THE FOURTH WORLD PEOPLE IN AFFLUENT SOCIETIES: AN

ANALYSIS OF SELF-HELP HOUSING AND ITS IMPACT

by

Joao Antonio M. R. Farinha

A Thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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Department of City Planning

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

St. Luke 6, 20-21

But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

St. Luke 6, 24-25

He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

St. Luke 1, 51-53

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the Fourth World in affluent
societies, and proposes a way to fight its extreme poverty
and social exclusion.

The Fourth World is the social stratum that exists
at the bottom of the society and that has been excluded
from the major social, economic and cultural rewards that
have come to others with world change. The Fourth World
exists in every country, but it is more alienated in indus-
trial and urbanized Western societies.

Chapter I surveys in-depth the Fourth World in
order to characterize its destitute inhabitants, isolated
communities, hard conditions of life, history throughout
the last centuries, and prospects for the future. The
chapter is based mainly on publications from the Inter-
national Fourth World Movement, which is recognized by the
United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe. Also
included are some photographs from Portuguese and French
Fourth World communities.

Chapter II extensively analyses the causes of the
persistence of poverty in affluent societies. Three
theories emerge from the social science literature on the
subject: The Cultural perspective postulates a "culture

of poverty," and that the behavior of the poor is the factor responsible for the persistence of poverty. The Structural perspective hypothesizes that the unjust and oppressive structure of society is the principal cause of the maintenance of poverty. The third perspective encompasses both cultural and structural aspects in accounting for the persistence of poverty in affluent societies. Authors like Oscar Lewis, Michael Harrington, Ian Adams, Eleanor Leacock, Charles Valentine and Chaim Waxman, among others, represent these viewpoints.

Chapter III advocates that housing, understood as both the physical commodity and, in particular, the process of achieving that commodity, can be a fulcrum for the improvement of the Fourth World situation, and a catalyst for the fight against poverty. The author's experience in a Fourth World community in a European country is capitalized on and used as background support especially in this chapter. Authors like John F. C. Turner, Colin Ward, Robert Fichter, and several others, contribute to this chapter.

Chapter IV analyses three basic self-helped housing methods: Independent Self-Help, Aided Self-Help, and Employed Self-Help Housing. The methods are evaluated according to their capacities to not only produce houses for the Fourth World, but essentially to fight the causes for the persistence of poverty. Some improvements to the

methods are also proposed.

This work is a natural outcome of five years of voluntary work in a Fourth World community, where some of the basic ideas advocated in this thesis started to grow; and of two years of study in the City Planning Program at the University of Manitoba, where those basic ideas gained form and found theoretical concepts to grow.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to study the Fourth World in affluent societies. Its purpose is to analyse the complex situation, to identify the causes of its existence, and to propose a way to catalyse the fight against extreme poverty and social exclusion found in the Fourth World.

The hypothesis of this thesis is that a very powerful measure in improving the conditions of the Fourth World is self-help methods associated with proper external support--as opposed to passive acceptance of welfare.

This hypothesis has its roots in the author's experience in a Fourth World community, but it is developed and supported by data drawn from an exhaustive analysis of the Social Science literature.

The experience in Bairro das Marianas, a Fourth World community, is described in detail in an Appendix to this thesis. The most important observation in the Bairro was that by the involvement of the population in housing improvements, development of the Bairro, and cultural activities combined with the active support of a group of Christians, the people of Bairro das Marianas achieved high organization, physical improvements, and confidence that a better way of life was possible.

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In this thesis the focus will be on this concept of Self-Help and, even more narrowly, upon Self-Help in the area of housing. However, the meaning and concept of housing is a broad and encompassing one. Housing, in this context, includes the physical commodity, the process and activities of people achieving that commodity including education, skill learning and cultural development, as well as the community itself with its common tasks, links, and internal social organization.

An extensive analysis of the social science literature reveals that the causes of poverty are both "the Culture of Poverty" and the oppressive structure of the society. To the extent that Self-Help housing can be shown to eradicate these causes of poverty and its persistence, will the hypothesis be considered to be established.

CHAPTER I

THE FOURTH WORLD

The Fourth World is the social stratum that exists
at the bottom of the society and that has been excluded
from the major social, economic and cultural rewards that
have come to others with world change which have taken
place in every political system since the last century.
The Fourth World population is the poorest of the poor,
and constitutes five to ten percent of the population in
developed countries.[1]

The Fourth World exists in every country, developed
or underdeveloped, occidental or oriental. But it is more
alienating in industrial and urbanized western societies as
poverty is more pronounced when juxtaposed with abundance.

A Fourth World is born when there is a marked lack
of all the following: education, culture, material well-
being, job stability, proper housing, health, union and
political power, among the same people. These people,
trapped in hard-core poverty, segregated and isolated from
the society, are unable to break away from their enclosed
circle and are thus destined to pass on their conditions

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[1]Le Mouvement A.T.D. Quart Monde. Editions Science
et Service. Paris, France, 1977.

to their children.

The Fourth World population is estimated to be two million in France[1] and eight million in the European Economic Community.[2] In developing countries the Fourth World communities take the names of "Barriadas," "Favelas," "Buntees," "Barrios de Lata," or "Bidonvilles," and provide the homes for roughly one-third of the urban population.

In spite of the fact that the Fourth World population is much larger in developing countries like Latin America, Asia, or Africa, this thesis will focus on the European and North American Fourth World. This option is taken for three main reasons.

First, the Fourth World is much more segregated and excluded from the rest of society in Europe and North America than in any other part of the world .

Second, the resources available to fight the extreme poverty of the Fourth World are much greater in rich countries than in poor countries.

Third, the author's experience in a Fourth World community in a European country can be capitalized on and used as background support for this thesis.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Steenwijk, Alwine. The Fourth World, Touchstone of European Democracy. A publication of International Fourth World Movement, 1977, p. 6.

Historical Background

In order to have a good understanding of the Fourth World and perceive it in its collective dimensions, a brief look into its history is necessary.

We could go as far back in time as the agricultural revolution, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau did, to explain the origin of inequality, property and misery; but such a long way through history would take a lifetime to explore. So we will restrict this survey to the last few centuries in Europe.

The problem with the history of the poor is that their history was never told; or when the poor sporadically appear in the historian's textbook it is because they play a specific role in the history of the rich and powerful social classes. As Steenwijk states: "We come across the very poor on the roads of the pilgrims, when secular justice takes over certain penalties of the Inquisition: towns of Bradant and surrounding provinces are being rid of their undeserving poor, sent off on faraway pilgrimmages because of petty crimes."[1] We also come across the poor when "hordes of destitute peasants from across the Rhine suddenly loom up in our textbooks, when they cause trouble for the nobility and emergent bourgeoisie, in Luther's time."[2] However, in spite of the fact that the disappearances of the poor from history are as fast as their appearances

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[1]Ibid., p. 7. [2]Ibid., p. 7.

were brief , Lewis Mumford was able to describe the living

conditions of the lower classes in this way:

> The urban congestion in the seventeenth century
> affected every part of the city: but first of all it
> affected the dwellings of the poor. . . . Competition
> for space by poor unprotected immigrants had the same
> effect on seventeenth-century Paris or Edinburgh as
> on eighteenth-century Manchester and nineteenth-century
> Liverpool and New York: the ground rents rose and the
> living quarters worsened. . . . To understand the
> source of this congestion, apart from the desire for
> wringing profits out of the necessities of the poor,
> unable like their economic superiors to bargain, one
> must realize that by the seventeenth century destitu-
> tion had been accepted as the normal lot in life for
> a considerable part of the population. Without the
> spur of poverty and famine, they could not be expected
> to work for starvation wages. Misery at the bottom
> was the foundation for the luxury at the top. As
> much as a quarter of the urban population in the bigger
> cities, it has been estimated, consisted of casuals
> and beggars: it was this surplus that made for what
> was considered, by classic capitalism, to be a healthy
> labor market, in which the capitalist hired labor on
> his own terms, or dismissed workers at will, without
> notice, without bothering as to what happened to either
> the worker or the city under such inhuman conditions.
> In a memorandum dated 1684 the Chief of Police of Paris
> referred to the "frightful misery that afflicts the
> greater part of the population of this great city."[1]

Lewis Mumford goes on to say that "between forty

and sixty-five thousand were reduced to outright beggary."[2]

Joseph Wresinski, a researcher of the history of the Fourth

World, presents some figures that match those presented by

Mumford. Wresinski indicates that sixteenth-century Paris

had thirty thousand beggars in a population of one hundred

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[1]Mumford, Lewis. The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects. 1961.

[2]Ibid.

thousand inhabitants.[1]

Lewis Mumford states bluntly,

> . . . there was nothing exceptional about Paris.
> When Herman Melville, as a boy, visited the pros-
> perous city of Liverpool in the eighteen-thirties,
> he found a woman with two babies at her breast
> dying in a cellar opening under the sidewalk.
> Despite his efforts to obtain aid, no one would
> succour these creatures. They were removed only
> when their dead bodies stank. . . . With appro-
> priate variations, these conditions held throughout
> Europe, and in the more prosperous seaports of
> North America.[2]

With the Industrial Revolution, although rapid economic growth takes place, the living conditions of the poor are not improved. New social classes are thrown into poverty, and exploitation in factories is common-place.

H. G. Wells in "The Outline of History" says:

> As the Industrial Revolution went on, a great
> gulf opened between employer and employed. In the
> past every manufacturing worker had the hope of
> becoming an independent master. . . . But now a
> factory and its engines and machines became a vast
> and costly thing measured by the scale of the
> worker's pocket. . . . "Setting up for oneself"
> ceased to be a normal hope for an artisan. The
> immediate effect of the Industrial Revolution upon
> the countries to which it came, was to cause a vast,
> distressful shifting and stirring of the mute,
> uneducated, leaderless, and now more and more
> propertyless common population. The small cultiva-
> tors and peasants, ruined and dislodged by the
> great land owners, drifted towards the new manu-
> facturing regions, and there they joined the

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[1]Wresinski, Joseph. Le Droit D'Habiter la Terre. Editions Science et Service, France, 1976.

[2]Mumford, Lewis. Op. cit.

families of the impoverished and degraded craftsmen
in the factories. Great towns of squalid houses
came into existence.[1]

Such were the conditions of the proletarian classes.
However, below this class there was an even poorer one that
Karl Marx called "the stagnant population."

> The stagnant population forms a part of the active
> labour army, but with extremely irregular employment.
> Hence it furnishes to capital an inexhaustible reser-
> voir of disposable labour-power. Its conditions of
> life sink below the average normal level of the working
> class; this makes it at once the broad basis of
> special branches of capitalist exploitation.[2]

Two important points therefore stand out from this
history.

1) The poor through the last few centuries have
had a very destitute way of life. They have been very
poorly lodged in substandard housing and have had a tremen-
dous degree of insecurity. (This will be discussed later
in the thesis.)

2) There is a similarity between the poverty of
the last few centuries and the Fourth World. The ancestry
of the Fourth World can be traced to Karl Marx's "stagnant
population" of the nineteenth century. As Alwine Steenwijk
states: "For all historical research we have had the occa-
sion to carry out ourselves in A.T.D.[3] seems to indicate

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[1]Wells, H. G. The Outline of History. Garden
City, New York, 1971.

[2]Marx, Karl. Capital, a Critique of Political
Economy. 1906.

[3]A.T.D. = Aide à Toute Ditresse--The International
Fourth World Movement.

that the very poor today are no other than the descendants
of the very poor of yesterday, of nineteenth century urban
and rural 'sub-proletarians.'"[1] The Fourth World is hence
a heritage of the misery of the nineteenth century. The
ancestors of the Fourth World population were unable to
prepare their way to a better future; and Fourth World
populations have never received the means to reach the
lowest rung of the social and economic ladder.

<div align="center">

Fourth World Communities and Population
in the Twentieth Century

</div>

Relegated to the periphery of the city, enclosed in
the inner-city, or neglected in public housing projects,
Fourth World communities are essentially the same: they are
physically, economically and culturally segregated from
society.

However, it is at the periphery of the city where
the Fourth World, hidden from the view of authorities,
City Hall and society, experiences its most extreme pov-
erty. Here houses are built on vacant lands far away
from the built-up areas of the city inside the so-called
urban fringe. The land usually belongs to an absent
owner, or is situated in unwanted areas, for example,
near a swamp, a main railway track, or a potential flood
area. As these Fourth World communities on the periphery

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[1]Steenwijk, Alwine, op. cit.

of a city are clandestine, they do not have water supply, sewage systems, fire protection, paved roads, public transit, and other primary services.

Housing conditions, needless to say, are very bad, with cement floors, wooden walls, and corrugated roofs. On rainy days pools of water are formed by the combination of irregular floors and leaking roofs. Outside, on the streets, there is much mud and pools of stagnant water.

Conditions of life are very difficult. The school, the hospital, the employment center, the city, in a word, are always far away from the community. To use these public services a Fourth World inhabitant has to spend large amounts of time and money in transportation. First he has to cross the community he lives in, then to walk through no man's land.[2] When he finally arrives at the city and his destination, he may be told that such a service is not available to him for trivial reasons, like his not having filled out a form correctly.

Figures 1 and 2 are examples of a Fourth World community at the periphery of a city, and they show the hard conditions of life. These photos were taken in the "Bairro das Marianas"[3] during the summer of 1980. Bairro

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[1]No man's land can be thought of as the vacant land between the Fourth World community and the built-up area of the city.

[2]For a detailed description of Bairro das Marianas and experience that took place for five years, refer to the Appendix.
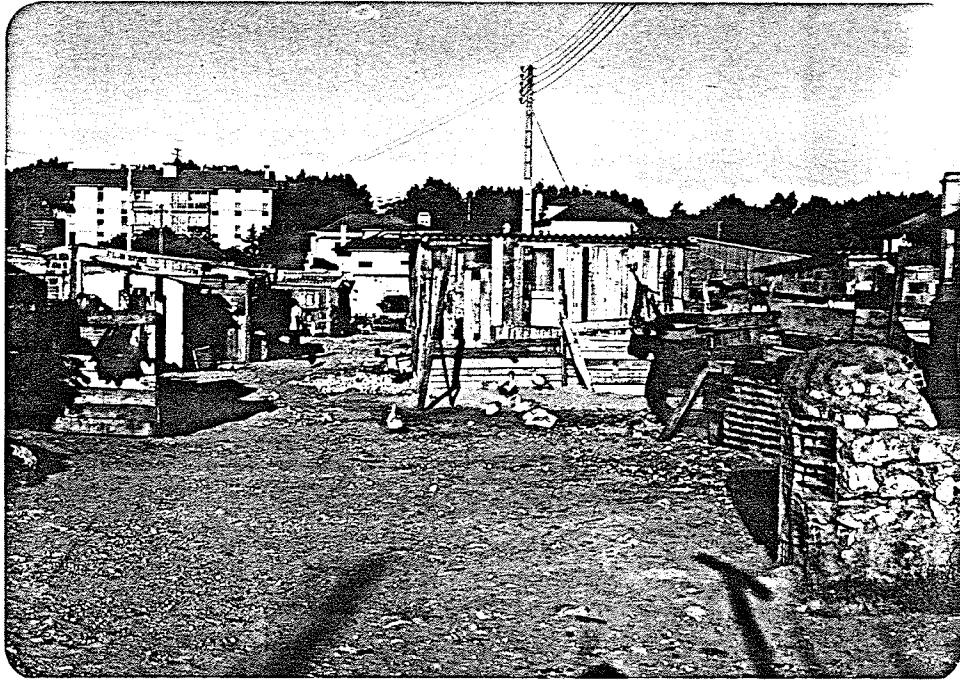
11

Fig. 1. Bairro das Marianas. A Fourth World Community in the urban fringe of Lisbon, Portugal.

Fig. 2. Another view of Bairro das Marianas. On the left side is a house achieved through self-helped improvement.

das Marianas is situated in the urban fringe of Lisbon in Portugal, and occupies a section of potential flood area in the small town of Carcavelos. As the photos document, roads are not paved, sewage is directed to the streets, animals are left to roam freely to feed on the garbage, and the houses are in very poor condition.

On the special aspect of housing it is interesting to note that on the left side of Fig. 2, the fairly good house was achieved through self-helped improvement. Several other houses were also involved in self-helped improvement programs organized by a group of Christians of Carcavelos, of which the author was a member. But, due to lack of funds, no money was available from the City Hall or any governmental agencies within the city. Without the benefit of tenant ownership of the land, only small physical improvements were achieved.

Fourth World communities at the periphery of a city are more frequent in the less developed countries of Europe, like Portugal or Spain, but they also exist in more developed countries, like France[1] as Fig. 3 documents.

The Fourth World population, isolated within their communities whether they are at the periphery of a city or inside the inner-city, have no participation in or integration with the major institutions of the larger society. People do not belong to labor unions, neither are they

[1] Le Mouvement A.T.D. Quart Monde, op. cit.
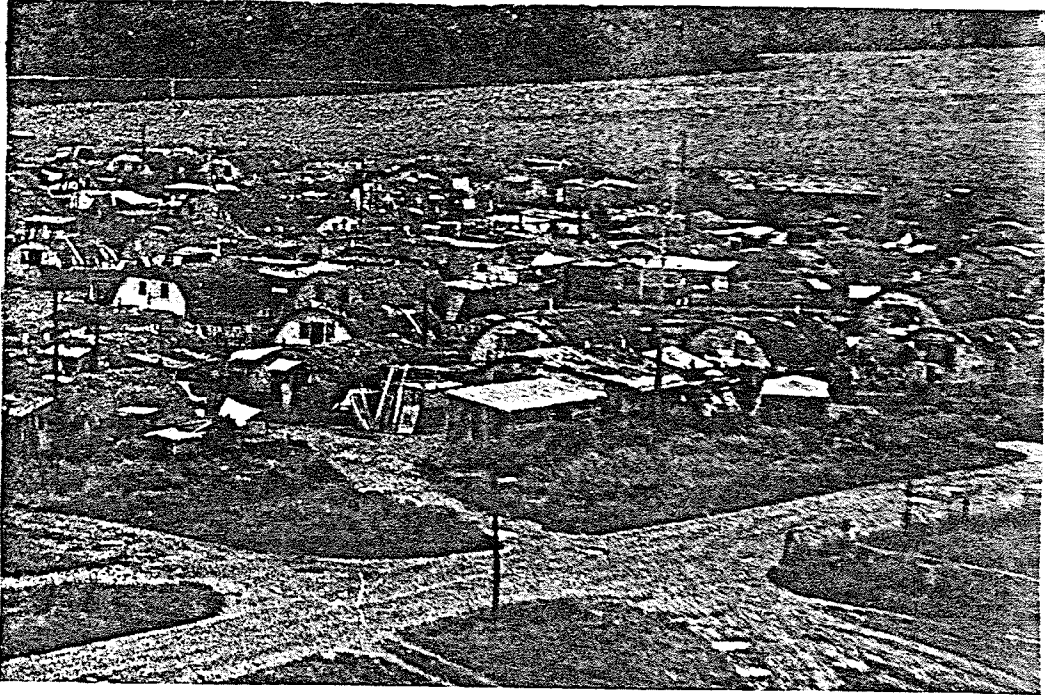
Fig. 3. Fourth World community at the periphery of a city in France.

members of political parties. There is a high degree of unemployment and under-employment that leads to low income and material deprivation. In France, for example, 16% of the population has less than two-thirds of the average income per capita, about one million people are illiterate, another million are looking for employment, and 16 million are badly lodged.[1]

>   In the United Kingdom we know that:

>   - 118,000 children live in children's homes or foster homes. (Many of their parents were also "in care" as children.)

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[1]Le Mouvement A.T.D. Quart Monde, op. cit.

- 300,000 children reach 16 with no academic qualifications or preparation for work. (Many of these can barely read and write.)[1]

Families of the Fourth World are characterized by the following:

1) "They lack the means to provide children with all the elements essential to their well-being and development (income, housing, health, family life)."[2] See Fig. 4.

2) "Their children leave school uneducated and without the skills and opportunities to accumulate knowledge and become fully fledged participating citizens."[3] See Fig. 5.

3) Children are introduced very early to the hard life of adults and very often are forced to quit school at a very early age (12-14 years of age) to earn money through begging on the streets or to work at low paying jobs suited to children, like shining shoes, selling newspapers, or peddling. Fig. 6 shows Fourth World children who will soon follow the steps of their brothers, and leave school for a money-earning activity.

There is thus a vicious cycle. Children inherit their parents' poverty and in turn pass it onto their children. As Steenwijk puts it:

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[1] Poverty and the Fourth World. A publication of the International Fourth World Movement, 1979.

[2] Ibid.   [3] Ibid.
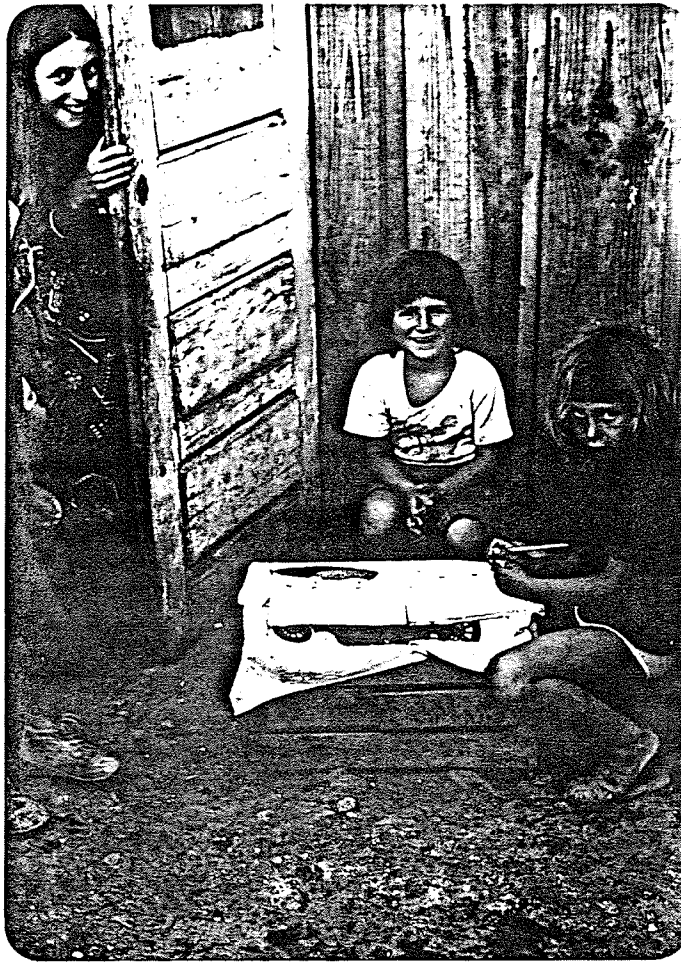
Fig. 4.   Fourth World children doing their homework
on the street because they have no proper facilities at home.
                How far will they go on in their studies?

Fig. 5.   A very young boy helps his peddler father.

Fig. 6

Lack of minimal education means not only lack of professional training but even unfitness for the un- qualified manual labour offered on a modern labour market. This makes, at best, for underemployment, for irregular low-paid jobs in marginal or tertiary industries, which in turn mean lack of resources, of housing and health.[1]

This insiduous state of affairs is reflected in the invisibility of the Fourth World. It is directly pro- portional to the development of a country; the more devel- oped a country is, the more invisible is the Fourth World. It is as if the present poverty of the Fourth World is

[1]Steenwijk, Alwine, op. cit.

immune to progress.[1]

Michael Harrington in "The Other America, Poverty in the United States," describes the phenomenon in a very clear way:

> The poor still inhabit the miserable housing in the central area, but they are increasingly isolated from contact with, or sight of, anybody else. Middle-class women coming in from suburbia on a rare trip may catch the merest glimpse of the other America on the way to an evening at the theatre, but their children are segregated in suburban schools. The business or professional man drives along the fringes of slums in a car or bus, but it is not an important experience to him. The failures, the unskilled, the disabled, the aged, and the minorities are right there, across the tracks, where they have always been. But hardly anyone else is.[2]

He goes on to say that forty to fifty thousand people are becoming "increasingly invisible" in the United States, political invisibility being the most pronounced.

> The poor are politically invisible. It is one of the cruelest ironies of social life in advanced countries that the dispossessed at the bottom of society are unable to speak for themselves.[3]

In the next chapter the causes for the persistence of poverty in affluent societies will be analysed.

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[1] Harrington, Michael. The Other America, Poverty in the United States. MacMillan, New York, 1964.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSISTENCE OF POVERTY

IN AFFLUENT SOCIETIES

How is it possible that 8 million people in the wealthy countries of the European Economic Market,[1] 25.9 million people in the rich United States,[2] and 2.8 million people in prosperous Canada[3] are still living in poverty?

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[1] Steenwijk, Alwine, op. cit., p. 6.

[2] Caskie, Donald. Canadian Fact Book on Poverty 1979. Published by Canadian Council on Social Development, 1979.
       The numbers refer to the year 1975 and use the poverty line defined by Statistics Canada (Revised), which is $7,505 (Canadian dollars) for a family of four persons.

[3] Ibid.
       The numbers refer to the year 1976 and use the poverty line defined by Statistics Canada (Revised), which is $8,079 for a family of four persons.
       Poverty line is one method of measuring poverty. It can be based on an absolute approach, which considers only the physical minimum necessities for an individual or a family to survive, or a relative approach, which considers not only the minimum necessities to survive, but the resources required for a person to live with dignity, defined according to the living standards of the community.
       Figures on poverty vary according to the poverty line used. In this thesis, such is essentially based on the absolute approach, because it best shows the number of people living under a subsistence level.
       Had a relative poverty line been adopted, the figures about poverty would have almost doubled, and it would have shown the number of people living under a "dignity" level.

18

These astonishing figures representing roughly ten percent of the population of the most developed countries in the world, are not only living below a subsistence level, but are also excluded from the mainstream of a democratic society. How can this be possible?

Two main theories explain the causes of this fact. The "Cultural" or "Internal" theory looks at the cultural and internal characteristics of the poor to explain the persistence of poverty. The "Structural" or "External" theory looks at the structure of a society and at the factors that are external to the lower class to explain the persistence of poverty.

These two theories differ on the conceptualization and explanation of poverty. In recent years, a third theory has emerged which assumes that both Cultural and Structural factors contribute to the persistence of poverty.

This chapter will examine each of these three theories. The theorists and their proposals will also be discussed in great detail. The criticisms of each perspective in the social science literature, as well as the social policies which follow from them, will be presented.

The Cultural Perspective

Not all the authors that subscribe to the cultural perspective agree on every issue, but all advocate that the

patterns of behavior and values poor people develop to cope with deprivation and isolation deprive them and their children of the opportunity to take full advantage of mobility opportunities that may occur in their lifetime. The "Culturalists" also "urge resocialization of the poor, particularly the children, to prevent perpetuation of their 'dysfunctional' subculture."[1]

Oscar Lewis is the most prominent proponent of the view that poverty is perpetuated by the culture or subculture of the poor, and is the first author to introduce the concept of "Culture of Poverty." This concept is the basis of the cultural perspective, and thus its extensive analysis is required.

Culture of Poverty is a way of life that develops among some of the poor in societies that are characterized by the following set of conditions:

1) A cash economy, wage labor and production for profit.

2) A persistently high rate of unemployment and underemployment for unskilled labor.

3) Low wages.

4) The failure to provide social, political, and economic organization, either on a voluntary basis or by government imposition, for the low-income population.

5) The existence of a set of values in the dominant class which stresses the accumulation of wealth

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[1]Schwartz, Audrey. "A Further Look at 'Culture of Poverty:' Ten Caracas Barrios." Published in <u>Sociology and Social Research</u> 59 (1975), p. 365.

and property, the possibility of upward mobility and thrift, and explains low economic status as the result of personal inadequacy or inferiority.[1]

It is interesting to note that even the European and North American societies show most of these characteristics. There is a cash economy, wage labor, production for profit, a high rate of unemployment or underemployment, low wages for unskilled labor, ununionized lower-paid workers, and a complete set of values that stress the myth of competition between individuals, whatever their origin and social class; this last explaining low economic status as the result of personal failure.

Oscar Lewis goes on to say:

The culture of poverty is an adaptation and a reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society. It represents an effort to cope with feelings of hopelessness and despair which develop from the realization of the improbability of achieving success in terms of the values and goals of the larger society. . .
The culture of poverty, however, is not only an adaptation to a set of objective conditions of the larger society. Once it comes into existence it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on the children. By the time slum children are age six or seven they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime.[2]

For Oscar Lewis, "the most likely candidates for

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[1]Lewis, Oscar. La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty--San Juan and New York. Random House, New York, 1966, p. XLIII.

[2]Ibid., p. XLV.

the culture of poverty are the people who come from the lower strata of a rapidly changing society and are already partially alienated from it."[1] He finds remarkable similarities in the lower strata of London, Glasgow, Paris, Harlem, and Mexico City, and concludes that "culture of poverty transcends regional, rural-urban, and national differences. . . . These cross-national similarities are examples of independent invention and convergence."[2]

The most important characteristics of the culture of poverty are:

1) A very strong present time orientation, a lack of impulse control.

2) People have strong feelings of marginality, inferiority, fatalism, and resignation.

3) People and community are isolated from the rest of society and there is no participation in major social organizations.

4) "On the family level the major traits of the culture of poverty are the absence of childhood as a specially prolonged and protected stage in the life cycle, early initiation into sex, free unions or consensual marriages, a trend toward female--or mother--centered families, a strong predisposition to authoritarianism, and competition for limited goods and material affection."[3]

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[1]Ibid., p. XLV.   [2]Ibid., p. XLIII.

[3]Ibid., p. XLVII.

5) Poor housing conditions and crowding.

6) People have very low levels of literacy and education and these in turn lead to low wages, unemployment, and underemployment.

Oscar Lewis is very careful in distinguishing poverty per se from culture of poverty. He suggests that the elimination of physical poverty may not be enough to eliminate culture of poverty; culture of poverty, being a whole way of life, is much more complex. However, if certain characteristics are met, culture of poverty may disappear. As Oscar Lewis states:

> When the poor become class-conscious or active members of trade-union organizations, or when they adopt an international outlook on the world, they are no longer part of the culture of poverty, although they may still be desperately poor. Any movement, be it religious, pacifist, or revolutionary, which organizes and gives hope to the poor and effectively promotes solidarity and a sense of identification with larger groups, destroys the psychological and social core of the culture of poverty.

Lewis ends the description of the concept of culture of poverty by proposing future solutions for people living under the culture of poverty. If, in a country, a large percentage of the population live in the culture of poverty, as in Cuba before the revolution or any other developing countries, basic structural changes in society are required. "Revolutions frequently succeed in abolishing some of the basic characteristics of the culture of poverty even when they do not succeed in abolishing poverty

itself."[1] If, in a country, a relatively small percentage
of the population lives in the culture of poverty, like
the United States, the major solution would be to raise
the standard of living and to incorporate this sector of
the population into the middle class, using, if necessary,
such methods as psychiatric treatment.

From Oscar Lewis' description of the concept of
culture of poverty it is legitimate to infer that a large
percentage of Fourth World inhabitants live in the culture
of poverty. In fact, the characteristics of the culture
of poverty are so remarkably similar to the way of life of
the inhabitants of the Fourth World described in Chapter I,
that it is as if culture of poverty, as a subculture of a
subgroup of the larger society, is the culture of the
Fourth World.

Michael Harrington also supports the above view.
Harrington is a culturalist and a subscriber to the concept
of culture of poverty. However, he goes beyond Oscar Lewis
and advocates that a large number of people in the United
States live in poverty, in a culture of poverty, and in an
invisible land isolated from the affluent America that he
calls "the other America."

This other America is populated by "the unskilled
workers, the migrant farm workers, the aged, the minorities,

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[1]Ibid., p. LII.

and all the others who live in the economic underworld of American life."[1] Or, more concisely, the other America can be defined as the American manifestation of the Fourth World.

For Harrington, the inhabitants of the other America--or the American Fourth World--are caught in a vicious circle from which they cannot escape without help from the affluent America. They are also living in the culture of poverty: "Poverty in the United States is a culture, an institution, a way of life."[2] It is thus safe to conclude that Oscar Lewis and Michael Harrington are of the opinion that the Fourth World lives in the culture of poverty.

Based on the pro position that poverty is a form of culture and on the concept that poverty affects every aspect of life, Michael Harrington attacks poverty on two fundamental aspects. First, "any attempt to abolish poverty in the United States must seek to destroy the pessimism and fatalism that flourish in the Other America."[3] (This first step can be interpreted as an attack upon the culture of poverty, and thus being coherent with Oscar Lewis' view that it is more important to abolish the culture of poverty than poverty itself.) Second, "a campaign

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[1]Harrington, Michael. Op. cit., p. 2.

[2]Ibid., p. 16.   [3]Ibid., p. 167.

against the misery of the poor should be comprehensive. It should think not in terms of this or that aspect of poverty, but along the lines of establishing new communities, of substituting a human environment for the inhuman one that now exists."[1]

It is interesting and worthwhile to note that these two main conclusions in Michael Harrington's theory coincide with two guidelines that are followed in Chapter IV of this thesis. The first goal of a self-help housing program is intended to destroy the passivity, pessimism and fatalism that flourish in the Fourth World; the second, to catalyze the improvement of the overall situation of the Fourth World. However, as it will be clear in the next chapters, these proposed programs go much deeper and beyond a mere integration of the inhabitants of the Fourth World in the middle-class, "using, if necessary, such methods as psychiatric treatment," as proposed by Oscar Lewis.

The cultural perspective, and in particular, the concept of the culture of poverty, was well accepted when it was introduced. It provided an explanation for the persistence of poverty that politicians and social-scientists of the early 1960's were looking for; it focused on "poverty's deleterious effects upon people, and on seeking out policies and programs to combat these

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[1]Harrington, Michael. Op. cit., p. 168.

effects"[1] that were the concerns of the time. But it also furnished the conservative and reactionary political circles with arguments that blamed the poor for their poverty.

Such a concept, especially the uses that were made of it, inevitably provoked increasing criticism.

Criticisms of the cultural perspective found in social science literature can be grouped at three different levels:

1) Refusing to admit the existence of the culture of poverty.

2) Admitting the existence of a culture of poverty, but arguing that it is a consequence of the persistence of poverty, and not the cause, as a culturalist would subscribe.

3) Admitting that a culture of poverty does exist, and advocating that it is just one cause, among others, for the persistence of poverty.

The first statement above is supported by the idea that the poor share the values and norms of the middle class. The poor may live differently, but it is only temporary and due to their position in the structure of society. By keeping the poor in the status quo, the rich continue to enjoy the advantages society offers them as a result of their position. This idea is associated with

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[1]Rodman, Hyman. "Culture of Poverty: Rise and Fall of a Concept." In Sociological Review 25, 1977, p. 868.

Marxist theories and leftist views of society. Authors

like Ian Adams, William Cameron, Brian Hill and Peter Penz

do not support the view that a culture of poverty exists.

In fact their book, "The Real Poverty Report," analyses

the economic system to explain the persistence of poverty

in Canada. The authors bluntly state that "people are

poor because they don't have enough money,"[1] and the argu-

ments and proposals of this book are intended to "help to

create the will for social and political revolution."[2]

The empirical works of Audrey Schwartz,[3] Leonard

Davidson and David Krackhardt[4] also do not support the

existence of a culture of poverty.

Schwartz challenges Oscar Lewis' culture of poverty

theory by analysing data from interviews conducted in ten

squatter settlements in Caracas. She selected several char-

acteristics of the culture of poverty and compared them

with the characteristics of the Barrios. The characteris-

tics selected were: family structure, future orientation,

mutual aid, attitudes toward official institutions, economic

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[1] Adams, Ian; Cameron, William; Hill, Brian and
Penz, Peter. The Real Poverty Report. Published by M. G.
Hurtig Limited, 1971, p. 8.

[2] Ibid., p. 7.

[3] Schwartz, Audrey, op. cit.

[4] Davidson, Leonard and Krackhardt, David. "Struc-
tural Changes and the Disadvantaged: An Empirical Test of
Culture of Poverty/Situational Theories of Hard-Core Work
Behavior." In Human Organization 36, 1977.

integration into the larger community, and voluntary association within Barrios. Schwartz arrives at the conclusion that it is not possible to distinguish a common behavior pattern that could be labeled as "culture of poverty."

Leonard Davidson and David Krackhardt found that in a certain city in the United States, an employment program substantially changed the structural opportunities of the poor and unemployed. After analysing the process of adaptation of the poor to their new environment, Davidson and Krackhardt were able to say that with regard to the world of work, "the impact of the minority individual's personality has been overstated and misunderstood in the culture of poverty literature."[1]

Eleanor Leacock, in "The Culture of Poverty: A Critique," is highly critical of the concept of culture of poverty proposed by Oscar Lewis.[2] The article is a long and highly technical dissertation that we will try to resolve and simplify. The first criticism has to do with the cultural part of the concept of culture of poverty. For Leacock, culture is "the totality of a group's learned norms for behavior and manifestation of this behavior." It is a very broad definition that includes not only ideological and psychological aspects (that are

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[1]Davidson, Leonard and Krackhardt, David. Op. cit., p. 308.

[2]Leacock, Eleanor B. The Culture of Poverty: A Critique. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1971.

also included in the culture of poverty theory), but also economic and social aspects. According to Leacock, there is a complex interaction among all those dimensions of culture; namely that the ideological aspects develop and change with fundamental changes in economic and social institutions. It is this lack of understanding the culture as a whole that drove the defenders of the culture of poverty to misunderstand the culture; this misunderstanding being caused by their class values, by deficient research methods, or by biased judgments when interpreting data.

> The term culture is being inaccurately used when it implies that poor people perpetuate the condition of poverty in our society through their adherence to unhealthy or dysfunctional values; and that need only turn to presumably healthy and functional middle-class values to enter the world of relative economic security.[1]

For Leacock, poverty cannot be overcome only by a change of attitude. There has to be a change towards unjust economic and social structures.

Criticism of the culture of poverty theory also extends to some more concrete areas. For example, the culture of poverty theory "assumes a person's 'value-attitude system' and response pattern to be virtually set by the age of six or seven."[2] Leacock disagrees with this and argues that findings in developmental psychology indicate that profound developments take place between the age of six and ten. Leacock also points out that

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[1]Ibid., p. 34.   [2]Ibid., p. 13.

following the culture of poverty theory one is forced to conclude that what happens prior to school entry is more dominant and important than what happens later.

Charles A. Valentine is also very critical of the concept of culture of poverty proposed by Oscar Lewis. He agrees with Leacock and has contributed a chapter in Leacock's book The Culture of Poverty: A Critique. Valentine goes from questioning the fieldwork methods of Oscar Lewis, to finding inconsistencies between his abstraction and data. However, his major attack is directed against the cultural perspective, on the grounds that poverty is structural, not cultural. His criticism can be summarized thus:

> Poverty is not basically the result of a special set of values and behavior patterns of the poor, but rather the result of inequality in the social structure of the larger society.[1]

In the last part of his book Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-proposals, Valentine seems to take a less critical view of the cultural perspective. Because of his statement that "living in poverty has its own destructive effect on human capacities and that these impairments become part of the whole process perpetuating deprivation,"[2] it is legitimate to say that he concurs with

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[1]Valentine, Charles A. Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-proposals. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

[2]Ibid., p. 145.

the group of authors cited who admit the existence of a

culture of poverty, but argue that it is a consequence,

and not a cause, of the persistence of poverty.

It is indisputable that Charles Valentine strongly

disagrees with the concept of culture of poverty proposed

by Oscar Lewis. However, there is a "shadow" of a concept

of culture of poverty in his statement that living in

poverty has its own destructive effect on human capacities

and that these impairments become part of the whole pro-

cess perpetuating poverty.

In his review of the book Culture and Poverty:

Critique and Counter-proposals, published in Current

Anthropology, 1979, Oscar Lewis has the following state-

ment that shows the evolution of his ideas since the time

he wrote Lavida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of

Poverty--San Juan and New York in 1966:[1]

> The crucial question from both the scientific and
> the political point of view is: How much weight is to
> be given to the internal, self-perpetuating factors
> in the subculture of poverty as compared to the
> external, social factors? My own position is that in
> the long run the self-perpetuating factors are rela-
> tively minor and unimportant as compared to the basic
> structure of the larger society. However, to achieve
> rapid change and improvement with the minimum amount
> of trauma one must work on both the "external" and
> "internal" conditions.[2]

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[1]Lewis, Oscar, op. cit.

[2]Lewis, Oscar. Book review of Charles Valentine,
"Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-proposals" in
Current Anthropology 10 (1969).

The above position subscribed to by Oscar Lewis can be identified with group 3 which admits the existence of a culture of poverty, and advocates it as one cause among others for the persistence of poverty.

Another author that subscribes to group 3 is Chaim Waxman with his relational perspective. This will be analysed later in this chapter.

The social policies and programs that are derived from the cultural perspective to fight poverty inevitably reflect the "internalist" position in which poverty is seen as generated by the values and way of life of the poor.

According to this perspective, the poor must thus be helped to be integrated into the system, and be taught the values and behavior of the middle class in order to overcome poverty.

Approaches towards the resocialization of the poor, like compensatory education, special job training programs, counselling and guidance, and cultural enrichment programs, are based on a cultural perspective. Also the popular principle of "helping the poor to help themselves" is derived from an internalist position. In fact, almost the entire field of social work has been based on the cultural perspective.

> The notion of "helping the poor to help themselves" implies, basically, that the poor have to be changed to

fit the system, which is, again implicitly, sound
. . . Helping the poor means helping them to think
and behave "properly."[1]

Children and young adults are the main focus of
anti-poverty programs because, according to the cultural
perspective, they are in a better position to take advan-
tage of corrective efforts. Some radical programs in the
United States during the "war" on poverty in the 1960's,
like the Job Corps, incorporated in the Economic Oppor-
tunity Act of 1964, went as far as removing youth from
their "dysfunctional" environment, while offering them
basic education and marketable skills.

The process of eradicating poverty is very diffi-
cult and slow according to the cultural perspective because
it is the whole way of life which has been internalized
and passed down from generation to generation that has to
change. An important cause for the persistence of poverty
is due to the fact that not enough material and human re-
sources have been mobilized to change the poor.

The Structural Perspective

The structural perspective is in opposition to the
cultural perspective just analysed. For a structuralist,
people are poor because the structure of the society does
not allow them to improve their situation. It is thus the

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[1]Waxman, Chaim. The Stigma of Poverty: A Critique
of Poverty Theories and Policies. Pergamon Press Inc.,
1977, p. 25.

structure of the society that has to be radically changed,
and not the poor people.

As mentioned earlier, under the criticism of the
cultural perspective, the "externalists" advocate that the
poor share most values and norms of the middle class. How-
ever, due to their structural position and, denied access
to cultural resources, the lower class poor may act and
behave differently, thus forming a structurally distinct
subsociety. This subsociety will disappear once the res-
trictive structure of society has been changed and the
necessary redistribution of resources accomplished.

Ian Adams, William Cameron, Brian Hill, and Peter
Penz in their book, The Real Poverty Report, do not ex-
plicitly identify themselves with any perspective. But
from the arguments and proposals of the book which are
intended "to help to create the will for social and po-
litical revolution,"[1] from the fact that the book analyses
the economic system to explain the persistence of poverty,
and from the statement that "people are poor because they
don't have enough money,"[2] it is clear that they subscribe
to the structural perspective.

The Real Poverty Report analyses extensively the
factors that contribute to the production and persistence

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[1]Adams, Ian; Cameron, William; Hill, Brian and
Penz, Peter, op. cit., p. 7.

[2]Ibid., p. 8.

of poverty in an affluent country--Canada. Very briefly, these factors are:

1) The Myth of Competition between individuals whatever their origin and social class in a free economic market.

2) Permanent Unemployment that hits much more often the low-wage and unskilled workers than the high-wage workers--or the middle and upper classes.

> Unemployment both creates poverty and intensifies the poverty that already exists; and unemployment is itself created through government reaction to gains in income by the affluent.[1]

3) Wage Inequality. A wide range of wages perpetuates and accentuates inequality. Wages depend mainly on education, training, demands of the market, and on the capacity for organization in professional associations and labour unions, all areas where the poor are at a relative disadvantage.

As an example of wage inequality in Canada--the average income of doctors and surgeons in 1961 was about ten times that of fish canners and packers.

4) Economic Power: Corporations. According to The Real Poverty Report a free economic market does not promote equality. The imbalance of economic power between corporations or businesses, and the general public or the people that work for these businesses, creates inequality

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[1]Ibid., p. 81.

which is the root of poverty. Also pointed out by the authors is the fact that corporations control the mass media which is responsible for the apathy of Canadians towards poverty.

5) Economic Power: Unions. Unions are too fragmented, too vulnerable to repressive actions from the government, and too close to the large corporations, to fight poverty and inequality. Unions also tend to organize high-wage workers instead of low-wage workers who are more difficult to organize due to their mobility and dispersed work locations.

6) Regional and Rural Poverty. The economic power has provoked vast disparities between city and rural areas, between different regions, and between provinces.

7) Discrimination. Statistics show that being a woman, belonging to a minority group--Indian, Eskimo, French-Canadian, etc.--or being old increases the chances to be poor.

8) Consumer Exploitation affects all classes trapped in the illusion that consumption is good in itself; but the poor are the most exploited because they have to pay for an exhorbitant credit rate as well.

9) The Inheritance of Economic Power which perpetuates the class structure from generation to generation, and thus inequality and poverty.

The persistence of inequality and poverty in Canada

is also seen as a consequence of the government policy of submitting public interest to large corporations, absence of a real planned economy, and inadequate reaction to structural problems.

The policies proposed by Ian Adams and his "structuralist" colleagues are somewhat an answer to the factors that contribute to the production of poverty just analysed. These policies range from full employment, equalization of wages, and better union organization of low-income workers with a centralized collective-bargaining process, to price controls, guaranteed annual income, and better regional planning. All these measures reflect a socialist character and are in tune with the structural view that massive social changes are required to eradicate poverty.

A critique of the structural perspective often found in social science literature can be summarized thus-- living in poverty has destructive effects upon a person's values and way of life and this should be taken into consideration by any anti-poverty programs. Radical social changes proposed by the "externalists" are also criticized because they are not practicable and not likely to occur in affluent societies like the United States, Canada or European countries, where the poor clearly constitute a minority.

The Third Perspective

The third approach to the study of the causes of poverty and related problems involves a set of authors whose views differ widely. However, all these authors agree that poverty cannot be explained by either the cultural or structural perspective alone because each by itself is incomplete.

The sources of poverty are found in the internal characteristics and way of life of the poor, and in the structure of the society and unequal distribution of resources.

Charles A. Valentine and Chaim I. Waxman are among the authors that subscribe to the third approach. They present respectively the model of a "Heterogeneous Subsociety with Variable, Adaptative Subcultures," and the "Relational Perspective," each of which will be analysed separately.

Heterogeneous Subsociety with Variable, Adaptative Subcultures

Valentine reconciles the cultural and structural perspectives on the assumption that the basic points of both perspectives are simultaneously valid. He refuses to accept the concept of culture of poverty introduced by Oscar Lewis, but is of the opinion that some subcultural patterns are a consequence of living in poverty and that these patterns contribute to the perpetuation of

poverty. Further research is necessary to determine the amount of importance that should be given to the internal as opposed to the external causes of poverty. But, internal causes "are definitely not the whole problem and almost certainly not the principal problem."[1]

Valentine's model is self-explanatory:

a) The lower-class poor possess some distinct subcultural patterns, even though they also subscribe to norms of the middle class or the total system in some of the same areas of life and are quite nondistinctive in other areas; there is variation in each of these dimensions from one ethnic group to another.

b) The distinctive patterns of the poverty subcultures, like those of the other subsocieties, include not only pathogenic traits but also healthy and positive aspects, elements of creative adaptation to conditions of deprivation.

c) The structural position and subcultural patterns of the poor stem from historical and contemporary sources that vary from one ethnic or regional group to another but generally involve a multicausal combination of factors.

d) Innovation serving the interests of the lower class to an optimal degree will therefore require more or less simultaneous, mutually reinforcing changes in three areas: increases in the resources actually available to the poor; alterations of the total social structure; and changes in some subcultural patterns.

e) The most likely sources for these changes is one or more social movements for cultural revitalization, drawing original strength necessarily from the poor, but succeeding only if the whole society is affected directly or indirectly.[2]

Following this model, Valentine presents a proposal to reduce inequality and increase the power of the poor.

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[1]Valentine, Charles A. Op. cit., p. 145.

[2]Ibid., p. 143.

Here he advocates "positive discrimination" in favor of the
poor and other disadvantaged groups.

The proposal is essentially directed to employment
of the poor and the unemployed. In order to achieve this
goal, employers, governmental agencies, and educational
institutions should join efforts to <u>give</u> real advantages
and opportunities for training and employment to the dis-
advantaged.

Valentine's proposal to deal with poverty does not
go beyond this basic outline, and seems to fall into a
problem-solving social policy instead of an expected "al-
teration of the total social structure" underlined in his
model. In fact, according to Oscar Lewis:

> Valentine suggests no fundamental changes in the
> structure of the social and economic system beyond
> that of providing better jobs for the unemployed by
> a national policy of compensatory hiring.[1]

The criticism made by the author of this thesis
is that Valentine's proposal should be less problem-
solving and more structurally oriented, and this finds
support in John Friedmann's statement:

> Job retraining programs for the poor have enjoyed
> a certain vogue [in the United States] in recent
> years. They have also been notably unsuccessful.
> But no serious effort has gone into a study of the
> guidance system, which consistently generates a
> stream of people who become redundant in an economy
> geared to rapid technological obsolescence and the

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[1]Lewis, Oscar. Book review of Charles Valentine,
"Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-proposals" in
<u>Current Anthropology</u> 10 (1969), p. 189.

maximization of private gain. A lasting solution to the problem of structural unemployment and poverty will be found only when we are prepared to make changes that will cut off this stream at the source.[1]

Nevertheless, Valentine's contribution to the study of poverty is relevant and should be viewed not as a static perspective, but as the basis for further research.

The Relational Perspective

The relational perspective is one of the most recent theories that attempts to explain the persistence of poverty in an affluent society viz, the United States. It is proposed by Chaim Waxman and intends to overcome the culturalist and the structuralist viewpoint by analysing the position of the poor in the social structure, and the intra- and inter-action of the poor and non-poor.

Chaim Waxman advocates that the stigma associated with poverty is responsible for the material and cultural isolation of the poor. It is the reaction to this stigma of poverty that drives members of the lower class to develop "a cluster of traits that have been described as the culture of poverty."[2] According to Waxman, culture of poverty is not a completely independent culture as the culturalists argue, but a dependent subculture "in the

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[1]Friedmann, John. *Retracking America*. Anchor Books Edition, 1973, p. 165.

[2]Waxman, Chaim. Op. cit., p. 92.

sense that the persistence of the subculture is dependent upon the persistence of the stigma."[1]

Waxman convincingly demonstrates that the concept of culture of poverty is not incompatible with the structural perspective. In the beginning, the behavioral patterns of the poor are merely situational adaptations that would disappear if the conditions of life are improved. However, as these adaptations are passed down from generation to generation due to their adaptive quality, the behavioral patterns become "the way things are done" under those conditions of life. Thus, a situational adaptation gives way to a cultural pattern if hard conditions of life are not improved over generations.

Waxman summarizes in the following statement the guidelines of the relational perspective:

> It is the perspective of this analysis, then, that the persistence of poverty and the behavior of the poor cannot be attributed to solely internal nor external sources. Rather, they have both internal and external sources which are reciprocally related, in that the patterns and attitudes of the poor are adjustments to the stigma of poverty, and these adjustments are transmitted intergenerationally through socialization. Socialization, the internal aspect, teaches the young how to behave in situations of stress, which are the product of external aspects, the stigma of poverty.[2]

Concerning the social policy implications of the relational perspective, Waxman does not offer any specific

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[1]Waxman, Chaim. Op. cit., p. 93.

[2]Ibid., p. 98.

proposals, but suggests directions for a successful social policy. In order to eradicate the stigma of poverty, which is the cause of the persistence of poverty, the poor should be integrated with the non-poor rather than be isolated. One criterion for the evaluation of a social policy is the degree of integration of the poor with the non-poor that it promotes. Programs that are available to all members of the society, such as unemployment insurance, are strongly recommended.

A criticism made by the author of this thesis to Waxman's relational perspective is that it is not quite clear what role culture of poverty will play once the stigma of poverty has been eradicated. Will the culture of poverty merely disappear with the eradication of the stigma of poverty? Or will the culture of poverty persist after the eradication of the stigma? This is a question that Waxman does not answer explicitly. His statement that "the failure to recognize the adaptive quality of culture . . . has been the source of a mass of confusion and logically unfounded criticism on the subject of culture of poverty"[1] may lead an attentive reader to conclude that culture of poverty will change and adapt to "external" improvements, but in a very slow way.

Waxman does not explore this view. But it is as if culture of poverty works as a large "momentum of inertia"

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[1]Waxman, Chaim. Op. cit., p. 56.

that impedes a rapid integration of the poor with the rest

of the society, whenever external improvements take place.

Curiously enough, Oscar Lewis does support this view given

by the author of this thesis:

> The crucial question from both the scientific and
> the political point of view is: How much weight is to
> be given to the internal, self-perpetuating factors
> in the subculture of poverty as compared to the ex-
> ternal, social factors? My own position is that in
> the long run the self-perpetuating factors are rela-
> tively minor and unimportant as compared to the basic
> structures of the larger society. However, to achieve
> rapid change and improvement with the minimum amount
> of trauma, one must work on both the "external" and
> "internal" conditions.[1]

In addition to the vast analyses of the causes of

poverty, to the social policies recommended, and to the

criticism made, there is a new dimension to the problem

of poverty that has to be added. This new factor is the

imminent era of scarcity and the energy crises. How will

this new era of austerity, scarcity and energy crises

affect the poor?

It is known that in the past "the conditions of

the poor tended to improve during times of full employment

and the gap between the rich and the poor became wider in

times of recession."[2] So with fierce competition for

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[1]Lewis, Oscar. Book review of Charles Valentine,
"Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-proposals" in
Current Anthropology 10 (1969), p. 192.

[2]Durfee, David. Poverty in an Affluent Society.
Serie Inquiry into Crucial American Problems, edited by
Jack Fraenkel, 1977, p. 95.

limited resources, global energy crises, and steep infla-
tion "will it mean even stiffer competition for limited
goods and nothing at all left for the losers or will it
lead to a new set of values which will help end the present
situation of poverty existing next to affluence?"[1] This is
a crucial question which David A. Durfee does not answer.
However, the effects of this new dimension of the problem
of poverty are already felt all over Europe.[2]

> According to _Time_ magazine, January 12, 1981:
>
> At a conference on social policy this fall at the
> O.E.C.D., academics, businessmen, union leaders and
> government officials reached agreement on a central
> point: in the face of a world slump induced by rising
> energy prices, the era of openhanded social benefits
> has effectively ended.[3]

In fact, the welfare system has become too expensive and
too heavy for most European economies. As an example,
The Netherlands government is attempting to reduce the
30 percent share of the national budget that now maintains
the welfare system.[4] Other affluent countries like Sweden,
France and Britain, are also introducing drastic cut-backs
on funds to fight poverty.

Thus the poor are already suffering the effects of

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[1] Durfee, David. Op. cit., p. 5.

[2] We could also mention the conservatism wave that
has been growing in the U.S. that helped to elect Ronald
Reagan.

[3] _Time_ magazine, January 12, 1981, p. 23.

[4] Ibid., p. 22.

the first wave of the crisis, and it is legitimate to con-
clude that unless there is a structural change the poor
will see their situation getting worse and worse.

William Ophuls, in his book <u>Ecology and the Politics
of Scarcity</u>,[1] supports this view. He advocates that due to
ecological scarcity it is necessary to radically change
national institutions that support individualistic and
laissez-faire attitudes and international relations that
cause the gap to widen between rich and poor countries.
To face ecological scarcity Ophuls proposes a steady-state
society that is characterized by communalism, authority,
values of frugality and sufficiency, and so on. He does
not bluntly state what will happen to the poor in the
steady state. However, it is legitimate to conclude from
the tone of his book that if the steady state is achieved
there will be a movement towards equality and social jus-
tice. If the laissez-faire attitude and the free economic
market are maintained, poverty will increase in absolute
and relative terms among the lower classes, until a revo-
lution, world war, or major change takes place.

It is interesting to see how this new dimension of
the problem of poverty affects the three perspectives ana-
lysed. On the one hand it is clear and undeniable that it
supports structural change. On the other, a steady-state

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[1]Ophuls, William. <u>Ecology and the Politics of
Scarcity</u>, 1977.

society demands a change of values towards frugality, communalism, and simplicity of life. However, this change of values is not only for the poor, as a culturalist would argue--because for a culturalist, the middle-class values are implicitly sound--but for all members of the society, the poor and the non-poor. It is almost as if the values of the middle class become as dysfunctional in a steady-state society as the culturalists say the culture of poverty is nowadays. So, if the new era of scarcity and energy crises is taken into consideration, the cultural perspective should attempt to change the values and behavior of the poor to the values of a steady state, and not to the values of the middle class. This statement made by the author of this thesis demands further research that unfortunately goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

From the fact that both structural and cultural changes will occur in an era of ecological scarcity, it is legitimate to conclude that the third perspective, which advocates structural changes of the society and cultural improvements of the poor, is not only the perspective that best explains the causes for the persistence of poverty but also one that best faces the future era of ecological scarcity.

The next chapter will focus on the improvements that housing can bring to the present situation of the poor just analysed.

CHAPTER III

HOUSING AS A CATALYSIS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT

OF THE FOURTH WORLD

It is not the intention of this thesis to advocate
that poverty in affluent societies can be overcome by a
new housing policy, practice, or any type of housing im-
provement in the Fourth World. It has been shown in the
preceding chapters that the complex situation of the Fourth
World demands a concerted campaign engulfing cultural im-
provements and structural changes.

However, it is the contention of this chapter that
housing, understood as both the physical commodity and
specifically, the process of achieving that commodity, can
be a fulcrum for the improvement of Fourth World conditions
and a catalysis for the fight against poverty in affluent
societies.

This goal is not new! Michael Harrington supported
it, almost twenty years ago, when he stated

> ... a campaign against the misery of the poor should
> be comprehensive.... Here, housing is probably the
> basic point of departure. If there were the funds
> and imagination for a campaign to end slums in the
> United States, most of the other steps needed to deal
> with poverty could be integrated with it.[1]

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[1]Harrington, Michael. The Other America, Poverty
in the United States. MacMillan, New York, 1964, p. 168.

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Hassan Fathy, in his book <u>Architecture for the Poor</u>, also has a very similar statement regarding the potentialities of housing while attempting to improve the situation of the Egyptian peasants which he describes as "hopeless," "resigned," and "too sunk in their misery to initiate a change."[1]

According to Fathy, "the standards of living and culture among the world's desperately poor peasants can be raised through cooperative building, which involves a new approach to rural mass housing."[2]

Some public housing policies in the United States were also based in an apparently similar goal: that by improving the housing conditions the quality and quantity of life of the poor would also be improved. And so, massive housing programs were sponsored, designed, constructed and managed by the government and centralized agencies. However, these public housing policies have not produced the desired results, as expressed by John Palen in his book <u>The Urban World</u>:

> Public housing was originally designed to provide standard-quality housing for those who could not afford decent, safe housing on the private market. One of the basic unwritten assumptions of the programs was that by changing a family's residence you could also change the way they lived and the way they behaved.

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[1]A clear reference to the Fourth World in developing countries.

[2]Fathy, Hassan. <u>Architecture for the Poor</u>. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973, p. XV.

...Once professionals thought that if they could get problem families out of slums, then fathers would stop drinking, mothers stop fooling around, and kids stop doping and stealing. It didn't work; as caustically expressed by one professional in Urban Affairs: "They are the same bunch of bastards they always were."[1]

At a first look, the failure of these public housing policies could be interpreted as a serious threat and handicap to the goal of this thesis; that housing can in fact work as a strong catalysis for the improvement of the Fourth World. As it will be clear throughout this chapter, the failure of massive public housing in upgrading the life of the poor does not deter the hypothesis of this chapter.

However, the three examples briefly referred to, raise two essential questions in pursuing the study of this subject.

The first question is concerned with the meaning and values of housing. This thesis follows the view of housing as advocated by John F. C. Turner and Ian D. Terner. According to them,

the word housing signifies much more than houses or dwelling units--it refers to the activities of people (and their organizations and institutions) building and using houses and the directly related utilities and services. In other words, when we write the word housing, we have in mind the "actors," their organizations, and their organized "activities"--as well as the material products or achievements of their actions.[2]

[1]Palen, John. The Urban World. McGraw-Hill, Toronto, 1975.

[2]Turner, John and Terner, Ian. Industrialized Housing. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of International Affairs, 1972, p. IX.

Thus, housing should be understood not only as the physical product but also as the process to achieve and maintain that commodity. According to this view of housing it is easy to understand one of the factors that contributed to the failure of massive public housing projects, which focused only on the physical and quality standards of housing and did not pay any attention to the process of achieving it. Good housing does not necessarily mean expensive materials, high area/occupant ratios, or any other physical standard.

Good housing is, according to John Turner and Robert Fichter, that in which "both the housing procedures and the dwelling environments produced act as vehicles for personal fulfillment and stimulate real social and economic development, or, to use Sapir's phrase, 'genuine culture.'"[1]

The second question is concerned with a criterion to evaluate the impact of housing upon poverty. The capacity of housing to catalyze the improvement of the Fourth World situation would have to be tested upon the causes of the persistence of poverty, and not upon the visual manifestations of poverty. As the extensive analysis of the causes of the persistence of poverty carried out in Chapter II proved, poverty is maintained and produced by a combination of "the culture of poverty" and structural

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[1] Turner, John and Fichter, Robert. Freedom to Build. MacMillan Company, New York, 1972, p. 255.

oppression.

Thus, it is clear that the criteria that should be followed is the capacity of housing to destroy the culture of poverty and to promote structural changes.

The impact of housing upon each of these two factors responsible for the persistence of poverty, and thus, the existence of the Fourth World, will be examined separately for a better systematization of the analysis.

The Impact of Housing upon the Culture of Poverty

The culture of poverty is a way of life poor people develop to cope with their deprived situation. This way of life is then passed down from parents to children and renders the next generations unable to take advantage of upgrading opportunities that may occur in their lifetime.

The culture of poverty is self-perpetuating and persists even after unjust structural conditions have been corrected. A detailed analysis of this phenomenon has been described in Chapter II, constituting a school of thought called "cultural perspective."

Several traits of the culture of poverty were pointed out in Chapter II. However, according to Oscar Lewis[1] and Chaim Waxman,[2] it is possible to select the

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[1]Lewis, Oscar. La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty--San Juan and New York. Random House, New York, 1966.

[2]Waxman, Chaim. The Stigma of Poverty. M. G. Hurtig Limited, 1977.

most important characteristics, which, when they have been overcome, will allow people to escape from the culture of poverty.

The characteristics selected are:

1) Feelings of hopelessness, fatalism and despair.

2) Lack of confidence in personal capacities and feelings of inferiority.

3) Low level of literacy, education and skills.

4) No participation in major social organizations and isolation from the larger society.

It is upon these four main traits that the capacity of housing to overcome the culture of poverty is going to be tested. The other characteristics of the culture of poverty identified in Chapter II--a very strong present time orientation, lack of impulse control, and the several family features enunciated--are considered to be gradually improved by the overcoming of these four major character-istics.

1) Feelings of hopelessness, fatalism and despair can be appeased and transformed into hope and pride if people are directly involved in the process of housing achievement and community development, and are given, ac-cording to their needs, an incentive to participate, and an access to the resources for housing development.

Several authors agree with this statement. From the moderate suggestion of William Grindley that, "owner-

buildings tap dormant energy and enthusiasm,"[1] to the more

definite view of the report of Self-Help Housing in the

U.S.A.,[2] a large spectrum of supporters could be pointed

out. This report presented to the United States Depart-

ment of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.), has a very

interesting and relevant statement.

> The worst human condition is material poverty com-
> pounded and reinforced by the lack of hope. Depres-
> singly, large pockets of this utter poverty exist
> in the U.S.A.[3]

This is a clear reference to the Fourth World in

the United States. The report goes on to say that people

trapped in this social group are not in need of "better

standards [of housing] and better jobs so much as a job,

an income and above all, hope."[4] The solution advanced

by this report is "employed self-help housing programs"

directed towards housing improvements, employment oppor-

tunities and community development projects, through which

"a family incapacitated by prolonged unemployment discovers

or rediscovers hope and opportunity."[5]

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[1]Grindley, William. "Owner-Builders--Survivors
with a Future." Freedom to Build, Organization for Social
and Technical Innovation, Inc., 1972, p. 19.

[2]Self-Help Housing in the U.S.A. Preliminary
report to the United States Department of H.U.D., 1969.

[3]Ibid., p. 107.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

The author's experience in Bairro das Marianas, a
Fourth World community on the urban fringe of Lisbon, Por-
tugal, also confirms one's faith in the capacity of housing
to raise hope for a better future and convince the inhabit-
ants that a better way of life is possible. (The whole
process is described in detail in the Appendix of this
thesis.)

Because Bairro das Marianas was a very destitute
community, as the photos and description in Chapter I show,
a group of Christians, organized under the name of "Movi-
mento dos Jovens," of which the author was a member,
engaged in improving the situation of the barrio.

The financial resources available were almost nil
and thus the primary needs of the barrio exceeded astron-
omically the capacity of the Movimento dos Jovens. It did
not take long to conclude that any action of the Movimento
dos Jovens would have to be directed towards helping people
to help themselves and to the organization of campaigns
that required people's participation rather than large
financial resources.

Throughout the implementation of this principle
the population, led by a newly organized residents' com-
mittee and backed by the Movimento dos Jovens, were
directly involved in housing improvements and development
of the bairro.

The achievements went from electricity for all

houses and streets, roofs for needy houses, and more public
water taps, to a community centre and cultural activities.
These accomplishments are not remarkable if they are meas-
ured by pure physical standards, but they are extraordinary
in making people realize that they still have some control
over their lives and surrounding environment, and that a
change towards a better life could be possible.

In his book Culture and Poverty, Charles Valentine
makes a very interesting statement, in the sense that it
supports a phenomenon observed in the Bairro das Marianas--
"even slight improvements in the level of life and hope
have often liberated quite unsuspected strengths, and
rising hopes have led, not just to frustration, but to
creative forms of action for change."[1]

However, it should also be noted that this stage
of increased hope and confidence in a better way of life
is very unstable and easily reversible if people are not
allowed access to resources and given real opportunities
to upgrade their situation. This fact emphasizes the view
that the fight against poverty has to be comprehensive.
Housing is one aspect of the fight, and an important one.

2) Lack of confidence in personal capacities and
feelings of inferiority are greatly improved by a person's
involvement in the building process of his own house. This

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[1]Valentine, Charles A. Culture and Poverty.
University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968, p. 153.

capacity of housing is supported by the main point of the

book Freedom to Build. In fact, according to John Turner

and Robert Fichter,

> when dwellers control the major decisions and are
> free to make their own contributions in the design,
> construction, or management of their housing, both
> this process and the environment produced stimulate
> individual and social well-being.[1]

These authors go on to say that beyond the physical

improvements brought about by self-helped housing, there

are the nonquantifiable benefits of "pride in achievement,"

"sense of competence," and "sense of satisfaction" which

stems from direct personal action.[2]

The Special Report on Techniques of Aided Self-Help

Housing is also unanimous with the above view, underlining

that,

> a person who has built his own home has a stake in
> and an appreciation for that home. An individual's
> involvement in the construction process results in
> a feeling of responsibility...[3]

More beautiful environments, healthier housing,

and better physical standards are also relevant factors

in the upgrading of feelings of inferiority and margin-

ality.

The kind of materials and technologies used in

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[1] Freedom to Build, op. cit., p. 241.

[2] Ibid., p. 242.

[3] Special Report on Techniques of Aided Self-Help
Housing. Department of Housing and Urban Development,
Office of International Affairs, 1973, p. 1.

housing construction are also important. Construction materials should be familiar to the people, and the technology used should be simple and easily controlled by unskilled people. In this way a person may express his natural creativity and achieve more satisfaction from having built a house that fits his particular needs.

3) <u>Low level of literacy, education and skills.</u> It is undisputable that education is one of the most important vehicles for a person to upgrade his or her own status. Better education means increased prestige, more power, and higher wages.

However, for a person without resources to invest in education, and trapped in the culture of poverty, there is a different connotation to education. It is one of the most important barriers in separating the poor from the non-poor.

This phenomenon has been perceived by politicians with good intentions, as well as planners and social workers. Consequently the need of education for the poor has been occasionally proclaimed. At such times, special education programs are created for the poor, or, in most cases, for the fortunate poor who have the luck to be reached.

These special education programs are "special" in the fact that they are designed to integrate the poor within the society. The poor, it is assumed, know nothing,

and the teachers, as representative of the dominant culture

and status quo, know everything.

In the education process that follows, the poor are

the depositories and the teacher is the depositor; or, to

use Paulo Freire's words: "education, thus becomes an act

of depositing."[1]

This develops into what Paulo Freire calls the

"banking" concept of education:

> In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a
> gift bestowed by those who consider themselves know-
> ledgeable upon those whom they consider to know
> nothing.[2]

Through the banking method of education, the values

of the dominant class are then inculcated into the poor, in

a kind of "cultural invasion." According to Paulo Freire,

> the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another
> group, in disrespect of the latter's potentialities;
> they impose their own view of the world upon those they
> invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by
> curbing their expression.[3]

The fact that a person is living in the culture of

poverty does not make this invasion legitimate, nor does

it give the dominant class the right to impose its own

values or culture.

If there were not reasons based on the principles

of liberty and personal auto-determination, the fragile

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[1]Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Helder and Helder, New York, 1970, p. 58.

[2]Ibid., p. 58.   [3]Ibid., p. 150.

values of consumerism, free market economy, maximization
of private gain, individualistic and laissez-faire atti-
tudes, and so on, characteristic of the dominant classes,
would forbid it. As shown in Chapter II, in an era of
scarcity, the values of the upper and middle classes be-
come as dysfunctional in a steady-state society as the
culture of poverty is nowadays, because the values of a
steady-state society are characterized by communalism,
authority, frugality and sufficiency.

The solution we should strive for is education as
an instrument for liberation, rather than for domination.
An education that develops the capacities of thinking and
questioning; that promotes creativity, and "stimulates
true reflection and action";[1] and that deals with "the
problems of men in their relation with the world."[2] This
solution is advocated by Paulo Freire and is labelled as
the "problem-posing" education.

Housing, understood as an activity, is in a priv-
ileged position to incorporate and take advantage of this
"problem-posing" education. In aided self-help housing
programs there is always a pre-construction phase to
organize the participants and to prepare them for the
construction of the houses.

Problem-posing education could easily be included

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[1]Freire, Paulo. Op. cit., p. 71.

[2]Ibid., p. 66.

in the pre-construction phase, or precede it if the low
level of literacy so demanded. This would be greatly
profitable not only for the people but also for the whole
housing project. Because problem-posing education deals
with the real "problems of men in their relation with the
world,"[1] the ideal education program for Fourth World
people would focus on the topic of housing. Questions
like "why are we living in such deprived conditions and
other people are not?", "what would be the best method to
achieve decent housing?", or "what kind of materials and
skills should be used in the housing construction?", would
greatly contribute to the development of the people and
housing programs, and would guarantee that houses fit the
needs of the householders.

This view of education integrated with housing
projects, demands further research that unfortunately,
goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

However, the important thing to note is the poten-
tiality of housing to upgrade the level of education of
the poor people.

Housing can also be a vehicle to improve the skills
of the poor. Throughout the many months of the building
process of a house, a person will become familiar with a
variety of construction skills and eventually specialize
in one of them. If, in some cases, the skills learned are

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[1]Freire, Paulo. Op. cit., p. 66.

not enough for a person to find a related job, they will
always be useful for future housing renovations and pro-
vide a guarantee against housing decay.

Hassam Fathy in his book Architecture for the Poor,
advocates a very similar view, but he goes beyond to pro-
pose an "in-service training."

> If a village is to be built by its own future inhabit-
> ants, then we must give them the necessary skills....
> I suggest that these workers be trained on the job.
> It would be difficult to train a large number of
> apprentices on small jobs such as private houses.
> That is why it is necessary, if a village is to be
> built by the cooperative system, to start with public
> buildings, which provide plenty of opportunity for
> training the villagers in building crafts that they
> can later apply to their own dwellings.[1]

4) No participation in major social organizations
and isolation from the larger society. The impact of
housing upon this important characteristic of the culture
of poverty can be said to be both indirect and direct.

It is indirect in the sense that the capacities
of housing to improve skills, upgrade education and over-
come feelings of inferiority, fatalism and hopelessness,
greatly contribute to a better integration of the poor in
the larger society.

It is direct in the sense that some housing
strategies necessarily increase the level of organization
of the participants. A good example is organized self-help
housing programs which view the future householders as the

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[1]Fathy, Hassam. Op. cit., p. 122.

main actors in the process of achieving housing but that

provide access to resources and coordinate the efforts of

the participants.

From the combination of direct and indirect effects

of housing it is also legitimate to expect increased par-

ticipation in major social organizations like labour unions

or large residents' associations.

Higher physical quality of the houses and environ-

ment also contribute to a better integration of the poor in

the larger society by overcoming the immediate visual dis-

tinction of a Fourth World community from a "standard"

community.

From the above analysis, it is legitimate to con-

clude that housing has a very positive impact upon the four

main characteristics of the culture of poverty. Housing is

also in the privileged position to incorporate other

programs--like education and skill training--designed to

upgrade the way of life of the poor.

To finalize, it should be noted that a lesson comes

from developing countries based on the success of self-help

methods in overcoming the culture of poverty. Colin Ward,

(the preface author of Housing by People), compares the

attitudes of the poor in developing countries to those of

the poor in developed societies. According to Ward, the

attitudes of self-help and initiative of the poor in Third

World countries are in great contrast to the attitudes of

the poor in rich countries, "who are deprived of the last shred of personal autonomy and human dignity, because they have nothing they can depend on apart from the machinery of welfare."[1]

Housing has an important impact on this phenomenon. For Colin Ward illegal squatter settlements are a "triumph of self-help, which, overcoming the culture of poverty, evolved over time into fully serviced suburbs, giving their occupants a foothold in the urban economy."[2]

On the other hand, mass public housing in the cities of affluent societies is seen as incarcerating people in the culture of poverty. To use Ward's words: "In London, Glasgow, New York or Detroit, in spite of an enormous investment in mass housing, the poor are trapped in the culture of poverty."[3]

The Capacity of Housing to Promote Structural Changes

As seen in Chapter II, poverty is produced and maintained not only by the culture of poverty, but also by the unjust and oppressive structure of the society.

If housing is to be claimed as an important catalyst of the improvement of the Fourth World situation, then its capacities would have to be proven to contribute

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[1] Ward, Colin. Housing by People. Marion Boyards, London, 1976, p. 7.

[2] Ibid., p. 5.   [3] Ibid., p. 7.

also to structural change. Thus, the goal of this section
is to investigate in what way housing promotes structural
change. However, before embarking in this discussion it is
necessary to look more closely into housing.

The concept of housing as it has been developing
in Chapter III, is essentially based on three principles
stated by John F. C. Turner.[1] These basic principles of
housing derive from lessons Turner learned in developing
countries and that he found to be universal.

1) The principle of self-government in housing.[2]
This principle is based on the consideration that what
matters in housing is what it does for people, i.e. how
well it satisfied the different needs of the householders,
rather than what it is, how it looks or how high the
quality standards are.

According to Turner[3] the main householder needs
are access--to social interaction, employment, and institu-
tions,--shelter "from climate and neighbours"[4]--, and
tenure providing a minimum of security. However, each of
these housing needs,--access, shelter and tenure--vary
widely according to the priorities of the householders.
It is impossible for a central agency, with its large scale

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[1]Turner, John F. C. Housing By People. Op. Cit.,
Chapter 6.

[2]Ibid., p. 104.   [3]Ibid., p. 97.

[4]Ibid., p. 97.

projects and low input of citizen participation, to supply

housing that satisfies personal needs.

> Even if it were possible for a centralized decision
> and control system to supply the great majority of
> householders with well-matched housing services,
> their tolerance would shrink, generating even more
> exacting demands while failing to provide that satis-
> faction which one gets from having made a decision
> or having done something for oneself, however imper-
> fect it may be.[1]

In order that housing satisfies the priorities and

needs of a householder, it is imperative that individuals

themselves are in control of the housing process, and thus

the principle of self-government in housing.

2) The principle of appropriate technologies of

housing.[2] As seen in the principle of self-government in

housing, centrally produced housing *is* incapable of

matching the personal variety of housing priorities. These

mismatches--(or expected future mismatches)--transmit to

users'--(or potential users')--dissatisfaction, which con-

sequently leads to decreased investment of personal and

local resources.

Personal and local resources go from muscle-power,

skills, imagination, willpower, initiative and cooperation

between people, to the capacity of using locally available

materials and tools. It should be noted that these

resources are essentially renewable, non-polluting, and

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[1] Turner, John F. C. Housing By People. Op. cit.,
p. 41.

[2] Ibid., p. 104.

cannot be controlled by authoritarian central powers or used against the will of the people. On the other hand, centrally produced housing uses heavy equipment, complex technologies and fossil fuel energy, that are suitable for large scale standardized procedures and products.

The more the amount of centrally constructed housing, the more the standardization, the more will be the mismatches with people's priorities, which lead to less investment of personal and local resources. To overcome the decrease in personal involvement, more centrally built housing is planned, giving place to a vicious cycle.

Because fossil-fuelled technologies are very expensive and highly paid bureaucrats and administrators consume large financial resources, housing becomes accessible only to the wealthy, or the heavily subsidized lower classes. In economies of scarce resources--that in an era of global scarcity include also the affluent societies--not only the costly means to achieve housing built by central agencies are unbearable, but also, the heavy subsidies required and the very fast decay of public housing are intolerable.

This fact drove Turner to advocate the principle of Appropriate Technologies of Housing. The principle is based on the conclusion that "the economy of housing is a matter of personal and local resourcefulness rather than centrally controlled, industrial productivity."[1] So,

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[1]Turner, John F. C. Housing By People. Op. cit., p. 102.

appropriate technologies, also referred to as alternative
technologies, are required to allow access to local re-
sources by people and small organizations.

    3) The principle of Planning for Housing through
Limits.[1] The task of central agencies and government
housing authorities is to protect and supply scarce re-
sources to the people and local organizations, and to con-
struct hardware infrastructures that serve large numbers
of people, like water supply.

    Proscriptive Planning,[2] i.e., planning that esta-
blishes limits within which people are free to act, is
designed to allow people to use in their own way, the re-
sources available to them. On the other hand, Prescriptive
Planning,[3] i.e., planning that states lines which must be
followed, is essential for the design and installation of
the supra-local infrastructures.

    Proscriptive planning, in the context of housing,
is according to John Turner, the correct form of planning
to give incentive to the investment of local and personal
resources, and to promote self-governing forms. Planning

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[1]Turner, John F. C. Housing By People, op. cit.,
p. 105.

[2]Term used by Turner in Housing By People, op. cit.,
p. 30. Proscriptive law meaning "Thou shalt nots" and
consequently leaving a complementary universe of viable
alternatives from where people are free to choose.

[3]Term used by Turner in Housing By People, op. cit.,
p. 30. Prescriptive law meaning "Thou shalts," and conse-
quently leaving no alternative.

is also essential to guarantee equitable access to resources, namely land, money and technology and to limit private exploitation of natural resources.

From the general description of housing, and in particular, from these three principles of housing, there emerges a general concept of self-governing forms derived from the incentive of self-help methods in achieving housing.

According to Turner, self-governing forms give power to people and local organizations and reduce the authority of central governments and large corporations. This contributes to the spread of the seeds of structural change, or to use Turner's words:

> When a critical mass of people realize this, the structural changes vital to the immediate improvement of the condition of the poor, and to the continued existence of human life, can take place. The breakdown of traditionally accepted institutions in urban-industrial contexts testifies to the fact that this development is equally likely in rich societies.[1]

Events occurring in Europe reinforce the view that when people are directly involved in the process of achieving housing, new forms of organization are born, new power is generated and old oppressive structures of the society are questioned, if not changed. According to Time magazine, March 30, 1981:

> Squatting is not a new phenomena in the major cities of housing-short Western Europe, but it has been

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[1]Turner, John F. C. Housing By People, op. cit., p. 155.

gathering force in recent months, particularly in
West Germany. Arrests of squatters have led to more
demonstrations and begun to spill over into a broader,
ill-defined protest against everything from materialism
and technology to authority in general. Officials in
Bonn fear the squatters movement could become politi-
cized or even develop links with terrorists.[1]

The article goes on to say that:

Similar disorders suddenly flared in other European
cities, most notably Amsterdam and Zurich. The squat-
ters put much of the blame on local housing authorities
for an inability to cope with social change.[2]

To sum up the investigation into the capacity of

housing to catalyze the improvement of the Fourth World, it

is legitimate to say that housing has a very positive im-

pact upon the culture of poverty and unjust structure of

the society. From the combination and mutual reinforcement

of these positive factors, the Fourth World is greatly

improved.

Or, to use the words from a report on self-help

methods made by the Secretary of the United States Depart-

ment of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.), and pre-

sented to the Congress in 1969:

It is evident that self-help methods, properly applied,
increases housing production, decreases costs to the
user and to the public, and contributes to the elimina-
tion of the symptoms and causes of poverty.[3]

The next chapter discusses diverse forms of self-

help housing, with special emphasis on its application in

affluent societies.

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[1]*Time* magazine, March 30, 1981, p. 41.   [2]Ibid.

[3]Unpublished Report on a study of Self-Help Housing
in the United States. In *Freedom to Build*, op. cit., p. 24.

CHAPTER IV

SELF-HELP HOUSING METHODS

As seen in the last chapter, housing constitutes
an important catalyst for the improvement of the fourth
world situation. A natural consequence of the principles
of housing and discussion carried out, is a particular
form of housing, namely "Self-Help housing" which emerged
as possessing the capacity, not only to house the Fourth
World, but to promote structural changes and contribute
to the destruction of the culture of poverty.

In this chapter, Self-Help housing methods are
going to be studied, their main characteristics will be
underlined, their major advantages and disadvantages will
be pointed out, and some improvements will be proposed
having in mind the situation of the Fourth World in afflu-
ent societies.

There is a wide variety of self-help housing
methods, and each method very often is subjected to modi-
fications in order to respond to the particular needs and
characteristics of each group of participants. However,
it is possible to distinguish three basic self-help
housing methods: Independent Self-Help, Aided or Organized

Self-Help, and Employed Self-Help--that for a better sys-
tematization are going to be analysed separately.

Independent Self-Help Housing

This is the oldest form of housing. Throughout
the centuries people have independently built, managed and
rehabilitated their own homes without external sponsorship,
supervision, technical guidance or financial support.
Even nowadays, "approximately a third of the world's
people house themselves with their own hands, sometimes
in the absence of government and professional intervention,
sometimes in spite of it."[1]

However, in affluent societies the times have
changed. Increased high skill specialization and wide-
spread mass production and consumption, combined with even
higher building standards, restrictive zoning regulations
and building codes, and the almost imperative necessity to
have access to financial credit, have restricted the capa-
city and freedom of a person to build his own house without
outside help.

In spite of these unfavourable conditions in modern
and affluent societies, people still house themselves by
means of independent self-help methods. For example "every
year some 160,000 families in the United States build their

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[1]Turner, John F. C. and Fichter R. Freedom to
Build., op. cit., p. viii.

own homes."[1] Two socio-economic groups tend to use
independent self-help methods: the upper classes who
prize uniqueness of design and emphasize housing as a
status symbol; and the low income classes who do not
have any other way of achieving housing. While the former
socio-economic group is outside the scope of this thesis,
the latter is clearly related to the Fourth World.

The most important characteristic of independent
self-help housing is that "the participant takes the ini-
tiative and retains decision-making power in all phases
of the housing process."[2] A participant may receive some
form of support--such as advice from friends and tech-
nicians, financial assistance, etc.--but he is always in
control of the whole housing process.

Independent Self-Help housing possesses several
advantages. Without mentioning the incentive of self-help
forms characteristic of all self-help housing methods and
other general advantages referred to in Chapter III,
independent self-help housing is a way to achieve housing
at very low cost by the involvement of the participant in
the administrative, management and construction tasks.
Because the process is independently carried out by each
participant there are no additional administrative costs

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[1]Turner, John F. C. and Fichter R. Freedom to
Build., op. cit., p. 3.

[2]Self-Help Housing in the U.S.A., op. cit., p. 9.

characteristic of aided and employed self-help methods.

As disadvantages, it can be said that, in spite of the fact that the participants are poor, they have to possess some degree of hope and capacity to make decisions and carry out all the construction process, which are not characteristic of a person trapped in the culture of poverty. In face of this disadvantage it is legitimate to say that independent self-help housing is only able to reach the upper strata of the Fourth World that may still possess some degree of hope and is not totally submerged in the culture of poverty.

A proposal to overcome this disadvantage is that independent self-help housing be complemented by a pre-construction phase, through which hope is raised, skills are learned and education is upgraded, so that Fourth World inhabitants may take full advantage of this self-help housing method.

External support could go further by supplying serviced lots at below market price, and make available technical and financial help, that owner-builders could have recourse to, if they so wished. Building standards should also be more permissive to allow gradual construction and improvement of a house.

Examples of independent self-help housing in affluent societies are abundant. However, due to their scattered and individual character, they are difficult to

to cite.   In West Germany there has been a tendency for the

government to support independent self-help housing:

> Some municipal governments have programs where below
> market-value lots are made available to families
> interested in building their own houses.   A family
> has to build on this lot within a five-year period.
> If this requirement is not met, the family must sell
> the lot back to the government and incur a penalty.[1]

Aided or Organized Self-Help
Housing

Aided Self-Help housing is a method of achieving

housing through a combination of the efforts of the par-

ticipants and the support of an external agent.   The par-

ticipants in this housing method do not possess the freedom

and decision-making power found in independent self-help

housing, but they have much more support from the external

agent which goes further by making several decisions for

them.

According to the report on self-help housing in

the U.S.A.:

> Organized self-help is sponsored or supervised or
> supported, or all three, by parties other than the
> participant.   Most important, the participant does
> not initiate the effort beyond making the decision
> to join a program or project.   In this case, many
> tasks carried out by an individual, independent
> self-helper are accomplished by the external agents
> or organizations.[2]

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[1]Special Report on Techniques of Aided Self-Help
Housing.   Edited by Department of Housing and Urban
Development, Office of International Affairs, 1973, p. 2.

[2]Self-Help Housing in the U.S.A., op. cit., p. 10.

Aided Self-Help housing programmes are composed
of two main phases: the pre-construction or preparation
phase, and the construction phase. In the pre-construction
phase, the participants that have been selected or, at
least, that have agreed to follow the rules set by the
external agent are organized and trained. The participants
are also instructed about the project, financial commit-
ments are made, and the working groups are formed. This
phase is usually the responsibility of a "social orientation
staff," which also has the task of the maintenance of moral
and productivity of the working groups throughout the
project.

In the construction phase the participants and
families continue to be assisted by the "social orientation
staff." Technical support for the building work is also
provided. The foreman usually dedicates special attention
to the organization of the construction site, planning of
the construction activities, and coordination of the dif-
ferent phases of the work at different houses. Once all
the houses are finished the ownership of the houses is
achieved.

Due to its characteristics, aided self-help hous-
ing is able to reach socio-economic groups with very low
income, low level of hope, and low capacity of self-help.
Or in other words, it is able to reach most Fourth World
inhabitants. However, there is still the extremely low

income group which because striving for daily food and an
income use all their energies, are therefore incapable of
taking advantage of aided self-help housing programs.

The most important advantages of aided self-help
methods are the achievement of housing at low cost for
families that otherwise could not afford decent housing,
and the social development built by these programs. The
importance of the second advantage drove John Turner to
underline that "the Aided Self-Help advocate claims that
the most important products are of literally incalculable
value: that in Nehru's words, 'we are building families
as well as homes.'"[1]

The major disadvantages of this method are the
high administrative   costs associated with it, the diffi-
culty to recruit a well trained and dedicated staff--
social orientation staff as well as technical support
staff--and the length of the programs that usually take
from one year to two years.

These disadvantages are of considerable importance
in the context of the Third World countries which have a
large percentage of people living in poverty and only very
little financial and human resources to deal with it. How-
ever, in affluent societies these disadvantages are of less
importance because there is only a small percentage of
people living in poverty and large financial and human

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[1]Freedom to Build., op. cit., p. 132.

resources available.

In order that Aided Self-Help housing be a catalyst for the improvement of the Fourth World situation it is imperative that the potentialities of the pre-construction and construction phases be taken advantage of. The principles of housing seen in Chapter III should be implemented. Programs to increase the level of literacy, education and skills should be included in the pre-construction phase and capitalized on throughout the entire project. People should not be screened out by the external agent as a prerequisite to entering the project, but should rather be given incentives to participate.

As seen in the last chapter, it is essential that feelings of hopelessness, fatalism and despair, and lack of confidence in personal capacities be overcome. Special attention should be given to this aspect by the "social orientation staff." Another important task of the "social orientation staff" is to organize the participants in a resident's or participants' committee so that they can have decision-making power and be able to exercise it. Integration in larger organizations should also be fomented.

A transactive form of planning should be used through the entire project, with special emphasis in the community organization, housing construction, materials and skills used in the houses and organizations of work.[1] As the project

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[1]Transactive planning is a form of planning in which processes of mutual learning--between the planning

advances and the participants gain hope and self-help
capacity, the external agent should give more and more
incentive to independent self-help forms.

It is impracticable to go beyond these general
guidelines for an Aided Self-Help housing project--
expressed in these recommendations, principles of housing
and discussion--and to propose more concrete measures.
This is because each group of participants, as well as
each Fourth World community has its own characteristics
and aspirations according to which Aided Self-Help housing
projects should be designed.

Employed Self-Help Housing

The major distinction between Independent, Aided,
and Employed self-help housing is the amount of external
support that each of these self-help housing methods re-
ceive. Employed self-help is the one that requires the
most support with wages paid to the participants for their
labour.

> In employed self-help, people participate in a
> program initiated and run by one or more organizations.
> Typically, the sponsors have been governmental agen-
> cies. The principal departure from the organized
> self-help model is the employment of participants for
> cash wages in the construction of their houses. Al-
> though this need not imply a reduction of participation
> in the non-construction activities, participants in

expert and his client--are closely integrated with an
organized capacity and willingness to act. Transactive
planning is a response to the widening gap in communication
between technical planners and their clients. Friedman,
John., _Retracting America_, Anchor Books, New York, 1973.

employed self-help programs have usually been at the
lowest income levels, and have indicated less interest
in such participation than people in organized self-
help programs. Again, the final goal is home owner-
ship by the participants, achieved by paying off
mortgages or making rent payments towards ownership.[1]

An important advantage of this method is its capa-
city to reach the socio-economic group with lowest and
extremely low income, i.e. the poorest of the Fourth World
population. This method also frees the participants from
a daily search for food and income, while providing them
with the opportunity to acquire a skill and better housing.

The disadvantages associated with Aided self-help
methods mentioned earlier--administrative high costs, dif-
ficulty to recruit a well trained staff, and the length of
the projects--are magnified in Employed self-help housing.
The participants' wages also contribute to increase the
cost of the programs. There is a risk that the partici-
pants become dependent on the assistance of the sponsor,
rather than having an increased self-help capacity. These
disadvantages restrain the use of employed self-help hous-
ing to the cases where independent and aided self-help
methods cannot reach the potential participants.

Employed self-help methods should follow the model
described for Aided self-help housing, with a pre-
construction and a construction phase, and having the
support of a "social orientation staff" and a technical

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[1]Self-Help Housing in the U.S.A., op. cit., p. 24.

construction staff. Employed self-help should also follow
the recommendations mentioned in Aided self-help housing.
However, special attention should be given to the promotion
of self-help capacities and self-help forms of organization.

The existing field work experience of Employed self-
help housing is very scarce, and so, more research is neces-
sary before implementing it.

To conclude this chapter, it should be noted that
Independent Self-Help, Aided Self-Help and Employed Self-
Help housing are only basic models. There are countless
variations according to the characteristics of the commu-
nity, the organization sponsoring the program, and the
objectives to be reached.

It is the responsibility of a planner in contact
with a real situation and by using a transactive form of
planning, to introduce the necessary changes and to promote
the full use of the potentialities of self-help housing as
a catalyst in the improvement of the Fourth World situation.

CONCLUSION

This thesis studied the Fourth World in affluent
societies. Its purpose was to analyse the complex situa-
tion, to identify the causes of its existence, and to
propose a way to catalyse the fight against extreme poverty
and social exclusion found in the Fourth World.

The Fourth World is the social stratum that exists
at the bottom of the society and that has been excluded
from the major social, economic, and cultural rewards that
have become available to others with world change. The
Fourth World population is the poorest of the poor and con-
stitutes five to ten percent of the population in developed
countries.[1]

The poverty of the Fourth World is produced and
maintained by the combination of two factors: the internal
factor or the "Culture of Poverty," and the external factor
or the oppressive structure of the society. The Culture of
Poverty is a way of life the poor develop to cope with
their deprived situation. This way of life is passed down
from parents to children and renders the next generation
unable to take full advantage of upgrading opportunities
that may occur in their life time. The Culture of Poverty

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[1]Le Mouvement A.T.D. Quart Monde, Editions Science
et Service, Paris, France, 1977.

83

is self-perpetuating. It persists even after unjust struc-
tural conditions have been corrected, and constitutes a
vicious circle. The oppressive and unjust structure of
society is a constant source of inequality and places strong
barriers that impede the attempts of the poor to improve
their situation. It starts and reinforces the vicious
circle in which the Fourth World is trapped.

To overcome the destitute and complex situation of
the Fourth World it is necessary to wage a comprehensive
and concerted campaign, not in terms of this or that aspect
of poverty, but one engulfing cultural improvement and com-
plete structural change.

This thesis advocates that housing, understood as
both a physical commodity and especially, the process and
activities of people achieving that commodity, can be a
fulcrum for the improvement of Fourth World conditions,
and a catalysis for the fight against poverty in affluent
societies. The thesis shows how this concept of housing
based on the principles of "Self-Government," "Appropriate
Technologies" and "Planning for Housing through Limits"
enunciated by John F. C. Turner, and associated with proper
programs--like skill training, cultural upgrading, and
educational improvement--can contribute to the destruction
of the culture of poverty and spread seeds of structural
change.

The characteristics of the Culture of Poverty upon

which the capacity of housing were tested are:

1) Feelings of hopelessness, fatalism and despair.

2) Lack of confidence in personal capacities and feelings of inferiority.

3) Low level of literacy, education and skills.

4) No participation in major social organizations and isolation from the larger society.

It was found that these characteristics are greatly modified, if not overcome, by the form of housing described above.

Structural change is also promoted by the self-governing forms derived from the incentive of self-help methods in achieving housing. Self-governing forms give power to the people and local organizations and reduce the authority of central governments and large corporations.

There are three basic self-help housing methods:

1) Independent Self-Help Housing.

2) Aided or Organized Self-Help Housing.

3) Employed Self-Help Housing.

These methods have sporadically been used to achieve housing at low costs and to reach the sector of the population that could not afford housing by any other means. However, the great potentiality of self-help housing methods to destroy the Culture of Poverty and promote structural change has been overlooked and not properly stimulated.

This thesis proposes that these self-help housing methods be properly modified to account for the values of housing mentioned above, to follow the principles of housing enunciated, and to incorporate the additional upgrading programs. The guidelines for these improvements in self-help housing are generally referred to in the thesis, but it is the responsibility of a planner in contact with a real situation, by using a transactive form of planning, to introduce the necessary changes and so promote the full potentialities of self-help housing as a catalyst in the improvement of Fourth World poverty.
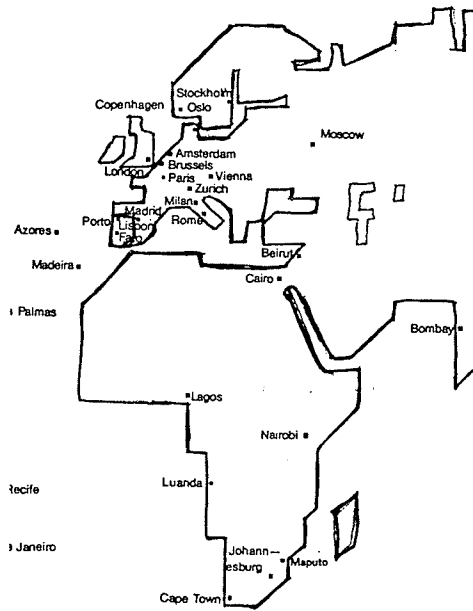
APPENDIX

BAIRRO DAS MARIANAS EXPERIENCE

Position of Portugal in
Europe

Situation du Portugal
dans L'Europe

Localizacion del Portugal
en Europa

Lage Portugals auf Europa

Localization of the small
town of Carcavelos in which
Bairro das Marianas is
integrated.

ENVIRONS
OF
LISBON
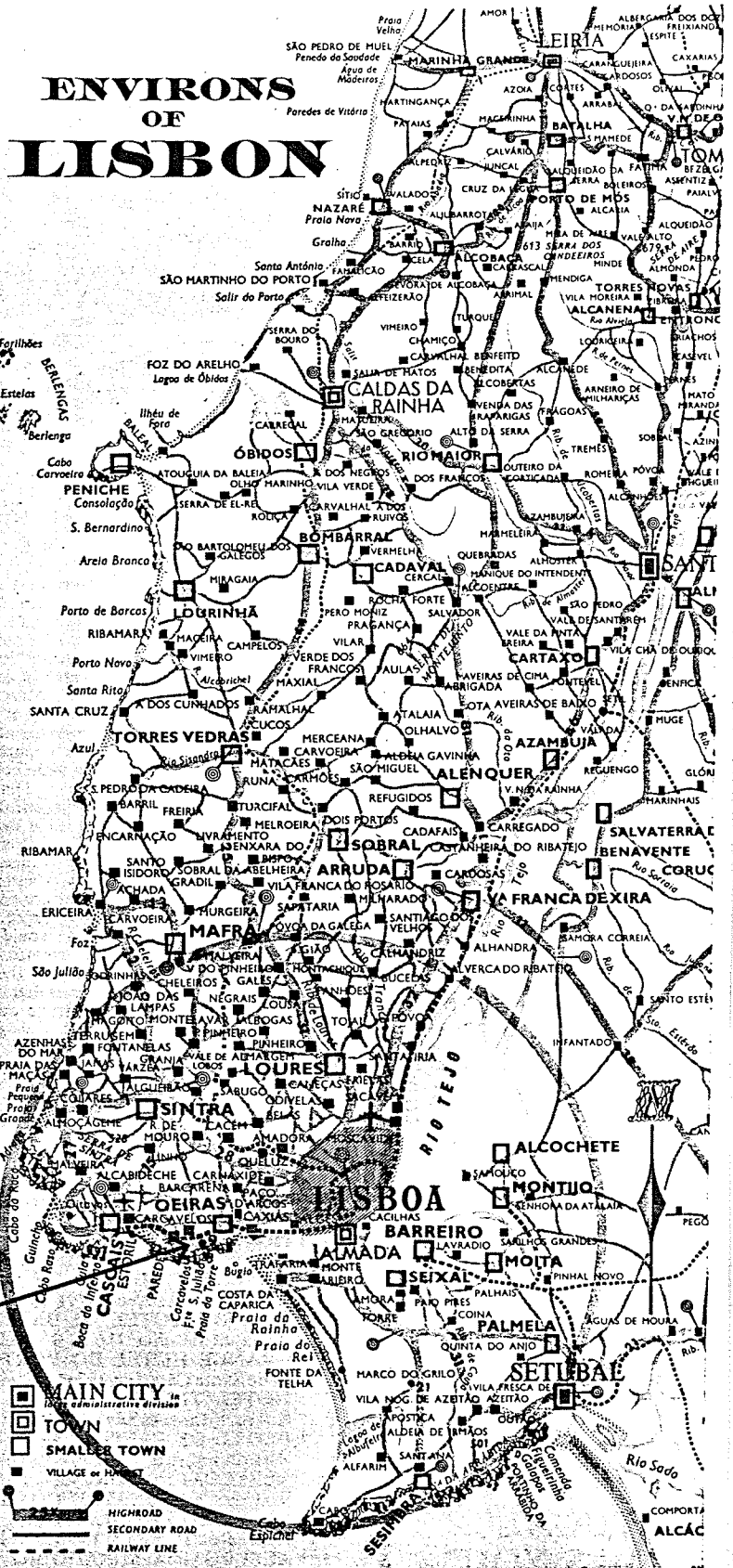
Bairro das Marianas

Location

Bairro das Marianas is located in the urban shadow
of Lisbon and is integrated in the small town of Carcavelos.
Carcavelos is characterized by its tourist industry that
capitalizes on the beautiful seashore and by its upper-
middle class that every morning takes the electric train
to Lisbon.

The bairro is conveniently located near the railway
station, not far away from the centre of Carcavelos, and
fairly well served by roads. However, it is physically
separated from the rest of the community by high walls on
two sides, a railway and a road on the south, and a road
and trees on the north side. The bairro is rectangular in
shape, with an area of 9 or 10 acres. The land belongs to
a powerful bank that is more interested in future specula-
tion than in the present use of the land.
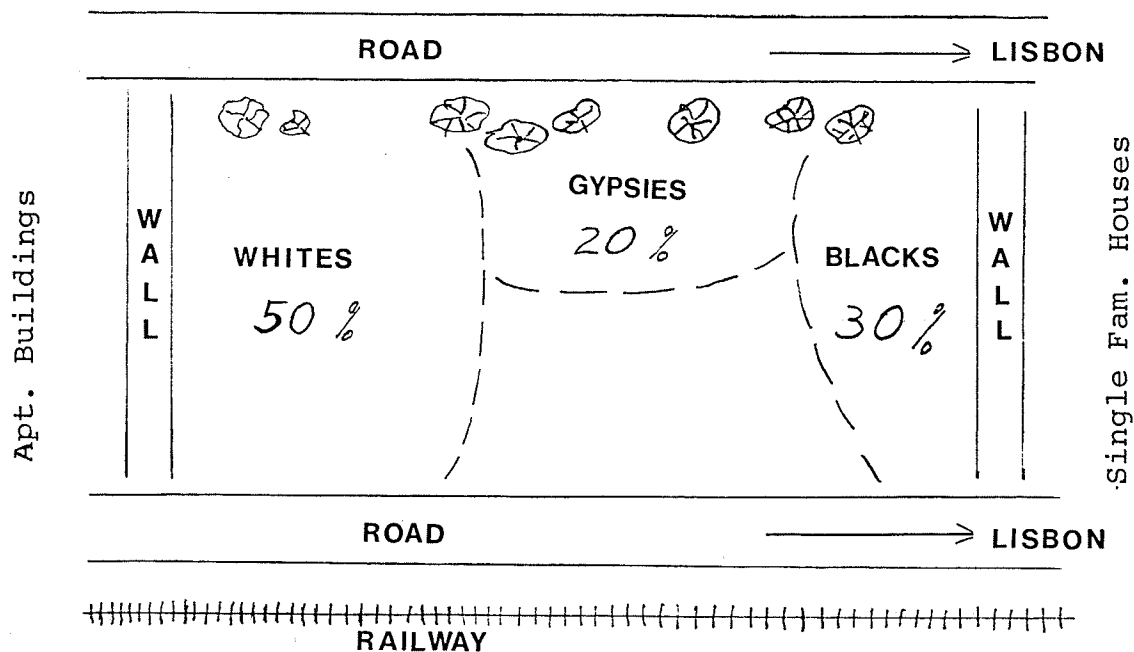
In spite of the two main roads that traverse the
boundaries of the bairro, it is very secluded and people
passing and driving by may not notice the bairro.

Population and Social Structure

The population of Bairro das Marianas is around
100 families, and the most significant common denominator
seems to be their poverty. However, we can easily dis-
tinguish three social classes: the Whites, the Gypsies,
and the Blacks. Each class has its own strong character-
istics.

Whites are the largest group (50 percent) and view
themselves at the top of the social ladder in the bairro.
They usually talk about the non-whites as violent, aggres-
sive, and anti-social beings. Their houses are concentrated
in the west part of the bairro, close to the wall, where
they are sheltered from the winds and form a small neigh-
bourhood. Most of the whites have been living in the bairro
for more than five years, and there are a few who have lived
there for more than twenty years. It is a stable population
with some social organization. When they are not unemployed
or sick, they may have an unskilled job, a seasonal job, or
self-employment. One of the largest sources of income is
the seasonal work on the beach during summer. Women usually
don't work outside, however, those who don't have children
may work as servants in some rich house in Carcavelos. Fam-
ilies very often have more than three children and young

people tend to get married (free-love unions are the most frequent) at a very early age. The elderly don't live with their married sons or daughters, but they usually live within calling distance, very often next door. The children below the primary school age (seven years old) sometimes contribute to family income by begging from door to door in Carcavelos, and at other times they just play in the vacant land around their houses. Those of school age (from seven to thirteen) may help their fathers who are self-employed or they keep begging from door to door. Fights are very frequent and some may go further and become arguments and confrontations between families. After school they try to get a job but often they end up working at the same jobs as their parents. It doesn't take long for a sixteen or seventeen year old male and for a fourteen or fifteen year old female to get married and start a new family that is going to be exactly the same as that of their parents.

Gypsies are characterized by their mobility and very strong clan ties. The family is usually composed of four or five children, parents and grandparents. I don't think there is any gypsy family that has lived in the bairro for more than five years. Most stay around for one year and a few stay only from one day to several weeks. They tend to build their houses or put their tents on the north side, close to the road. Despite the fact that

gypsies are the smallest group of the three (only 10 per-
cent), they cause the most violence in the bairro. Petty
theft, verbal offences, fights that may end up with serious
consequences, are frequent and the other two groups don't
lose any opportunity to say how bad gypsies are and all
sorts of stories circulate about them. On the other hand,
gypsies are also friendly and when in a good mood they are
very exuberant. It doesn't take them long to make a party
in front of their houses and cheer up all the neighbours
around a bonfire. Gypsies' main sources of income are
small deals and a few seasonal jobs. It seems that they
never have a permanent job and always think in terms of
the present. This is also a cause for the Whites to com-
plain about gypsies, but in fact the Whites also behave
in the same way. Due to their great mobility it was the
sector of the population with which I had least contact.

Blacks are mainly from Cabo Verde, a former Por-
tuguese colony in Africa now independent. They are in
Portugal just to work, and so this group is characterized
by a great predominance of males in their twenties or
thirties. They account for one-third of the population,
and are viewed with hostility by both the other groups.
There are racial reasons for the discrimination, but the
main reason, according to the Whites, is that they take
all the jobs! Blacks are less literate than Whites but
more so than the gypsies. They are almost as skilled as

the average for the bairro. However, they are willing to
work for less money and usually are employed by small
building contractors. Blacks are never self-employed and
only have a seasonal job if they cannot find a permanent
one. Their period of residence in the bairro is usually
longer than the gypsies, but not as long as the Whites!
Blacks tend to occupy the East part of the bairro that is
closer to transportation. There are only a few families
among these people in the bairro. Usually, three or four
males share the same house and use it only for sleeping.
Their social organization is more noticeable during week-
ends and they try to reproduce the social life of their
country.

In spite of these different characteristics, there
are several daily intercommunications and if one needs
help one is always free to ask, even if one belongs to a
different social group. The contacts among people are
much more frequent in this bairro than in the rich neigh-
bourhoods. There are also basic group norms. For example,
how much land a family may use for gardening is dependent
on an informal community consensus.

Living Conditions

Needless to say, in the Bairro das Marianas, as
in any other shanty town, the living conditions are very
difficult.

Houses are only one storey high with cement floors, wooden walls, and corrugated roofs. All the families own their houses. Nobody rents! Should one need a house, one just grabs a few boards and with the help of neighbours, friends and relatives one has a temporary house. As the family grows in number or as money is earned, the house is improved. Some houses have as many as three bedrooms but the majority have only one or two. A small kitchen is the centre of the daily life and is also used to receive close friends and neighbours. Bathrooms are very rare, and the latrine is placed at the back of the house. On rainy days, there is water on the cement floor forming pools under the leaks in the roof, and on windy days there is too much ventilation in the rooms. In 1972 there was no water, sewage, or electricity in the houses. There was only one public fountain for one hundred families and only three public lights for the main street. Neither the main street nor the narrow secondary streets were paved. On rainy days, one has to jump from stone to stone to avoid mud and pools of stagnant water. There is no garbage collection. Refuse and waste are thrown on the vacant land where children play. Houses occupy only half of the 10 acres. Two or three acres are used for gardening and for raising some goats and sheep. There is no school in the bairro. Children go to a school not far away and that also serves a rich neighbourhood. There are no shops in the bairro with

an exception of a small cafe-tavern. This is the place where men get together and spend most of their time. Women never go there. It is the centre of the social life and where some informal discussions about the bairro take place. It is also the place where men try to forget, with the help of alcohol, that the next day is going to be the same as the day before.

After having viewed the population, the social structure, and the living conditions of the Bairro das Marianas in total perspective, we may now try to summarize these observations in four conceptual categories:

1) Relationship between the Bairro and the larger society:

- There is no participation in and integration of the population of the bairro with the major institutions of the larger society.
- There is a high degree of unemployment and under-employment that leads to low income and material deprivation.
- There is a low level of literacy and education. People don't belong to labor unions, neither are they members of political parties.

2) The Bairro as a community:

- There are very poor housing conditions, lack of primary services, and blighted and dirty environments.

- There is some social organization beyond the level
  of the nuclear family.

- There is a sense of community in spite of the
  three different social groups. The walls around
  the bairro may help to form this sense of "us and
  them."

3) Family Life in the Bairro:

- Large families.

- Children are introduced very early to the hard
  life of the adults. The youngsters tend to get
  married at a very young age. Usually the marriage
  takes the form of informal or common-law marriages.

- There is lack of privacy.

- The mother occupies the central place in the
  family life by bringing up the children and
  governing the house. Men rarely stay at home.

4) The Bairro at the level of the individual:

- There is a very strong present-time orientation
  with little ability or willingness to plan for
  the future.

- There is a general belief in male superiority,
  and a strong separation of daily activities
  between sexes.

- There is a sense of inferiority, fatalism and
  low level of aspirations.

The Movimento de Jovens

Movimento de Jovens is a Christian youth group formed in 1971 and was initially composed of more than forty young people, of both sexes, in their first year of the University. The group was the result of merging several small groups in Carcavelos that dedicated themselves to different activities like: Bible-study, youth problems, parish work, tutoring the illiterate, or just getting together and having a good time. However, all the groups had in common was the fact that they were Christian and the fact that they were gradually arriving at the conclusion that to be Christian nowadays is much more than going to church on Sundays, reading the Bible and discussing it. To be Christian is to implement in daily life the things people hear every Sunday in the church and read every week in the Bible. This implementation, the group thought, should be in an organized way, so as to coordinate efforts and to be sure one is on the right track.

So with the active support of the priest of Carcavelos, the group was merged in the Movimento de Jovens. Among the primary objectives of the movement was a direct involvement in the social problems of the community of Carcavelos by alerting the community to social injustices; by trying to solve those problems with our very limited resources or with the help, as much as possible, of the

community; by promoting public meetings and debates, and
by reflecting and discussing in our weekly group meetings
the action to take as enlightened by Christian principles.
These activities demanded from each of us three or four
hours a week for meetings, and almost every Saturday or
Sunday for some actions decided in the meetings. As
University students, we found it difficult to spare that
time; but on the other hand, the human contact and the
feeling of participation in something concrete and useful
was greatly rewarding.

First Efforts

The first effort was the "Transplant Operation."
With this operation we intended to transplant superfluous
goods from the rich and give them to the poor. So we went
to almost every house in Carcavelos explaining our purpose
and asking for things that people had in their attics and
basements that they didn't want any more, or that they
would like to share with deprived people. From piles of
paper to used clothes and old furniture, we collected
everything. This operation took several months and re-
quired hard work not only from the members of the group,
but also from dozens of volunteers with cars and vans
that helped in the transportation and collection. This
activity was also very important in that it involved and
woke up a large part of the population of Carcavelos.

During this campaign a rich person lent us a store where we could separate all the material collected and sell them. Things like paper, bottles, and metal were sold to merchants at current prices. Shoes, clothes, furniture, and things in good condition that could be used directly by a person were sold directly to the people of the bairro, and others, at very low prices. For example, a good pair of used shoes would cost 10 cents. The reason why we sold at very low prices rather than give for free was that we wanted to preserve the dignity of the people. By purchasing the shoes (even symbolically) they were helping themselves. It was interesting that more than 90 percent of the people who purchased at our store were from the Bairro das Marianas, which was only 5 minutes walk from the store.

For seven or eight months, there was intensive contact between our group and the population of the bairro, creating ties of friendship between the Movimento de Jovens and the Bairro das Marianas expressed at the personal level among all of us. It happened frequently that pregnant women came and talked with two girls of our group who were studying medicine; the children of the bairro also felt very comfortable coming to our store and staying there all afternoon playing among thousands of small treasures or just enjoying to be among people who smiled at them; old women used to come very often and we tried to make them feel important listening patiently to them; men came,

probably more attracted by the bargains. It was an opportunity to meet and know almost all of them.

The store was also very successful in a monetary way. With the profits, that had come mainly from the bairro, we bought staples and started selling them at half price to the population of the bairro. However, not everybody was satisfied with the store. Since the "Transplant Operation" had started, the opposition from merchants kept growing. With this new stage of selling staples in the store, the threats evolved from writings on walls to vandalism against windows and doors. We already knew that Saturday mornings were used for repairs and very often men from the bairro came to help us. The store was open only on Saturdays and Sundays, so it was very difficult to keep an eye on it and one day there was a fire! The fire didn't burn down the structure of the store, but damaged the interior and all our things. The owner of the store was afraid and asked us politely to leave.

Second Stage

Without the store and with the transplant operation stopped, the next stage came very spontaneously and naturally. We already knew most of the population of the Bairro das Marianas, had very good friends among them, and all the population was very favourable to our Movement. Our principle of fighting social injustice and helping needy people

had also a very large camp of action in the bairro. So there was no other way to go, but into the bairro.

Once there, the first two or three weeks were spent talking, getting to know and visiting people. It didn't take long to conclude that the primary needs of the bairro exceeded astronomically our scarce resources and that our action should be directed to helping people to help themselves. This is expressed in a popular saying that "it is better to teach a man how to fish than to give him a fish." However, the housing conditions were so bad that we had at least to do something about those paper and plaster roofs that allowed as much rain inside the house as fell outside.

By this time (1972), our Movement had about 30 members and we felt we could start mounting three campaigns:

1) The clean-up campaign

2) The community development campaign

3) The building rehabilitation campaign

The clean-up campaign had two objectives: to clean up the bairro and to involve the population in a community activity that could produce some sense of the bairro as a community.

To achieve these we worked very closely with the natural leaders of the bairro and tried to make all the people realize how dangerous it was for health to have garbage everywhere. Strong propaganda about the campaign was broadcast in advance and a date was chosen most

suitable for all.

The campaign was a success and people from the three different social groups worked together.

After the campaign it was also more clear that a garbage collection at least once a week, made by the city hall, was necessary. This conclusion reinforced the second campaign.

The community development campaign had the objective of putting pressure on city officials for some primary improvements in the bairro. A committee constituted by bairro residents and members of M. J. went to talk with city officials. The first time we were not received, but by the second time, in spite of a cold reception, we got the promise of garbage collection and two more public fountains for the bairro. Help for house rehabilitation was refused by city officials.

The housing rehabilitation had to be done at the lowest cost and restricted to the most urgent situations. As our group had still some money we decided that we could pay one-third of the cost of the materials for the roofs and the owners of the houses could pay the remaining two-thirds. Another committee was chosen among those residents who were more interested and active to buy the materials directly from the factories and to organize the repair work. For those residents who couldn't afford two-thirds of the price of the roof, we loaned money that

could be paid back in very small amounts. Support for this
had to be sought from the church parish of Carcavelos and a
special collection at Christmas time was asked for. At
Sunday masses we also talked and asked for donations. As
a result not only the necessary money was collected, but
also the attention of the population of Carcavelos was
focused on the Bairro das Marianas.

At this stage the bairro was highly unorganized
and committee work was mainly done by members of M. J.
The committees were not elected, but chosen among the
most active residents. The participation of the popula-
tion appeared to vary according to their social group.
Whites were the most interested, Blacks were not very
interested, and gypsies only participated in short range
activities.

Third Stage

At this stage we focused our attention on commu-
nity activities. The most important were:

    1) Organization of a Residents' Committee

    2) Building a Community Centre

    3) Pressure on City Hall for Services

The necessity of a permanent and elected residents'
committee became evident. Not only should the residents of
the bairro gradually have more participation in the work
and destiny of the bairro, but also it was important that

all the people felt represented on those decisions that

could not take place in general meetings.

It was a very difficult process! People were

not accustomed to living in a democracy* and had enormous

difficulty expressing themselves and talking in public.

The cultural environment itself posed tremendous obstacles:

men didn't allow women to participate in meetings because

"the place of a woman was at home;" if a person disagreed

with another, it was taken as personal revenge, etc.

However, with a lot of work and time, a Residents'

Committee was elected. The three social classes were

represented, and natural leaders emerged.

Building a Community Centre--The community centre

was built mainly by residents with a little help from our

group. Money for materials came from the parish of Car-

cavelos and from special donations during masses. The

building process was the first large activity of the Resi-

dents' Committee and involved a great controversy. There

were people who thought the money should be used in repair-

ing houses and consequently were strongly opposed to the

community centre. Other people disagreed with the kind of

materials used in the construction and were unhappy with

the community centre location at a central location; Whites

wanted it on their side. A few didn't care at all about

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*There was a dictatorship in Portugal for forty
years that ended in 1974.

what was going on and avoided working on the construction.
In the beginning, the residents' committee was also reluc-
tant to build it, but after several meetings where we
showed the importance of the community centre for future
activities, they agreed with us and took it almost as a
matter of honour to build it. Not every man worked on it,
but more than half did. Women never worked directly on it.
And young people between ten and sixteen years old worked
very much; it seems it was like a party for them to parti-
cipate in the construction.

The community centre was built of wood and with
the same kind of materials existing in the houses. Its
construction took ten or eleven weekends, and its dimen-
sions didn't exceed three or four houses together.

Pressure on City Hall for Services--Once a Resi-
dents' Committee was elected, the representation of the
bairro was more powerful and could exert more pressure.
Electricity for all houses and for all main streets was
achieved. Garbage collection was improved. However,
sewer system and water supply were refused due to shortage
of funds. When the community centre was finished, it had
free electricity and city officials promised public showers
and washrooms (that never came).

On these trips to City Hall, only three or four out
of twelve members of the Residents' Committee participated.
The Whites were the most interested, the gypsies became

excited very easily by any refusal from a city official,
and the Blacks didn't participate at all in these trips.

Fourth Stage

At this stage, with a community centre built, cul-
tural activities were further reinforced. The most impor-
tant were:

1) Classes for illiterate adults

2) Activities for young people

3) Small library and projection of some movies

These activities took place or started at the end of 1973.

In classes for illiterate adults, the teaching
experience of some members of Movimento dos Jovens was
tapped. Classes were given at night in the community
centre and they drew a fairly good attendance. The new
method of Paulo Freire was used with good results.

Activities for young people were conducted mainly
during weekends. Soccer games, trips to the beach, and
visits to the zoo and aquarium were the most appreciated.
Sometimes it was difficult to control and orient the wild-
ness of those boys and girls who were used to the "street
life."

On special occasions, like Christmas and First of
May, short plays were performed by young people for all the
population.

A small library was begun, composed of books
offered by the population of Carcavelos, one or two weekly

newspapers, and one weekly magazine. It was located at one side of the main and only room of the community centre. Cultural movies were also shown monthly, and discussions were fomented after the film.

There were several other activities that tried to place the community centre at the centre of bairro life, and tried to create the sense of the bairro as a community.

In the beginning, there was strong opposition to cultural activities. The population preferred help for food, clothes, and house improvements and viewed books, movies, etc., as a waste of time. However, after persistent work by the Residents' Committee in coordination with our group, people understood and participated more. Cultural activities in the community centre continued until 1977.

Fifth Stage

On the 25th of April, 1974, there was a revolution in Portugal! It ended a forty year dictatorship and it was intended to start a democratic and socialistic regime. Poor people and workers were exhalted and hailed as the most important social classes.

This national political situation had important consequences in the Bairro das Marianas, but not as quickly as one might have expected. It took time for the new ideas to pass through the walls of isolation and indifference

within which the people still lived, and reach all the
population. However, people gradually participated more
in activities at the community centre and started realizing
that a change in their lives could be possible. A sense
of unity in the bairro developed, not because the differ-
ences of the three social groups had disappeared, but
because they had now a much wider view of the society in
general and were gaining a sense of forming an exploited
class.

Activities in the bairro now included visits to
other shantytowns near Carcavelos in order to share
experiences, political movies followed by discussions and
debates, classes for adults and activities with young
people; informal talks about preventive medicine, etc.
At the national level, the government established a year
of training between grade 12 and University called
"Servico Civico," where students were supposed to have
contact with social problems and the realities of the
country. Students in this Servico Civico were appointed
to help our group in the bairro. A permanent kindergar-
ten was reopened and served the population five days a
week. Almost every weekend there were activities in the
bairro and the population participated with enthusiasm.
Women also gradually lost their inferior status. Men
didn't lose their attitude of machismo, but now it was
much less intense than before. There were several

meetings with a governmental organization, "SAAL," that
offered support for building a new bairro. The expecta-
tions kept growing. The bank which owned the land was
nationalized and the prospect of resident ownership of
the land greatly enhanced. Some people already knew where
they were going to build the new living room, kitchen,
rooms, and washroom!

The Residents' Committee kept working well. New
powers were given to Residents' Committees and their im-
portance as lobbies at City Hall was much greater. Some
residents were involved in political parties, the most
popular party being the Communists.

This high level of interest, hope, and involvement
in the larger society was maintained during 1975 and only
wavered slightly when expectations weren't fulfilled.

Sixth Stage

However, the year of 1976 arrived and the main
government promises of new houses, new bairro and the
life that politicians had talked about, hadn't been achieved
yet! The excuses of the governmental organization "SAAL"
were invariably lack of funds. National economy was in fact
very bad with an inflation of more than 30 percent a year,
and massive borrowings of money from the United States,
Canada, and EEC countries avoided a total bankrupt of the
system. Politically, there was also a slow movement that

shifted the initial objectives of a Socialist Revolution
for objectives of Social Democracy. There were elections
and the new politicians in power no more talked about the
poor and workers as the most important classes. Majority
needs became the main slogan; and the majority was the
middle classes.

The policy of the new government was to control
inflation by unemployment and raised prices.

In the bairro people not only lost confidence in
promises, but they realized that their material conditions
were worse than before the revolution. Unemployment had
hit hardest the unskilled workers characteristic of the
bairro. High inflation for fixed income people, especially
the elderly, also produced dramatic consequences. Unem-
ployed Blacks had to go back to their country since Cabo
Verde was now an independent country.

As a consequence, the hope and belief that a new
life was possible faded. There was a sense of disillusion-
ment and defeat. Activities in the community centre had
the participation of children and very young people and
of some adults with radical political ideas.

In the beginning of 1977 the social groups of the
bairro had changed in number: several White families left
the bairro and went back to the country due to very hard
conditions of life in the city and in some cases because
they still possessed a piece of land in their village of

origin. Some new families arrived at the bairro because they couldn't afford to pay rent in an apartment. Blacks were reduced to less than half. Gypsies seemed to be the least affected, and their number didn't vary very much. Our group, the Movimento dos Jovens, was as much affected as the bairro was. By 1977 the group was reduced to eight members and our enthusiasm had dropped even more than the disillusionment of the population had risen.

The relationship between residents and our group was similar to the relationship between an old friend cheated by the other. People indeed associated our group with the failed revolution and with the rest of the society outside the bairro. By the middle of 1977 our group left the bairro, leaving an almost non-existent Residents' Committee and a community centre only sporadically used.

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