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**Morphological, Karyological and Electrophoretical
Studies on the Genus *Arvicanthis* (Rodentia:
Murinae) in Egypt**

A THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Zoology, Faculty of
Science, Minia University

FOR

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DEDICATION

TO

My Mother,

My Brothers and

Memory of my Father

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My foremost and greatest gratitude indebtedness go to *ALLAH*, the most merciful and originator of earth and heavens, who has and is a constant support and guidance in my life at all times. I pray that I will be able to use my experience and knowledge to help others and in doing so glorify *ALLAH* through all my actions and deeds. I acknowledge without God's support nothing would have been accomplished.

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CONTENTS

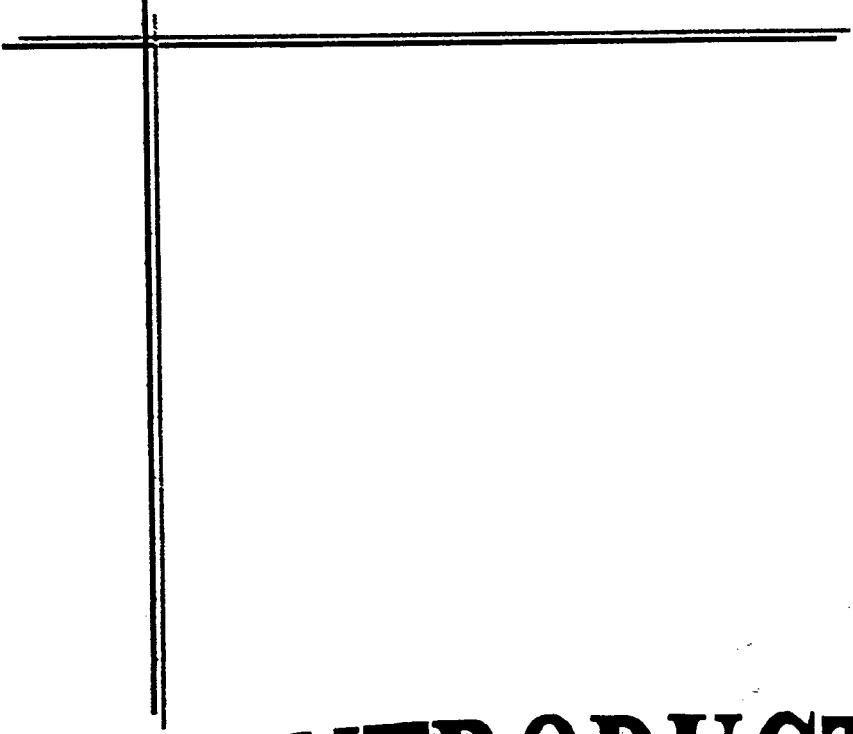


CONTENTS

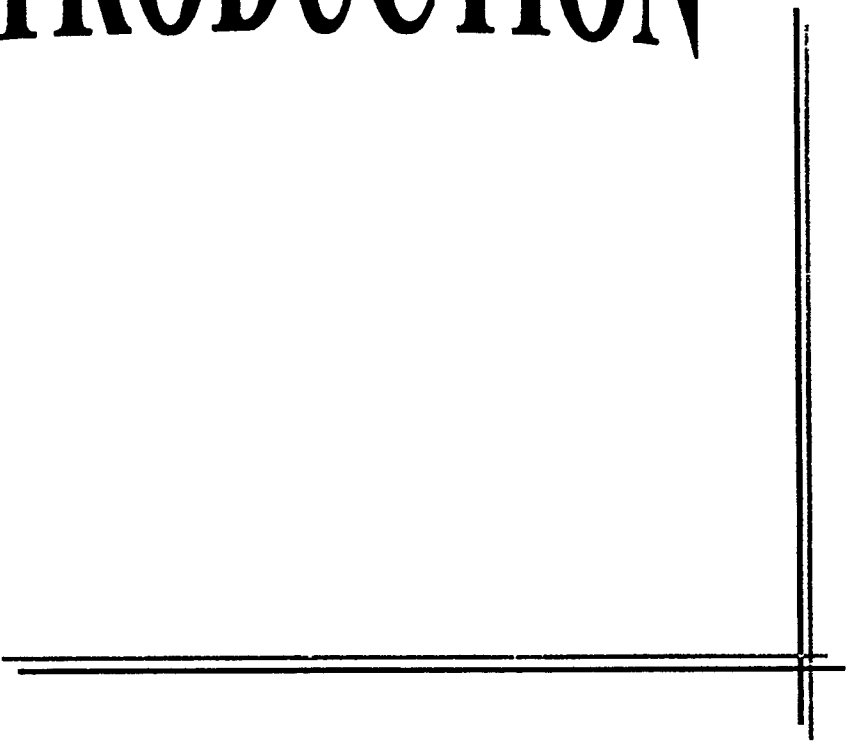
Subject	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
MATERIALS AND METHODS	7
1. Materials	7
2. Methods	7
2.1. Morphological Study	7
2.2. Karyological Study	15
2.2.1. Conventional technique	15
2.2.2. Banding techniques	16
2.2.2.1. G-bands	16
2.2.2.2. C-bands	17
2.3. Preparation of solutions for karyological study	18
3. Electrophoretic Study.....	19
3.1. Laboratory techniques	19
3.2. Electrophoresis techniques	20
1. Enzymatic proteins	20
2. Non-enzymatic proteins	21
3.3. Methods employed in data analysis	22

3.4. Discontinuous gel electrophoresis	25
3.4.1 Solutions	25
3.4.2. Gel preparation	26
3.4.3. Electrode buffer systems	27
3.4.4. Stain buffer system	28
3.4.5. Potential	29
3.4.6. Washing and fixing solution	29
3.4.7. Enzyme assay	29
3.5. Continuous gel electrophoresis	35
3.5.1. Gel preparation	35
3.5.2. Gel buffer systems	35
3.5.3. Electrode buffer System	36
3.5.4. Potential	36
3.5.5. Stain buffer system	36
3.5.6. Washing and fixing solution	36
3.5.7. Enzyme assay	37
RESULTS	39
1. Morphological Data	39
1.1. Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	39
1.2. Principle component analysis (PCA)	39
2. Karyological Data	44
2.1. Karyotype	44
2.2. Giemsa G-bands	52

2.3. Constitutive heterochromatin (C-bands)	58
3. Electrophoretic Data	63
3.1. Enzymatic proteins	63
3.2. Non-enzymatic proteins	81
 DISCUSSION	 84
1. Morphological Analysis	84
2. Chromosomal Analysis	85
2.1. Karyotype	85
2.2. G-band	86
2.3. C-band	88
3. Electrophoretic Analysis	91
4. Genetic versus Morphological and Chromosomal Data.....	94
SUMMARY	97
REFERENCES	101
ARABIC SUMMARY.....	123



INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The murine rodents form one of the most common subfamilies of the family Muridae (Musser and Carleton, 1993). The subfamily Murinae comprises the Old World mice and rats and includes 122 genera and 529 species of the whole rodent species currently described. One of its unique features is the quasi-absence of any suprageneric arrangement, which illustrates the high phenotypic homogeneity of its components. In contrast to the related subfamily Sigmodontinae (New World mice and rats), which is subdivided into seven well-defined tribes (Reig, 1980), the only tribal units proposed for the Murinae were Conilurini, Hydromyini, and Anidomyini (Watts and Aslin, 1981; Lidicker and Brylski, 1987), all restricted to the Australian region. In particular, the suprageneric relationships of the extensive African murine fauna, which include more than 150 species arranged in approximately 30 genera, are still very poorly understood. Arvicanthine murid rodents are one of the most common groups of murine fauna in Africa and that have ever been put forward to contribute to a better understanding of their taxonomy and phylogeny.

The first author to introduce the concept of arvicanthine rodents was Misonne (1969) in his study of the evolutionary trends in the African and Indo-Australian Muridae. He created an *Arvicanthis* "Division" in which he grouped 12 genera, both African and Asian, namely *Aethomys*, *Arvicanthis*, *Dasyms*, *Dephomys*, *Golunda*, *Hadromys*, *Hybomys*, *Lemniscomys*, *Mylomys*, *Pelomys*, *Rhabdomys* and *Stochomys*, with the possible inclusion of *Bandicota* and *Nesokia*. This *Arvicanthis* "Division", named after its most representative genus, was defined almost solely on dental traits. In a later revision of the systematics of *Hadromys*, Musser (1987) concluded that only the genera *Arvicanthis*, *Lemniscomys*, *Mylomys*, *Pelomys* (including *Desmomys*), *Rhabdomys* and