sugar.

- **Balanced coffee:** a spoon of coffee and a similar spoon of sugar.

- **More sugar-coffee:** a spoon of coffee and a spoon and a quarter of sugar.

- **Banani coffee:** coffee served in a cup.

- **Osmali coffee:** coffee served in small glasses.

- **Magalo tea:** a big coffee of tea.

- **Clear water tea:** it means preparing tea with tap water so that water and tea are put together from the start which is called fresh tea.

- **Tea pot:** it is served for guests in tea pots according to the number orders.

- **Tray tea:** it is served in ordinary glass on a tray with a glass of water.
- **Post-sugar-tea:** it is served with sugar on the side.
- **Door tea:** it is served to the non-regular guests who come to the café for the first time.
- **Shisha Abu Neiya:** it means ordering special water pipe for the regular guests with which starts when he enters the café.
- **Kalouh El-Gorky:** Agami water pipe of Tobacco Shisha.
- **Apple Shisha:** Robaco Agami water pipe mixed with apple and yeasted honey to give the apple flavor when smoking.
- **Tombakshi:** The worker specialized for preparing water pipe for guests.
- **Guard:** The worker specialized to collect empty cups and tools from the guests' tables, and distributes flames on water pipes.
- **Buffet boy:** The counter worker who makes the drinks.

**- Waiter: Is the server who serves orders for guests.**

**In addition, there are recognized signs among café owners and workers, which are a way that use symbols and signals between the waiter and the buffet boy for preparing orders for guests. They are being used from a distance by using a trays, a cup, a plate, a glass, and small spoon, and they are as follows:**

**- A cup turned up down on a plate: Sugar free coffee.**

**- A cup turned half down on a plate and the other half outside the plate: A coffee with a small amount of sugar.**

**- A cup turned on its side inside the plate: slightly-sweet coffee.**

**- A cup with its regular position next to the plate on the right or on the left: balanced-sugar coffee.**

**- A cup with its regular position behind the plate: sweetened coffee.**

**- A cup in its regular position in the middle of the plate: more-sugar coffee.**

- A glass of water with a spoon inside it: means that the order is jujube drink.

- A glass of water with an upside down spoon inside it: means that the order is aniseed drink.

- An upside down plate inside the tray: means that the order is coco drink.

- An upside down plate and the spoon on its back: means that the order is sahlap drink.

- A spoon on a plate: means that the order is tea.

- A glass of water with a spoon on its top: means that the order is pot tea.

### **The café house and the leisure Economies:**

In the light of the fast changes witnessed by Egypt in the second half of the twentieth century, and after the cafes in the Egyptian society became like the European and Turkish café houses in previous period, these dramatic social changes had an influence also on the popular café regarding its structure and function on one hand, and the café as an economic activity that some people desire to work in its scope on the other hand.

The café house as an economic activity has attracted many people from upper Egypt in particular who came from crowded societies to Alexandria looking for jobs in guarding houses and companies, and in serving in some houses and touristic places. Therefore, many rural immigrants, especially from upper Egypt came to Alexandria, after they used to work as farmers. As soon as they moved to the city, they had opportunities to choose the jobs available according to their potentials, mentally, physically, and financially. Some of them were used to changing their professions, including those who worked in café houses in the city, for example. In the beginning, they had no experience in working in a café. But only the chance was the reason of their work in café, either as workers and later café owners, or café owners according to their circumstances. Upon the field study results, some café owners came to their cities for a visit, and some of them came for medical treatment. During their visit, they had the idea of establishing a cafe, for which they planned and later settled in the city.

Another form of joining café life as an economic activity is that some café owner viewed cafes as an investment project after several years of working and travelling abroad to obtain the necessary money to establish a project.

Therefore, the café house is the easiest economic project that can be considered and executed. Many young café owners have learnt this profession abroad, particularly those who went to Iraq and some other petroleum gulf countries. They visited these countries without a previous experience in much of the professions, including the café houses field.

Circumstances and chance were the reason these young people had to learn this profession, and a few years or months, they adapted to these professions and described them as the "current" professions. In addition, café owners a spire from some rest after years of hard work and traveling. They see that their immediate observation for their business inside the café allows them to take care of their money and to ensure the best performance.

As for the work system inside the café, there are several jobs for the café workers which are as follows:

**1-Chief: he is the buffet boy prepares hot and cold drinks. In many cases in the big café houses, this person do not prepare juice, tobacco, or water pipes. But there are other people for that who either stand next to him in the same area, or have other areas especially for them to do their work. In the cases where the café house is small with less guests, the chief alone prepares all different types of orders. In all cases, the chief who prepares hot drinks has a high standard in the café because in this case, he is either the café owner, or one of the experienced workers in the café, so that he is responsible for the work.**

**2-Waiter: he servers orders for café guests, and collects the drinks charges, as he is light in movements with a nice smile and behavior in treating guests. It is a profession that needs courtesy and good performance in welcoming guests. There are many café owners who abandon a certain café because of a waiter's bad behavior, which is an important thing to café owners in dealing with their employees.**

**The café owner usually interferes in solving some disputes that happen between guests and the waiter, which usually result from negligence in serving orders or from dispute about the drinks charges.**

**3-The juice boy: he prepares different kinds of juices and has an ability to make up certain types of juices by mixing some fruits together with adding milk, a syrup known as "orange sweet syrup" or "flower syrup" with adjusting the sugar amount. Mostly it needs a high skill in preparation. He should have an experience in that field.**

**4- Tobacco boy: He prepares water pipes and shisha. It is not an easy job inside the café, as he should be totally aware of all types of smoke and tobacco. In addition, he should prepare or directly observe the process of washing and cleaning water pipes with hot water after use. After serving water pipe and tobacco now in some Alexandrian cafes, they became one of the attraction factors for guests, as some cafes serve only "tobacco rolls" without the pipe, because it is considered a high level smoking for the elite and well educated people. Smoking water pipes in considered for lower levels and local people. Consequently, the touristic café houses which aim at improving performance use their guests' orders as a method towards improvement and development and choosing their guests indirectly.**

**5-Guard:** He collects empty cups, glasses and water pipes after people finish smoking, as well as a trays and tools, i.e. his job is "collecting tools" as an owner once said to give them to the counter worker next to the chief.

**6-The counter worker:** He help the chief in washing cups and trays, and giving them to the chief by hand in order to prepare the orders. The counter worker buys the café orders including sugar, tea, tobacco, and others.

**7-The desk:** It is the café management. It is directly responsible for work, reserving security, and balancing between workers in the relationships with each other. In addition, it is responsible for the café house before the official authorities, which is the café owner himself, one of his sons or relatives, or another deputy assigned by the owner. In addition, it observes the "orders", and count them with tools he deals using them with the waiter.

The number of workers differ, and there by the jobs they perform, according to the differences between a café and another regarding the cafe's size, activity, reputation acquired in the range of social community, and sometimes in the city community or National

**Community. Some cafes have obtained a National "Fame", such as "El-Feshawy" on Cairo, and "the commercial café" and "the Nile café" in Alexandria. Thus, the value and status of the café start from its high reputation social and functional history, to its location either in touristic places or in the local areas where the café status becomes a small "buffet" that serves orders to stores in its area (although the "buffet" function and role is not involved in our study).**

**The worker's wage in the café differs according to their job and behaviour with guests. Then, they obtain "tips" that became a main income row for those who work in these cafes.**

**It became a general phenomenon in Egypt, but one of the negative ones not the positive ones, as a person pays two charges for one service, the café owners organize this, as the more the worker collect tips, the less his salary is. Here there is a balance in the worker's income based on an opposite relationship between salary and tips.**

**From this, the worker who gains more than his salary is the chief who prepares orders, as he cannot take tips, because he does not deal with guests. The next worker is the water pipe boy who prepares water pipes,**

then comes the guard who collects the "tools" after the guests are gone, then the waiter who serves orders for the guests, as he is the one dealing with guests, thereby he gains more tips.

The chief who is responsible for preparing orders is in the top of the workers hierarchy, as he usually is the one who spent long years of his life in this job which became his profession, in addition to his experience and skills. On the other hand, some workers, such as the guard and the water pipe boy can change their jobs and have other jobs that make more money.

On the other hand, as mentioned before, there are some cafes that do not commit to that specialization. It is probable that the chief is the waiter and the guard in the same time. It depends on the working hours as this happens in the cases of opening for 24 hours and when guests' number is small, as well as according to the café location, size, and time of work.

As for the relationship between the work and the workers inside the cafe, it indicates mutual respect. As long as the worker commits to his job, there will be no problems in this relationship.

If the workers' performance changed, such as frequent absence from work and bad behaviour with guests, the café owner has no choice but to fire these workers.

The relationships between owners and workers in other fields are limited, but if these workers are relatives with the owner, they will visits and strong relationships outside the range of daily work. The dimensions of these relationships are clear in happy accessions and crises. In all cases, the café owners is aware of the living circumstance of his workers, the places they come from, addresses, and sometimes their families, in order to refer to them in any problems in their relationships.

As for the way to recruit these workers and conditions of their choice, most café owners agree that the "chief of café owners" who lives in Alexandria and known to all café owners and workers, and when the cafes need workers with specific characteristic, is the one to refer to. He immediately starts supplying the required workers on his own responsibility, regarding their ethics behavior, history, address and performance.

Alexandria is divided into different areas in this field. For example, El-Attareen, El-Manshya, and El-

**Anfoshy represent one area observed by one chief of café owners,**

**Therefore, there are other areas with different "chiefs" such as Moharam Bek, and Ghebrial as independent area, and El-Ramle line which is an independent areas. Every chief of café owners was mainly a café worker. As he grows old and losses his ability to work, he takes this job. He also registers himself in the café houses "guild" that has a section inside the Chamber of Commerce in Alexandria. This chief performs his job officially and usually when he is assigned and authorized by the café houses section in the Chamber of Commerce. He should gain support from a large number of café owners. If they did not gather in the Chamber of Commerce, the chief should collect their signatures on an official application to confirm their agreement to elect him so that his application is officially accepted.**

**As a reward to his services for cafes owners (through supplying their needs for trained workers) the chief visits them in holidays and occasions, and collects the commission for recruiting these workers.**

**But some cafes owners and workers think that recruitment system is not commuting to the café owner,**

and that there are many assignments are done by chance. One café workers tell his story in that work saying "one day I was sitting in the café waiting for someone to give me a job in the "architecture" profession as a paint worker. This person never showed up, and the waiter was absent that day. After a while of waiting, I saw that the café owner was very busy in the morning in serving orders and preparing drinks on the counter. Then I went to help him and perform the waiter's job. After my success in a few hours, the café owner insisted that I should have this job. Since then, I have been working as a waiter in this place for nine years.

Sometimes assignment to work through one of the "acquaintances" or "relatives" of the café owner who could be mediator to recruit some people. Assignment to work takes place through some workers, as a worker can bring one of his friends, relatives, or neighbours to join work in the café after the café owner's permission.

As for the conditions preferred by café owners about their workers:

**1-Honesty:** the worker should honest in his work, dealing with guests, and commitment to work. He is also committed to take cheques from guests, especially the

**waiter, for the determined price and not to increase it for his own good in order to make a financial profit on the café expense. Thus, every worker to join a café should be tested in the beginning of his work. For example, the owner might direct the new waiter to serve particular guest who is an acquaintance of the owner. But the waiter does not know that, so the guest leaves money more than the determined price on purpose as he agreed with the owner. When the waiter ends his shift and the cheques are submitted to the owner, he will know honest the waiter is, the same happens with other workers.**

**On the other hand, some owners put many mirrors on the internal walls and columns in side the café through which they can see what is happening between the guest and the waiter. As one café owner said, " I know the lips language and body language between a waiter and a guest".**

**2-The workers should be light, quick and smart. He should be able to provide service to the guest as quick as possible. This applies to all workers.**

**3-The worker should have a smile on his face when receiving guest. He should have a good behaviour. He must leave his family problems at home and full fell**

everybody's requirements without complaining or dissatisfaction with his tasks.

4-The owners prefer that workers are married and settled as this will provide settlement in the café, and married people have more responsibilities as others.

5-Sometimes owners recruit their relatives or friends which might exceeds the work limits to go to the in-law relationships which might benefit the owners as they think.

As for the relationship between workers, some searchers see that it is friendly and cooperative, and depends on how clever and skillful the worker is. But sometimes, some problems occur, particularly among waiters and other workers, if the café is big and has many waiters. Therefore, they might fight about where the guest sits and try to attract a large number of guests in their area. This might influence the sum of "tips" at the end.

Some disputes might happen between a waiter and the owner's deputy because of counting the cheques number. Sometimes the deputy accuses the waiter that he served some guests and did not give him the orders cheques. This means that what the waiter collect from

**the guests will be his. Here some disputes take place between workers, in which owner interferes. Except for that, their relationships are close and friendly and they usually exchange home visits.**

**As for the workers' perspective inside the café, they have made clear that some notes or issues are important to them, as follows:**

**1-Working in cafes are hectic, as they have to still standing, if he is a chief, or come and go, if he is a waiter, for a hundred times a day for more than eight or ten hours, which is tiring and not healthy.**

**2- No respect from the owner, as he only aims at profit, as the workers say. If the worker is absent for only one day for any reason, it is being deducted from his salary. If the absence is frequent, he is being replaced with another one, café owners do not accept the workers' excuses, no matter how strong they are.**

**3-Workers see that owners are bias to the guest, as they see that the customer is always right, and the worker is always wrong whatever bad behaviour did the guest show.**

**4-Some guests treat workers badly, as they order as if they were their servants. Sometimes the guest**

changes their mind about the order which was already served. The waiter takes the responsibility for that order, as he did not understand the order in the first place. This happens a lot and the waiter understands that. Thus, a skillful and clever waiter repeats the order for several time to inform the chief, so that he avoids such problems.

5-Café workers might have some health problems, especially cold and asthma because of staying up all night working, and because of the café location in the winter, as the waiter goes outside and inside the café for several times, so that he is exposed to winter diseases.

6-There are some problems from which the café workers suffer in general, which are:

a) There is no social insurance for workers, so that the owner won't pay a specific share of money for that prescription. But the workers face that on the long run.

b) There is no health services for work injuries, which indicates that there is no health insurance for that category of workers.

**c) There is no feeling of career security as many workers are being fired from work, and there are no warranties that can protect their rights.**

**In spite of that and all the problem the workers face, they think they are better off in the light of unemployment nowadays. In addition, working in cafes are tiring but it is a profitable job compared to other jobs performed by persons with the same skills and abilities.**

### **Café Houses and the Relationships of Entertainment and Acculturation:**

**In the light of the anthropology scientists saw in the initial social relationships in the range of local societies, they fulfil the main needs for persons which makes them care for performing these relations in the light of commitments imposed by the local and social community. From this, the relationships that take place in the frame of café-related life, plays an important role in a person's life, whether for café owners or for guests. Here the relationship limits are strongly related regarding their entertainment and economic role, that they can not be separated in some regards. There are several relationships between café owners and guests,**

especially the regular ones. Although entertainment plays a main role in building that relationship, it has some interests. Through the guest, a café owner can work and have profits. On the other hand, the guest have his good service, so that he can enjoy his leisure time in the café. This proves what Throstien Vieblen has said about happiness and enjoyment which are relative to leisure, and may connect to work performance. But the most important characteristic in these relationships in that they take the form of mutual respect as they achieve mutual interest. In the frame of these relationships that are based on fulfilling each other's desire, the café owner tries to attract guests by all methods and make him feel he is worthy of attention by all workers. Usually the café owner sits with the guests on the same tables, and distributes his time to sit with more guests.

Although they are entertainment relationships, it includes some interests, particularly if the guests were employees in an administrative association where the owner had some interests. Thus, the relationships are not limited only to the café limits, they exceed that to the wider society. The relationships take also the form

of social depth, particularly if they were in the social frame and regular visits outside the café limits.

There might be reasons to perform these special and intimate relationships, such that regular guests usually live in the same area of the café. Because of neighbourhood, the relationships strengthen. Sometimes there are regional and ethnic reasons that have an important role in enhancing these relationships, particularly if the café owners and guests are immigrants from the same city, such as Upper Egypt. This makes these relationships in the frame of imaginative relativeness that imposes itself in crises, immigration, assault, raids, or invasions. It enhances their commitment to each other which exceeds the limits of being only guests to be personal relationships.

In addition, relationships take other forms between café workers and guests, particularly between the waiter and the regular guests, as a waiter can serve their orders the minute they come into the café. In spite of this relationship inside the café, it takes a deep form outside the café, as it happens between the owner and his guest. As for the relationship between the guest and the rest of the workers, it disappears when the guest leaves the café.

As for the guests' relationships with each other inside the café, which aim at building a form of initial friendship in the frame of entertainment and education, we notice, we notice that each group of guests meet daily, weekly, or upon what they agreed on, so that they can stay up all night to play the popular games, such as dominos and chess. They also spend their time in intellectual talks regarding politics, economy, and changing from the social economy into the free market economy. The relationships between café guests are based on the basics of friendship and mutual understanding, and they are as follows:

**1-Age:** people of the same age category sit together in special meetings, trying to imitate older people, particularly in smoking water pipes and tobacco, in addition to playing popular games, such as dominos and chess.

**2- Occupation:** people of the same occupation or other related ones usually are related in a friendship that is based on meeting in a café, which enhances their relationship to a higher level of spending leisure time and entertainment in a café. Their relationships are deepened outside the café in the scope of their career and activities in their life. Mostly these meetings are an

opportunity to discuss the problems they face at work and to take work decisions to solve them.

**3-Education:** café guests are interested to relate according to their education. School mates usually meet in the café, sometimes they have different degrees but their jobs are related. This leads to the aspect of enjoyment and spending the leisure time.

As for café owners' evaluation of their business, they see that working in a café as an economic activity enables him to start a family and earn his living easily, particularly that it a stable income, as they say a stable small income is better than unstable large income. They also see that the café has many advantages, mainly that the owner feels that he has no boss, but he is the boss of himself without any orders from others, but he is the one who orders his workers, and pays their salaries. However, there are some problems the café owners face which are as follows:

**1-Working in a café as an activity,** although it is profitable, is tiring and difficult. The café owner sometimes is nervous, especially when a worker is absent. Then he is obliged to work since the early morning himself, even if he was up the previous night. Therefore, working or owning a café is not easy as

people might think, but it needs management and effort.

2-They suffer from the health problems resulting from this profession for the owner or the workers, mainly cold and influenza in the winter which result from mingling with ill guests. Because the places are narrow and most windows are closed all winter, the owner and workers are sick all winter. However, they exert their effort in their jobs.

3-Café owners suffer from the random estimations of taxes performed by the tax administration every five years. As one of the owners said, the tax and ministration estimated that I owe them 160.000 pounds in the last five years, as taxes. Is this the right estimation? Does it mean I will pay 32000 Pounds for each year, which is 3000 pound monthly!! Dealing with taxes is one of the most important problems that the cafes owners face.

4-Police interference: Policemen always interfere in our work, particularly at late night, and start investigating with guests and ask for their ID cards. It might end by taking the owner to the police station, until the next day to present before the representative of the prosecution. This is because one of the guests was

**not sitting straight in the presence of the police officer!! Many café owners made clear that these procedures, in spite of their importance, cause a lot of problems that affect the café reputation, and guests might leave the café if it was frequent. In addition, some police men are used to impose charges on the café owners to take them with no clear reason.**

**5-Irregular work shifts: It happens for any reason that it may lead to revenue loss. In the some time, owners cannot recruit reserve workers inside the café, It also leads to the owner performing the work himself, which requires that he should be trained in all types of work in the café.**

**6-Problems related to road occupation: Every month, there is a vacation of the road laws given by the local administration to the café owner, because there is an umbrella for protection from the sun, which is a problem from which café owners suffer. As for the seats out side the café, they are allowed to be put is a line aligned to the outer wall of the café. But this might cause embarrassment for guests, if a large number wants to sit out side the café. Here start the problems of road occupation.**

7- The café always has problems that occur between guests and the waiter, either because of the orders, the cheques, or the required service that satisfies the guest. Here some problems arise. The café owner should be present all the time. If he could not, he must have a deputy to replace him when he is absent because he is the only one who can absorb the guest's anger in that case. These problems are regularly frequent, as they expect them all the time.

However, performing the job inside the café is profitable. Upon that, they accept all problems that might arise from that job, and work on solving them in patience. Most café owners prefer to perform their jobs because it is free and they have no boss. But at the same time, they prefer stable jobs for their children to earn a stable income each month, while they can have the café as an additional activity in the future. Here, they can see that it is not necessary to change their current job, but they can enlarge the range of their business and perform some additional jobs that are not related to café houses. Some of them work commerce, contracting, the building business, in addition to the café house. Although it is a small percentage, but they do not exist

in Alexandria's café houses. They exist in the new areas, such as El-Raml and El-Agamy.

### **Café Houses and the local Community:**

There is an exchangeable relationship between the café and the local community, as we cannot ignore the role that the café plays in social life. In spite of the scientists' and researchers' interest in the local community, particularly the studies that were influenced by the Ethnographic introduction, mainly in the urban local community, there are some important aspects and phenomena which were not studied yet. They had no enough interest like the local community, for example popular cafes and their exchangeable role in the social life, and guests' participation in the perfect use of leisure time on the local community level. The café role is introduced when society is characterized by some interchangeable social relationships through which people's objective, perspective, and life reality are diverse in the shadow of social and cultural patterns that are characterized by urban development. Here come the differences in people's desires and activities of entertainment, leisure and work. In addition, there are kinds of subcultures that are imposed by their different diversities on the daily life style in the urban society and

culture. Therefore, the café house has a relationship with the local society, in addition to its close relationship with work and the economic activity, family life, life cycle and social and cultural upbringing, social and doctrine systems, professional and class hierarchy. Our anthropological study of café houses in Alexandria, and in the light of the relationship between the café and the urban local community, I had an interest in this part to study the types of café houses and their relationship with the surrounding community, the café house's role, and the marginal works that are closely related to café houses, in addition to the types, characteristics, and traits of café guests, the relationship between the café house and family life in the community range.

The café house in the urban society is related to professional aspects and different activities. In this case, criteria of leisure and entertainment are related with the criteria of work and performance through the café house. For example, some café houses are for guests who work as painters, builders, fishers, musicians, and artists. These café houses are in the areas of Bakus, Bab Omar Pasha, Ghebrial in Moharem Bek. In addition, there are the café houses of the elite, scientists, and intellectuals that are concentrated in areas of El-

**Ebrahimya, and El-Anfoushy, and the café houses that are related to an ethnic group that immigrated from specific regions, so that they were named after these cities or towns, including Souhag's sons café, Eleen's sons café which is a city in Kafr El-Sheikh governorate, El-Behera café, etc.**

**Classification of café houses differs according to the area where it exists. There are touristy cafes, and popular cafes, and normally there are differences between the guests' characteristics, as well as the service level and prices that differ upon the café's location, particularly after the drinks prices were liberated from the obligated pricing determined by café houses. They comply to demand and supply and the café type and location. The café owner has to inform the café houses section in the Chamber of Commerce about that, in order to have taxes on that basis.**

**The café role is determined in its relationship with the local community through demonstrating the following points:**

**a. The café house is considered a place to spend leisure time and have fun, in addition, it is a place where people can escape from their own problems.**

**b. In the light of the urban development and the high population, the café houses replaced houses in meeting people, particularly if they were not relatives.**

**c. The café house plays its role with certain population particularly from Upper Egypt, as it is considered a place for a certain population of a certain town to meet. A café house is prepared to receive new comers, either to work, visit, be medical treated, or spending the summer. It is also considered an information center for the original town through the new comers. Through cafes, guests from the same town can know the news of their families and friend, in addition, it is a place to deliver messages from and to people who live in Alexandria to their families and friends in their hometown.**

**d. Some café houses are considered branches of the charity associations headquarters specialized for their immigrated sons of a specific local community.**

**e. For example, the Religious Institution Cafe El-Asafra is considered a branch for the association of El-Bosailya sons in Aswan, which is the home town of the café owner and most of the guests. The association head quarter is located in El-khedewy street in west Alexandria.**

**The café, thus, is a connecting circle between the main association and those living in regions of urban extension in east Alexandria.**

**f. The café house is a place to publish news and announcements about happy or death occasions, as advertisements are posted on the café's wall, as the home town sons know that place because they go to check it immediately when they arrive to the café.**

**g. The cafe house is a place for workers to gather day and night, particularly the builders, as they go to work from the café with their contractors who are committed to recruit. It is also a place to give their salaries and wages when they meet at night with the employers.**

**h. The café house is a place to make achievement in work, as guests meet agents and contractors who are committed to perform their works. For example, the commercial café in El-kournish street in Alexandria, cafes all around the courts building in El-Manshia, and the cafes near the agency of distributing vegetables and fruits in El-Hadara in Alexandria**

**i. Café houses specialized in certain professional categories play an important role in the range of the**

local community, including cafes that welcomes artists and musical bands, as contracts for throwing parties and weddings are being written, and the cafes of reciting Qura'an, which are known as the sheikhs cafes for funerals.

j. The café house plays a role in a special type of media in the local community, as they are considered places to know the news of the regular guests. The owner or the waiter has good knowledge of their directions and movements, so that they can inform any one that asks about them, as well as the time they come and leave. In many cases, these regular guests inform the café owner of their phone number to contact them when necessary, particularly in cases concerned with their interests.

k. Some café houses are considered places to make business contracts, as through them, people who want to work abroad can have their working contracts, through some well-known brokers in this field.

l. We cannot deny the importance of the café and its role in the literal and cultural community, as some café were considered literal saloons where all scientific, literal, artistic, and political issues are discussed. For example, these cafes include El-Bourevage café in

Alexandria where authors and artists meet, such as Nagib Mahfouz, the late Tawfik El-Hakim, etc. The café status now do not exist in the light of the urban infrastructural changes that Alexandria has witnessed in general, and in the Kournish area in particular. Huge buildings have replaced the old small ones. However, some cafes still play the same role in developing the literal, cultural, and artistic awareness in Alexandria.

As for the café work in the frame of the urban local community culture, and in the light of the daily life style, and their connecting to the café guests, the café quests are different such as regular guests who visit the café daily and those who visit the café according to their interests.

Types of guests differ according to the time of their visit to the café. In the morning, café guests are contractor, businessmen, importers, lawyers, and agents. Therefore, many cafes play their role as a work office, where movement starts inside the café. In this time, the elderly and retired people visit the café, as the study revealed that they have special cafes. In the afternoon, until 4 P.m., it is a quiet time in work in many cafes. After that comes the evening or the night period, which starts from 5 P.m. to the mid-night, and it

is the main stage in the café work and the leisure time, as many guests with different categories and cultures visit.

No doubt that visiting a café and the meeting between its guests are not limited to the desire to spend the leisure time only, but it is also an opportunity to get closer to the daily life of individuals and groups in the Egyptian society, and throwing the light on its problems through unofficial discussions which elevate the social heritage to the language of the daily life about important issues which individuals discuss during their interaction with the daily situations. This takes place in the frame of unofficial life style between confirmation and exaggeration, the voice or the discussions being raised or decreased, as well as the way of talking, and listening, etc. In the light of this, the café is considered a place to hold daily conferences in the unofficial speech language concerning the issues and problems that society faces.

The current study revealed the most important issues that are imposed on the daily life, which are as follows:

*Firstly*, the economic problems that occupy many discussions of the café guests, such as problems of the

decreasing wages and bonuses, what they call the pain killer bonus meaning that they look like pain killers for chronic diseases, the problems of high prices of food like meat, sellers greed, daily chaos of life in the markets, lack of health observation on food and consumers commodities, and the bad services, as one subject says, the daily news paper, you grab it, read it, and then you should wash your hands off its ink. The daily speech language in the café is characterized by criticism and takes the form of a comparison between the economic life inside Egypt and the other countries.

*Secondly*, the increase in population, as they see that it is a big problem and an obstacle in the way of development, because any increase in production size does not influence luxury. They appreciate the government role in that. They also see that the population increase is one of the factors that mitigate the criticism language in the daily speech to the government and its work, and that the government is weak in the population increase, particularly in building schools, hospitals, houses, and transportation means. Then, the daily speech language inside the café discusses the population problems, particularly by the uneducated category. They see that there is no

population problem in Egypt and that God gives us everything, and that each child has its destiny in the sky before it was born. The prophet Mohammed also prohibited family planning saying that we should be married and have children as I will be proud of you in front of all nations on the dooms day.

Therefore, discussions of national issues reveals that the well-educated categories are the most ones to carry the country's problems and they initiate to do something to face these general problems.

*Thirdly*, the problems of recruitment, work, and unemployment, as the guests realize that this problem threatens everybody in Egypt, after graduates of school and universities increased. The graduate waits for his recruitment for ten years or more. Therefore, the lack of opportunities for young people led some of them to practice jobs that are not their specializations which they studied all their life. We find that a graduate engineer works as a waiter in a hotel. Some of them worked as builders with contractors, although they are graduates of universities. We cannot deny that the unemployment phenomenon in Egypt now caused some problems, such as deviation of some young people, such as drugs addiction, religious extremism. Café owners

see that the decreasing number of café guests of young people is a result of the common unemployment situation, as the young people work and earn a wage to spend their leisure time inside a café, while the unemployed people can not afford to go to the café, and they prefer to stay at home or wander in the streets. But this does not mean that some limited-income guests do not visit cafes frequently. But they do that in order to kill their leisure time. Café owners think that these categories cause many problems, either with each other, with other guests, or with café workers. Thus, unemployment causes leisure time, which causes problems with others.

*Fourthly*, the issues related with extremism and terrorism, as many subjects made clear that they did not know any thing about these events before, as life was easier and safer without any problems. But today unemployment and leisure time lead many young people to be victims of extremism and terrorism.

*Fifthly*, the issues related with the athletic life in Egypt, particularly football, as it controls the mind of most ideas and discussions of youth categories inside cafes, especially where there is a football game for the biggest teams in Egypt on the T.V in the café. Here, it

**might reach fights between these teams fans. The guests are occupied for a long time after the game in criticizing the players of the times or praising their performance.**

**As for the factors by which the owner attracts his guests, they have two aspects, from the view point of the owners, and the other is from the guests. This is an unannounced competition between cafes, particularly if they were next to each other. Every café tries to make a customer, as owners made clear that making a customer means the methods through which the café can make his regular guests in a large number, they think it happens as follows:**

**1- Good service: Good quality of drinks, clean tools, and the service make a guest feels it has good service and performance.**

**2- Fast orders and no delay because cafes that are slow in serving orders for their guests lead the guest to leave the café, and look for another one until they find their suitable place with good and fast service.**

**3- No exaggeration in drinks prices, as the suitable drinks prices make guests regular, while if they are exaggerated leads them to find another café.**

**4- Good behaviour of the waiter with the café guests, as he is considered the café's front and a factor of attracting or repelling guests in the first place, because their relationship is direct. The better the waiter's behaviour and the faster his service is, the more the guest is related to the café.**

**As for the attraction factors in a cafe, the owners think that, in addition to the waiters not pushing on the guests directly or indirectly. The pushing here means that the waiter frequently passes by the guest during his visit to the café to drink something after he finishes his drink. This leads the guest to be embarrassed and leave quickly. Other waiters do not come to the guest unless he asks for a certain drink. Some guests confirmed that one of the attraction factors to a café is also the security aspect, good reputation, the social and entertaining long history of the café which expresses the originality of any café, in addition to the quality of its guests and characteristics.**

## **Conclusion**

**This research is about the café culture, between entertainment and work, which is a study for the daily life style – as a way of life - and an important and necessary introduction to know the way to occupy a leisure time of the members of the second Egyptian city community, in space and population. The study took the example of the popular café as an area of a field study. The café does not represent a place of entertainment and kill free time only, but also for practicing many professional and commercial activities and social relationships that have intimacy of cooperation among members of one group, and among friends and peers, as well as the social symbols as these social group are considered the natural result of the increasing urban society, and an alternative for social, emotional and psychological fulfillment that families had.**

**Thus, our study has concluded some notes or issues in the form of research results, as follows:**

***Firstly*, the study demonstrated that there is a connection between a café and an ecological location, and the urban and economical value such as its location in the city centre for instance, or its approximate to**

commercial stores and the daily active centre. The study revealed that there is a relationship between the café nature, history and status in the community, and the type of guests who visit it, in the light of distinguishing the social categories, which made cafes sometimes take the specialized descriptive form, such as cafes of artist, workers, intellectuals, and authors.

*Secondly*, the study revealed that there is a strong relationship between the café and the local community in the frame of leisure and entertainment, on one hand, and in the frame of work and economic activity on the other hand. The leisure phenomenon is no longer one of the issues that can be ignored in a society that is scientifically, industrially and technologically developed with replacing human labor with the auto motion in the production processes.

*Thirdly*, the leisure and entertainment experience is considered interesting in researches and studies in all societies and cultures, as they represent one of the social systems that are included in the total structure of a society. Thus, all institutions of the industrial urban community take responsibility for preparing the opportunities to entertain their members. The café role

now became more important in the light of the urban growth and population explosion.

*Fourthly*, saying that the leisure and entertainment phenomenon is an issue not to be raised but in the industrial communities and the abundance societies is wrong. When industrial and developed societies care to provide place and establishment of leisure, such as tennis stadiums, golf stadiums, horse-riding areas, and others, aiming at entertainment fun, and reactivation to suit the working times and the leisure times, developed and poor communities, whose members are blamed to waste a part of their time, urged to work and develop to get out of retardness, as blame in these situations become a normal thing in the limits of local communities. For example, visiting cafes is related to laziness, unemployment, thieves, gangsters, and burglars at first. There was no complete information about the role that a popular café could play in entertainment; especially that it is related to a special pattern of leisure culture that aims at establishing the positive values of free time. It is the time filled with humane, spiritual, physical, and intellectual aspects. Thus, we can say that the café and its culture and role

work on helping people to make peace with the social culture structure of their changing life patterns.

*Fifthly*, the study revealed that the popular café and its culture between entertainment and work are not an urban luxury that some café owners want, but the café's important role in the urban community life, particularly that the café internal structure is developing as is the developed life nature. Therefore, the more the café size increases, the more its activities and guests are, and the more complicated are its work systems and heirarcy sequence of the internal structure, and the more it has determined tasks assigned to each worker.

Therefore, although the current study has been launched from the analysis of the leisure society in the light of our study of the popular café, the research elements have revealed that there are evidence and meanings of interaction between the leisure nature, culture, culture, and social systems.

When some people view leisure as the lost of meaning and lack of interest in life, which result in lack of work value, others see that leisure started to acquire its identity inside social patterns according to the role it can play in people's lives. Thus, the popular café

**became an evident characteristic in the Egyptian social life. Although cafes existed before, their significances as long as the urban growth and development rates increase.**

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