

animals, which helped him work the land.

The same was true for the agricultural produce, e.g. grain, wheat, sesame and lentils, and dried figs, which were kept in a high place out of reach of the animals. A wooden ladder (fig.4.36E) placed in the middle of the mastabeh connected it to the dark rawieh above. Here was where the fallah's food storage (muneh) was kept in big mud bins (khawabi), or in small mud containers or barrels. The big mud bins usually formed a wall, which separated the rawieh from the mastabeh below.



Fig.4.41: Mud bins (khawabi) separated the different areas

To the left of the entrance door and a step higher than the service area, lay the family space (el-mastabeh). In it all family daily activities -sitting, eating, cooking, sleeping- were performed. This was the one space which encompassed the whole life cycle of the fallah; here he was born, got married, raised his children and met his creator. There were no physical partitions which divided the mastabeh. In winter, when the use of the frontyard was restricted, almost all female activities were performed in the mastabeh. In summer, the mastabeh was hardly used, except for sleeping.

The mastabeh had almost no furnishings except for the few box-like mud bins (khawabi). These bins, which were usually made and decorated by women, were placed against the walls. In these khawabi, the family's belongings and small amounts of food for every day consumption were kept. There were also big bins which functioned as main dividers between the mastabeh and rawieh as well as storage cabins (Fig. 4.41). A number of small niches (taqat) were used for