THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

THE POLITICS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN A SUDANESE URBAN COMMUNITY

being a Thesis submitted for the

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by

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SUMMARY

The main problem of this thesis has been to investigate the relations between the change in the administrative system and the change in the social structure of a Sudanese urban community within the context of processes affecting the whole of Sudanese society. The location of the study was Baytalmal administrative division in Omdurman. The main changes in the administrative structure considered were those that followed upon the application of the Peoples Local Government Act of 1971. This had entailed the creation of numerous councils which,in principle, were supposed to promote popular participation and local self-development.

A critical review of the relevant literature was first provided in order to assess its potential relevance for the analysis of the problem at hand. This included studies in the American Community Power tradition, French Structuralist studies, in addition to studies of Third World situations dealing with issues of urban politics and changes in the social structure of Third World urban areas.

The study began with an indepth analysis of the actual operation of the administrative system in Baytalmal stressing some of its inherent contraditions and pressing problems. Then, moving to the level of the community, the changing pattern of membership characterising Baytalmal's councils were examined. Further aspects of the politics of local councils were considered as evidenced from the differential perception of councils by Baytalmal's population and voting turnouts. Local Organisations as they relate to councils and an analysis of two important issues (those of Consumer Goods Shortages and the Replanning of Baytalmal) of current significance in Baytalmal were also analysed. In relation to all of the above the principal findings were: a) that in the situation of current economic deterioration, the setting up of the new administrative system in the shape of numerous councils had provided an arena for the area's classes to contest the limited range of resources dispensed by councils, thereby accentuating processes of class conflict, and b) that councils

did not turn out to be representative of all interests but, in effect, were monopolised by the area's affluent class.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introduction to the problem of the thesis - it attempts to outline several conceptual and theoretical approaches that are relevant to this problem, and to indicate the position I am adopting in relation to them. The chapter has five sections: A - The aim of the thesis, B - Sudanese Urbanisation and Sudanese Urban Studies, C - The value of Western Urban Studies, D - The value of Third World Urban Studies and E - Concepts used in the thesis.

A: The Aim of the Thesis

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate the relations between a changing administrative system and the local social structure of a particular urban community. In this sense (especially within the Sudanese context), the study is necessarily of an exploratory nature as no such study has previously been attempted in Sudan. More specifically, within the general area of concern outlined above, I consider one problem, namely the effects of the changing administrative system on the local social class structure.

The major focus of the study is on the analysis of a changing urban community and concomitant changes in the politics of its local government. The following are the specific themes to be pursued: 1) The effects of change in the formal administrative system on the local social structure, and 2) The interplay of local and national politics with particular attention to the general national socio-economic and political processes in contemporary Sudanese society as a whole.

The locale of the study was Baytalmal, an administrative subdivision of Omdurman town. The major administrative changes examined are those that followed on the far-reaching reorganisation of local government in the Sudan in 1971. The major national economic and political processes considered are those which have developed since May 1969, (succeeding the inception of the May military government), especially the rapid deterioration in the economic situation during the 1970s. The thesis thus dwells primarily on that decade.

After the establishment of the military regime in May 1969, major changes were implemented in the local government system. This reorganisation aimed at: 1) increasing local participation and promoting local involvement, and 2) improving basic local services and encouraging local self-development. The political "spirit" surrounding these changes is discussed in detail in Chapter III. Part of my emphasis will thus be on the extent to which these aims have actually been achieved, and what the consequences of this reorganisation has been for the community.

Baytalmal administrative division is made up of seven neighbourhoods, those of Mulazmin North, Mulazmin South, al-Izbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al-Makki, and the three neighbourhoods making up what was traditionally known as Baytalmal, namely Baytalmal South, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal North. Before the 1971 Peoples Local Government Act (PLG) this area was administered by a single council - the Omdurman Municipal Council - which covered the whole of Omdurman. After the 1971 reorganisation, Omdurman has had 137 councils. Thus, numerous administrative boundaries have been established (the basis on which these boundaries were decided is considered in Chapter II). One of my major concerns is to investigate the effect of the establishment of these particular administrative boundaries on the local social structure. In this respect, the study begins with a close examination of the administrative system, its operation and problems, before moving on to examine the implications and effects of these on the community. I shall argue that one of the major effects of the administrative reorganisation has been to promote and articulate processes of class conflict. This can be seen most clearly in relation to scarce resources which the new administrative bureaucracy is now involved in allocating and distributing. To repeat, my basic concern is with changes in the local social structure deriving from the reorganization of the administrative system, and taking place within the wider context of important processes of change in the whole of Sudanese society.

B. Sudanese Urbanisation and Sudanese Urban Studies

In line with my argument that the problem studied must be placed within the context of processes affecting Sudanese society as a whole, in this section I look at aspects of Sudanese urbanisation, against which background the problem of Baytalmal's changing social structure must be seen.

To begin with, in conceptualising Sudanese urbanisation, or even more generally, Third World Urbanisation, it is crucial to note that just as under-development can be related to, and is the consequence of general western colonial and capitalist expansion, in a more specific way, colonial urban development is part of the same process. As Castells has put it:

> "The study of urbanisation in the 'underdeveloped regions' (has to be) integrated into an overall analysis of 'under-development'"

Approaching the study of Third World urbanisation in this way involves a criticism of modernisation theorists[2] who have accepted a view of urbanisation as an inevitable and integral stage in the process of development, and who see the city as positively correlated with modernisation and economic growth. They further consider that through diffusion or spread effects this growth will ultimately reach other regions or the hinterlands of particular cities. This view has largely given way to a different notion namely that large cities maintain an essentially exploitative relationship with their hinterlands, and are in the long run dysfunctional to the achievement of national development goals. If we follow this more recent view, it is essential for us to place Sudanese urbanisation in the total context of Sudanese society and its particular developmental issues and problems.

The first issue to consider in such an analysis is the relation between Sudanese urbanisation and colonial political and economic policies. A series of important questions arise in this connection though not all are necessarily relevant to the Sudan but which nevertheless are

important for any consideration of colonial urban development generally. These include the following: What was the form of colonial domination and the specific relations between the dominating and dominated societies? Was there a distinctive urban policy pursued? (The differences between British as contrasted with French policies are relevant here, or even the different policies pursued by the British in different colonies). Were there European urban settlers? Were there European rural settlers? and what were the implications of their presence or absence for the spatial forms of colonial cities?

Not all these questions will be answered directly in my analysis, but I wish to stress that Sudanese urbanisation was intimately related to the particular policies of the colonial government.

In Sudan, in pre-colonial[3] times, the most common types of habitation were small villages or scattered isolated huts. Towns were few and the only major urban centre was Sennar, the capital of the Funj kingdom, which because of its political significance, was able to acquire other functions such as those of trade and education. Besides, the largely subsistence orientation of the various regional economies, the poorly developed means of transportation and the lack of security, limited interaction even among the few towns that did exist. Although trade routes connected a few urban centres internally and with the outside world, the overall level of socio-economic interaction was low. Isolation, economic independence and the lack of formal domination over a limited hinterland of traditional agriculture or pastoral nomadism were common characteristics of the pre-colonial town in the Sudan.[4]

After 1821, and with the progressive establishment of Turco-Egyptian colonisation, there was increasing, though limited urbanisation. Due primarily to administrative and commercial reasons, several urban centres arose in Northern Sudan. These included Khartoum and Wad Medani. The shift of the centre of power from Sennar to Khartoum can be taken to be significant. The main consideration in the choice of the site of

Khartoum was that Sudan being an Egyptian province, its capital was to be, logically, situated as near as was geographically possible to the mother country.

Thus, Khartoum arose from a small fishing village to become the most populous town in the Sudan, primarily due to the fact that it was the centre of the administration. Its population consisted of Europeans, engaged in trading, working between the White Nile and Khartoum or Cairo. A second group were the Turks, who were primarily involved in administration. A third group included Arab traders. Other urban groups included, Egyptian artisans, soldiers and Danagla merchants.[5] The growth of Khartoum and other towns in Sudan during this period led to a network of urban control over the much larger rural areas, both sedentary and nomadic, a control making itself felt not only in administration and taxation, but also in commerce and education. As can be seen, in addition to entrenching a group of exploiters in urban areas, Turco-Egyptian rule in Sudan led to the fragmentation of the existing agricultural and pastoral communities and created new social groups of privileged urban people (traders and administrators) who exploited the rural areas through heavy taxation and slave raids.

Turco-Egyptian rule ended with the rise of the Mahdist State, during which time, the most significant step as regards urbanisation was the transfer of the capital city from Khartoum to Omdurman. Further, especially after the Khalifa came to power, large numbers of western Sudanese tribesmen were encouraged to migrate to Omdurman, to ensure the Khalifa political support, in the face of his opponents.

It was Anglo-Eguptian rule commencing with the fall of the Mahdist state in 1898, however, which signalled the most change in terms of its implications for Sudanese urbanisation. Firstly there was the transfer of the capital once again, this time from Omdurman to Khartoum - as stated earlier, under Turco-Egyptian rule, the choice of Khartoum as capital was related to its relative closeness to Egypt, Sudan at the

time being considered an Egyptian province. Under British colonial rule, the choice of Khartoum as capital can primarily be related to its strategic position on the Nile, in addition to its relative proximity to the Red Sea coast. Nevertheless, due to its marginal geographical position, it has come to project a "factional"[6] image, that of the privileged central riverain Sudanese culture. What we find in the case of Khartoum is that it became an increasingly important town as a result both of its use as a political capital by the colonial regime and its development as the economic centre of the region chosen by the British for their plans of economic expansion, namely the Gezira. Khartoum, thus developed a "factional" or regional image as a result of this.

As regards it internal structure, Khartoum from the start of British colonial rule developed as a European town providing primarily administrative and commercial functions. Planning and zoning ordinances were introduced in the early years of colonial rule to help regulate urban land use. Three classes of residential areas were established. These differed according to the size of plots laid out and types of building materials used.[7] From the beginning, the majority of Sudanese lived in Omdurman–and later also in Khartoum North - while Khartoum developed into a "European" town. Throughout colonial rule Khartoum received most of the attention and developed into the most important administrative, commercial and educational centre in the country. (The case of Omdurman with which I am more specifically concerned, is considered in detail in Chapter II).

In Omdurman, the situation was different, it was not yet clear how the new colonial administration would react to the Omdurman inhabitants, since Omdurman had been particularly related to and was the seat of Mahdism. During the early years of the century, an exodus of the population from the city continued. Very little attention was given to Omdurman during colonial rule, commercial and industrial development were

primarily located in Khartoum and Khartoum North, especially after World War II, when various manufacturing industries were established. So that, it becomes clear from the above, that even within the Three Towns, there existed unequal development between Khartoum and Khartoum North on the one hand, and Omdurman on the other.

Outside of the Three Towns area, the most important colonial policy affecting the contemporary development of Sudanese urbanisation was the modernisation of agriculture, especially the expansion of irrigation and cash cropping of cotton along the Nile, which produced new administrative, commercial and social functions for some towns. The development of the Gezira scheme in 1925 and the Gash scheme in 1927, for instance, accelerated the growth and development of the towns of Wad Medani on the Blue Nile and Kassala in Eastern Sudan.

Still, another event affecting historically patterns of Sudanese urbanisation was the establishment, in 1905, of the railway from Khartoum to the Red Sea coast, and the development of Port Sudan at its terminus. Port Sudan grew rapidly, and the main outlines of the present town were laid down in the 1920s. The area had been traditionally occupied by Beja nomads, these people then tended to congregate on the fringes of the town throughout its growth, selling milk and animals.

Besides heavy investment in projects in the North East of Sudan such as the Gezira scheme and Port Sudan railway, other British policies affecting colonial urban development and its consequences in terms of regional inequalities included various administrative policies, especially that of indirect rule or, as called in Sudan, Native Administration, whereby indigenous political institutions were preserved largely intact. This consisted of a native authority, normally single and autocratic, which is part of the machinery of government, with defined powers of judicial, fiscal and executive nature, which are exercised under statutory authority. Each local authority administered its own treasury, fed by revenue from local taxes. The exmphasis of the

system was on the preservation of 'rule' and upholding of the authority of the chiefs. The relevance of this is that it furthered regional inequalities for whereas colonial investment, especially in infrastructure was centred in the riverine area, particularly North and South of the Three Towns, other areas were left under the authority of their tribal leaders, who personally enriched themselves from taxes, at the expense of their own regions.

After the end of formal colonial rule in 1956, major public investment was concentrated in three irrigation projects in the North East, the Managil extension to the Gezira scheme, the Roseires Dam on the Blue Nile, and the Khashm al-Girba project. Industrial development, meanwhile was left largely to private capital. This was a direct continuation of colonial policies and it continued to engender regional inequalities in three dimensions: urban-rural, urban-urban and intra-urban.[8]

Following from the above analysis then, it is clear that more than ever before, towns in the Sudan have been at the centre of transformations of all kinds that have greatly affected Sudanese society at large. Thus, it is that the towns - Greater Khartoum in particular - have become centres of privilege.

The aim of the above historical review of Sudanese urbanisation has been to provide background information against which the problem of this thesis must be seen. Thus the changing social structure of Baytalmal as one of the oldest areas of Omdurman must be seen in relation to the specific position occupied by Omdurman, as a "native" town which was largely neglected during British colonial rule, especially when compared with Khartoum. The resultant unique social structure of the town, and the colonial policy towards it, must be seen as two factors which later facilitated its part as the centre of the country's nationalist movement and Baytalmal's social structure must be seen in this context.

Bearing this in mind, what can be said of the current status of Sudanese urban studies? The following statement by Hale, writing in 1971, in my view accurately describes these studies:

"Urban studies of the Sudan are for the most part just beginning to be problem-oriented, but there are not yet enough of these studies to test established hypotheses generated by other urban areas or enough published data to contribute to the formation of important new paradigms, hypotheses, concepts or theories." 9

In the light of the above statement, we may generally classify existing studies of Sudanese urban areas according to their major emphases thus:

a) Demographic - concentrating on demographic characteristics of Sudanese towns and processes affecting them (including numerous studies by Mohamed El-Awad Galal al-Din and El-Sayed El-Bushra).[10]

b) Historical - concentrating on the histories and historical development of particular towns during particular historical periods (including studies by Hakem and El-Sayed El-Bushra and Stevenson).[11]

c) Interactional - emphasising the growth of specialised networks of social relations or institutions which are clustered in cities.[12] (including studies by Hale and Lobban).[13]

Although the above is an extremely general classification, yet it is still safe to maintain that most studies of Sudanese urban areas largely fall into one of the above categories.[14] Furthermore, they have tended not to be problem-oriented, and have largely neglected to link specific urban processes with national ones, characterising Sudanese society as a whole. In the light of the present state of knowledge, hence, this thesis is essentially about trying to link categories a, b, and c together, especially through placing them in the context of the development of Sudanese society as a whole.

I have selected a specific community for study with special reference to one problem (namely its changing social structure as influenced by its changing administrative system). In addition, I have dealt with its demographic, historical and interactional aspects, within the general context of processes affecting Sudanese society at large. The study hence attempts to provide both badly needed ethnographic

material on a specific locality as well as presenting hypotheses testing that material. These hypotheses are, in my view, general enough to be transferred to, and tested on, other urban localities.

As stated above, the study is problem-oriented, in that it has selected a specific problem for close examination, namely that of the relation betwen a changing administrative system and a changing urban social structure, within the general context of processes we know to be affecting the whole of Sudanese society. Thus, in addition to urban problems as such, I am concerned to examine an aspect of administrative systems namely local government. Like Sudanese urban studies, writings on Sudanese administration[15] have tended to be historical and formal, emphasising the change over time of how the administration is supposed to work. To counteract this, I have tried to study and to show how a specific administrative system actually works in reality, the problems it faces, and its effects upon the area in which it is functioning.

In this section I began by giving an overview of Sudanese urbanisation and its relation to colonial policies, before going into a discussion of aspects of Sudanese urban studies and studies of Sudanese administration. I have emphasised in relation to both categories of studies, that they have tended to be broadly descriptive, and not problem-oriented. I have tried to correct this, in the context of the present study, as I will come to show.

C The Value of Western Urban Studies

The crucial question that needs to be raised here concerns the potential relevance of such studies for the Third World, and more specifically whether Western Urban Studies have any relevance for this study.

In relation to these important questions the point that needs to be emphasised is that if these studies are to be used, they need to be related to specific societies, at particular historical junctures, rather than making apriori statements about whether they apply or not. Indeed, this

is what I have tried to do in this thesis.

Here, I shall consider only two sets of studies, since a review of all Western urban studies is not especially relevant to the problem at hand. The two sets of studies considered are: 1) American Community Power Studies and 2) French Structuralist Studies. I have chosen these two theoretical positions because whereas both are extremely divergent yet both relate to the problem under examination, as I will come to indicate. I will be examining each position in turn, critiques of it, and how it is of relevance to the problem of this thesis.

1) Community Power Studies:

Here, I am primarily concerned with the elitist and pluralist conceptions of community developed mainly in the US in the 1950s and early 1960s. The underlying aim of both positions was to get to know about the nature of local power, at the level of the community. Both were concerned with the community as a locus of political power, and how power is exercised within it.

a) The Elitist Position:

The first elitist study was Floyd Hunter's, Community Power Structure (1953), which was a study of Atlanta, Georgia. Its major findings were that an elite tends to rule in community life, that political and civic leaders are subordinate to the elite, and that in fact that single "power elite" rules the community.[16] Moreover, it was seen that such a power distribution was a more or less permanent aspect of the social structure.[17]

The primary method used by Hunter and others who followed his lead was the "reputational technique". It assumed that reputations for influence or power, were an index of the actual distribution of that influence or power.[18] Essentially, the method consisted of asking informants to identify and rank the leaders in their particular community. These informants were, in some cases, a pre-designated panel of experts, in others, a random sample of community members, and yet others were assembled through the use of the "snowball" or "cobweb" techniques.

The final list was usually made up of either those people who got the highest number of nominations by the informants or alternatively of all leaders whose average ranking exceeded a particular arbitrarily designated limit.[19] Through this method it was discovered that there was a "significant overlap" of persons since a group of about one dozen people (assumed to be the local elite), kept reappearing on all lists.[20] Numerous criticisms of this method have been made, as also of the approach in general. I shall consider these after outlining the pluralist approach.

b) The Pluralist position

Above, we saw that the main proposition forwarded by the Elitists was that a single elite ruled the local community and dominated politics in it, and further, that there was a rift between the elite and the rest of the community. On the other hand:

> "Pluralists hold that power may be tied to issues, and issues can be fleeting or persistent, provoking coalitions among interested groups and citizens ranging in their duration from momentary to semi-permanent...." 21

The pluralist argument rests largely on the following propositions: There are no power elites; power is widely distributed in communities; and power is always directly applied and can therefore be observed. Power should be investigated through case studies of important decisions (rather than perceived as a structure), and finally, that it is not a permanent aspect of the community structure, allowing for local change within it.[22]

Hence, while the elitists posited a more or less permanent structure as their answer to the question "Who rules?", the pluralists suggested that the question, "Who rules?" could be broken into three component parts allowing us to speak of three characteristic problems which a theory of community power might help to solve. These are firstly:

"the problem of identifying and characterising participants in decision-making, 2) the problem of determining who gains and who loses from outcomes of decisions, 3) the problem of discovering what makes for successful participation in decision-making." 23

Dissatisfied with elitist conceptions and methods, the pluralist approach was characterised primarily by the fact that instead of studying reputations for power, they attempted to get at a picture of 'real power' by analysing actual decisions.[24] Polsby specifies the procedures used in the following words:

"First, the researcher should pick issue-areas as the focus of his study of community power. Secondly, he should be able to defend these issue-areas as very important in the life of the community. Thirdly, he should study actual behaviour either at first hand or by reconstructing behaviour from documents, informants, newspapers and other appropriate sources." 25

In these terms, three types of data were required. Firstly, data as to who actually participates in decision-making. Secondly, data concerning who gains and who loses from alternative potential outcomes and finally, who prevails in decision-making.[26]

Thus, whereas the reputational method led to the discovery of power elites dominating politics of local communities, the decision making method led to the conceptualisation of pluralist power structures, where power, dependent upon the issue at hand, was widely shared and distributed by different groups and individuals.

Before considering some of the criticisms of both these approaches let us consider their potential relevance to the problem at hand, namely the relations between a changing administrative system and a changing urban social structure. These approaches are relevant to the present study in two ways. First, that they have specific communities as the focal points of analysis and secondly, that they make significant statements about local social structures (i.e. whether or not "communities" are ruled by a single power elite). Clearly, however, despite the relevance of both these aspects, there are problems involved with both , Specifically, that both approaches overly concentrate on the local com-

munity and assume an unrealistic degree of autonomy in relation to it and secondly in characterising the local social structure they are interested in on either/or situation (namely either that a single elite exists or it doesn't) whereas clearly the problem involves much more, as will be seen when we consider some of the criticisms levelled at both approaches, especially emanating from Third World studies.

Clearly, the main issue this set of criticisms concentrates upon is the potential value of the approaches for Third World contexts. Rabinovitz and Trueblood have thus said:

> "Since the core of US community studies was at that time mainly research on community power, which tended to isolate consideration of local processes from national patterns, the effort to investigate Latin American City politics was, paradoxically also formulated with some measure of local exclusiveness. More recently, observers of Latin Ameircan urban problems have again noted that in the study of urbanisation and urban development in Latin America it is difficult to use the same implicit model followed for North American and European cities". 27

More specifically, F.Rabinovitz in her article, "Sound and Fury Signifying Nothing? A review of Community Power Research in Latin America", makes reference particularly to the fact that in Latin America (but in fact equally generalisable to the rest of the world, including Western Societies, where the approaches first developed), community power is in large part dependent upon the nature and demands of national political systems.[28] This is an important point, and is an issue marked by its absence from the American literature of the 1950s and 1960s, which takes the nature of the state, and the national political scene for granted. This notion is, of course, seriously challenged by recent trends in Marxist urban studies,[29] which have started with questioning the value of community power approaches for the study of even Western cities.

More specific criticisms, meanwhile have questioned the value of methodological techniques employed by both approaches. Thus, in a study of Lagos, Nigeria, Baker states:

> "First of all the pattern of social stratification in many non-Western areas is not identical with or nearly so stable as that of the West. Power and status do not rest principally on economic resources. Vertical class divisions are cross cut horizontally by ethnic, class, kinship and communal stratification which are of enormous importance in social relations." 30

Furthermore, she adds:

> "...because of overlapping institutional affilications among the elite, the distinction between leaders who are held in high esteem for social, religious, educational, hereditary or other non-political reasons and those who are authentic political leaders, may not be discerned by their respective loyal followers. Even judges used as independent observers may identify certain men as leaders not because they are politically influential but necause they are thought to be". 31

As regards the pluralists, Baker maintains that they assume that community decisions reveal the nature of local politics, forgetting that intense competition for national resources in the Third World (and the rest of the world for that matter) tends to be concentrated in its urban areas, where the dichotomy between local and national politics is not always clear. Consequently, the analysis of local politics is complicated by the role of higher government authorities in addition to individuals, operating at the local level who represent non-local interests.[32]

From this review of the elitist and pluralist approaches, and of criticisms of those approaches, especially from Third World contexts, it appears that there are two main issues of importance for us: a) the value of the approaches in the study of Third World situations and b) to what extent their methods are of any relevance in the study of those situations. In relation to a) especially as clear from the criticisms reviewed above, both approaches, although related to our problem (through their concentration on a specific local community and its social structure), are of little value, particularly due to the fact that they almost completely neglect the national political system and its demands. It follows then in relation to b) that a total dependence on their methods would misguide us and would lead to wrong conclusions. If they are to be

employed, their methods must be combined with others that allow us to take into consideration the wider national context. In this thesis I have only used aspects of issue-analysis (refer to Chapter VII), although again in a different way from that used by the pluralists. I have not used analysis of the issues chosen to show us whether or not an elite exists, but rather to help in our analysis of the community's changing social structure within the context of national processes affecting the whole of Sudanese society.

2 The Structuralist Approach

Interest in the application of Dialectical Materialism in the field of urban sociology is a development primarily characteristic of the late 1960s which received extra impetus from the events of May 1968 in France and their consequences. The latter included the French government's provision of finance for urban research in universities or independent research institutions consequent upon its perception of these "events" as being at least partly due to the malfunctioning of the urban system.[33]

Although there are many variants of this approach, a common assumption underlying them is the following realisation:

> "The heart of the sociological analysis of the urban question is the study of urban politics, that is to say, of the specific articulation of the processes designated as 'urban' with the field of the class struggle and, consequently, with the intervention of the political instance (state apparatuses) - object and centre of the political struggle and what is at issue in it." 34

Here, I shall primarily be concerned with the ideas of Manual Castells, since it was his early work, in particular, which could be seen to have laid the foundations (especially through his vehement critique of traditional urban sociology), for much of the later structuralist studies.

Castells in his analyses, especially in his earlier work, relies on an Althusserian Marxist approach.[35] Castells begins by a critique of earlier urban sociology especially as it is represented by Chicago-

school types of analysis. In this respect, he is especially concerned about the scientific status of urban sociology, hence he poses the following questions: 1) does urban sociology have a theoretical object? 2) if so, is that theoretical object 'urban'? 3) If not, does urban sociology have nevertheless a real object which could be described as urban? In response to these three queries Castells concludes that in highly urbanised societies, the spatial and cultural distinctions between urban and rural are unfounded, and he asserts that urbanism is the cultural expression of capitalist industrialisation, the emergence of the market economy, and the process of rationalisation of modern society. In other words, he concludes that the concept "urban" is ideological, since it implies a false explanation of the nature and causes of particular cultural patterns.

Castells proposes a different conception of the urban system, deriving from two sources: The first having as its source a Marxist conception of the social structure, whereby the economic system (with its component spheres: production, circulation and consumption), the political-legal system and the ideological system are spatially structured and have spatial expressions. For Castells, hence, the concept 'urban system' refers to the relation between elements in the spheres of production (e.g. factories), exchange (e.g. transport facilities) and consumption (e.g. housing) as well as in the political system (e.g. management element in the urban system).

The second source for Castells conceptualisation of the 'urban system' refers to the basis of delimitation of the spatial unit concerned. He argues that problems relating to collective consumption are one non-urban focus of research in urban sociology, and which deserve a fresh start. He, therefore, argues that in the final analysis an urban system may be defined as being a 'residential unit of labour power' or 'unit of collective consumption'.[36]

Besides, it is asserted by Castells that since no social structure (the urban system included) can exist without contradictions, i.e. class

struggle, the analysis of the urban system is necessarily an analysis of urban politics. Urban politics is seen by Castells to be constituted of two elements, 1) urban planning and 2) urban social movements. For Castells, urban planning is seen to be not an instrument of social change, but only of domination, integration and regulation of contradictions.[37] Meanwhile, urban social movements are seen to be a

> "...system of practices resulting from the articulation of a conjuncture of the system of urban actors and other social practices, such that its development tends objectively towards the structural transformation of the urban system or towards a substantial change in the balance of forces within the political system as a whole". 38

Castells, is therefore, particularly interested in studying urban change, as occurring through the medium of urban social movements. Thus he states:

> "A process of social change starting from this new field of urban contradictions occurs when on the basis of these themes, popular mobilisation takes place, social needs are given political expression and alternative forms of organisation of collective consumption, in contradiction with the dominant social logic are set up. Thus, it is urban social movements and not urban planning institutions which are the true sources of change and innovation in the city." 39

Above, I have reviewed very broadly some of Castells general ideas, especially his earlier ones. Some of his more recent ideas are included in his work City, Class and Power (1978). In this work he is more specifically concerned with an application of a Marxist analysis of social class as related to ideas of the reproduction of labour power and collective consumption, in addition to being interested in the comparative ability of different social classes to use power to achieve their objectives through the use of urban social movements as a medium. He is thus particularly interested in local governments and who controls them, thus:

> "Local governments have become essential for the management of the daily lives of the popular masses. They will therefore express their political choices according to the platform and the practices of the forces present. Municipal and regional politics, as institutional expression of urban policy, is

> becoming one of the major axes of the political confrontation of classes in advanced capitalism." 40

This statement by Castells is of particular importance to the problem at hand, however, my task is trying to empirically decide on this question of the extent to which local government is indeed a major axis of the political confrontation of classes.

Numerous criticisms have been levelled at Castells analyses, stemming from different standpoints. I shall consider some of these. Firstly, Castells, while still wishing to accept the 'urban' as a special focus of analysis, concentrated on its being conceptualised, as being a "spatial unit" of'reproduction of labour power'. Regional units, meanwhile, for him, are defined in terms of production space, and urban units, as reproduction space, as mentioned. In accepting some sort of distinction between 'regional' and 'urban' in this way, Castells separates two processes (production and reproduction) which in reality seemed to be combined in spaces which are defined as urban or regional; and, as Ecker has pointed out, he seems to undermine the prime relevance of production and the study of its effects to any Marxist analysis of space.[41]

With reference to Castells conception of urban social movements, a major criticism is that levelled at him by Chris Pickvance. Pickvance's principal point is that Castells emphasises the actions of the 'movement' at the expense of the actions of the 'authority'. In particular, that Castells tends to attribute too much causal influence to the actions of the movement organisation, and insufficient influence to the actions of the authority. His inferences about cause and effect thus become 'movement-centred'. More specifically, Castells has failed to adequately conceptualise local authorities and the social processes within them which affected their response to protest movements, and emphasised popular mobilisation to the exclusion of other modes of protest action (such as personal approaches and 'institutional' methods) as reasons for their success (or lack of success). Further, with respect to urban

social movements, another element not elaborated upon by Castells, is what Pickvance terms the transformation of a 'Social Base' into a 'Social Force' or in other words how a population affected by an urban issue becomes mobilised.[42]

Similar criticisms have been directed at Castells by P.Dunleavy, especially in his article, "Protest and quiescence in urban politics: a critique of some pluralist and structuralist myths" (1978). Specifically, Dunleavy is critical of what he terms the "unidirectionality of influence" assumption, which leads to a belief that change within the urban system can only be a consequence of popular action, never action by authorities. He is furthermore critical of the lack of definite criteria whereby particular issues are selected for study or examination.[43]

Having looked at aspects of the structuralist approach and some of the criticisms levelled against it, the next question to be dealt with, is the relevance of this particular approach to the problem under concern, although bearing in mind the various critiques made of it. The structuralist position, it must be pointed out, is relevant in two ways. First, (and in great contrast to the American Community Power position) it is concerned with social classes and with how different social classes get what they want in relation to scarce urban resources. This being a point that is completely neglected by the American Community Power theorists who limit themselves to the relatively naive question of "Who rules?" at a particular juncture in time, and in a particular location. The concern of the structuralists for social class in relation to the acquisition of scarce urban resources is, therefore, especially relevant. However, I am furthermore interested in the accelerated development of social classes and processes of class conflict as responses to particular changes in the Sudanese urban situation, as also in the national situation.

Secondly, the concern of Castells for state-controlled urban administrators and institutions is relevant, especially since I am concerned with similar institutions, namely those of local government. Castells

sees these institutions as ultimately being agents of the state and consequently, by definition, as being unable to effect meaningful urban change. This view is shared by C.Cockburn in her study, The Local State: Management of Cities and People. She thus states:

> "We need an analysis that sets local government in the context of the real economic situation of the period in which we live and asks: what is its job? Such an approach involves stepping outside the conventional frame of reference and seeing local government, our old red-brick town hall, for what it really also is: a key part of the state in Capitalist society." 44

Similarly, Biarrez, et al in their study, Institution Communale et Pouvoir Politique, see institutions of local government as:

> "Subordinate branches of the state apparatus, and as such are involved in the state's function as guarantor of the interests of the hegemonic classes or fraction. This structurally limits the power relations within them. Thus, the actual power relations within a particular local authority reflect firstly this structural limitation and secondly the actual balance of forces between classes in the local area". 45

As regards the above stands, and in relation to my study, the following clarifications need to be made: firstly, this study is indeed concerned with the degree to which local government is related to the state and, secondly, the extent to which it is a reflection of the balance of classes in the local area, but above all, with the extent to which its actual setting up has affected the articulation of classes and accelerated processes of class conflict, by providing arenas for such conflicts, especially since in the case under study (Baytalmal administrative division), local government councils specifically serving that area were only created in 1971. Hence, whereas Castells, Cockburn and Biarrez et al start off with the assumption, based on their overall theoretical perspectives, that local government is a reflection of the class structure and class conflict in the local area, my main interest has been to study and analyse why this is so in Baytalmal and what the effects for the actual development of classes has been.

I began this section on Western urban studies by raising the issue of the relevance and potential value of Western theoretical models to analysing Third World situations. I reviewed two such models, those

of American Community Power and the Structuralist Approach. The point I have emphasised throughout is that the value of these studies can only be decided at the level of empirical analysis of actual historical situations, as is attempted in the context of this study.

D. The value of Third World Urban Studies

Recent years have seen the publication of numerous general works on Third World Urbanisation and urban areas. These have included, J.Abulughod and R.Hay (eds.), Third World Urbanisation (1977), Bryan Roberts, Cities of Peasants (1978) Friedman and Wulf, The Urban Transition (1976) and R.A.Obudho and Salah El-Shakhs, Development of Urban Systems in Africa (1979). In this section, rather than reviewing these general works as wholes, I will refer to several that touch upon my particular problem area, trying to ascertain the relevance of each. In this respect I have looked at several works which dwell on the following themes: a) urban politics and urban social structure, and b) relations between national and local/urban politics.

The first study to be considered is the one by Walton and Lubeck entitled "Urban Class Conflict in Africa and Latin America: Comparative Analyses from a World Systems perspective" (1979). Walton and Lubeck are interested in examining how global economic changes, upturns and downturns, influence the internal development of classes within nations and regions. They thus state:

> "One of the central arguments of this paper is that the nature of urban class conflict is to be explained to some considerable extent by the manner of incorporation of a region into the world economic system". 46

They start with the assumption that class conflict is a principal source of social change and they then focus on class formation as a process of the steady elimination of social groupings based on traditional authority and simple commodity exchange and on their replacement by social strata

> "Whose life chances are determined by their location in a capitalist market and mode of production. Class conflict, in turn, expresses itself as a struggle for control over

> social surplus and for advantage in the market economy by groups differentially located with respect to the organisation of production and the surplus it generates. 47

Lubeck and Walton apply this approach to the two urban centres of Kano and Monterrey, tracing their historical development since the 16th century, to the present.

Before making some comments on Walton & Lubeck's formulations, it is interesting to compare them with one example of a totally different tradition, more representative of colonial type of studies (more examples of this tradition are considered later on in the section). Here I will look at some of the ideas of A.L. Epstein as included in his work, Politics in an Urban African Community (1958). Epstein's book is a study of the administrative and political system involving Africans in an urban community on the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt. He essentially sees the Copperbelt as a single field of social relations, composed of different sets of relations, each of which form a distinct sub-system. He states:

> "Fundamental to this social system is the dominant cleavage between Europeans and Africans, and this cleavage influences behaviour and institutional growth within each part of the social field. At the same time, each sub-system enjoys a certain measure of autonomy. They do not react in the same way and at the same time towards the external stimuli making for social change. The various sub-systems are interdependent, but they are not synchronised. Hence the contradition whereby African urban dwellers give allegiance to tribal leaders in some situations and in others have moved away completely from representation on a tribal basis, is explained by the fact that these situations refer to different sets of social relations, and belong to different departments of social life." 48

Hence, the major difference between analyses like those of Walton and Lubeck on the one hand, and Epstein's on the other is that Walton and Lubeck are primarily interested in explaining the social structure of Monterrey and Kano, and more specifically, processes of class formation and class conflict, by relating them to the mode of incorporation of the specific cities into the world capitalist system, which they see to be the main explanatory factor. Epstein, meanwhile, is interested in "institutional selection", and the individual's choice of particular social relations according to particular situations, or particular

subsections of the social field, which he sees as relatively autonomous of each other, although still interdependent. Of course, Walton and Lubeck's analyses imply a rejection of such notions of "autonomous subsectons of the social field" from the beginning, their interest lies primarily in the development of classes and class conflict historically, and they are, thus, not by and large interested in the choice of individuals in different situations.

In relation to Walton's and Lubeck's analyses I would make the following points, a) first, I do agree with them that class conflict is a principal source of social change that needs to be examined, b) however, I do not conform completely to their assertion that it can be primarily explained by reference to a world systems theory. Indeed, this is where their analysis of the situations of Kano and Monterrey is lacking. Obviously, their reliance on such a world systems explanation necessarily means that they can only make general comparisons and assertions about urban politics and class structure of the two areas, since surely change on a world level is not as dramatic as more micro change (which is one of my primary concerns) so, actually, Lubeck and Walton's analyses tend to be broadly historical and rather general. An indepth study of particular historical epochs (instead of including the whole time span since the 16th century) would have yielded qualitatively different information. Thus, whereas I agree with the basic stance taken by Lubeck and Walton, I would maintain that specific empirical studies (perhaps a la Epstein) as contrasted with total reliance on a world systems perspective, are what is needed. Indeed, this is what I have attempted to do. Beginning with assumptions like those of Walton and Lubeck concerning the importance of class conflict as a source of social change, I have attempted to test these through an in depth study of a specific location (which is not done by Lubeck and Walton). However, I have still tried to link processes within the specific locality to national or even international ones (the latter being neglected by Epstein). Essentially, the point I am making is that in order to arrive at a more clearer

picture of what is happening in urban areas in the Sudan (and, of course, the Third World), theoretical assumptions like those of Lubeck and Walton need to be tested in specific empirical situations, which must be placed within national and international contexts. Epstein arrives at different and perhaps not comparable conclusions because basically he confined himself to processes within the specific locality to the neglect of the political economy of Africa.

The next group of studies I consider consists of analyses of specific African cities and their politics. All can be related to the type of tradition Epstein belongs to although they are studies of specific post-colonial (rather than colonial) cities. Again, like Epstein they select specific cities for study and by and large tend to neglect their national contexts or national processes affecting social change within them. These studies are: 1) J.S.LaFontaine, City Politics: A Study of Leopoldville 1962-3 (1970), 2) Pauline H.Baker, Urbanization and Political Change: The Politics of Lagos, 1917-1967 (1974), 3) Frank Furedi, "The African Crowd in Nairobi: Popular Movements and Elite Politics". The features these studies possess in common include: a) they are all studies of politics in African cities undergoing rapid change (and are hence similar to the situation of Omdurman). The pace of this change is clearly not uniform, being most rapid in the case of Leopoldville, which, according to La Fontaine,

> "...presents for study a special urban case-history: one in which the chief characteristics of new African cities, fluidity has been greatly exaggerated by political and economic turmoil....The effects of sudden and violent change are thus the primary problems with which the investigator is faced." 49

b) Contrary to Walton and Lubeck's type of analysis, outlined above, all three works are more concerned with studies of specific cities. They are not, by and large, concerned with world systems and do not even place excessive emphasis on national developments, a point which could be held against them, in this respect. c) all three studies make use of specific concepts in characterising African urban politics. Thus, La

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Fontaine makes use of the notions of "publicity" and "patronage".

Baker makes use of that of "communalism" which

> "...refers to a form of political domination which is not vested in competing sets of interest group leaders or, as the stratification school asserts in a dominant socio-economic class, but rather in a particular communal group, a cultural aggregate whose members share a common identity and a common sense of corporate solidarity". 50

For Furedi, meanwhile, although still referring to "social class", yet this is not a concept central to his analysis "crowd" and "elite" are his basic concepts. Thus

> "The majority of the Nairobi Africans came to constitute the African crown - domestic servants, the majority of workers in private and public employment, and petty traders. This group should be distinguished from the Nairobi African middle class which formed the political elite. The African middle-class possessed a fairly high level of education and had remunerative positions with government or were wealthy traders. By the mid-forties, this group had become well-integrated within the colonial system. 51

Clearly, all three concepts ("patronage", "communalism" and "crowd" vs "elite") have in common notions of structured inequality, with which I agree, in any characterisation of African urban politics. However, I would substitute the concept of "social class" for those of patronage, communalism, crowd and elite (especially as postulated by Lubeck and Walton) for two reasons. First, that it is more general, and hence can subsume all three concepts (patronage, communalism and crowd vs elite), leaving a lot of room for comparison between the different situations. Second, it is a dialectical concept (as we will discuss in the coming section), hence built into it is the notion of change and the ability to deal with different levels of analysis. The implication here being that, all three studies reviewed above (but also including the work of Epstein) although concerned with social change yet deal with it only at one level (that of the urban area), whereas "social class" can be profitably used to make the link between local social change within the context of national or even international levels.

Above, I have used several studies of urban politics in the Third World with the object of relating my specific problem to them. I

essentially reviewed two groups of studies. The first sought to explain urban politics and social structure by referring to a world systems approach, to the neglect of detailed empirical studies of specific cities, which would have informed the more macro world systems perspective. The second group, in contrast, concentrated on the more specific study of particular cities to the neglect of placing them within a wider context. I have argued, in this section, that a clearer understanding of Third World urban politics and changing urban social structure can only be achieved through a combination of both approaches, which is what I have attempted to do in the present study.

E. Concepts Used in the Thesis

In this section, the aim is to clarify my usage of certain concepts which will be employed throughout the thesis. These are the concepts of 1) Social Class and 2) Cliques.

1) Social Class

Here, I will first give a brief introduction on the employment of this concept in Third World situations. There seems to be general agreement in academic circles that until recent years there has been a marked absence of the usage of "class" (especially its Marxist variants), in describing and analysing Third World, but more specifically African contexts. Thus, in an editorial in a special issue of the Journal Review of African Political Economy, the authors state:

> "It must be conceded that the analysis of class relations in Africa remains underdeveloped. Governments and politicians, bureaucrats and academicians have officially declared African societies to be classless. Class analysis has been deemed by them inappropriate. More than that, it has been seen as divisive." 52

Cohen states in the same line of thought:

> "In the African context it has been possible to argue on the onehand that class formation and crystallisation have not, and may never occur; on the other hand that if class structures are emerging that these are of peripheral importance in the determination of social conflict. 53

The same sorts of attitudes exist regarding class analysis in Sudan, hence according to O'Neill:

> "In bourgeois commentaries on Sudan (as in the case of other African nations) two subjects remain conspicuous by their absence: class formation and the nature of the neo-colonial state". 54

Similarly F.B.Mahmoud states:

> "Among Sudanese academic and political circles, with the exception of those which identify with the Sudanese Communist Party, the notion still prevails that classes do not exist in the Sudan...." 55

It is also suggested in academic circles that

> "...class is a concept that has been imported from the European situation without consideration to the different structure of Sudanese society". 56

As is clear from the above, then, the basic rationale for the absence until very recently of class analysis in Third World situations concerns the issue of the potential value (referred to earlier) of such Western concepts to non-Western contexts. All of the above-mentioned authors have refuted this as a weak argument, emphasising rather (as I have done) that the only test for the value of concepts lies in their empirical application in actual situations. The editors of RAPE thus state:

> "It is essential to consider social classes in a specific society or social formation at a distinct juncture in time." 57

Similarly, Cohen elaborates on this point further saying:

> "The research problem is to identify what these conditions (of class formation) are and what social forces act to induce class conflict." 58

Hence, the task clearly is not one of answering the question of whether classes exist in a Yes/No fashion, but rather one of explicating the specific conditions under which they may or may not exist, and furthermore the conditions under which they become vehicles for political action. This particular point leads us to the crucial one of definitions of social class.

The passage generally considered to be Marx's definition of classes according to ownership of the means of production is the following:

> "The owners merely of labour power, owners of capital and landowners whose respective sources of income are wages, profit and ground rent, in other words wage labourers, capitalists and landowners constitute the three big classes of modern society based upon the capitalist mode of production." 59

However economic living conditions are not enough to make a social group into a class, since this essentially means the exclusion of that integral aspect, the class struggle. This is especially so since,built into the concept of class (particularly when viewed dialectically), is the idea of the political struggle of classes. Hence, I agree with Shivji when he says that social class as a category probably remains theoretical and becomes actual only in the political struggle namely when it becomes a class for itself.[60]

Shivji, hence does not see political relations as merely one aspect of class relations, but as their core.[61] More specifically, the definition of class I adhere to in the context of the present study follows upon that of Shivji, hence besides the ownership of the means of production, what defines a class is the political struggle of that class, when it becomes a "class for itself". Furthermore Shivji specifies the following objective criteria for delineation of classes: a) income, b) education, c) standard of living and life-style, d) control of or potentially effective participation in the decision-making bodies, e) the role occupied in the production process for control of or proximity to state apparatuses.[62]

All of the above factors, have been taken into consideration in our delineation of Baytalmal's various classes, however the essential point I have stressed throughout is that in the period under study (i.e. the decade of the 1970s), for various reasons, (outlined later in the thesis), the area has seen a marked development of "classes for themselves".

2. Clique

This concept has been especially developed in relation to industrial sociology to deal with basically occupational categories. Two works

which have made use of this concept are Grillo's, African Railwaymen (1973) and Burns, "The Reference of Conduct in Small Groups: Cliques and Cabals in Occupational Milieux" (1956).

Despite differences in the usages of the term, they both used it to deal with an occupational category. Grillo's usage, however, is motivated by a criticism of some of the inadequacies of network analysis. Specifically, that it (i.e. network analysis) does not qualitatively distinguish between the different kinds of relationships that 'ego' maintains with different individuals in his network. He, therefore, suggests,

> "...it is perhaps more useful to concentrate on small groups of individuals who maintain frequent contact with each other, rather than the full range of ego's contacts". 63

Grillo continues:

> "Any railwayman maintains a wide range of social contacts both in town and as we have seen in the rural areas. At Nsambya he selects from these a small number as close associates and friends who in turn often associate with each other forming a clique". 64

Hence, for Grillo, cliques are a means of organising social life by a particular occupational group, namely Kenyan railwaymen.

Burns usage of the term, on the other hand, is concerned with organisation of social life within the occupational situation, specifically, the factory. He is interested in contrasting cliques with larger membership groups and reference groups. He, furthermore, distinguishes between clique, cabal and confident. He begins by the assumption that in success-oriented milieux, there exist needs for reassurance about possible failure and there arise needs to improve chances of success by illegitimate means. He further adds that "informal groups in the management organisation of a factory appeared to distinguish themselves according to the age of their members. This distinction reflected in turn assumptions about the greater suitability of younger people to the needs of industry. Membership of the groups (cliques)appeared to offer compensation to older people and improved

chances of success to the younger (cabals)."[65]

According to Burns, the characteristic form of behaviour in cliques and cabals is a kind of gossip. In cliques this takes the form of ironic criticism of the successful or the system in which others are successful. In cabals, meanwhile, the dominant form of behaviour is appraisal of others in an attempt to arrive at the latest definition of position of ego in the esteem system and to manipulate the system in one's own favour. Hence, the clique exists as a "counter-system, maintained as a counter-vailing pattern of norms and values over and against the pattern prevailing in the milieu, and especially in the dominant group (cabal), and serving to sustain rejection of the dominant milieu in ways appropriate to organised social living."[66]

Now back to Grillo, for him characteristics of a clique include identification of the clique as such by outsiders to it. Thus people on the estate are very conscious of these cliques, often referring to them by the English word "group". Solidarity of these cliques, however, is also expressed by its members, using the self-identifying "our group". Furthermore, among the members of a clique there is frequently a complex network of debt, and perhaps often "common property". Sometimes, a clique becomes a decision-making unit for its members. Grillo also adds that cliques are all composed of men who are roughly of equal status, in terms of education, occupation and fall within the same age group, and often ethnic origin. Grillo does not dwell on the issue of durability, although he does say it may depend on the pattern of job transfers. In relation to durability, meanwhile, Burns maintains that cliques and cabals are ultimately unable to provide continuing assurance of the rightness of the norm to which reference is made and that eventually leads to the creation of "confidents" out of persons who do not belong to the clique.[67]

So what points can be derived from the discussion of both the above usages of "clique"? First, both usages are concerned with status, Grillo with status organisation outside of the work situation, Burns with

status organisation within the work situation. Second, the factors underlying membership are similar for both, similar age group primarily but also for Grillo there are the additional factors of kinship and ethnic origin. Third, in terms of differences we see that for Burns, there explicity exists the notion of "success" and how it is to be achieved (cabals) or how to deal with failure and insecurity (cliques). Grillo does not set any of these specific aims for the existence of cliques. He sees them simply as a way of organising social life outside of the factory situation. Fourth, on the question of durability, Burns assumes that on the whole cliques and cabals are of limited durability, since according to him it is not possible to keep on escaping from the larger social milieu. For Grillo, on the other hand, durability is not a major issue, and when he does mention it, he says it largely depends upon job transfers.

Above, hence, I have shown aspects of the usage of the concept of "clique" by Grillo and Burns, and have indicated both similarities and differences in usage. Below, I will elaborate on the usage of "clique" in this thesis (refer to Chapter IV for details). I have used "clique" primarily in the analysis of the changing membership pattern characterising Baytalmal Town Council, and the extent to which that pattern of membership is reproduced in the Council's various sessions. I have shown in Chapter IV how the council is dominated by different cliques at different points in its history. This is hence the major difference between my usage and that of Burns and Grillo, the latter being primarily concerned with an occupational situation. However, my usage overlaps with that of Grillo and Burns in that "cliques" in Baytalmal Town Council (as for Grillo and Burns) possess common characteristics: those of similar age, socio-economic standard, political affiliation, kinship bonds, and common identification both by outsiders and insiders to the clique. Moreover, for me the major defining characteristic of clique is (and which is a factor not dwelt upon by Burns and Grillo who concentrate on the factor of "status") that cliques in Baytalmal Town Council

represent specific class interests. It follows then that the dominance of particular cliques at specific times may be taken to be representative of the dominance of particular classes at those same points in time. Hence, that cliques are those groups in actual possession of power at the council level, or are groups seeking possession of that power. In both cases they are representative of particular classes in the area, and their conflict by extension is representative of the conflict of those classes. This will become clear in discussion of the council's internal politics in Chapter IV.

Final Comments

This first chapter has had the aim of introducing the main concepts and arguments used in this study. I began by stating the main problem of the thesis, before trying to place it within the context of Sudanese urbanisation and the current state of Sudanese urban studies. I then considered the question of the value of Western urban studies to the problem at hand by looking at two groups of such studies (American 'community power' and French 'structuralist' studies), and trying to ascertain their usefulness to our analysis. Several Third World urban studies were then considered with the same aim in mind. Finally, two concepts were discussed ('social class' and 'clique') which are of vital importance to the arguments on which this study is based.

CHAPTER I: FOOTNOTES

1. Manuel Castells, The Urban Question: A Marxist Perspective (1977),43.

2. For examples of this particular view of urbanisation, (see N.J. Smelser, Social Change in the Industrial Revolution (1959), R.Redfield, The Folk Culture of the Yucatan, (1941), R.Redfield and M.B.Singer, "The Cultural Role of Cities", Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol.3 (1954) 53-73.

3. "Pre-Colonial", here is taken to mean the period preceding the Turco-Egyptian invasion, i.e. before 1821.

4. Salih El Arifi, "Urbanisation and Distribution of Economic Development in the Sudan" in "Sudan Urban Studies", ed. G.Hale, African Urban Notes (Summer 1971), 119.

5. R.C.Stevenson, "Old Khartoum: 1821-1885", Sudan Notes and Records, Vol.XLVII (1966) 29-31.

6. This concept has been used by J.Gugler and W.Flanagan in "On the Political Economy of Urbanisation in the Third World: The Case of West Africa", International Journal of Urban and Regional Research Vol.I (1977), 272-292. They state: "As a consequence of their location on the geographical fringe of the new States, the young capitals of West Africa have acquired a political character that is more regional than national. Because of major ethnic and economic differences between the capital region and the rest of the nation, the geographically marginal capital comes to stand as a symbol of factionalism rather than national unity", 286.

7. El-Sayed El-Bushra, An Atlas of Khartoum Conurbation,(1976), 35-36.

8. For details on urban growth see Salih El-Arifi, "The Nature and Rate of Urbanisation in Sudan" in Urbanisation and Urban Life in Sudan, ed. V.G.Pons (forthcoming).

9. G.Hale and S. Hale, "Sudan Urban Studies: An Introduction", in Hale (ed.), op.cit., 4.

10. See works by Mohammed El Awad Galal el Din "Internal Migration in the Sudan since the Second World War" (London, D.Phil., 1973), A Report on Migration (1978). Also works by El-Sayed El-Bushra, "Occupational Classification of Sudanese Towns" Sudan Notes and Records, Vol.L (1969), and "Some Demographic Indicators for Khartoum Conurbation, Sudan", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.15 and Mona Abdel Fattah Khalifa, " Fertility Differentials in Urban Khartoum, Economic and Social Research Council Bulletin, No.81 (1979).

11. See works by El-Sayed El-Bushra, "The Evolution of the Three Towns" in Hale (ed.), op.cit, and "Towns in The Sudan in The Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries", Sudan Notes and Records, Vol.LII (1971).

12. The category "interactional" has been used by Hale in Hale (ed.), op.cit.

13. See works by Richard Lobban, "Alienation, Urbanisation and Social Networks in the Sudan", Journal of Modern African Studies (1975), 491-500, "The Historical Role of the Mahas in the Urbanisation of Sudan's Towns, with special reference to two communities: Tuti island and Burri al-Mahas in Hale (ed.), op.cit., and "The Dialectics of Migration and Social Associations in the Urban Sudan", International Journal of Sociology (Summer 1977).

14. For recent divergences from the above categories, see especially El Wathig Mohamed Hag El-Khidir Al-Kameir, "Migrant Workers in an urban Situation: A Comparative Study of Factory Workers and Building Sites labourers in Khartoum", (Hull, D.Phil, 1980).

15. For examples of these studies, see Tagelsir Osman Abdel Rahman "The New Role of the Commissioner in the Sudan", (Khartoum, MA, 1976) in addition to numerous articles in the Journals Majallat al Hukim al Sha'bi al Mahalli, and al-Majlis, also works by Ga'afar M.Bakheit, al-Thawra al-idariyya Wal hukim al Sha'bi al Mahalli, (1973).

16. Nelson Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, (1963), 8-10.

17. Ibid., 115.

18. Raymond E.Wolfinger, "Reputation and Reality in the Study of Community Power" in The Structure of Community Power eds. Michael Aiken and Paul E.Motts (1970), 241.

19. Charles M.Bonjean and David H.Olsen, "Community leadership: Directions of Research" in Aiken and Motts (eds.) op.cit., 204.

20. William U. D'Antonio and Eugene C.Erickson, "The Reputational Technique as a Measure of Community Power: An Evaluation based on Comparative and Longitudinal Studies" in Aiken and Motts (eds.), op.cit., 262.

21. Polsby, op.cit., 115.

22. Todd Gittlin, "Local Pluralism as Theory and Ideology" in Recent Sociology: On the Social Basis of Power, ed. H.P.Dreitzel (1969) 64.

23. Polsby, op.cit., 123.

24. Kenneth Newton, "Community Politics and Decision Making: The American Experience and its Lessons" in Essays on the Study of Urban Politics, ed. Ken Young (1975), 3.

25. Polsby, op.cit., 120-1.

26. Colin Bell and Howard Newby, Community Studies (1971), 230.

27. Francine F.Rabinovitz and Felicity M.Trueblood, "Introduction" in Latin American Urban Research, ed. Rabinovitz and Trueblood (1973), 11.

28. Francie F.Rabinovitz, "Sound and Fury Signifying Nothing? A Review of Community Power Research in Latin America", Urban Affairs Quarterly Vol.3 (1968) 113.

29. See especially works by E.Mingione and M.Castells and J-Lojkine in Captive Cities, ed. Michael Harloe (1966) and works by J. Lojkine and M.Castells in Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, ed. Chris Pickvance (1976) and M.Castells in The City in Comparative Perspective ed. J.Walton and L.Masotti (1976) and comments by Peter Saunders, Urban Politics (1979).

30. Pauline Baker, Urbanisation and Political Change: The Politics of Lagos, 1917-1968, (1974), 8.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., 11.

33. C.G.Pickvance (ed. (1976) op.cit., 1-3.

34. Castells, (1977) op.cit., 244.

35. For Althusser the central concept is that of mode of production by which he means a specific form of articulation of the fundamental elements or instances of a social structure, namely the economic, political-legal, ideological and possibly other 'systems'. Each mode of production has one system which is dominant and the place of this system in the structure characterises the specific mode of production. This system which is determinant in the last instance is invariant, it is always the economic. However, it is the type of economic system (i.e. the specific structuring of its elements) which explains which system is dominant in each mode of production. A particular social formation is the particular mix of several modes of production, one of which is dominant. Manuel Castells, "Theoretical propositions for an Experimental Study of Urban Social Movements" in Pickvance (ed.) (1976) op.cit.. For further explication of this approach see L.Althusser and E.Balibar, Reading Capital, (1970) and L.Althusser, For Marx, (1970).

36. Manuel Castells, "Is there an urban Sociology?" and "Theory and Ideology in Urban Sociology" in Pickvance (ed.), (1976) op.cit.

37. Castells, "Theoretical Propositions for an Experimental Study of Urban Social Movements" in Pickvance (ed.) (1976), op.cit.

38. Ibid., 155.

39. Ibid.

40. Manuel Castells, City, Class and Power, (1978), 179.

41. Michael Harloe, "Introduction", in Harloe (1977), op.cit. 20-21.

42. C.Pickvance, "On the Study of Urban Social Movements" in Pickvance (ed.) (1976), op.cit.

43. Patrick Dunleavy, "Protest and Quiescence in Urban Politics: A Critique of some Pluralist and Structuralist Myths", International J. of Urban and Regional Research, Vol.I (1977).

44. Cynthia Cockburn, The Local State: Management of Cities and People, (1977), 41.

45. Chris Pickvance, "Marxist Approaches to the Study of Urban Politics: Divergences Among some recent French Studies", International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol.I (1977), 228.

46. Paul Lubeck and John Walton, "Urban Class Conflict in Africa and Latin America: Comparative Analyses from a World Systems Perspective", International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol.3 (1979), 19.

47. Ibid, 5.

48. A.L.Epstein, Politics in an Urban African Community, (1958), 234.

49. J.S.LaFontaine, City Politics: A Study of Leopoldville, 1962-1963, (1970), 4.

50. Baker, *op.cit.*, 276.

51. Frank Furedi, "The African Crowd in Nairobi: Popular Movements and Elite Politics" in *Third World Urbanization*, eds. Janet AbuLughod and Richard Hay, Jr. (1977), 239-40.

52. "Editorial", *Review of African Political Economy*, No.3, 1975. 1.

53. Robin Cohen, "Class in Africa: Analytical Problems and Perspectives", *Socialist Register*, 1972, 231.

54. Norman O'Neill, "Imperialism and Class Struggle in Sudan", *Race and Class*, Vol.20, 1978, 1.

55. Fatima Babiker Mahmoud, "Origin and Development of a Sudanese Private Capitalist Class", (Hull, *D.Phil.*, 1978), 220.

56. *Ibid.*, 220-1.

57. *Review of African Political Economy*, *op.cit.*, 3.

58. Cohen, *op.cit.*, 252.

59. Karl Marx quoted in Ernst Fischer, *Marx in His Own Words*, (1973), 69.

60. Issa Shivji, *Class Struggles in Tanzania*, (1976), 8.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*, 87.

63. R.D.Grillo, *African Railwaymen: Solidarity and Opposition in an East African Labour Force*, (1973), 104-5.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Tom Burns, "The Reference of Conduct in Small Groups: Cliques and Cabals in Occupational Milieux", *Human Relations*, Vol.8, (1955) 484-5.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT OF OMDURMAN AND BAYTALMAL

In the previous chapter I outlined the main problem of this thesis, namely the relations between a changing administrative system and a changing social structure in a specific urban community. I also indicated the main theoretical perspectives considered as possibly useful in interpreting the empirical data on which the thesis is based and my own position in relation to these perspectives. In this chapter, my main aim is to provide a general framework for the arguments and analysis to follow. The chapter is divided into three broad sections: I:a general description of Omdurman Town, with particular attention to its historical development, II: a general description of Baytalmal administrative division, emphasising some of the salient differences between its various neighbourhoods, III: Baytalmal as viewed by its inhabitants. The main questions with which I am concerned are: a) To what extent are various aspects of the town's historical development relevant to an understanding of its present social structure? and b) What is the nature of the particular historical role played by Baytalmal in the history of Omdurman and the Sudan?

I: <u>A General Description of Omdurman</u>

Before describing Omdurman, it is necessary to refer to the poor quality and quantity of information on Sudanese towns in general. This is perhaps less true of Omdurman and a few other northern towns (especially Port Sudan, Khartoum, Khartoum North, and El-Obeid),[1] but it is still a serious drawback for any study based on Omdurman, and is somewhat surprising given its importance as the "national capital" or <u>al-'asim a al-wataniyya</u>, as the town is commonly referred to. In this section, I have used as much documentary material as is readily available and unpublished sources, but I have also drawn on a lot of oral history gathered during my period of fieldwork. The section is presented in several subsections corresponding to the various stages in the town's historical development.

A) The Establishment and Growth of Omdurman During the Mahdiyya

The city was first established in 1885 as a military camp for the siege of Khartoum. Despite this, it is certain that not all those who took part in the siege of Khartoum later settled in Omdurman, rather a lot of the tribal groups taking part in the siege returned to their homelands after the fall of Khartoum.[2] Thus, initially, there was a decrease in Omdurman's population, also due to the fact that several Umarā' headed military forces to various parts of the country to establish Mahdist rule in them. Those who stayed were what remained of those forces, in addition to some Khartoum civilians, craftsmen, artists and merchants, and a large majority of people belonging to the Khalifa's Western tribesmen.[3]

So what can be said about the population size of the town at the time? According to Abu Salim, at the beginning (i.e. succeeding the fall of Khartoum in 1885), the population of the town could have been estimated to be between 15,000 to 20,000 rising to 400,000 by 1895, with the forced migration policies of the Khalifa.[4] In Kuhn's opinion on the other hand, it is more probable that the population of Omdurman never exceeded 100,000 except perhaps at times of national emergency (e.g. famines).[5] However, the important thing to note is that following the capture of Khartoum and the return of many tribesmen to their various homelands, there was an initial decrease in the town's population. During the early 1890s, meanwhile, Omdurman once again began to grow rapidly. Its population bourgeoned for two reasons. First, it took over the functions of the earlier capital of Khartoum, becoming the seat of the bureaucracy carrying out the administration of the new state. Secondly, the Khalifa ordered that great numbers of his followers come to live in Omdurman, so that he could more effectively control them.[6]

It is generally assumed by some writers on Mahdist Omdurman (including Abu Salim, Kuhn) that no deliberate attempts were made to plan or lay out the town and that houses were simply put up wherever space happened to be available. Specifically, Kuhn states:

"Development was helter-skelter at best, there was no plan, no municipal engineering interference." 7

Nevertheless, in my opinion, especially from having looked at a map of Mahdist Omdurman, there existed a form of planning, (how conscious or deliberate is a point for discussion). This form of "planning" related to what groups of people were to live where. In Omdurman this coincided with the socio-political structure of the Mahdist State. This element of organisation was the distinct division of the town along tribal lines into several distinct sections. Firstly, there was the Southern section. Most people living here were drawn from Western tribal elements and the Jihadiyya section of the army. In addition, the area contained an ammunition factory, and the Khalifa had a house here. In fact, according to Abu Salim the Khalifa planned for this section to be a last resort for him in case of fighting occurring within the city and he was forced to retreat from his own section of the town. In that event he would have found himself among the jihadiyya section of the armed forces and among people of the West, among his most loyal supporters.[8]

The North-Western section of the town was divided into neighbourhoods for various tribal elements. For example, the Kinana tribe were settled in the neighbourhood facing the mosque westwards; other tribes living in this section of the town included the Dighaym tribe, tribes under the banner of Khalifa Ali el Hilu, Danagla, Kunuz and Nubians.[9]

The third main section of the town was the central one making up the heart of the city and being the seat of power. It was enclosed by a wall on three sides and by the Nile on the Eastern boundary. Here lived the Khalifa, his family and bodyguard, the Mulazmin.[10]

Finally, there was the North Eastern section which was made up of Baytalmal (the treasury), houses of Baytalmal clerks and houses of Egyptians and other inhabitants of the old capital of Khartoum.[11]

From the above, it can generally be seen that ecological and social categories within Omdurman town coincided. There was the Khalifa, his family and Mulazmin (bodyguard) in the central section, surrounded on

one side by loyal followers, the Western tribesmen, on the other by the bureaucracy and centre of economic power, the Baytalmal, and separating him from his rivals, the Ashraf, a set of "neutral" neighbourhoods who belonged to neither camp. Thus it was that the social structure of Omdurman was to a great extent representative of the main social divisions within the Mahdist state - those who were loyal to the Khalifa, and those who were either against him or neutral. Besides these social divisions corresponded with the main ecological divisions of the town at the time.

As a consequence of the above and of Omdurman's primate position within the Mahdist State, conflicts within the town were decisive in settling national conflicts. In this respect the settlement of the town's population in tribal groups and the numerical strength of these groups at various times were crucial factors affecting the outcome of any conflict. Following on this point, it can be said that due to their numerical inferiority, the Khalifa's rivals, the Ashraf, were not able in their first conflict with him concerning succession to the headship of the Mahdist state after the Mahdi's death, to pose an effective military threat in his face, since he had the loyal support of large numbers of people from Western tribes. Nevertheless, this first conflict with the Ashraf and the support and sympathy they got from some sections of the population forced the Khalifa to become aware of the importance of having large groups of people to support him within Omdurman town. This ultimately led the Khalifa to order the forced migration of thousands of people from the Western Sudan, and their settlement in the Southern section of the town, whereas the Northern sections of the town generally tended to be inhabited by Danagla and people of the Nile.[12] Later the Khalifa also brought a lot of his rivals to the town in order to supervise them more closely, the population of the town thus suddenly inflated as a result of these forced "political migrations".

Above, I have briefly looked at the development of Omdurman town during the Mahdiyya. I emphasised two points: its unique development

from a military camp initially to becoming the capital of the Mahdist State. Furthermore, I indicated the town's division ecologically along tribal lines that coincided with divisions within the Mahdist State, and how it became an arena or site for fighting out of conflicts between these various "groups".[13]

Baytalmal, meanwhile located immediately north of the walled section of the city which housed the Khalifa, his family and bodyguard, was where the treasury (called the Baytalmal) was located. There was also a printing press, a lithograph machine, and a telegraph office with direct lines of communication to the Khalifa's house. The principal slave market was also in the area, sales being carried out by the treasury two or three times a week.[14]

The population of Baytalmal area was primarily composed of bureaucrats who wished to be near to their offices in the Mulazmin or who worked in the Baytalmal itself. Many of the bureaucrats and members of their families were "Muwalladin" (i.e. people of Egyptian origin), who had worked for the previous Turco-Eguptian government, and who remained there after the fall of Khartoum as bureaucrats in the Mahdist State. Others were drawn from riverain tribes and were either bureaucrats or merchants. The latter especially made use of Baytalmal's location near the Nile to control Nile-borne trade.

The population of Baytalmal included well-known families, whose descendants continue to live in Baytalmal today. These included the families of Kaylani, Hasan Zaki and Katir. Inhabitants of Baytalmal were also later called "al-Munafiqīn" or the hypocrites, because they did not really believe in the Mahdist cause, but only said they did.[15] The dominance of these families of "Muwalladin" and riverain peoples in the Mahdist bureaucracy is also indicated by Holt, who claims that

> "...even at its height (the Mahdist State) depended upon the riverain tribes and the muwallads for the performance of the routine tasks and management of the correspondence on which its administration depended". 16

Hence, it was that the most important section of Omdurman was Baytalmal, located next to the walled Mulazmin area, where the Khalifa lived. Baytalmal contained the treasury, in addition to accommodating large numbers of bureaucrats, administrators and merchants. These were the people who controlled the economic, political and administrative affairs of the State. In my discussion of contemporary Baytalmal, I will be asking the question of the extent of continuity of this particular social structure.

B. Omdurman under colonial rule

Until 1901, when the district of Khartoum was established by the Governor-General of the Sudan, the administrative affairs of the country continued to be run from Omdurman, before the final transfer to the old capital of Khartoum.[17] The first task of the new administration was to clear the site of Khartoum and to build the new capital of the Sudan along modern lines as a twentieth century "European" or colonial town. The fact that the site was unoccupied was in itself an advantage from the point of view of the planner, for laying out streets and building blocks.[18]

In relation to this, however, a correspondent of The Times writing in April 1900, made the following comments:

> "Firstly, owing to hasty legislation, most of the town's lands had passed into the hands of a few speculators. Secondly, Kitchener's assumption that the population of Omdurman would move to Khartoum proved fallacious. Khartoum remained an empty city while the inhabitants of Omdurman were completely neglected." 19

(This point in particular, is elaborated upon later).

During the early days of the reconquest, the population size of Omdurman was greatly reduced, primarily due to the return of numerous tribesmen to their homelands and who, as indicated earlier, had been forcibly brought to Omdurman by the Khalifa.[20] Krotki gives a population estimate of 46,000 for Omdurman in the year 1904.[21]

But what of the people who remained? The people who after the fall of Omdurman did not return to their tribal homelands settled in Wad Nubawi

together with soldiers from the Mahdi's army. Other areas of Omdurman remained inhabited as before. These included the Umara, an area with a long unbroken tradition going back to the time of the Mahdi. In this area, the chief commanders of the army, the Amirs were settled on comparatively large plots, and their descendents later continued to live there. The descendents of many Egyptian coptic Christians lived in Masalma. Some of them had been forced to become Muslims by the Mahdists, although a lot reverted back to Christianity, after the reconquest. In al-Murada (in the Southern section of the town) remained some concentrations of the Jihadiyya forces, in addition to tribal elements of the West.[22] As was the case during the Mahdiyya, the Baytalmal area continued to accommodate most of the "Muwalladin" and riverain peoples, specifically, the Danagla, who were the bureaucratic and trading elements of the Mahdist state. The "Muwalladin" had never really believed in the Mahdist cause and they thus initially welcomed the new rulers. Many of them were now incorporated into the colonial bureaucracy.[23]

Legislation concerning the ownership of urban lands was enacted immediately after the reconquest through the Town Lands Ordinance of 1899. It allowed the government to obtain any land it required either by purchase or by exchange thus enabling the new towns to be planned without interference from property owners. In 1909, the Town Building Regulations were announced. They included instructions concerning the type of buildings allowed for each class of land of which there were three and specified sanitary regulations. Land holders had to apply to the Municipal authorities or to the governor of the province in order to obtain a building permit.[24]

In the case of Omdurman, the confusion and devastation that resulted from its overthrow and partial depopulation presented an immense problem to the government. A very large number of houses were left unoccupied, and conditions of sanitation were generally very bad.[25] The lands of Omdurman, unlike those of the other urban areas, were regarded as government property from the time of the reconquest. In 1906, however,

the government changed its policy and decided to allocate lands to all genuine claimants who were present in Omdurman after its fall. The District Commissioner of Omdurman was ordered to preside over the hearing of cases, and to decide which claims were to be recognised. Town surveys of Khartoum, Khartoum North, Omdurman and Port Sudan were begun in that same year.[26]

In Omdurman, an initial rough survey of the town was made before deciding which thoroughfares should be widened, straightened and preserved, and which areas should be set aside for markets etc. Wherever an alteration to a thoroughfare interfered with an existing plot or building, the owners claim to compensation was considered, and he was, if necessary, awarded another plot instead of the one of which he was deprived in whole or in part.[27] Thus, people who had not left the city after the battle of Omdurman were able to claim land freehold. Others who had newly immigrated were allowed simply to take possession of any vacant land they could find. They would dig pits to obtain material needed for the building of a house and proceeded to do so. Property boundaries were hence largely fixed where they had been under the layout of the Mahdist reign, other land being partitioned under shari'a law.[28]

In its desire to accelerate the development of Khartoum as the country's new capital, the government sought the cooperation of private enterprise. Government and private lands were sold freehold for very small sums to Greek traders in particular, and a lot of the most valuable land in the new city thus passed at once into the hands of a few wealthy traders. A similar land use policy as that of Khartoum was adopted in other towns, but due to a lack of demand only a few plots were sold. By 1905, the government decided to change its policy and to stop the sale of government lands in Khartoum. The result of this change of policy was that prices soared and land speculators who had bought a plot of £E30 could now sell it for £E1,000.[29] This differential policy meant that there was a large difference in land values between Khartoum on the one hand and Khartoum North and Omdurman on the other. As a result

large areas within these two towns came to attract lower income groups to acquire plots of land and build their houses. This trend developed markedly after the building of the White and Blue Nile bridges in 1909 and 1928.[30]

Having discussed what happened to Omdurman in the aftermath of the reconquest, there are several points worth noting. These are firstly, the differential policy mantained by the British as regard Khartoum as contrasted with Omdurman. The following quote from Mclean, municipal planner for Khartoum, summarises the attitude underlying this differential policy:

> "The reconstruction of Omdurman presented a vastly different problem from that of Khartoum. In the latter case a heap of ruins, containing only a few scattered inhabitants, had to be cleared, and a new city laid out. But such a "rabbit-warren" as Omdurman, containing an enormous number of inhabitants, could not be dealt with in the same wholesale manner. When it is remembered that the native has a keen appreciation of his rights as an owner of property, and that the majority of troubles arise through land disputes, it will be seen that it was necessary to proceed very carefully in the matter of "improvements", so as to avoid offence to native prejudices." 31

Thus, for Mclean, "Omdurman,... is the real native town, while Khartoum is...the European one".[32] As a consequence of this differential policy, whereas Khartoum's lands were classified into Government, First class, Second class and Third class lands, all of Omdurman's lands were simply classified into Government and Third class land.[33]

Secondly, there is the general continuity of ecological and social structure from the Mahdiyya and thirdly, the development of areas within Omdurman for living of lower-income groups working in Khartoum, especially due to its lower land values.

Administration of Omdurman

Kitchener directed that the new administration was to be built by the

> "...individual action of British officers working independently, but with a common purpose, on the individual natives, whose confidence they have gained...." 34

Kitchener, furthermore, warned his governors that this could be achieved only through involving the

> "...better class of native, through whom we hope gradually to influence the whole population." 35

The Province of Khartoum (Sudan was divided into six provinces) was divided into districts, each district being in charge of a British District Commissioner, who was in turn assisted by a British assistant District Commissioner, two native Administration Officers and a clerical staff.[36] The three districts corresponded to the towns of Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman. Omdurman, was thus considered a single administrative unit, namely a District. In 1903, Omdurman was divided into smaller administrative units, called Rubu's and Haras. There were four rubu''s. The first rubu' extended roughly from the area of Dabaghin to Shari' Abu Rof. The second rubu' extended from Shari' Makki to Western Omdurman. The third rubu' was from Shari' Abu Rof to the Khalifa's mosque. The fourth rubu' included Southern Omdurman, specifically the neighbourhoods of al-Murada, al-Hashmab and Abu Kadok. The central market area was not included in this demarcation.

Each rubu' (the larger unit of the two) had a shaykh as did each hara. Shaykhs of rubu''s supervised Shayks of haras, the latter in turn being assisted by ghaffirs. At the head of this hierarchy of Shaykhs of rubu''s and haras was the 'Umda who supervised them. The 'Umda and the Shaykhs subordinate to him served an important function. They formed a kind of liaison between government officials and the local population. They assisted the colonial government by serving summonses of various kinds, helping rate collectors and house tax assessment boards, seeing that sanitary regulations were observed, exercising control over workers and settling disputes.[37]

As stated earlier, every attempt was made to ensure the cooperation of the "native element" and to bring them into association with the administration, particularly through the membership of boards and committees. Hence, the District Commissioner, although in charge of all

aspects of administration in the town was assisted by several such committees. These included the following: 1) lajnat taqdīr al-dariba al-tijariyya (Committee for assessment of commercial tax. 2) lajnat al-ta'lim al-ibtidā'i (Committee for primary education.)[38]

Persons who were consistently appointed to these committees all largely belonged to the big merchant class or were bureaucrats, a lot of them coming from Baytalmal,[39] and who according to Kitchener constituted the "better class of native". As stated previously their involvement in administration was a deliberate attempt on behalf of the colonial government to demonstrate its interest in promoting local participation, although this was in effect limited to the class of big merchants and bureaucrats.

In line with the colonial governments devolutionary policy which was one of the recommendations of the Milner report of 1921, in that same year the Governor-General issued a warrant creating an advisory council to supervise the administration of the Three Towns, headed by the Governor of Khartoum Province and made up of several specialised agencies. Furthermore, in 1923, the Governor-General decreed the creation of Municipalities. Khartoum North Municipal Council was created in 1923, Omdurman in 1924, and Khartoum in 1928.[40]

The Advisory Council set up consisted of the following ex-officio members. The Governor of Khartoum Province who was President, his Deputy, the District Commissioners of Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman, the Ma'murs and four government officials nominated by the Governor-General. In addition, there were four members nominated by the Sudan Chamber of Commerce and sixteen members nominated by the Governor-General. The Council was a purely consultative and advisory body consisting of a main council on which all members sat, in addition to several committees. These were the Khartoum sub-committee, consisting of the Khartoum members of the Council, the Khartoum North subcommittee, consisting of the Khartoum North members of the council, and the Omdurman subcommittee, consisting of the Omdurman members of the council. Other committees

included the Public Health committee, consisting of six appointed members. The roads and lighting committee consisting of eight appointed members, the finance committee consisting of six appointed members, and the rules committee consisting of five appointed members.[41]

Its principal functions were to examine and pass the budget estimates and to approve of the annual programme for capital expenditure on improvements out of the municipal reserve fund. The most important were the subcommittees for Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman. They met at frequent intervals to discuss and put forward suggestons affecting the town which they represented.[42]

As stated above, apart from the advisory council for the Three Towns, there were individual municipalities for each of the towns. For Omdurman, municipal affairs were controlled by a hierarchy of officials made up of the following: a) The Governor of the Province, District Commissioners and Ma'murs by a few central government officials who were paid out of municipal funds but on the central government pension list, among these, for instance was the Assistant Municipal Engineer. b) a staff of purely municipal employees, paid out of municipal funds and not pensionable, but who were treated for purposes of gratuities like government officials.[43]

Above, hence I have looked at aspects of the administration of Omdurman. One point emphasised was that the colonial government was trying to influence the local population through what it came to see as the "better class of native", specifically this was the class of big merchants and bureaucrats. The latter, in particular were to a large extent a product of the colonial education policy, which merits brief discussion for this reason.

The aim of the colonial educational policy pursued in the Sudan were defined by the Director of the Education Department in his first annual report:

> "The creation of an artisanclass; the diffusion of an elementary education to enable the masses to understand the elements of government and the training of an indigenous

administrative class". 44

The first government school to be opened was the Amiriyya of Omdurman in 1902, a lot of whose pupils were from the sons of the merchant and bureaucratic classes. Gordon College was opened in 1902 and according to Holt,

> "The Gordon College and other schools established in (early colonial times) had a very small intake, and their curricula were consciously planned, not to give a liberal education, but to provide adequately trained government employees." 45

The most important point to note in relation to the colonial educational policy pursued in Sudan, is that it basically aimed at the creation of a Sudanese administrative class. It is this same class that came to lead the Sudanese nationalist movement, as the coming section will demonstrate.

C. Omdurman and Sudanese Nationalism

Above I have looked at aspects of the development of Omdurman during colonial rule, in addition to examining aspects of its administration. The latter, I emphasised, was largely dependent upon a native class of big merchants and senior bureaucrats who acted as mediators between the colonial government and the population. In this section meanwhile, I briefly look at aspects of Sudanese nationalism, especially as related to Omdurman town's social structure.

The period succeeding the first world war saw the rise of Sudanese nationalism, and the formation of numerous political organisations which were later to be responsible for the 1924 revolution. The first significant development in this respect was the establishment of the Graduates Club in Omdurman in 1918. In its early years, it was essentially simply an organisation for the promotion of cultural and artistic activity. At the time, Khartoum had had six social clubs and numerous sports clubs, none of which really catered for the educated Sudanese. This was initially the main reason for the establishment of the Graduates Club.[46] It is important to note that Baytalmal neighbourhood provided the majority of members for this club, this being

related to the fact that it had a large number of educated and it provided a large number of officials for the colonial bureaucracy.[47]

By the early 1920s, the Sudanese could be broadly divided into two political categories, the first advocated British rule in the Sudan in preparation for independence, and the second worked for the withdrawal of the British and unity with Egypt for the achievement of independence. The first category consisted of traditional and religious tribal elements, and were largely big merchants (what the British saw to be the "better class of native"). The second comprised the modern educated elements.[48] The latter belonged largely to an urban middle class and within the Three Towns were concentrated in Omdurman. The latter had no access to the administration and no organisation through which they could express themselves. Moreover, most of the members being in the government service were debarred from forming or joining political parties. The only way open to them at the time was to organise illegal underground associations and to circulate political pamphlets clandestinely. Their fields of activity besides Omdurman included Khartoum, Port Sudan, Wadi Halfa and Atbara, but their main meeting place was the Graduates Club in Omdurman.[49] This first phase of political activity promoted through leaflets and circulars gave way to a second stage of political organisations and associations. The first such organisation was set up in Omdurman, called the Sudanese Union Society. All of its members were Omdurmanis, members of the Graduates Club, and most were graduates of Gordon College, and employed by the Sudan Government as junior administrators or clerks.[50]

Another organisation was the White League Society which organised numerous demonstrations in the towns, but especially in Omdurman and Khartoum.[51] However, succeeding the aborted army revolt of 1924, these various organisations became less militant and gave way to the development of various literary associations a lot of which were concentrated in Omdurman. Also in 1931, a merchant club was established in Omdurman. Together with the officers club, Graduates club and the various literary

associations, they came to provide meeting places for political discussions.[52]

With the growth in importance of educated Sudanese after the 1924 demonstrations, the British government responded by establishing the system of native administration whereby local administration was shifted into the hands of tribal sheikhs (especially in rural areas) while the role of the educated was progressively reduced.[53]

Two outstanding literary groups which developed in Omdurman were the Hashmab group and the Abu-Rof-Baytalmal group. Members of these groups were mostly young graduates of Gordon College working in the government service.[54] They published magazines, including al-Fajr magazine whose aims were affirmed to be the following:

> "a) to foster and engender a national consciousness and annihilate tribal prestige, b) to create a national united front;....e) to dissaprove of native administration as it is not the way to self-government, f) to demand the first place in government for the Sudanese, g) to found a thorough and sound educational system."

This programme encapsulated the political mode of thinking of the educated, and their programme of action. The last point, education, received particular attention from al-Fajr magazine.[55]

In this kind of atmosphere, there was a growing feeling that a single organisation should be set up which would express the demands of the educated, in addition to coordinating their efforts in social and political work.[56]

The first call for the establishment of such an organisation came in 1935, when al-Fajr demanded the formation of an association with the aim of representing the graduates, of defending their interests and communicating with the government. On all matters pertaining to the working conditions of graduates in government service.[57] By the end of 1937 the idea of a Congress was generally accepted by the graduates. The Omdurman Graduates Club committee discussed the steps to be taken and called the graduates for a meeting in January 1938.[58]

In February 1938, the Graduates who were interested in the idea held a Congress in Omdurman, attended by 1180 of them. They constituted themselves into a permanent body with a supervisory committee of sixty and an Executive committee of fifteen, to be elected annually, charged with the task of laying down and executing a programme of social reform, and of the bringing to the notice of the Government, the views of the educated on matters of public interest.[59] The majority of the members were government employees, but it also included small merchants and traders as well as old and young graduates.[60]

By 1939, the popularity of the congress had grown greatly, not only among graduates but also among non-graduates. In fact, it came to be perceived by the non-graduates as representative of the country, so much so that a group of Omdurman citizens during that same year found it necessary to send a petition through the congress (rather than through the advisory council for the Three Towns), on their difficulties with the Sudan light and power company.[61]

The 1940 annual meeting was well attended, and a new executive committee with Hamad Tewfiq as secretary, Khidir Hamad as assistant secretary, Abdulla Mirghani as treasurer and Ibrahim Yousif Suliman as accountant, was elected. The new members of the executive committee all belonged to the aforementioned Abu Rof-Baytalmal literary association, and were among the graduates who advocated increased political action and only conditional cooperation with the colonial government. Their election, therefore, heralded a new phase in the relations between congress and the government.[62]

However, differences concerning ways of dealing with the colonial problem, and alternative but incompatiable stands soon led to divisions within the congress and eventually to the rise of the first political parties.[63]

The first such to organise itself into a political party was the Ashiqqa. These were a group of young men united by a very close friendship (and a common Omdurmani origin) and were led by one Ismā'il al-

Azhari. Their political stand called for independence from British rule and support for a "unity of the Nile valley"policy , ultimately culminating in some form of political union with Egypt. The Ashiqqa were urban-based and enjoyed the full support of the slowly emerging middle-class in the towns. Led by al-Azhari they were able to dominate the congress.[64]

Another political faction that soon developed from the congress was the Umma party which came into existence in March 1945. It was heavily supported (contrary to the Ashiqqa) by merchants and rural and tribal elements, but was basically the mouthpiece of the Ansar, or followers of the Mahdi. Its main aim was preventing any form of union with Egypt, the latter being one of the main aims of the Ashiqqa.[65]

To counteract the Umma's influence in rural areas the Ashiqqa joined forces with the powerful Khatmiyya sect, and the National Union Party (NUP) was proclaimed in 1953. The NUP was the outgrowth of the more educated and secularised majority section of the Graduates Congress. Its membership was more

> "...dominated by petty capitalists and the educated civil servants and the urban masses". 66

The first test of the relative strength of both parties were the Omdurman municipal council elections, held in 1945 and in which the Ashiqqa got a majority of seats.

The first municipal council for Omdurman town was set up succeeding the passing of the 1937 local government ordinances (refer to chapter III for detailed analysis of the evolution of the administrative system). Membership of this first council was completely by appointment of the District Commissioner. It was exclusively made up of members of the class of big merchants, in addition to some senior government officials. It thus included well known names such as those of Muhammad Ahmad al-Birayr, al-Shaykh al-Amin 'Abd al-Rahman, Nasr al-Haj Ali. This council only met when summoned by the District Commissioner, who was ex officio head of the Council.[67]

In 1945, meanwhile, the first elections for the municipal council were held. For the first time elections involved severe party rivalry, particularly between the Ashiqqa and Umma parties. The former were successful in dominating the council. Thus, whereas the first council largely represented the class of big merchants, the second elected one came to represent the class of bureaucrats and small merchants, both forming the social base of the Ashiqqa party.

It is, moreover, interesting to note that the electoral rules for municipal elections were such that only about 30% of the adult maile population were eligible to vote. The francise was restricted by law to male owners or occupiers of premises with annual rental value in house tax ranging from £E3.60 m/ms to £E6. Women were debarred from voting.[68]

Above, I have looked at the historical development of Omdurman town since the Mahdiyya until the late 1940s, with the rise of the first political parties. In what follows, I would like to make some comments upon its changing social structure during that period. It is again necessary to emphasise the sparsity of information in this area. Consequently, the following comments are primarily identification of trends about the towns social structure rather than rigid statements.

Firstly, we saw how during the Mahdiyya, the social structure (and in fact ecological structure) of the town basically overlapped with divisions within the Mahdist State. These were of three categories basically: 1) those who supported the Khalifa, largely coming from the Western Sudanese tribes and who did most of the fighting, 2) those who were actively opposed to him, and who came from the riverain tribes, a lot of these being merchants (especially slave traders) annoyed by the Mahdist's state monopoly over trade, 3) the Khalifa's bureaucracy (especially its Muwalladin elements) who were only outwardly supportive of the Mahdist state, but effectively controlling a lot of its bureaucratic and economic power. I, furthermore, referred to the fact that how relations between these various "groups" within Omdurman was crucial

in determining outcomes of national conflicts.

Secondly, succeeding the fall of the Mahdist State, colonial rule was set up and the new colonial state apparatus introduced education and administration, both modern and traditional to serve the objectives of that state.[69] Among its objectives, of course, were control of the local population and prevention of a rejuvenation of Mahdism. One of the ways it accomplished this was the subsequent differential colonial policy pursued viz-a-viz the towns of Omdurman and Khartoum. We saw the development of the former into a native town, largely neglected by the colonial authorities whether in relation to planning or provision of basic services. Khartoum, meanwhile, developed into the proverbial European or colonial town. Other ways of fulfilling the colonial state's aims included the propagation of a specific education and administrative policy (refer to pages 46 - 50). In relation to the latter, I indicated how Omdurman's administration meant the involvement of the big merchant class in various committees, the colonial administration seeing that a way of preserving an illusion of local participation but simultanteously coopting that class, thus protecting itself, on at least one ground. In relation to education, we saw how it was specifically aimed at creating an administrative and artisan class to work within the colonial bureaucracy.

There were thus, three important classes identifiable in Omdurman during colonial rule, firstly the big merchant class, who all supported the Umma party and its opposition of union with Egypt, but endorsement of an "independent" Sudan led by the Mahdist family. In relation to the latter it must be stated that they developed under British patronage and furthered the entrenchement of a new system of semi-feudal social relationships, based on their followers belief in the Mahdist message.[70] Secondly, there was the administrative or civil servant class, who were the vanguards of Sudanese nationalism, and later developed the Ashiqqa and NUP parties. Thus, according to Collin,

> "Nationalism was almost exclusively expressed during this period by the few educated and urbanised Sudanese, many of them graduates of Gordon College or one of the few technical and high schools in the cities, who formed part of the colonial administration or of the miniscule commercial bourgeoisie." 71

Thirdly, there were the working classes, originally attracted to Omdurman because of its lower land values in relation to Khartoum, and largely employed as labourers in Omdurman municipality, Department of Stores or Department of Mechanical Transport, and Khartoum North Industrial area, which developed during this time.[72]

In our delineation of the three major classes existing in Omdurman town during colonial times, I have further distinguished them by referring to their different political affiliations. Thus, I indicated that whereas the towns big merchant class largely supported the Umma party, its class of bureaurcats, (who had been the vanguards of Sudanese nationalism), supported the NUP. However, this dichotomy did not continue to be of great importance in post colonial times, especially as even the latter class began to be involved in widespread capital accumulation with the result that according to F.Mahmoud,

> "Between 1956 and 1966 the bourgeois and petty bourgeois elements within the NUP grew in strength in the shadow of foreign investment. The leading capitalist within the party controlled the Ministry of Trade in several governments during this period. They managed to obtain lucrative import licences, and many of them became agents of foreign companies. Several traders within the party ..reinvested in industry, and many of their supporters among the civil servants invested in contracts, insurance and other services." 73

She concludes,

> "It seems evident that the new capitalist interests of the NUP leadership led them to develop a political orientation similar to that of the rest of the bourgeois parties," 74 (i.e. the Umma and Peoples Democratic Party)

The point I am essentially making here is that, whereas during the 1940s, the different political affiliations of these two classes (big merchants and bureaucrats) distinguished them, the changing nature of the NUP, consequent upon changes in the latter class (that of bureaucrats) meant that basically both classes came to overlap, and were only distinguishable viz-a-viz the town's working classes.

D. Post-colonial Omdurman

During the 1930s and 1940s, the town grew slowly, most efforts being concentrated on filling up the gaps within the town rather than on extending its boundaries. This situation changed after World War II, with the growth in trade and commerce and the virtual expansion of the whole conurbation. However, this expansion was not even, both Khartoum and Khartoum North developed more rapidly than Omdurman, especially due to their comparative economic prosperity.[75]

Another major development succeeding colonial rule was the growth of industrialization, which meant the development of an industrial area in Northern Omdurman. According to Fatima B. Mahmoud, industrialisation,

> "...coupled with the previous agricultural capitalst penetration, stimulated migration from rural to urban areas." 76

As a result, the town expanded both northwards and westwards, during the 1950s and 1960s to form in particular the new extensions of al-Thawra and Omdurman al-Jadida, the latter in particular being shanty dwellings and only recently have parts of it been planned. It was also during this period that most of the buildings in the Mulazmin first class area were put up. Various replanning schemes within Omdurman were also suggested during the 1950s, among them those of Murada and Baytalmal,[77] (see chapter VII for details on Baytalmal Replanning Scheme).

So that in relation to population size of the town, we find that it grew from 60,000 in 1898 to 113,000 in 1955-56 to 185,000 in 1964-1965 and 299,399 in 1973.

Various political developments during this period included the 1958 coup and the 1964 October revolution. The latter brought back the traditional political parties, after having been banned for a period of six years during military rule set up after the 1958 coup. The years succeeding October 1964, in Omdurman in particular were marked by intense political rivalry, this being particularly due to the fact that leaders of the leading political parties (including leaders of NUP, Umma and CP) actually lived in Omdurman. (Leaders of both the NUP and

Communist parties both lived in Baytalmal).

An important point to note in relation to this intense rivalry between the various political parties is that whereas in central or old Omdurman it revolved mainly around national issues, in other areas of Omdurman, specifically in the new extensions, it revolved around more specific and local ones. Thus in Umdurman al-Jadida (largely made of shanty housing) it related to the fact that the large population size of this area constituted a huge political resource to be exploited by the political parties for support during elections. Hence, tacit recognition of the inhabitants' rights encouraged further settlement and sometimes the reselling of land for higher prices. This was often sold to people from original Omdurman. Meanwhile,local authorities were handicapped due to the interference of the national political parties.[78]

In central Omdurman, on the other hand, and according to Bechtold,

> "The local issues confronting the voters of (central) Omdurman...did not involve the conventional claims of rival condidates to provide new schools and hospitals, better roads, and so on. Such talk would not have fired the voters imagination, because the need for an increase in the above services was not considered to be essential in Omdurman. The real issues concerned personal and ideological commitments." 79

Thus during elections voters generally tended to

> "identify with the candidates social background, such as his family, if influential, his tribal affiliation, his religious orientation, and sometimes his residence." 80

Ideological considerations were also important, however, especially related to whether voters wished to support the more progressive parties (especially CP) or more reactionary ones (especially NUP and Umma parties).[81]

I am basically emphasising two points. First, that in old Omdurman (including Baytalmal) during the 1950s and 1960s the classes that existed were those of big merchants and bureaucrats, but for them politics was basically not about local issues but rather about personal/ family matters and broadly ideological commitments. Hence, there was no

politics of local issues *per se*. This is partly related to the fact that basic services were much better than they are at present; there were hence no pressing local issues. Politics was focused as stated above on national political parties and their broad ideological commitments.

Secondly, in Omdurman's new extensions which housed the towns working classes, (especially in Umdurman al-Jadida) politics was about local issues, specifically land, thus whereas politicians were trying to woo populations of central Omdurman through personal and family networks, in the new extensions they were making promises about legalising the shanty town settlements. In fact, one of the points I am making in this thesis concerns the changes that have occurred in this situation succeeding the May 1969 regime and its passing of the new 1971 Peoples Local Government Act. This will be the subject of the coming chapters.

At the beginning of this chapter I raised the question of how to relate Omdurman's historical development, to its present social structure. In relation to this question we saw how Omdurman developed from a military camp to become the capital of the Mahdist State, when it came to possess certain characterstics, which were indicated above, including its division into areas according to tribal origin or political position viz-a-viz the Khalifa and the Mahdist State at large. Under colonial rule, the town fell into neglect, developing into a native town, and experienced a reduction in population size initially. During the '30s and '40s it became the vanguard of Sudanese nationalism, with the development of the various political groupings and culminating in the development of the first political parties, representing the interests of the big merchant and bureaucratic classes, respectively.

With the development of Khartoum North industrial area and later that of Omdurman new extensions grew on the town's outskirts to accommodate the inflow of migrants and of the growing working class population. I also indicated the different nature of politics in each. Having given this general account of important historical

processes in Omdurman, I proceed in the second section of this chapter to look more closely at Baytalmal administrative division, the main focus of this thesis.

II. Baytalmal Administrative Division

A. Introduction

In this section, I will look both at historical and contemporary Baytalmal. Each of its seven neighbourhoods will be described, and they will be compared with each other. Information on the latter is largely derived from the survey I conducted in the area.[82] Under the Mahdiyya, Baytalmal constituted a separate neighbourhood housing the treasury of the Mahdist state and a large merchant and bureaucratic population.

Under British colonial rule Omdurman was again subdivided, this time for purely administrative reasons, into larger units of which there were four, called rubu's, each of which was then subdivided into yet smaller units called haras. These administrative units existed from the beginning of the century until 1971, when the Peoples Local Government Act was passed, establishing different administrative divisions. A question that can be raised in relation to this Act is the following: On what principle(s) have the new administrative divisions succeeding the passing of the 1971 Local Government Act been based? In rural areas especially, many of the councils boundaries prior to 1971 followed tribal affiliations. Succeeding 1971, these were broken up by the creation of a large number of new boundaries and councils, which in principle, were supposed to follow criteria of "economic geography" or the prevailing economic realities.[83] The following example of what happened in one particular rural area will serve to illustrate the differences between administrative divisions and boundaries in post-1971 as contrasted with the earlier ones. The old Shukriyya Rural Council was a very large area lying to the east of the Blue Nile between Khartoum and Wad Medani. It was administered from the town of Rufaa. After 1971, although Rufaa continues to serve as a vital

administrative centre, there are in addition five new councils. The old council had been dominated by one tribe, the Shukriyya, and in particular by one family, that of Abu Sin. The old council was under the leadership of one Mohamed Ahmed Abu Sin, besides including six of his cousins, an uncle, a brother-in-law, and two nephews. The uncle, was also the local MP. The same family also controlled the Province Council. There was evidence of localised resentment to Shukriyya hegemony, which was (at least theoretically) ended with the breaking up of the old council, and the creation of new ones corresponding to economic changes in the area, including the Tambool extension, the Guneid Sugar scheme and Rahad Scheme.[84]

Within urban areas, meanwhile, previously it was usually main streets, thoroughfares, or generally features of the urban landscape, which were used to demarcate boundaries for urban administrative divisions. Under the 1971 Act, this has continued to be the case, although the units now created are, of course, much smaller. In both rural and urban areas the creation of more numerous and smaller administrative units has been related to the new Act's emphasis on popular participation. Nevertheless, both questions of whether tribal influence has actually been eradicated, and whether smaller administrative units make for increased participation, are questions open to empirical investigation. In the context of this thesis, there will be concern for the latter.

In urban areas, in particular, some of the problems resulting from the arbitrary division of a town into units made to fit its main thoroughfares and the like, rather than following demographic or social areas have been especially recognised in a report entitled Reorganisation of Khartoum Province's Administration, which was produced as a result of a 1974 administrative survey of the Province. The report in particular, emphasised that a consequence of arbitrary divisioning has been that some councils are very small, whereas others are very large.[85] For instance, in Omdurman, the neighbourhood of Mulazmin South has a population of

only 1,435, whereas a lot of Omdurman's other neighbourhoods, have populations of 3,000 plus.

As stated in the introduction, I again emphasise at this stage that the focus of this study is an administrative one. I am primarily interested in the administrative division of Baytalmal, which encompasses besides old or Mahdist Baytalmal neighbourhood, four others adjacent to it, namely those of Mulazmin North, Mulazmin South, al-Izbitaliyya and al-Sayyid al-Makki. Each of the above neighbourhoods has its own neighbourhood council, and all seven neighbourhood councils fall under the jurisdiction of one Town Council (Baytalmal Town Council) which is the next tier of local government. (A full analysis of the administrative structure of local government is given in Chapter III).

Of course, an interesting aspect of relying primarily on administrative boundaries, leads to a consideration of "boundaries", in general, problematically. One question that is relevant here is: What effect(s) does the demarcation of a boundary have on a particular area? This is relevant in the case of Baytalmal, especially when we consider that the new administrative boundaries created by the 1971 reorganisation has meant the bringing together under one administrative jurisdiction areas as diverse as Mulazmin (a first class residential area) and al-Izbitaliyya (or the hospital sector, which is a third class area). Two ideas that underly a lot of the following descriptions of Baytalmal are: firstly, that Baytalmal being an area that is part of Mahdist Omdurman possesses particular spatial, demographic and social structural characteristics that are different from Omdurman's newer extensions, developing during the late fifties and sixties, and secondly, that many differences exist within Baytalmal itself, especially between the newer neighbourhoods of Mulazmin (North and South) and the rest of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods.

Before considering each of Baytalmal's seven neighbourhoods, I will consider administrative divisions within Omdurman town generally. Omdurman is administered by several local government tiers. At the top, there is the District Council for the whole of the town, beneath which

there are nine town councils, (administrative Baytalmal is one such council), three rural councils, one industrial area council, and one market council. Town councils (including Baytalmal) are subdivided into neighbourhood councils, which are the smallest and most basic units of urban administration. Rural councils, meanwhile, are subdivided into "furgan" councils, which are the most basic units of rural administration. As stated Omdurman has nine town councils, the following table gives the names of these town councils and the number of neighbourhood councils they each include.

TABLE I: TOWN COUNCILS IN OMDURMAN

	Neighbourhood Councils
1. Umdurman al-Jadida	18
2. al-Thawra	22
3. Wad Nubawi	9
4. al-Maˢalma	9
5. Abu Anga	4
6. Abu Si'id	4
7. Baytalmal	7
8. al-Mahdiyya	7
9. al-Murada	12

As seen from the above table, the Town Councils with the largest number of subdivisions or neighbourhood councils are those of Umdurman al-Jadida, and al-Thawra, both of which are among the newer extensions of Omdurman Town, developing during the 1950s and 1960s to accommodate a lot of the immigrants coming into the town during those time periods. This is one of the main differences between Baytalmal and these newer extensions. Whereas Baytalmal's population is largely original to the town, having lived there since Mahdist times, the population of the newer extensions is largely made up of migrants. As such the latter areas in the town experience in particular, problems of illegal dwellings and thus of new planning, whereas for Baytalmal, one of the main problems,

as we will come to show is that of replanning of the existing area, to accomodate new streets and services.

B. Baytalmal's Seven Neighbourhoods

As mentioned earlier, although Baytalmal stands in clear contrast to Omdurman's extensions, in relation to both its social and physical composition, yet simultaneously numerous differences are easily noticed between its neighbourhoods. Here I consider in detail the question of these differences. A lot of historical information, in addition to data gathered through the questionnaire, will be employed. I will begin by outlining the histories of each of the neighbourhoods, emphasising in particular their specific social processes and problems.

1. Mulazmin (including Mulazmin North and Mulazmin South)

This neighbourhood is bounded roughly by the river on the East, by the road leading to Shambat bridge on the North, by the al-Izbitaliyya road on the West and Shari'Bawabat 'Abd al-Qayum on the South. Although under the post 1971 subdivisions Mulazmin is administratively divided into two neighbourhoods, those of Mulazmin North and Mulazmin South, yet in actual terms, these subdivisions are only of recent administrative significance, and have practically nothing to do with the history of the Mulazmin neighbourhood as a whole. Hence, for the purposes of this section, Mulazmin will be treated as one neighbourhood. In fact, a more significant, although non-administrative division is that between Mulazmin neighbourhood on the one hand, and the police barracks on the other. The latter differ greatly both socially and economically, from the rest of Mulazmin. The numerous problems raised by these fundamental differences between Mulazmin South especially (where the barracks are located) and the barracks will become clearer and figure as an important point in later analyses.

Mulazmin is the oldest neighbourhood in Omdurman. During the Mahdiyya, it was the quarter where the Khalifa, his family and his body-guard (or Mulazmin) lived. It is from this that the neighbourhood derives its name. At that time it was surrounded by a wall, separating

it from the rest of the town. It was in effect the seat of political power. However, during and after the Battle of Omdurman (1898) most of the town was destroyed, and the Mulazmin, in particular, was practically ruined, and people used its old ruins as building materials for renovating buildings in other areas of Omdurman. The neighbourhood itself, therefore, remained uninhabited.[86]

But what about its population? The Khalifa's family were either killed or imprisoned. Many of his Mulazmin (bodyguards) coming mainly from tribes of Western Sudan, returned to their tribal homelands. Those who remained, settled in different areas of Omdurman. The area remained uninhabited until the advent of the Second World War. It was the period of the 1940s and 1950s that witnessed the actual development of Mulazmin neighbourhood. After the war, the area was divided into first and second class land, with the first class area facing the river. Streets and a market were planned, and generally, it became one of the first areas within Omdurman to be internally planned. In this respect, Mulazmin can be contrasted with the rest of central Omdurman. Its planning was aided by the fact that (as in the case of Khartoum) it had been completely destroyed, and was uninhabited. Therefore, the problems of claims to freehold land, characterising the rest of the town during the early days of colonial rule did not exist.

It was, furthermore, decided by Omdurman's District Commissioner that the land was to be distributed on a leasehold basis (hikir), since in that case, besides providing a source of revenue for the government, it ensured that should the government ever need the land, it could easily evict the population, without having to be involved in problems of land settlement and compensation. The lease was to be for eighty years. The basic starting price at the auction being 20 piastres per square metre for the first class land and 10 piastres for the second class land. Yearly rental value was 4mms.[87] The area, at present known administratively as Mulazmin North was auctioned in 1946 and the area of Mulazmin South between 1954 and 1955.[88] Generally, the latter

area, however, had a smaller amount of land allotted as residential. Most of the land was for schools, in addition to other public buildings, such as Omdurman prison, the Mahdi's tomb(built in 1930s) and Radio and Television buildings.

Most of the buyers turned out to be government officials, since a lot of merchants who saw land as a form of investment, were discouraged from acquiring it as it was not freehold. The area was largely built, therefore, by government officials for private housing using government loans.[89] Among the first to acquire land in this area were members of the Mahdi's family.

The distribution of first class land in Mulazmin, together with replanning schemes of Baytalmal and Murada (all occurring during the '40s and '50s) should be viewed in the context of the colonial government's changed policy towards Omdurman, a reversal of the early policy of neglect, but most importantly occurring after the growth and success of the nationalist movement. This is especially evidenced by the fact that it attempted to appease the educated class of bureaucrats in particular, by offering them first class land in Mulazmin (it should not be forgotten that the rest of Omdurman was all third class land) and offering to replan an area where they are heavily concentrated, namely Baytalmal.

Although building in Mulazmin started in the 1940s and 1950s, many of the original owners of these buildings did not initially move into them. Instead, especially during the periods when they were engaged in goverment service outside the Three Towns, they rented their houses. These original owners (largely senior civil servants, as stated), only started to move into the neighbourhood, on a large scale as they retired from government service. Thus, in terms of its population, the principal feature of Mulazmin neighbourhood, is that it houses a class of senior civil servants and their families, many of them now retired. This characteristic of the neighbourhood is confirmed by several other sources, including Bechtold who says

"Today (Mulazmin) is inhabited almost exclusively by middle and upper level civil servants, including those retired who live in well-built government homes. This area gives the appearance of being by far the most affluent;...(it probably has the highest income average in the constituency of Omdurman South)." 90

Similarly, the 1974 Mefit study on the Three Towns reports that although senior civil servants are scattered over most areas of the town, the highest concentation is found in Mulazmin (2.6%). The report further adds that the high number of unproductive occupations is indicative of the fact that a substantial number of the occupants are retired (29.1%).[91]

The results of an enquiry published in the same report asked the question: "Do you have members of your own tribe in your neighbourhood: Many, Few or None?" Mulazmin was among the neighbourhoods that scored low on the response "Yes, many". The same study reported that in Mulazmin was found the highest percentage of post-secondary education (32.3%).[92] Similarly, Balghis Bedri (1978) has reported that 40% of the category of high earners (over £S200 in her sample) come from Mulazmin.[93] The point being emphasised and which is supported by all of the above is the fact that Mulazmin is the most affluent area within Omdurman and that furthermore it is characterised by the fact that it houses a distinct class based on common socio-economic standing, rather than common ethnic or kinship ties.

As mentioned early, in the beginning of this section on Mulazmin, a further characteristic of the neighbourhood is the existence within its boundaries of the police barracks. These lie adjacent to the first class buildings of Mulazmin South. They are made up of about 89 houses, with a population of about 800-900 (the whole population of Mulazmin South being only 1,435 persons). Its construction was begun under the British in about 1939, and was completed by 1945, before the buildings in Mulazmin South were completed. This particular site was chosen for the barracks because it was near to Omdurman main police station, in addition to its proximity to Omdurman prison, and its centrality in

relation to the rest of the town.

Generally, family size, years of service and priority of application have been the factors taken into consideration in the distribution of houses in the barracks. The houses are exceedingly small, and are supposed to house a single family each. However, the geographical position of the barracks (i.e. in central Omdurman) coupled with the chronic housing crisis, have all meant that increasingly a lot of migrants coming to the town seeking either educational or employment opportunities stay with relatives in the barracks, making the houses exceedingly crowded. This has meant that in terms of sanitation, the houses are very unhealthy, due to the inexistence of proper sewage in the first place, and the increased pressure on the little amenities available. A move by local authorities to transfer the barracks to another area, and wholeheartedly supported by the first class housing residents of Mulazmin South, has not yet materialsed.

Above, I have presented a brief history of Mulazmin area and its development during this century, what remains to be done in this section is to discuss some of its specific characteristics. There are several important points that need to be emphasised here. Firstly, that the defining characteristic of the neighbourhood is the existence of common socio-economic standing among its inhabitants, rather than a shared ethnic, tribal or family origin. This is, of course, related to the particular land use policy that was followed when the neighbourhood started to develop, a) that there were no original claimants to the land (as in the case of other neighbourhoods in Omdurman, for example) and b) that only people who could afford to pay for the land could get it. These turned out to be largely senior civil servants and a lot of politicians, who subsequently settled in the neighbourhood on retirement.

This fact of a common socio-economic standing is attested to by things like length of stay in the neighbourhood, the fact that most people interviewed said they had no relatives in the neighbourhood, in addition to the generally higher level of education and different

types of occupations that characterise its population. In addition, the neighbourhood's affluence is reflected in the patterns of conspicuous consumption that are widely noticeable, in addition to the wide divergence in physical appearance between Mulazmin neighbourhood and others in the rest of Baytalmal. A second important characteristic particularly relating to the neighbourhood of Mulazmin South is the existence of the police barracks within its boundaries. The crucial thing to note is that the common administrative boundary has forced these two areas and the different classes inhabiting them to be under the jurisdiction of a single council. The effects of this will be clear in later discussions.

2. al-Izbitaliyya neighbourhood

Literally the "hospital neighbourhood", presently it is the area surrounding Omdurman hospital; in addition to the area lying behind the Shuhada market, and extending westwards until the Omdurman main market. It is an area therefore, in which many of the activities relate either to the hospital (there are a lot of clinics, pharmacies and laboratories for clinical testing), or to the Shuhada market (increasingly a lot of people owning stalls in this street market are living in the neighbourhood) or to the main Omdurman market.

The neighbourhood is not as new as Mulazmin, the latter only developing during the late '40s and '50s, as indicated. Simultaneously it is not as old as original Baytalmal. Part of it did exist during the Mahdiyya, when it was called Hay al-Shuhada (neighbourhood of martyrs) due to the existence of the Mahdist Shuhada (or martyrs) cemetary. The rest was part of the walled Mulazmin. However, during this century, the cemetary fell into disuse and people began to build over it. As stated above, the neighbourhoods three most important characteristics are its nearness to the Omdurman Hospital, to the Shuhada market and its proximity to the main market of Omdurman. It is hence the neighbourhood's ecological position, specifically its centrality, which has given it its special character. How each of these sets of buildings (i.e. the hospital, the shuhada street market and the Omdurman main market) have

affected and continue to affect the neighbourhood, shall be explicated.

Firstly, in relation to the neighbourhoods proximity to the Omdurman hospital the original hospital buildings had been part of the Mulazmin under the Mahdiyya, at the time they were built of mud. After the reconquest, these buildings were converted into a hospital, and the first MD for the hospital was appointed. His name was Hasan Zaki. He had also been a doctor during the Turco-Egyptian period and then the Mahdiyya when he lived in Baytalmal. The 1920s saw the first rebuilding of the hospital. All doctors at the time were either Egyptian or Lebanese. The hospital took its present-day shape by 1933, when it was built of brick.[94]

By the late 1930s and early 1940s, there developed next to the hospital a street called Shari' al-Asayta, deriving its name from the Egyptian province of Asiut. At the time a lot of Copts, Egyptians, and generally foreigners used to live in the street, largely employed in commerce in the main market. However, as a lot of these foreign elements moved out (often to Khartoum), they rented their houses on this street as clinics, pharmacies, laboratories, all being activities related to the proximity of the neighbourhood to the main hospital. The streets name has now become, Shari' al-Dakatra (or street of Doctors), due to the large number of clinics found there. It is often also jokingly nicknamed Omdurman's "Harley Street."[95]

As mentioned above, the neighbourhood is furthermore characterised by the development of a street stall market just in front of it, called the Shuhadamarket, often also referred to as "al-akshak" or the stalls. It is made up of wooden and corrugated iron stalls set up on a very small area, selling all kinds of imported goods, especially female clothing. This market had originally been part of the main suq, but with its expansion it moved in front of the Omdurman hospital. It was then called Suq al-Izbitaliyya, or the Hospital market. It particularly catered for the large numbers of people who came during visiting hours to the hospital. It sold items like cheap material, kitchen utensils, footwear,

food, etc. This was during the early sixties. Increasingly, however, the market proved to be a health hazard for the hospital, especially as it began to expand attracting people who began to come especially for the market, and not only during visiting hours. It was consequently moved to a small open space right in front of the neighbourhood itself. This move coincided with the advent of the May regime, the difficulties involved in importing goods through official means, in addition to coinciding with the increased urban demand for imported luxury goods. This also coincided with the flourishing of the markets of Beirut at first, but then with the availability of markets closer to home, especially those of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and lately the London markets in particular. The market thus developed into one specialising in the selling of smuggled luxury goods, not found in the main markets of Omdurman or Khartoum.

Recently, there has been a move by Khartoum Province Commissioner to transfer the market to an area outside of central Omdurman. This move has been particularly motivated by the fact that the market is expanding on a very small piece of land, and due to the demand on it, is causing endless traffic conjestion on the main roads surrounding it.

The effects of this market on the neighbourhood of al-Izbitaliyya are crucial to consider. According to one informant, it has created a limited "boom" in the neighbourhood. However, it has simultaneously, created a rise in expectations, since the luxury goods it displays and their phenomenal prices (imported footwear costing anywhere between 15 and over 25 Sudanese pounds) are well beyond the reach of a lot of the neighbourhood's families.

The third feature of the neighbourhood is its closeness to the main market and generally to all the entertainment facilities in the centre of town, such as cinemas, bars, cafes, etc. This fact, in particular, has meant that the neighbourhood has become well-known for having a large number of prostitutes, and illegal gambling houses, a fact which besides being generally recognised in all of Omdurman, was continously pointed

out to me by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood themselves. They especially advised me not to walk around in the neighbourhood after seven o'clock in the evening.

The prostitutes are ostracised by the rest of the neighbourhoods population, and are completely isolated from activities in the neighbourhood. Even as regarding such things as distribution of scarce consumer goods by the council they are not counted as being part of the neighbourhoods population. Several purges, both by the police and the neighbourhood, have been directed at them, not always with effective results, however. A lot of them were able to produce false marriage certificates, or actually own the houses they live in, making it very difficult to evict them. Aggravating the problem, is the fact that increasingly, some of the neighbourhoods original inhabitants are moving out of it renting their houses to more prostitutes or immigrant (recently especially Eritrean) workers, employed either in the hospital or nearby main market. The neighbourhood council aware of this problem has instructed owners of houses not to rent their property prior to getting written permission from the council to agree on the types of people who are going to rent that property. However, owners do not always abide by these regulations, leaving the council practically helpless, especially after the police have become increasingly disinterested.

From all of the above, it can be vividly seen, therefore, that it is the specific location of al-Izbitaliyya neighbourhood that has rendered it "open" to all kinds of influences, which have given it its special character, but which, most importantly, are simultaneously causing its rapid change. The fact of its openness has led to a kind of lack of security and a loss of sense of community, which coupled with practical things like aggravated sanitation problems (also related to the nearness to the hospital and the large numbers of people who come to the Shuhada stall market), are practically forcing members of its better off classes to move out of the neighbourhood, and to rent their property to people who wish to be in that central location,

for whatever purposes, prostitution, nearness to jobs in the hospital, or in both the main and Shuhada stalls markets.

Consequently, the neighbourhood's population is increasingly becoming very heterogenous, with two practically mutually exclusive groups co-existing. These presently are the neighbourhoods original inhabitants, (decreasing in number) and consisting of a class of small merchants and mainly middle-rank civil servants, and a large class of workers (mostly immigrants) employed especially in the hospital and in the central market. In addition, of course, to the large number of prostitutes, and a very large number of clinics and pharmacies, whose owners do not live in the neighbourhood.

3. al-Sayyid al-Makki:

This is also one of the oldest neighbourhoods of Omdurman, and is physically closest to the original neighbourhood of Baytalmal, separated from it only by a street. It derives its name from al-Sayyid al-Makki, son of Shaykh Ismā'il al-Wali of the Ismā'iliyya tarika or religious order. This neighbourhood also goes back to the Mahdiyya, during which time its population consisted of two main groups. The first constituting a majority was made up primarily of members of the Ismā'iliyya religious family related by blood, and who had migrated from the Western Sudan. The second were Copts who had been living under the previous Turco-Egyptian rule and had only publicly declared their adherence to Islam and the Mahdist cause. A lot of them were merchants. Succeeding the Mahdiyya, some of them, often belonging to the same family, reverted back to Christianity. Those who remained Muslims, attached themselves to the Ismā'iliyya family.

In this neighbourhood, hence, the existence of several religious orders or groupings has had a profound effect in creating a kind of solidarity, religious groupings and organisation becoming especially important. The neighbourhoods two main religious orders are those of al-Ismā'iliyya and al-Khatmīyya. In addition, there is al-Darīr

family, a very well known religious family, which has produced many well known religious scholars. Religious groups meet in Zawiyas (a kind of religious lodging) and mosques of the neighbourhood, among the latter, the al-Darīr mosque, being most important.

Generally, in talking about the neighbourhood, it can be asserted that religious affiliation is more important than kinship relationships. As stated, a large number of the neighbourhood's population are Copts, who are primarily engaged in commerce, and tend to be the more affluent class in the neighbourhood. They tend furthermore to be isolated from the rest of the neighbourhood, largely composed of a class of middle-rank and lower rank civil servants.

The site of this neighbourhood is also relatively central, hence leading to the fact that prostitution and the problem of rented houses also exists, although to a lesser degree when compared with al-Izbitaliyya neighbourhood. Again, this is causing the neighbourhoods more affluent families to leave the neighbourhood and rent their houses.

4. <u>Baytalmal</u> (including Baytalmal North, Centre and South)

As indicated earlier in the section on Mahdist Omdurman, Baytalmal, is one of the oldest areas of the town. It derives its name from the fact that it housed the Baytalmal (treasury) of the Mahdist State. Also, as discussed two major groups comprised its population at the time: a) the Muwalladin (those of Egyptian descent) and North Riverain people, both of whom had worked in the Turco-Egyptian bureaucracy, and who after its fall continued to work in the Mahdist bureaucracy.
b) Danagla merchants, in particular attracted to the Baytalmal's proximity to the slave market and to the Nile, in itself a prime factor for riverborne commerce. A lot of these groups, but especially the Muwalladin did not really believe in the Mahdist message. However, it should still be noted that an important characteristic of Baytalmal at the time, was the fact of its being an important centre both in Omdurman and in the Mahdist state as a whole, of administrative and economic power and influence.

Administratively, it was important because it housed the bureaucracy and handled important matters of state. Economically, it was important in two senses, firstly because of the existence of the central treasury of the Mahdist state and secondly, because of the large number of merchants comprising its population.

Succeeding the fall of the Mahdist State and the advent of colonial rule, this continued to be the case. Practically, the same groups continued to live in the neighbourhood, which at the time was only composed of present day Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South (refer to map).

During the early decades of the century, Baytalmal saw the birth of several cultural, and political movements. Notable among these were the creation of the Omdurman Graduates Club in 1918, the development of the reading circles of the 1920s and early 1930s, (especially well known was the Abu Rof- Baytalmal group, mentioned earlier) and it, of course, significantly contributed to the leadership of the Graduates Congress, and still later to the political leadership for the first political parties, including the Ashiqqa, National Unionist Party, and even later the Sudanese Communist Party.

A question that can be raised in relation to the above is the following: Why was Baytalmal a birthplace for all these different movements? In attempting to answer this question , several factors that characterise the neighbourhood can be referred to. These include the high standard of education characterising the neighbourhood, especially the fact that its inhabitants were among the first to send their children through the formal educational system, once it started. This can possibly be seen to be a factor contributing to a higher level of consciousness or generally openness to influence. Furthermore, it was this educated group that came to first fill the lower ranks of the Sudan Government civil service, and was the major group to come into close contact with colonial rule. These various movements that developed at various times in the neighbourhoods history can hence be seen in such a light.

The above has been a discussion of Baytalmal (especially Baytalmal Centre and South) in very general terms, especially emphasising its history, but what about contemporary Baytalmal? (here including Baytalmal North). Has it changed significantly? and what sorts of processes are affecting or are likely to affect its future development?

In trying to respond to the above questions I will first talk about the population of contemporary Baytalmal. This can be broadly divided into several groups:

1) Big merchants, (largely descendants of Danagla merchants who lived in this area during Mahdist times)
2) Senior civil servants (primarly descendants of Muwalladin,who were employed first in the Mahdist bureaucracy and later the colonial civil service). Both of the above can be seen to constitute a single class, that is currently dominating the more affluent neighbourhoods of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South.
3) Lower-rank civil servants and a large labour element, constituting the major class dominating the less affluent neighbourhood of Baytalmal North. This particular class was initially attracted to the area now known as Baytalmal North (and which developed only during this century) by the creation of water and shipping works on the Nile, on the neighbourhood's Eastern side, but also by the development of the Khartoum North industrial area, which used to be reached by ferry on the neighbourhood's Eastern side (before the opening of the Shambat bridge in 1966), and in Omdurman municipality.

Bechtold gives practically the same description of the area. He says of Baytalmal's population:

"Many are labourers and low-rank civil servants, although a few upper income houses are sprinkled throughout the district." 96

In relation to the three neighbourhoods of original Baytalmal, the main point to be emphasised concerns the differences between its three neighbourhoods, with Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South on the one

hand being dominated by a class of big merchants and senior civil servants (as was the case during the Mahdiyya), and Baytalmal North (developing only during colonial times), being dominated by a class of workers and largely lower-rank civil servants. Although prior to the demarcation of the 1971 boundaries, these neighbourhoods were not physically divided, the 1971 boundaries came to coincide with their social divisions, reinforcing them in the process, as I will come to demonstrate later.

Two major processes can be seen to be influencing the three neighbourhoods (in fact can also be seen to be influencing them physically). These are, firstly the increasing differences between those who belong to fixed income groups (the lower rank civil servants and workers) and those who do not, in this particularly, referring to the big merchant class.

Secondly, there is the effect of the replanning scheme, which has and continues to force people to leave the neighbourhoods. These two processes have had several effects including the following. Those who belong to fixed income groups are being forced to remain in the neighbourhood in the same types of housing and crowded conditions they have been living in, a situation which is being aggravated by increased population pressure, and the housing shortage. All these factors are forcing people to remain in extended family homes in the neighbourhood. Those who belong to the merchant class, meanwhile, are increasingly affording to move out or alternately are improving their houses, with the effect that often one can find two-storeyed villas right next to mud houses.

The replanning scheme is in effect reinforcing this dichotomising process, since those whose houses are becoming too small as a result of replanning often sell their land to those who belong to the merchant class, and who can afford to buy the land to expand and improve their housing conditions. (The replanning scheme and its effects shall be considered in greater detail in a later chapter)

Above, I have looked at aspects of Baytalmal administrative divisions seven neighbourhoods, emphasising their histories and specific

social processes. From that analysis it was clear that just as a lot of differences exist between Baytalmal and other areas of Omdurman, similarly numerous differences exist within the area itself, especially in relation to social structure. Thus, we find that whereas the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal South, Baytalmal Centre and Mulazmin North, are by and large dominated by a class of big merchants and senior civil servants, the police barracks section of Mulazmin South, al-Isbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al-Makki and Baytalmal North are to a large extent dominated by a less affluent class, composed largely of lower rank civil servants and workers.

C. Demographic Characteristics of Baytalmal

Data used in this section has been mainly collected through the questionnaire I conducted in the area, (see footnote 82), primarily because deomgraphic information from previous censuses has been for the whole of the town, rather than for specific administrative divisions, which has rendered them of little use for my purposes.

Firstly, the following table shows the differences in population size for the areas seven neighbourhoods.

TABLE II: POPULATION SIZE FOR BAYTALMAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS (1974)

Neighbourhoods	Population	No. of Households
1. Mulazmin North	3517	416
2. Baytalmal Centre	3435	580
3. Baytalmal South	3133	425
4. Mulazmin South	1435	180
5. Baytalmal North	4520	602
6. al-Izbitaliyya	2795	487
7. al-Sayyid al-Makki	2561	416
Total	21,396	3,106

(Figures taken from a count by Baytalmal Town Council 1974)

As can be noticed from the table, the largest neighbourhood in terms of population size is that of Baytalmal North with a population of 4,520, the smallest being Mulazmin South, with a population of 1,435. This great difference can partly be explained by referring to the fact that the latter neighbourhood (as earlier indicated in the section on Mulazmin) is occupied by a large number of public buildings. The sizes of the five other neighbourhoods are roughly comparable ranging in size between 3,517 and 2,561.

Before going into details about Baytalmal's specific demographic characteristics the following table gives population sizes for Omdurman town's other Town Councils.

TABLE III: THE POPULATION OF AREAS SERVED BY DIFFERENT TOWN COUNCILS IN OMDURMAN (1973)

Town Council	Population
Abu Si'id	23,448
Abu Anga	17,228
al-Murada	28,910
Baytalmal	21,396
al-Masalma	20,786
Wad Nubawi	24,896
al-Thawra	85,688
al-Mahdiyya	46,216
Umdurman al Jadida	100,854
Total	369,422

(These figures are calculations made by Department of Statistics based on the 1973 Census figures)

The town councils with the largest population sizes are those belonging to Omdurman's new extensions, specifically al-Thawra, al-Mahdiyya (to the North of Central Omdurman) and Umdurman al-Jadida (lying to the West of Central Omdurman). They are also Omdurman's largest Town Councils in terms of area. The rest of the Town Councils

are all (except for Abu Si'id, which was only included within the town's boundary in 1973) situated in central Omdurman. Although no figures exist on population density for these different Town Councils, it is generally safe to say that the Town Councils in Central Omdurman (including Baytalmal, Abu Anga, al-Murada, al-Masalma and Wad Nubawi) are characterised by a much higher population density when compared with Omdurman's new extensions, namely Umdurman-al-Jadida, al-Thawra and al-Mahdiyya. The latter being planned areas, consist of much larger blocks of houses.

1. Type of Household

The figures on type of household were classified into the following categories: nuclear family household, extended family household, and compound family household. The latter two were differentiated on the basis of whether the household had a shared or common budget (extended) or whether the household was made up of individual nuclear families, each with a separate budget (compound).

TABLE IV: TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD

Type of Household	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Extended family household	11	52.4	16	57.1	9	40.9	6	60	23	76.7	13	56.5	10	50	88	57.1
Nuclear Family household	6	28.6	5	17.9	7	31.8	3	30	4	13.3	8	34.8	4	20	37	24.0
Compound Family household	4	19.0	7	25.	6	27.3	1	10	3	10	2	8.7	6	30	29	18.8
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	99.9

As seen in the above table, a majority of households were found to be extended (57.1%) followed by nuclear (24.0%) and then compound family households (18.8%). As for the occurrence of these types of households across Baytalmal, several points need to be emphasised. Firstly, that in all neighbourhoods extended family households constitute a majority. Secondly, if one looks at percentages for the incidence of nuclear family households, it can be seen that the highest percentages are found in Mulazmin and al-Izbitaliyya, the smallest in Baytalmal North. The high incidence of nuclear family households in Mulazmin can be explained by referring to two facts, a) the higher socio-economic standing of its population, hence the fact that it has become more economically feasible for nuclear families to have their own households and b) by referring to the history of the development of the neighbourhood, particularly that a lot of the land was initially distributed to individual nuclear familes of senior civil servants.

In al-Izbitaliyya, meanwhile, the higher incidence of nuclear family households can also be related to two facts. Firstly, the higher incidence of immigrants (as compared with the rest of Baytalmal) and secondly, the high incidence of people leaving the neighbourhood for various reasons (referred to earlier), thus breaking up extended family patterns.

It can also be noticed from the table that the lowest percentage for the incidence of nuclear families is characteristic of the neighbourhood of Baytalmal North. The percentage being only 13.3% (vs. 34.8 for al-Izbitaliyya or 30 and 28.6% respectively for Mulazmin North and South) This may be seen to be related to primarily the low socio-economic standing of the neighbourhood, and the economic importance of kinship and the extended family in this respect. This is specifically that a majority of the neighbourhoods population belong to a class of lower rank civil servants and workers, a fixed income group, not all of whom can afford to set up their own nuclear family households.

2. Average Household Sizes

The average size of household for the whole of Baytalmal is 8.1 (For Omdurman it is 6 according to the 1965/66 Household Survey) This high household size helps support the earlier comment made about the higher population density in this area when compared with Omdurman's new extensions, in particular. The following table shows average household sizes for Baytalmal's seven neighbourhoods.

TABLE V: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN BAYTALMAL

	MN	BC	BS	MS	BN	IZB	MAKKI
Average Household Size	7.2	8.5	9.2	8.7	8.3	7.5	7.3

In comparison with the average size for the whole of Baytalmal, it is noticed that Baytalmal Centre, South and North have the largest average with Mulazmin North, al-Izbitaliyya and Makki closer to each other. The large average size of household in Mulazmin South, meanwhile can be explained by the inclusion within the sample taken from that neighbourhood of houses lying within the police barracks, which, as explained earlier in the section on Mulazmin, houses relatively large families when compared with the area of first class housing of Mulazmin. In fact, if one were to break up the sample from Mulazmin South, it would be found that the average size of household in the sample from the barracks is 9.7, whereas in the area of first class housing it is 7.3

The following table meanwhile, gives average size for each type of family household whether extended, nuclear or compound.

TABLE VI: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF HOUSEHOLDS

Type of Family Household	MN	BC	BS	MS	BN	IZB	MAKKI
Extended	8.1	7.3	7.8	8.2	8.1	7.8	7.2
Nuclear	4.8	4.4	6.7	10.0	6.3	6.5	5.3
Compound	11.0	14.3	14.2	8	12.7	9.2	8.7

Here, the only significant differences are in the case of the nuclear household, whose size is smallest (except for Baytalmal Centre) in the neighbourhood of Mulazmin North. Again the large size of the nuclear household in the case of Mulazmin South can be explained by reference to the large family size characteristic of the police barracks. So, finally, if one were to conclude concerning the average size of households in the administrative division of Baytalmal, it can be said that generally despite the fact that there are no great differences that exist, yet those that do tend to differentiate Mulazmin North most from the rest of Baytalmal. This, of course, can be related to its specific historical development and social makeup.

3. Length of Residence in Town

The importance of this question of length of residence of household heads in town relates to the degree to which the population studied is urban.

TABLE VII: LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN TOWN OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Length of Residence	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Since birth	8	38.1	21	75	14	63.6	3	30	24	80	8	34.8	16	80	94	61
1 - 5yrs	1	4.8			1	4.5					6	26.1	2	10	10	6.5
10 - 15yrs	1	4.8	4	14.3	1.	4.5	1	10			5	21.7	2	10	14	9.1
16 - 20yrs	5	23.8			1	4.5	2	20	2	6.7	4	17.4			14	9.1
21 - 25yrs	2	9.5							1	3.3					3	1.9
26 - 30yrs	2	9.5	1	3.6	1	4.5	3	30							7	4.5
31 - 40yrs	1	4.8	1	3.6	2	9.1	1	10	2	6.7					7	4.5
Over 40yrs	1	4.8	1	3.6	2	9.1			1	3.3					5	3.2
Total	21	100.1	28	100.1	22	99.8	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	99.8

As noticed from the above table, a large majority of household heads have been living in Omdurman since birth, the percentage being 61, which seems to indicate that the population of Baytalmal is an urban one,largely original to the town, and does not by and large constitute an immigrant population. In this respect, Baytalmal can be contrasted with other areas in Omdurman, especially areas like Umdurman al-Jadida, which arose almost solely for the purpose of catering for a large immigrant population.

As for differences across Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, it is noticed that the neighbourhood of al-Izbitaliyya has the largest immigrant population with 65.2% of its population having come to Omdurman within the last twenty years. This fact in particular can be attributed to the very nature of the neighbourhood and processes currently characterising it, namely its central position vis-a-vis the rest of the town, hence its attraction for all those having jobs in the centre of town or in the hospital.

TABLE VIII: LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Length of Residence	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Since birth			19	67.9	14	63.6			24	80	8	34.8	16	80	81	52.6
1 - 5yrs	3	14.3	1	3.6	1	4.5	3	30			6	26.1	2	10	16	10.4
10 - 15yrs	7	33.3	3	10.7	1	4.5	3	30			5	21.7	2	10	21	13.6
16 - 20yrs	11	52.4			1	4.5	1	10	2	6.7	4	17.4			19	12.3
21 - 25yrs					1	4.5	3	30	1	3.3					5	3.2
31 - 40yrs			5	17.9	2	9.1			2	6.7					9	5.8
Over 40yrs					2	9.1			1	3.3					3	1.9
Total	21	100	28	100.1	22	99.8	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	99.8

It is clear from the above table that a majority of household heads (52.6) said they had been living in their neighbourhoods since birth, which only emphasises the pattern clear from the previous figures on length of residence in town, namely that a majority of Baytalmal's population is largely an urban one, and that furthermore has been living in the area since Mahdist times. Nevertheless, it becomes important at this stage to examine in greater detail differences across Baytalmal's neighbourhoods. First, whereas no household heads said they had been living in either Mulazmin North or Mulazmin South since birth, the majority of household heads in the five remaining households stated they had been living in their respective neighbourhoods since birth. This is related to the particular historical development of both areas, both only developing during the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, even during those times a lot of the inhabitants being by and large senior civil servants had rented their houses, especially in cases where they were engaged in government service outside of the Three Towns, returning to Mulazmin in the late 1960s and 1970s as they retired or approached the age of retirement.

Secondly, again we notice that a large number of informants from al-Izbitaliyya neighbourhood (47.8%) have moved into the neighbourhood within the last fifteen years, this in the case of this particular neighbourhood is especially related to the fact that it is a neighbourhood changing character, as a lot of its origial inhabitants leave it to rent their houses to an immigrant population seeking jobs in the centre of town and the Omdurman hospital.

Two other factors which further confirm the above trends already discussed are of responses to the question "Do you have any relatives living in this neighbourhood?" and b) ownership of houses. I will consider each in turn. In relation to (a) "relatives" were defined as kinsmen, affines were excluded, since this would have applied to practically all informants, a point in itself indicative of the tightly-knit social composition of the various neighbourhoods. The following

table shows responses to this question of relatives living in the same neighbourhood.

TABLE IX: NUMBER OF INFORMANTS WITH KINSMEN IN THE SAME NEIGHBOURHOOD
(Affines excluded)

Responses	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Yes	9	42.9	21	75	14	63.6	3	30	26	86.7	8	34.8	15	75	96	62.3
No	12	57.1	7	25	8	36.4	7	70	4	13.3	15	65.2	5	25	58	37.7
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

The above table shows a majority of household heads (62.3%) said they had kinsmen living in their neighbourhoods. Specifically, we find that those who gave "Yes" responses constituted a majority in all neighbourhoods except those of Mulazmin North, Mulazmin South and al-Izbitaliyya. Again this fact can be explained by referring to the specific natures of these particular neighbourhoods, namely that Mulazmin North and Mulazmin South are both neighbourhoods that have developed recently (1950s and 1960s) housing a class largely made up of senior civil servants, to which the land was sold during the late 1940s. al-Izbitaliyya, as I have indicated, meanwhile, is a neighbourhood which is increasingly housing a large immigrant population, attracted by the neighbourhoods central position viz-a-viz the rest of Omdurman. In contrast, Baytalmal's remaining four neighbourhoods, are characterised by a pattern of residence based on kinship and common ethnic background largely going back to Mahdist times.

Next, we consider patterns of house ownership in Baytalmal administrative division, again with the view in mind of trying to see to what extent they follow the above patterns of residence.

TABLE X: HOUSE OWNERSHIP IN BAYTALMAL

House Ownership	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Owned	18	85.7	26	92.9	20	90.9	4	40	23	76.7	11	47.8	17	85	119	77.3
Rented	3	14.3	2	7.1	2	9.1			7	23.3	12	52.2	3	15	29	18.8
Other							6	60							6	3.9
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

The above table clearly indicates that a large majority of informants own their homes. The large number of rented houses in al-Izbitaliyya (52.2%) is related to the large immigrant population in that neighbourhood, who are renting their houses from the neighbourhoods original population, who are increasingly leaving the area. In Mulazmin South, most inhabitants (60%) living in the police barracks reside in the government-owned barracks. Finally, having considered the variables of length of residence in town, and neighbourood, number of kinsmen residing in the same neighbourhood, and house ownership the following points can be made about residence patterns characterising Baytalmal administrative division: 1) That Baytalmal's population is an urbanised one mostly original to the town of Omdurman having by and large lived in it and in their respective neighbourhoods since Mahdist times. This fact is further supported by the two facts of house owhership and the number of kinsmen living in the area. In relation to the latter two variables, it was thus found that a majority of informants said they had kinsmen living in their neighbourhoods, and furthermore that for a clear majority the ownership of their houses went back for several generations.

2) The exceptions to the above pattern are the neighbourhoods of Mulazmin (North and South) and al-Izbitaliyya. In relation to the former, we found that again whereas a majority are native to the town of Omdurman, yet they have only moved to Mulazmin within the last twenty years, succeeding the selling of land in the area to individual families of senior civil servants, that being the reason why the pattern of residence in the neighbourhood is not by and large related to kinship.

In relation to al-Izbitaliyya neighbourhood meanwhile, the main point to be noted is that it is changing primarily due to the fact that it is increasingly attracting a large immigrant population. The consequence has been that its original inhabitants are leaving it and renting their houses to this new population, which accounts for the

large number of rented houses in this neighbourhood, especially as contrasted with the rest of Baytalmal. It also accounts for the fact that most respondents from this neighbourhood said they had no relatives living in it. In what remains, I will consider the two important variables of educational standard and occupations of household heads in Baytalmal.

5. Education

TABLE XI: EDUCATIONAL STANDARD OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Education	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Illiterate			1	3.6	2	9.1			2	6.7	1	4.3	2	10	8	5.2
Primary	1	4.8	10	35.7	10	45.5	5	50	6	20	8	34.8	2	10	42	27.3
Junior	6	28.6	3	10.7	2	9.1	2	20	8	26.7	5	21.7	1	5	27	17.5
Secondary	2	9.5	4	14.3	4	18.2	1	10	8	26.7	6	26.4	8	40	33	21.4
Post-secondary			2	7.1	1	4.5					1	4.3	3	15	7	4.5
University	12	57.1	8	28.6	3	13.6	2	20	6	20	2	8.7	4	20	37	24.0
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100.1	23	99.9	20	100	154	99.9

In relation to educational standards of household heads it is generally noticed that a majority (27.3%) have completed their primary education, 21.4% secondary education and 24.0% have completed university, which generally can be taken to be a relatively high standard ofeducation.

As for differences within Baytalmal, several points can be made. First, that besides the fact that the rate of illiteracy is generally low, no household heads were found to be illiterate in the neighbourhoods of Mulazmin North or South. Secondly, the table clearly shows that by far the highest percentage of university education is found in Mulazmin North (57.1%). These observations taken together are clearly supportive of some earlier comments concerning the differences between Mulazmin North and the rest of Baytalmal, namely that the former's population largely belong to a class of affluent senior civil servants. This point will once again become clear when we consider occupations of household heads.

6. Occupation

TABLE XII: OCCUPATIONS OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Occupation	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
Professional (Lawyers Doctors, etc.)	5	23.8	7	25	5	22.7	1	10	1	3.3	1	4.3	2	10	22	14.3
Merchant	3	14.3	14	50	10	45.5			2	6.7	2	8.7	2	10	33	21.4
Senior Gov't Official	9	42.9	4	14.3	4	18.2	2	20	1	3.3					20	13.0
Middle rank Gov't "	1	4.8	3	10.7	2	9.1			5	16.7	2	8.7	2	10	15	9.7
Lower rank Gov't "							6	60	20	66.7	17	73.9	13	65	56	36.4
Workers																
Housewife	3	14.3			1	4.5	1	10	1	3.3	1	4.3	1	5	8	5.2
Total	21	100.1	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	99.9	20	100	154	100

The above table indicates that for the whole of Baytalmal, the dominant occupation is that of lower rank civil servant (36.4%), followed by the category of merchants (21.4%). Within Baytalmal meanwhile, numerous differences are noticeable as regards which occupations are dominant in particular neighbourhoods. In this respect hence, we find that the category of senior civil servants is dominant in Mulazmin North. This is of course related to the specific nature of the neighbourhood, namely that its lands were sold primarily to senior civil servants in the 1940s. We also find that lower rank civil servants dominate in Baytalmal North, al-Sayyid al Makki and al-Izbitaliyya, which are the areas least affluent neighbourhoods. In contrast, we find most merchants in Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South, which together with Mulazmin constitute the areas most affluent neighbourhoods. We also find most professionals in the areas more affluent neighbourhoods, namely Mulazmin North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South. This is, of course, also intimately related to levels of education, (considered in the previous section) when we found these same neighbourhoods to contain the highest number of university graduates.

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Baytalmal: Final Comments

The main point we have been trying to emphasise is that numerous differences exist within Baytalmal administrative division in regard to these two characteristics. I considered the factors of type of household, household size, length of residence in town and neighbourhood, house ownership, levels of education and types of dominant occupations, all with a view of trying to emphasise these differences.

I established that generally, Baytalmal's population is an urban one, largely born and bred in it; and with many having family connections that can be directly traced back to the Mahdiyya. Despite this, I selected the case of al-Izbitaliyya which I showed was a neighbourhood whose character was deviating from the above pattern, as it increasingly began to house a large immigrant population. In relation to the other socio-economic factors considered, meanwhile, I showed

that Baytalmal's neighbourhoods can largely be grouped into two, dependent upon which class is dominant within each group. Thus, the areas affluent neighbourhoods (Baytalmal Centre, Baytalmal South, Mulazmin North and the first class housing area of Mulazmin South) were dominated by a class largely composed of senior civil servants, professionals and merchants. In contrast, the areas less affluent neighbourhoods (Baytalmal North, al-Izbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al Makki and the police barracks section of Mulazmin South) were dominated by a class of lower rank civil servants and workers.

Section III: Baytalmal as viewed by its inhabitants

In this section, I will consider two factors, which further help emphasise some of the points made in the previous section, especially in relation to the differences between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods. These factors are: a) Differential perception of important issues and problems by the neighbourhoods inhabitants and b) perceptions of change in the neighbourhood. Again, data for both was gathered through the questionnaire survey I conducted in the area.

a) Differential Perception of Important Issues and Problems

The following table gives responses to the question: "What are the most important problems and issues facing the population of this neighbourhood?"

TABLE XIII:DIFFERENTIAL PERCEPTION OF IMPORTANT PROBLEMS/ISSUES IN BAYTALMAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

Important Problems/Issues	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
Consumer Goods shortages	3	14.3	3	10.7	2	9.1	4	40	8	26.7	9	39.1	12	60	41	26.6
Problems of Replanning			6	21.4	3	13.6			9	30					18	11.7
Public Health problems (eg.Sewage)			5	17.9	4	18.2	2	20	3	10	3	13	2	10	19	12.3
No Garbage collections	6	28.6	2	7.1	2	9.1									10	6.5
Deficient public trans-port									4	13.3					4	2.6
No Taxis	3	14.3					1	10							4	2.6
Housing			2	7.1					4	13.3					6	3.9
Security Problems									2	6.7	8	34.8	3	15	13	8.4
No schools in neighbour-hood			5	17.9	6	27.3					3	13	3	15	17	11.0
No Nurseries	4	19	2	7.1	2	9.1									8	5.2
Police Barracks	2	9.5					3	30							5	3.2
No organised social activity	3	14.3	3	10.7	3	13.6									9	5.8
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	99.9	20	100	154	99.8

In relation to the above table, several points classifying these problems can be made: a) whereas certain problems are rated relatively highly by informants from all neighbourhoods, others are rated highly by only some of the neighbourhoods, thus emphasising the differences within Baytalmal, especially in relation to socio-economic standing, which I have already pointed to in discussions of individual neighbourhoods. Problems which are rated highly throughout Baytalmal include Consumer Goods Shortages (which is analysed in detail in the final chapter of the thesis), and Public Health problems. The latter is related to the fact that being one of the oldest areas of Omdurman, Baytalmal suffers from problems of sewage, especially due to the lack of a centralised sewage system for the town. This problem is aggravated by the increasing population size of the area, an increase that is not in proportion with existing amenities.

b) Problems that are rated differentially by different neighbourhoods meanwhile include : 1) problems associated with the police barracks, rated highly only by informants from Mulazmin North and Mulazmin South, clearly the only two neighbourhoods affected by the existence of the police barracks in the midst of this first class residential area, (refer to earlier description of Mulazmin), 2) problems of replanning, rated highly by informants from Baytalmal North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South. Again, these are the three neighbourhoods affected by replanning. Here the high rating given by Baytalmal North (30%) is related to the fact that (as I will discuss in detail when we consider replanning as an important issue in Chapter VII) this neighbourhood is suffering most from the effects of replanning, 3) security problems, are seen to be an important issue in the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal North (6.7%), al-Sayyid al Makki (15%) and al-Izbitaliyya (36.8%). The high rating by informants from al-Izbitaliyya is especially related to the central positin of this neighbourhood, and the fact that it has a large number of prostitutes and illegal gambling houses, in addition to a large immigrant population, all problems I have referred to earlier

in the description of the neighbourhood.

c) Problems which are related, yet provide a contrast between the neighbourhoods, 1) in this respect we find that whereas informants from Baytalmal North saw the deficient system of public transport to be a problem, informants from the more affluent neighbourhood of Mulazmin North complained about the difficulty of finding taxis. 2) similarly, whereas the informants from Baytalmal North complained about the non-existence of schools in their neighbourhood, the informants from the affluent neighbourhood of Mulazmin North complained about the lack of enough adequately equipped nurseries. 3) still, in relation to this particular contrast whereas informants from the areas less affluent neighbourhoods were concerned about problems of basic necessities such as education, housing and public health, informants from the affluent neighbourhood of Mulazmin North, saw the lack of any organised social activity to be an issue of concern.

The objective of the above exercise has been to emphasise some of the points made earlier, namely that a lot of differences exist within Baytalmal itself. The above consideration of the differential perception of issues seen to be of importance in Baytalmal's neighbourhoods helps to make this point about differences within the area, especially as related to which social classes are dominant in which neighbourhood. Of course, it must not be forgotten that these differential perceptions of important problems means that different demands are made by different social classes upon the council to cope with them, although this ultimately depends upon who is in control of the council, as will be shown in later discussions.

b) Differential Perception of changes affecting Baytalmal's neighbourhoods

Here, responses given to the question: "What have been the major changes that have affected your neighbourhood in the past years, Economically, Politically, Socially?" are considered. Again, the main objective was to find out more about the differences within Baytalmal administrative division.

Firstly, I will examine some of the economic changes perceived. Here, generally, two patterns of responses were predominant again conforming to which neighbourhoods informants came from. Whereas a majority of informants from all neighbourhoods saw rising inflation to be the major economic change, informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods saw the primary economic change locally to be the growing differences between those who belonged to fixed income groups (primarily the class of lower rank civil servants and workers) and those belonging to the big merchant class. Responses following this pattern were generally given by informants from the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal North, the Police Barracks section of Mulazmin South, al-Izbitaliyya and al-Sayyid al-Makki.

In relation to political changes perceived, the same general divergence between Baytalmal's two groups of neighbourhoods is witnessed. Thus, informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods saw the increased dominance of council politics to be the major local political change, whereas informants from the areas affluent neighbourhoods saw the banning of traditional political parties, succeeding the advent of the May 1969 regime to the main political change affecting their neighbourhoods. This difference is understandable when we know (as previously indicated in the first section of this chapter) that the traditional political parties had the areas affluent class composed largely of big merchants and senior civil servants as their main social base.

In relation to the perceived social changes, meanwhile, the same sorts of differences are noticed once more. Hence, informants from the areas less affluent neighbourhoods saw that the major social change was the effect of the deterioration of the economic situation on social relations, especially in relation to things like the increased difficulty of entertaining in view of the present difficult economic conditions. Informants from Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods meanwhile, were more concerned with the changing nature of the areas social makeup. Here, they especially referred to neighbourhoods like al-Izbitaliyya,

where there is an increase in the number of rented houses, a higher immigrant population, a large number of prostitutes and illegal gambling houses.

So that generally, two dominant patterns of perceived local changes can be delineated, a) changes perceived by the areas less affluent classes relating to the increased differences between classes in the area, especially between those belonging to fixed income groups and the big merchant class, the increased importance of local council politics in such circumstances, and the effect of the current economic deterioration on social relations, b) changes perceived by the areas affluent classes relating to the absence of traditional political parties representing their interests, and the changing social makeup of the area.

The existence of such distinctive patterns together with the differential perception of important issues and problems, discussed earlier, only helps the point we are emphasising, namely that numerous differences exist within Baytalmal, and that these are primarily related to social class.

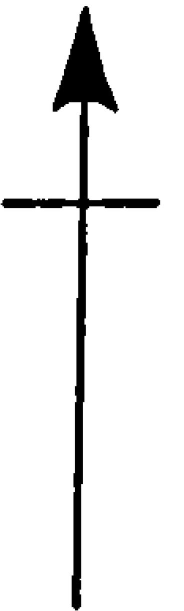
Conclusion

The following points can be made in relation to the questions raised in the first section at the beginning of the chapter. 1) I have traced Omdurman's historical development through various stages. One point made was that its contemporary social structure is quite recognisably a product of specific developments in its history which are well known, and which assume very considerable importance in the minds of its inhabitants. Here, the development of the town's various social classes and their roles in Sudan's nationalist movement is the most important thing to note. More specifically, I showed how during Mahdist times its social and ecological structures overlapped, and how the fact that it was neglected during early colonial times meant that it grew into a "native" town from which developed the country's first nationalist movement. This was led by the emergent class - largely made up of civil servants - which

somewhat paradoxically, had been primarily created by the colonial state's education policy and its need for indigenous administrative personnel. This emergent class was initially in opposition to the class consisting mainly of big merchants, who had early been seen by the colonial authorities as the "better class of native" and as mediators between the State and the people. I then moved to the development of the two first political parties in the 1940s when the above classes formed the social base of each. I showed how later during post-colonial times, the interests of these two classes came to coincide. A measure of industrialization attracted large numbers of immigrants who came to reside in the town's new extensions which, in contrast to Omdurman's original neighbourhoods, developed specifically in response to that development.

2) In relation to the second question concerning the historical role of Baytalmal, I emphasised its position as the centre of both economic and bureaucratic power during Mahdist times, and its later role as a springboard for various political movements, including the early growth of nationalism, and later more specific ones which culminated in the first political parties. I emphasised that its specific social structure (which developed under specific colonial policies including administration, education, and the particular neglect of Omdurman as a "native" town and widespread differences within it, have made for these divergent developments. In relation to Baytalmal, I stressed that great differences within it are being reinforced by the effects of various processes. These include the replanning scheme and the increasing attraction of immigrants and others of lower income status to it owing partly to the neighbourhoods central position viz-a-viz the rest of the town, but primarily to the large number of rented houses available. The latter is the result of a lot of Baytalmal's original (and better off) inhabitants leaving because of the wide deterioration of amenities and services and of the increased population pressure on those that are available.

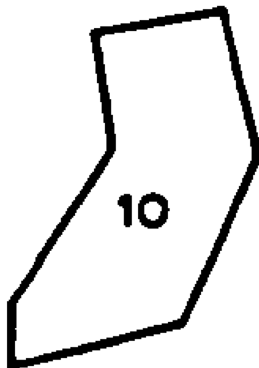
MAHDIST OMDURMAN



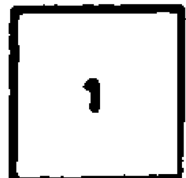
OMDURMAN

North Western Section

North Eastern Section



Central Section



River Nile

TUTI

Southern Section

Blue Nile

KHARTOUM

White Nile

El-Fitehab village

KEY

City wall

1. The Mosque
2. Mud wall of Omdurman
3. Houses of Khalifa's Mulazemin (Bodyguard)
4. House of the Khalifa's relations
5. Mashra (Ferry)
6. Khalifa's house on the Nile
7. Old fort of Omdurman
8. House of the commandant of Jehadia
9. Khalifa's house in Dem Yunes
10. Market
11. Beit el Mal
12. Slave market
13. Commissariat stores of the Mulazemin and Katebs
14. Quarters of the Egyptians (Ibrahim Pasha Fauzi, Said Bey Guma, Yusef Effendi Mansur and others)

BAYTALMAL TOWN COUNCIL

BAYTALMAL NORTH

AL-SAYYIDAL-MAKKI

BAYTALMAL CENTRE

BAYTALMAL SOUTH

MULAZMIN NORTH

Omdurman Hospital

Police Barracks

MULAZMIN SOUTH

AL-IZBITALIYYA

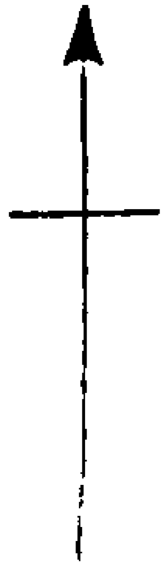
Mosque

Prison

Radio and Television

School

RIVER NILE



CHAPTER II: FOOTNOTES

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87. Interview with Mr.H.al-Sayyid.

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89. Interview with Mr.Suliman Akrat.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN BAYTALMAL: STRUCTURE, OPERATION AND PROBLEMS

The previous chapter aimed to provide an introduction for later discussions of the social structure of Baytalmal. This chapter aims primarily to provide a description of the formal administrative structure in order to facilitate later discussions of the relations between this administrative structure and the changing social structure of the area. The first part of the chapter gives a brief history of the development of the Sudanese local government system. The second part is a detailed analysis of how the local government system functions in one specific location, namely the Baytalmal administrative division of Ondurman. The main theme in the second part is to assess the extent to which the formal structure and operation of local councils (as stipulated in local government legislation) correspond to, or differ from the "actual" structure and operation in the particular case under study. The discrepancies between the "formal" and the "actual" will be fully discussed and explained.

I. The History of the Sudanese Local Government System:

A Local Government under British Colonial Rule:

At the beginning of colonial rule in 1898, general conditions and particularly the fears of resistance by local populations led the British to develop a semi-military administration carried out by a small number of provincial governors and inspectors, with the assistance of a subordinate category of Egyptian officials called Ma'murs.[1] All authority was concentrated in the hands of the Governor General and his three secretaries. These were the financial, legal and civil secretaries who, unlike the directors of other departments, worked in very close liaison with the Governor-General, and acted as his immediate advisers in their respective fields.[2]

The duties of governors, inspectors and ma'murs were laid down by Kitchener in 1899. They included responsibility for public security, the assessment and collection of taxes, the keeping and tendering of accounts, and the administration of justice.[3] The country was divided

into six provinces: Dongola, Berber, Kassala, Sennar, Fashoda and Khartoum. Each had a British military governor assisted by district commissioners who were in direct charge of their districts, which were the main units through which the provinces were administered.[4] Thus Khartoum Province had three districts, corresponding to the towns of Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North.

Initially, the provincial governors were directly dependent on the central administration for finance, though a certain degree of decentralisation was established when each governor was given his own budget for stores and allowed complete autonomy over the purchase of all materials required for administration. In all other spheres, however, the governors remained under tight central control. In 1905, the financial secretary extended his control over local provincial rates. Uptill 1905, these rates had been spent by the governors, without any supervision, on provincial services such as streets, sanitation and native administration officials. Also, the level of rates collected had been decided largely by the individual governors of each province.[5]

The next major development to affect the administration of Sudan, followed the First World War, and was some departure from the earlier highly centralised and military rule. This change was the outcome of several factors. The main reasons were stated in the Milner report of 1921, which strongly stated the view that the Sudan should be treated as a country both separate and different from Egypt because it showed such great diversity within its own borders. Though the report saw it as absolutely necessary to maintain a single supreme authority over the whole country, yet it saw it as undesirable for the Government to be highly "centralised". Thus:

> "Having regard to its vast extent and the varied character of the inhabitants, the administration of its different parts should be left as far as possible in the hands of native authorities. A centralised bureaucracy is wholly unsuitable for the Sudan. Decentralisation and the employment wherever possible of native agencies for the simple administrative needs of the country would make both for economy and efficiency."[6]

Economy was a particularly important consideration in view of the growing complexity of administration following on the development of the country.[7] An additional factor serving to accelerate the new devolutionary measures was the growing nationalist movement in Egypt which was beginning to affect the Sudan. The colonial government thus came to the view that it was absolutely necessary to speed up the "Sudanization" of the subordinate administrative service which had at the beginning been almost entirely Egyptian. But the difficulty of finding the required numbers of Sudanese suitable for the duties involved acted as a further incentive towards the more systematic and extensive use of native authorities, and this was to culminate in 1924 in the complete withdrawal of the Egyptian ma'murs.[8]

The construction of a system of native administration was spread over a period of roughly fifteen years, from the years 1920 to 1935. The most important feature of the new system of native administration was the establishment of local courts under a series of legislative acts between 1922 and 1932. These conferred increasingly wide judicial powers on the native authorities. These courts tried the vast majority of cases, either under specific ordinances mentioned in their warrants, or according to local customary law. Only in towns was extensive use made of the State's penal code, and in all large towns, there were benches of Sudanese magistrates (on the lines of English sessions) who tried all minor offences according to customary laws.[9]

In keeping with these new policies the Governor-General issued a warrant in 1921 creating an Advisory Council to supervise the administration of the Three Towns. This was followed in 1923 by the creation of three separate municipal councils for Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman (See Chapter Two for details on the advisory and municipal councils).

The 1920s thus saw a considerable degree of devolution of authority to a system of native administration, and thus stood in fairly sharp

contrast to the system used in the early years of the Condominium. An important question to ask is why the British abandoned their earlier policies of direct rule in favour of a limited devolution of authority? Apart from the fact of economy the British saw the possibility of effectively securing their hold over the country through an elite of proteges to whom limited authority was delegated. In Omdurman, as explained in the previous chapter, the "elite" comprised mainly of the emergent class of big merchants. These developments took place simultaneously with the emergence of a vigorous nationalist movement (centered in Omdurman) and was an important additional factor which prompted the colonial government to consolidate previous legislation on local government and administration.

The colonial government had come to realise that tribal forms of administration were not suitable to the more developed urban areas in particular. Consequently, there was a marked move in the direction of a system of local government in which authority was vested in local councils that would "get on" with the business of administration under the supervision of the central government. Another "advantage" from the government's point of view was that local councils made up wholly or largely of Sudanese would divert the attention of Sudanese political leaders from national participation and issues to local ones.[10]

These policies eventially culminated in three major acts in 1937. These were: a) The Local Government Ordinance for Municipalites, b) The Local Government Ordinance for Townships, and c) The Local Government Ordinance for Rural Areas.

Taken together they virtually constituted a Local Government code. They provided for the setting up throughout the country for a system of Local Government authorities which exercised powers delegated by warrant from the Governor-General. According to these laws, the Local Government authority in any area could be either a single person or a body of persons, making possible the granting of local government powers not only

to the former Native or Local Administration, but also to Local Government Councils.[11]

The towns of the Sudan were classified into three groups: municipalities, townships and urban areas. The municipalities were all purpose authorities. The townships and urban areas differing only in size, both being minor authorities within the framework of a major district council. At the time there were five municipalities: Khartoum, Omdurman, Khartoum North, Atbara, and Port Sudan. In addition there were 9 townships and 3 urban areas. All other areas in the country were administered directly by an officer of the administrative service as local government authority, usually with the help of an advisory committee of Sudanese.[12]

Each council was constituted by separate warrant, hence allowing for minor modifications to suit local conditions, but the typical council consisted of 14 to 16 members of whom one quarter to one-third were nominated by the Governor of the Province to represent important local interests (e.g. the Sudan Chamber of Commerce), and the remainder were elected.[13]

The municipalities and townships ordinances provided for the making of temporary local orders and the issue of regulations covering the fields of public order, health, safety and welfare, and such general matters as town planning, sanitation, refuse disposal, fire prevention, licensing of petty trades and inspection of foods. These powers were not conferred directly on local authorities, but on the governors of the provinces who were in turn authorised by warrants issued by the Governor General to delegate them in ways which might vary from one specific instance to another to the local authorities within their provinces.[14]

Municipal and township councils all enjoyed financial independence with revenue transferred from the central government and specified areas of expenditure. By 1949, there were 17 towns and municipalities with independent budgets with a total revenue of £E435,000 and a total

expenditure of £E394,000.[15]

However, the world depression, followed by the Second World War, resulted in the retardation of the establishment and full development of the municipal councils. So, despite the fact that the 1937 ordinances had stipulated that councils should be at least partially elected, they continued throughout the war years to be appointed. And, in fact, as seen in the previous chapter, the first elections for municipal councils coincided in the immediate post-war period with the rise of the first political parties.

In the meanwhile, however, the colonial government had in 1943 decided to establish province councils in the Northern part of the country. These were intended to assist and advise governors of provinces in their executive and legislative responsibilities. In addition, these councils were intended to associate provincial governors with units of local government, with the ostensible aim of widening the base of popular participation. Following the enactment of this ordinance, province councils were established in Kassala, Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan and the Northern Province. These province councils were, however, weak from the start, because they were only advisory and had no direct legislative or executive powers.[16]

By this time, the leaders of the nationalist movement were frustrated and restless and were not prepared to accept advisory functions only. The colonial government soon realised this and asked Dr. Marshall (a British expert in Local Government) to undertake a complete review of Sudan's Local Government system. As a result of his report the <u>1951 Local Government Ordinance</u> was passed.

According to the 1951 Ordinance the principles governing local government councils were laid down as follows: a) Local Government authorities were recognised as corporate bodies answerable to the local electorate and functioning under the guidance of the central government. b) the system of Local Government was made flexible in order to meet

the widely divergent conditions in the Sudan. c) Formal Local Government authorities were henceforth to be established in all areas where it was decided that the population had reached a degree of social development sufficient to allow them to determine for themselves local and tribal questions and simple local services to be established and run. d) Following this, powers were granted piecemeal to local authorities as and when they showed themselves capable in the eyes of the government of assuming additional responsibilities.[17]

In essence, Dr.Marshall had recommended that the 1937 Local Government Ordinances be repealed and substituted by simpler ones, that the previous classification of local authorities into municipal, townships and rural be changed, and that authorities should be specified in the warrants by name, i.e., whether or not a particular area merits a council.[18]

The warrants were to be issued by the Governor-General after consulting the Administrative Secretary. In practice, this meant that the councils would be divided into two categories: 1) Municipal or Rural Councils and 2) Province Councils.[19]

Rural and Municipal Councils were to pass through five stages, depending on the degree of economic and social (but also political, of course), consciousness of the population they were supposed to administer and on the degree of understanding of local problems in any particular area. In the first stage, Local Government authority was vested in the District Commissioner who depended on money allocated to him from the central government budget into which local revenue was pooled. This first stage was generally applicable to small areas having little revenue, but which were too small to achieve an independent status and yet not sufficiently compatible - ethnically or in other ways - with neighbouring councils to make mergers with any scope of fruitful coordination.

In the fifth stage the Governor-General (and later the Council

of Minsters) was to issue a warrant for the establishment of a council as a corporate body and with the right to elect its own president. The remaining stages fell between 1 and 5 in terms of the range and scope of their responsibilities.[20] It was only in 1956/57 that the ordinance was universally applied.[21]

B. Local Government in the post-independence period:

In the immediate post-independence period nothing was done to change the local government system, but that it became intricately connected with the major political parties, especially the Umma and NUP (see Chapter II). Major changes were, however, to be introduced after the imposition of military rule in 1958 and the banning of all political parties by the military junta.

1. Local Government under military rule (1958-1964)

One of the first pronouncements of the new military government expressed the intention of supporting the existing local government system providing that "interference" of political parties ceased.[22] The new military rulers were largely inexperienced in governmental affairs and depended to a great extent on bureaucrats at both national and local levels to help them formulate and execute their policies and programmes. Gradually, however, tension developed between the military rulers and the civil servants at both levels. In particular, the military rulers of the provinces and districts began to interfere with the normal workings of local government.[23] They strengthened the old system of Native Administration giving it a prominent place in government and thereby leaving little or no room for citizen participation and involvement.[24]

By mid-1959, however the Government had decided to review the whole local government structure. It established a commission under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice, and this commission recommended: a) The continuation of local government but with appointed instead of elected members for the time being, and b) the creation of a provincial

administration consisting of a fit person to represent the government, a Province Council and Provice authority.[25]

The commission gave the following reason for recommending the suspension of elections:

> "The principle of election is only one of the various means for attaining a fully representative body, but experience in this country has proved beyond reasonable doubt that the elections for the local government councils produced some members who degraded the standard of membership itself, and led in certain cases to party groupings inside the councils, a situation which hampered the interests of the citizens and delayed useful work, and led to the neglect of the services for which those institutions were established. In view of this, the commission does not recommend the application of the principle of elections for the time being. [26]

As a result of the commission's report, the 1960 Provincial Administration Act was passed. Under it, the administration of provinces was to be conducted at three levels. The first was the government representative appointed by the Higher Command of the Armed Forces who was the ex officio head of the Province Council; the second level was the Province Council which was to be a decision and policy-making body in relation to legislative and financial affairs; the third was the Province Executive Council which was to consist of representatives of central government ministries working at the level of the province. The main task of the Executive Council was to be the implementation of decisions taken by the Province Council. The Province Council was to consist of members elected by local councils within the various areas of the province and were to include members appointed by the Armed Forces Higher Command, in addition to ex officio members of the Executive Council.[27]

In effect this act was a deliberate attempt by the military rulers to achieve greater control over local authorities and especially over the activities and attitudes of local civil servants. In essence, each province council became a political body whose function it was to promote, explain and justify government policies and objectives. Appointments to the councils were largely dependent on the enthusiasm,

and strength of support of the individuals concerned for the regime. This situation was, however, to change with the revolution of October 1964 and the consequent ousting of the military regime.

2. Local Government after October 1964:

The most important point to note in relation to the period after 1964 is that successive constitutional and political crises which developed between 1964 and 1969 resulted in the increased politicisation of Sudanese society, and thus, of course, ultimately led to a higher degree of political involvement of civil servants at the local level. As this involvement grew, decision-making, tended to be increasingly geared to the immediate fulfilment of the expectations of the more powerful political groups and individuals especially where these had the ability to exercise influence on both central and local government. The entire political arena hence became extremely sensitive to the hazard of alienating or angering any of the important political leaders. Under these circumstances, efficient administration and widespread political participation inevitably became subordinate to performing activities that were politically feasible and at the same time in the eyes of different factions desirable. A high level of political direction developed and this was often exercised in a way which, according to Howell, severely damaged the former high standards of public service at the local level.[28]

The new government abolished all province councils created under the 1960 Province Administration Act, in addition to restoring elected local councils.[29]

Another question that needs to be dealt with here is the relationship between the Native Administration and the new government. In the struggle for political influence that characterised Sudanese politics after 1964, traditional elements of native administration especially in rural areas had the most to gain or lose, since they were directly in touch with the people they had not always been working for the "public

interest", and had often fostered their own ends. After 1964, there were two main groups of people opposed to Native Administration. These were made up of various local elements which wanted to free themselves from tribal authority - sometimes for different reasons - and progressive elements within the political parties. Thus one minister al-Shafi' Ahmad al-Shaykh (who was a member of the CP) described the system of Native Administration as follows:

> "a) A backward system of administration created by the Imperial power to strike at and weaken the national movement. It was inherited by the National Movement. It was inherited by the National Government which failed to introduce changes in it. Under the regime of military dictatorship it was consolidated and exploited in the service of the Junta.
> b) It was a system that obstructed the growth of rural areas and retarded the development of their people.
> c) It was in essence a bureaucratic system used for the suppression of the people and not to promote the interests of the masses, the fruits of whose toil was stolen especially in agricultural schemes and nomad areas." 30

He furthermore considered that all the laws governing the formation and conduct of local government councils should be amended in such a manner as to make elected councils responsible for native administration functions.[31] In actual fact however, no such laws were passed, mainly because the progressive elements advocating such legislation met strong opposition from elements of native administration themselves and from reactionary forces within political parties that depended upon and sought the support of Native Administration. The situation thus remained as it was until the establishment of the May 1969 military regime.

3. Local Government after May 1969:

Any assessment of developments after May 1969, has to take cognizance of the major problems which faced the new regime. These included the nature of the political structure, the strong influence of the Ansar and the Khatmiyya sects and, more generally the very nature of Sudanese politics which the regime was committed to changing radically. In addition, in the economic sphere there was the problem of dwindling

foreign currency reserves and the declining standard of living.

It was in direct response to the above problems that the Peoples Local Government Act of 1971 (PLG) was passed. Here, it is crucial to note that the regime at the time the PLG Act was passed strongly believed that a radical transformation and change in the local government system would act as a prelude to the easy application of its new policies and programmes. The regime was led by young enthusiastic military officers, supported by communists and other leftist elements who believed in radical change rather than in gradual evolutionary-type reform.[32]

One of the regime's first aims thus, was to rid local government of the influence of traditional and reactionary elements, especially those representing the old political parties. The PLG Act was intended to provide a new and different leadership capable of mobilising mass involvement and participation at both local and national levels.[33]

The old structure of local government operating under the 1951 ordinance was dissolved, after being strongly criticised on several grounds including specifically, the fact that it separated decision-making from executive authority. It was also criticised for the excessive control exercised by the Ministry of Local Government over local councils, and for the negative consequences that this had engendered for decentralization.[34]

The aims of the new system now introduced were, in addition to wanting to promote a fresh type of leadership, to eradicate reactionary elements, to increase democratic participation and to decentralise power and authority. The central ministries were, under this new vision, to concentrate on drawing up general policies, to make the province the effective unit for budgeting and administration, and thus also to reduce the cost of overall government.[35]

The above constitutes a brief assessment of the rationale and assumptions of the present local government system. Our next task is to

illustrate and explain the various stages through which the system has passed since 1969 and to review the various political events and processes surrounding these developments.

The Minister of Local Government had suggested in December 1969 that a congress be convened for the reconsideration of the aims and rationale behind the local government system, in order to make it conform with the policy of the government of May 1969. This conference took place in April,1971, and passed several recommendations which finally resulted in the passing of the November 1971 PLG Act. In effect, however, the architect of the Act was Dr. Ja'afar Bakhiet, who had joined the government in February 1971, as Minister of Local Government and remained in that position until his death in 1975. However, the Act was supported by the regime's more radical elements, a section of the Communist Party and the Arab Nationalists, both of whom perceived in it a means of excluding reactionary native administration elements from the arena.[36] Specifically the Act included important principles such as the following: 1) to increase peoples contribution, the number of councils was increased and they were reorganised on a new pattern, based on geographical and economic distribution, and not on the old tribal lines, so that whereas the old number of councils was 48, it was now increased to 4,000. 2) the Province Executive Council was entitled with wide powers and the right to establish local councils and to delegate powers. 3) women were given a minimum of 25% representation in all local councils in order to ensure their participation.[37]

It should be noted, however, that whereas the Act itself was passed in November 1971, it preceded the setting up of the Sudan Socialist Union organisations, whose establishment began in 1972. It also preceded the passing of the National Action Charter and the constitution in 1972 and 1973 respectively.

In that same year (1971) and succeeding the communist-backed coup of July 1971, the first councils were set up; originally for a three-

year term. However, before their term was completed, these first councils were dissolved and the whole experiment reevaluated. Councils were reorganised and new elections held, between the end of December 1973, and the end of January 1974.

Preceding the new elections, several amendments were made and new acts passed. These were: a) Regulations concerning the powers, jurisdictions and duties of administrative officers, 1973. b) Peoples Local Government Regulations on Secondment, 1973. c) Regulations for the formation of Executive Peoples Councils, 1973 , d) Regulations for the Formation of Peoples Local Government Councils, 1973, e) Funding Orders to the Provinces, 1973.[38]

The most important thing concerning these various amendments is that they followed on the establishment of the first units of the Sudan Socialist Union. They specified the rules for, and set limitations on, council membership, hence emphasising the regime's stress (especially after the 1971 communist-backed coup) on a wide-ranging but fully committed support instead of relying simply on leftist support, especially since pressures arose, particularly from within the army, to remove all communists of whatever type from the government.[39]

I have reviewed the various local government systems that have operated in the Sudan from the beginning of this century till the present. In addition, I have indicated the various political developments that surrounded changes in local government. The objective throughout has been to provide a background for understanding the present system, which is described and analysed at the end of this review.

Before proceeding to a micro-analysis of how local government actually operates in one particular locality, there are several general points to be stressed in relation to the above review. Firstly, it is evident that there has been a close and intricate relationship between national politics and changes in the local government system. Thus, for instance, during the military regime of 1958, a system of appointing

in favour of electing councillors was consistent with the national policy of control over local affairs not least through the exclusion of elements from the banned political parties. At the same time the strengthening of the old native administration, which had a reactionary stance, served to isolate progressive elements from local government.

Secondly, whatever the political complexion of the different governments the continued restructuring of the local government systems has almost always been rationalised on the grounds that there should be greater popular participation, though this expressed aim has never been achieved. Thirdly, none of these 'reforms' has effectively diminished the domination of traditional and reactionary elements in local councils, and the influence of these elements in one way or another has in fact become a permanent feature of local government. How this has occurred in the case of the present system is the subject of analysis in the next section of this chapter and in the chapters to follow.

II Baytalmal Local Government Councils: Structure, Operation and Problems:

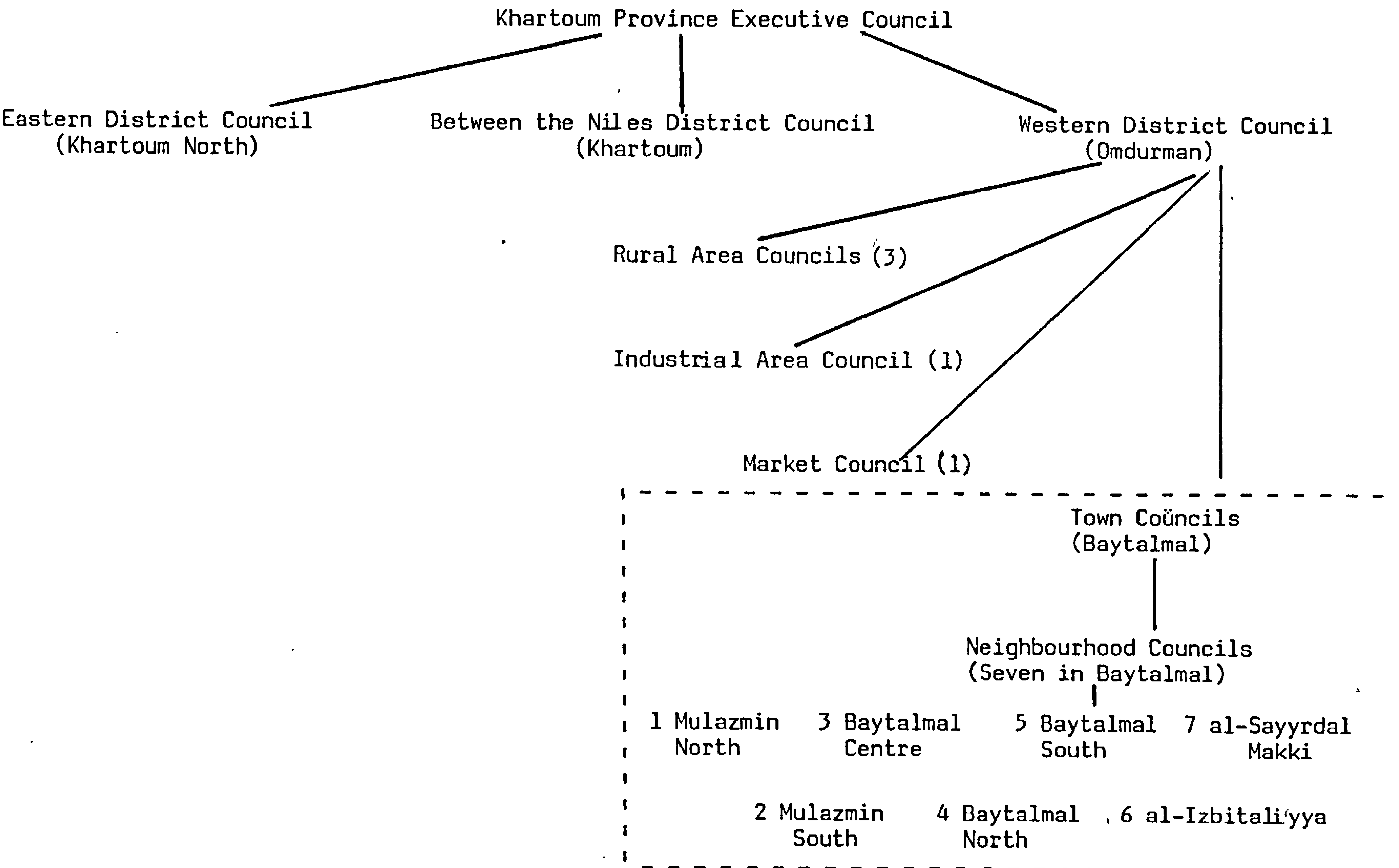
The aim of this section is to examine the extent to which there is congruence or divergence between the "formal" structure and the"actual" structure of local government in Baytalmal. There are several issues to be considered, all relating to the structure of the councils, and how they actually work. These include the departments of which they are made up, the staff working there, and the various responsibilities of this staff. I shall then discuss the electoral procedure and its application. I shall also examine relationships between the staff and members of the council and those between the various levels of councils. The functions of councils will also be examined in detail. Finally, attention will be devoted to the important area of finance and financial problems as this is obviously a crucial element affecting the way councils in Baytalmal operate.

A. Structure and Formation of Local Councils:

First, however, it should be re-emphasised that the basic unit of this study is the administrative area of Baytalmal. It subsumes two tiers of local government structure, the neighbourhood council level (the most basic unit of urban administration, of which there are seven in Baytalmal), and the level of the town council for the whole area. The following diagram shows the various levels of local government structure, the levels under study are shown surrounded by dotted lines.

The levels with which we are concerned (town councils and neighbourhood councils) are the two most basic, above which there exist two other tiers, the district council for the whole of Omdurman town, and the Province Executive Council administering the whole of Khartoum Province. We have already seen that these various organs of local government were established through the 1971 Peoples Local Government Act. This act repealed The Province Administration Act of 1960, and The Local Government Ordinance of 1951 but stipulated that all regulations and local orders made under them should remain in force in so far as they were not inconsistent with the provisions of the 1971 Act.[40] The Act further stipulated that the Council of Ministers or the President (in a later amendment of the Act) should by inaugural warrant establish in each province an Executive Council, which was to be responsible for the administration of public utilities, except for those relating to the Armed Forces, National Security, the Judiciary and other National matters (such as economic policy).[41] The first council to be established within any province was thus the Province Executive Council (PEC). The first such warrants were issued late in 1971, immediately after the passing of the PLG Act.

Diagram 1: The People's Local Government Structure



The first Province Councils, however, were later dissolved in 1973, before they had completed their full terms, and new presidential inaugural warrants were passed. The reason for this was, as indicated earlier, that new amendments were made in the Act laying down specifications for membership of councils. These amendments were motivated by a desire on the part of the government to control the political leanings of council members.

Following the establishment of the PEC, the PLG Act stipulates that it supervises the formation of all lower level councils, including village, "furgan", (sub units of villages) neighbourhood, market, industrial area, town, rural and district councils.[42]

The first local counciles (i.e. beneath the PEC level) began to be established at the end of 1971, immediately after the passing of the 1971 Act. Councils were to run for a term of three years (i.e. until 1974). However, as previously stated, the first councils were dissolved before they had completed their full terms. This happened after the establishment of the first units of the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) and its general growth of influence. The intention was that Local Government Councils should be under continuous pressure from the local branches of the SSU, as these would be likely to ensure the election of radical elements into the councils and the pursuit of radical policies.[43] The idea was to accelerate the creation of new leadership patterns and more generally to escalate radical change in Sudanese society. Both these aims had been prime factors in the passing of the 1971 PLG Act in the first place.

As shown in Digram I the whole local administrative structure in urban areas rests on neighbourhood councils. Each neighbourhood council is made up of 24 members, of whom two-thirds are elected and one-third appointed. The former are literally called the "popular members" (al-sha'biyyin) and the latter are the "technical members", (al-

diwaniyyin). Furthermore, at least twenty-five per cent of all elected seats are reserved for women.

Elections for local councils involve a kind of indirect representation, i.e. that a council is composed of representatives of councils in the next lower level or tier situated in the same territory.[44] Thus after neighbourhood councils have been constituted, their members become an electoral college for the formation of the town councils and members of all town councils in turn form an electoral college for the membership of District Councils. To illustrate this, we may examine the actual case of Baytalmal. The population of Baytalmal's seven neighbourhood will elect the popular members of its neighbourhood council, constituting two-thirds of the 24-member council. The female members are also elected, constituting at least six of the total elected members. All neighbourhood councils come under the jurisdiction of Baytalmal Town Council. The members of the seven neighbourhood councils, numbering 168 (24 x 7) members among whom are included both men and women, then elect the Town Council of Baytalmal. In addition, the female members, numbering at least 42 (6 x 7), meet separately to elect from among themselves six women to represent them in Baytalmal Town Council irrespective of how many women there are in the general membership of 168. Once the Town Council is formed, it elects a president and vice-president from among its own members. Members of town councils for the whole of Omdurman then meet to elect the popular members of Omdurman Town District Council. The District Council then meets to elect a president and vice-present again from among its own members. Appointed members on the neighbourhood level are usually people like the local headmaster/mistress, the health officer or midwife. They never exceed one-third of total membership. SSU officials also have the right to attend town council meetings, although they do not have the right to vote.

Neither the 1971 PLG Act nor the later (1973) Guide to the Formation of Peoples Local Councils, stipulates any specific procedure for the running of elections. However, what has happened everywhere including Omdurman is that the pre-1971 electoral procedures, namely the appointment of registration officers and the registration of electors and candidates, have been discontinued in favour of open elections. The only official document relating to electoral procedures is a Ministry of Local Government circular No.2/1973. It stipulated the following: 1) that the chairman of the electoral committee(who has usually turned out to be the administrative officer at the Town Council level) will give notice of the time and place set for an election; 2) that on election day, at the time and place stipulated, a count of those present will be made by the chairman of the electoral committee and that he or she will then read out the names of the candidates who were submitted to, and approved by, the basic local SSU unit, 3) that he or she will read aloud the names of candidates, one by one, and ask the electors to vote for each in turn, either by a show of hands or by standing up, and 4) that the votes for each candidate will be counted and that a list of the candidates with the largest numbers of votes will be submitted to the chairman of the electoral committee.[45]

Another significant point is that the 1973 Guide to the Formation of Peoples Local Councils states that nominations of candidates for neighbourhood councils should be made by the neighbourhoods "popular organisations" (al-munazamāt al-jamāhīriyya) (to be discussed in detail in a later chapter) such as Youth organisations and branches of the Sudanese Womens Union.[46] However, since in many cases these popular organisations had not really established themselves properly at local levels this stipulation was generally disregarded.

The next question discussed concerns the significance for the membership and functioning of councils of these rules. Firstly, elections are not as "free" and "popular" as they are made out to be by

the central government, espcctially in view of its criticism of pre-1971 local government. The fact of open voting is especially crucial here as it lends itself to so much manipulation. Secondly, the requirement that nominations be made by popular organisations and ratified by SSU units means that only persons who have particular political views, and who are at least formally committed to the status quo, are nominated. Thirdly, the fixing of times and places for elections can be, and is, manipulated in various ways to influence and control the membership of councils.

In fact at the time of the last elections, in December 1977 there were several letters to the daily press protesting about the electoral procedures and making allegations of irregularities which are in most cases fully justified. In many instances people who voted did not even reside in the neighbourhood concerned. Also, the people present at one electoral meeting refused to agree to the persons appointed by the electoral committee to count the votes, and the chairman, therefore decided to postpone the electoral meeting. In this particular instance the meeting was postponed to the next morning, a time when most of the interested people were at work.[47]

How the various controls referred to above have affected the membership of Baytalmal's councils is examined in detail in the next chapter.

The rules governing the eligibility of electors and candidates were, as we have seen, formulated before the second session of councils (i.e. in 1973) with the objective of controlling council membership and ensuring its commitment to the regime. To qualify for the vote, a person must be of 1) Sudanese nationality, 2) mentally sane, 3) at least 18 years of age. (Both men and women may vote). To be a candidate for election, a person must be, 1) of Sudanese nationality, 2) at least 18 years of age, 3) has not been convicted during the five years prior to the elections for any crime relating to honour or morality, 4) a

holder of full political rights, 5) have the approval of the SSU according to its rules and regulations. (Both men and women can nominate themselves).[48]

It is stipulated that the president of any local council should: 1) have political consciousness that is in line with the aims of the revolution, 2) that he or she not be less than 25 years of age, 3) that he or she be from the inhabitants of the area under the jurisdiction of the council, 4) that he or she was not convicted for the past five years in any crime relating to honour, honesty or morality, 5) that he or she be literate, 6) that he or she be a participant in public affairs, 7) that he or she not hold a position of leadership in Sudanese Youth Union, Sudanese Womens Union, Village Development Committees or a member in popular courts, 8)that he or she not be under contract with the council.[49]

The net effect of these rules as also of the electoral procedure is that council membership, is severely restricted, a fact which runs counter to the formal government rhetoric that the councils should be vehicles of democratic participation and counter, also, to official slogans such as "No democracy without peoples local councils". The rules for council membership, especially for council presidency eligibility lend themselves to much manipulation. For instance, the clause that presidents must have a "political consciousness that is in line with the aims of the revolution" is open to loose interpretation and hence control, and as is the clause concerning "participant in public affairs". Several potential candidates in Baytalmal stated that the first clause referred to above was used against them by their local SSU units and by allegations at the neighbourhood level that they were communists.

More generally, the fact that all nominations for council membership have to be ratified by SSU basic units, constitutes another form of control. (The relationship between SSU units and local councils in

Baytalmal is especially important and will be discussed in subsequent chapters).

B. <u>The Staff of Local Councils</u>:

Baytalmal Town Council has its own building situated in the neighbourhood of Mulazmin South. This is where the meetings are held. The council has several departments where the business of the council is run. The first office of importance is the accounts office, where there is a head accountant and a clerk, in addition to the personell who collect local rates. Among the latter there is an ex-shaykh of a <u>hara</u> who continues to be employed by the council because of his knowlege of the area, although he has lost most of his former power. The second office is the health office, in the charge of a health officer (<u>dabit siha</u>) who is aided by a health superintendant(Mulahiz Siha), in addition to an assistant. There is also an education office, employing five full-time staff.

We have seen that at the level of the town council, as at the level of the neighbourhood council, there are several appointed officials. But there is an important difference between those appointed at the neighbourhood level and those appointed at the town council level, namely that the former must be residents of the neighbourhood, whereas this is not necessarily, and indeed not usually, the case for those appointed at the level of the town council. This is because the neighbourhood councils unlike the higher tiers of local government have no physical existence in the shape of permanent offices, full-time paid staff and the other facilities, such as cars. In this sense, their existence is less formal when compared to the higher tiers of local government. The officials working at the level of the Town Council include the administrative officer, the engineer, education officer, health officer and cooperative officer. In addition, there are accountants, clerks, etc..

Of all the above, the Administrative Officer is the most important.

He/She is the representative of the Province Commissioner in the area where he works and the Assistant Commissioner for the District is the immediate supervisor to whom he/she is directly responsible. Thus the Administrative Officer of Baytalmal Town Council is responsible to the Assistant Commissioner of the western district (i.e. Omdurman).

Prior to 1973, when a lot of amendments and additions to the original 1971 Act were made, the role of the Administrative Officer was not specified, although it was a generally dominant one. A circular issued by the Ministry of Local Government in 1973 had the specific aim of guiding the performance of administrative officers. This circular drew a distinction between administrative and political duties. The former included, 1) that the Administrative Officer should guide all officials in the council as to their proper functions/duties and should reinforce good administration and should submit through his immediate superior to the commissioner, monthly reports on performance, 2) without infringing on the rights of popular members, the Administrative Officer within the place where he works represents the Province Commissioner in the task of supervising public property and revenue. This right of supervision includes the right of giving directions, the right to audit accounts and the right to make any kind of investigations, 3) that the Administrative Officer should make field trips within the area where he is appointed, 4) the Administrative Officer should receive peoples petitions and should work towards their solution, 5) the Administrative Officer has the duty of supervising elections and plebiscites, in addition to holding public meetings of popular organisations in the area falling under his jurisdiction.[50]

On the other hand, political functions specified by the circular included the following:1)The enforcement of the "Socialist Revolutionary System" through explaining the ideas of the revolution, 2) Emphasising the role of the SSU as the leading organisation for the alliance of the

working peoples, 3) helping popular institutions and organisations to carry out their duties and fulfilling their assimilation working together in the context of both administrative and executive fields, 4) applying the principle of community development as a tool of local development and emphasising the idea of self-help.[51] Specific observ ations concerning the role of the administrative officer shall be made when we speak about the case of Baytalmal.
The education office, meanwhile, is headed by an education officer (called musā'id al-mushrif al-tarbawi, literally assistant to educational supervisor), in addition to several officials in charge of adult education. There is also an engineering office made up of an engineer and a building inspector. A recent addition to the council is the cooperative office, headed by a cooperative officer. All of the above officials, except for the coooperative officer, work full-time at the council. These officials are ex-officio members of the Town Council, and are called al-diwanīyīn, as in contrast to al-sha'biyyīn or popular elected members. The council has two cars, one for the engineering, health and education departmsnts and one for administration.

Before examining the functions and duties of councils, and how these work out in practice, I briefly discuss relations within Baytalmal Town Council.

C. Relations Between Members Within the Council:

While administrative officers are in principle supposed to be in charge of the work of all the departments of a council, in practice, his or her authority is commonly in dispute. Whilst visiting the Baytalmal Town Council Offices in the course of my fieldwork, I witnessed many clashes between the administrative officer and the technical officers, and it is clearly important to consider the internal relations of the council. There are several particular relations of importance, and I refer to two in this chapter. Firstly, there is the relationship between administrative and technical officers. Secondly, and perhaps

most importantly, there are the relationships existing between the technical officers and the administrative officer, on the one hand, and the popular or elected members on the other.

Before discussing these, however, the differences between the present system of local government and the pre-1971 system needs to be stressed. In the present system, the administrative officer and the popular members, being on the same council, are ideally supposed to share both the tasks of decision-making and decision-execution, but how this principle operates from day to day is affected by the tensions between the categories of members referred to above.

The Peoples Local Government Act takes the concept of partnership very literally. Although administrative and technical officers take their place in councils ex-officio up to a maximum of one-third of the total membership, they participate in council meetings as ordinary members without the special privileges or allowances which the elected heads of neighbourhood councils enjoy. Decisions made are the collective responsibility of councils as is their implementation. No official distinctions are drawn between elected council members and officials in implementation and execution. The main assumptions underlying these arrangements when they were made included the ideas of breaking down the split between the representative or elected and official or appointed members, and the improvement of the quality of decisions and of their execution.[52] Formally, the post-1971 situation differs from the earlier one where, decision-making and execution were separate, with the former being the responsibility of popular members and the latter being performed by the executive officer (dabit tanfidhi), who occupied a position, in some respects similar to that of the present administrative officer. I begin by considering the relationship between the administrative officer and the popular members, and especially that between the President of the Council and the administrative officer. There are several contradictons underlying this relationship. The

Administrative Officer is a full-time official working permanently for the council, who is naturally concerned about his or her career, and who is directly involved in the day to day bureaucratic functioning of the council. The President of the Council, on the other hand, is not a full-time employee. He only comes occasionally to the council to deal with pressing matters or to attend council and committee meetings. In effect, therefore the Administrative Officer does most of the work of the council and is left to take on the spot decisions in the absence of the President. The Administrative Officer deals with correspondence, makes regular rounds of the area, is largely responsible for the supervision of the distribution of consumer goods (see last chapter for details), and directs the staff of the council.

However, some of the problems encountered by Baytalmal's Administrative Officer prompted her to send a report to the Assistant Province Commissioner on what she saw as their main causes. She dwelt in particular on the contradictions between the duties of council presidents, as set within the 1973 Guide to the Formation of People's Local Government Councils, and that of administrative officers as set out in the 1973 circular referred to above. She also mentioned the overlapping of functions of the administrative officer and the council president as a source of the difficulty,

The 1973 Guide to the Formation of People's Local Government Councils contains the following categorical statements:

> "The President of the Council has full authority for total supervision of council work and he has the responsibility of accomplishing good functioning of the council. This includes the submission of reports on work progress to the Province Executive Council." 53

Yet the circular for administrative officers gives them identical rights and duties especially in regard to the supervision of council functioning and the submission of reports.[54]

Baytalmal's administrative officer also complained that joint execution of decisions was practially impossible, and that this

injunction was not governed by any guidelines or rules. She added that what actually happened was that all council members always left the execution of decisions to her. She was particularly worried over who would be blamed or charged in the event of a mistake. The two points made by the Administrative Officer of Baytalmal Town Council are clearly important and are directly related to the reasons why the council works the way it does. Overlapping duties and the lack of clear responsibilities and procedures for checking whether these responsibilities are actually carried out, inevitably hamper efficient council work. Furthermore, the administrative officer is a government official with a career in the civil service to worry about. In contrast the popular members of the council have quite different motivations as will be seen later.

My regular visits to the council and numerous discussions with various people involved in council affairs led me to note additional aspects of the relationship between the administrative office and other councillors. These include: a) the underlying feeling expressed by some councillors that the Administrative Officer was actually dominating the council and was manipulating the councillors, who in effect had no real power. For instance, one councillor sent a letter of protest to the President of the Town Council, with a copy to the Assistant Commissioner for Omdurman District, complaining about the inefficiency of the council, and was promptly reprimanded by the Administrative Officer on the grounds that he had no right to contact officials higher up in the local government structure without going through the Administrative Officer, b) there was always tension caused by the fact that the Administrative Officer saw it as her duty to ensure that the bureaucratic rules and instructions from above were carried out, whereas the popular members wished to serve either their neighbourhoods, or such interests of those neighbourhoods as coincided with their own,

while also trying at any cost to maintain or develop popularity at the local level.

Incidents supporting these claims are given next. In regard to the first point several councillors I spoke to thought that the simple fact that it was the Administrative Officer who sets the agenda for town council meetings signalled a primary limitation on councillors and their autonomy. A more specific event can also be used to illustrate the underlying tension between the Administrative Officer and the councillors. In October 1978, a dispute between administrative officers and the Khartoum Province Commissioner led the former to go on strike. In particular, they refrained from participating in the distribution of rationed consumer goods, a function which has in the past two years constituted one of their primary duties. The response of the President of the Council and his secretary to the strike was to distribute the goods themselves. The Administrative Officer protested, withholding the council seal, and told the President and his secretary that they were acting illegally, as the distribution of consumer goods had not been delegated to them by the Town Council. It is clear that in this situation, the two parties held different interests. The Administrative Officer was primarily interested in the legality of the action taken, whereas the President of the Council was more interested in the practical matter of distributing the goods. Again, as noted above, the divergence in interests is related to the fact that serving on the council is for the administrative officer part of his or her career; the importance of following correct bureaucratic procedures is thus important in furthering that career. But the main concern of the elected councillors was to enhance, or at least not damage their positions within the community and to act in a way which did not conflict with the interests they were serving. Their concern with correct bureaucratic procedure was thus minimal.

A similar incident occurred when the council was entrusted (in November 1978) with the distribution of pieces of land in Southern Omdurman. Certain regulations imposed by the Department of Housing determined who were eligible to receive the land. The applications were to be forwarded through local committees composed of the Neighbourhood Council President and several councillors. These committees were entrusted with the task of sorting applications at the neighbourhood level. This was to be done on the basis of criteria such as the length of residence in town, size of family, previous applications if any, etc. These committees, however, often ignored the set rules altogether, and this meant that a double workload was placed on the Town Council, once the applications reached it, as those applicants who were not eligible had to be sorted out again. This led to several clashes between the Administrative Officer and the councillors concerned. The Administrative Officer saw the councillors' action as an attempt to gain local popularity by disregarding the correct rules and procedures, and she was not prepared to allow this. In the end, the matter was resolved through the formation of a special committee to review certain marginal applications.

Having looked at one set of relationships, namely those between administrative officers and popular members, I now examine another set, namely that between administrative officers and technical officers working in the council. The latter include officials like health officers, the education officer and engineers. As in the case of elected councillors, technical officers are also full members of the council, and they have the right to share in collective decision-making and in the implementation of decisions. However, their main problem is one of allegiance. Although the various circulars state that it is the duty of administrative officers to lead and supervise the work of technical offic ers, the technical officers themselves

resent this, and they see their primary allegiance to be to their supervisors at the District Council level, since it is they who control their careers. This problem was also raised in the report written by Baytalmal Town Councils Administrative Officer. She stated that the law does not specify sufficiently the relationship between administrative and technical officers, and that many clashes occurred as a result of this failure. She further stated that the council engineer, for instance, saw it as his duty to report to the Chief Engineer at the District Council level, rather than to the Administrative Officer. Similarly, the education officer saw it as his duty to obey the directives of the Chief Education Superintendent rather than those of the Administrative Officer under whom he was working.

Several incidents which occurred during my period of fieldwork demonstrated this uneasy relationship. One such incident occurred when the Education Officer acted without consulting the Administrative Officer over the use of one of the Council's cars. (The Council only has two cars, so that unauthorised use or abuse of these scarce resources can seriously hold up council work. It is usually the Administrative Officer who decides on the use of cars). The Education Officer later defended herself by saying that she was acting on orders from her superior at the District Council. A similar incident concerned the Council Engineer, who had on one occasion acted on the orders of the Chief Engineer at the District Council and had defied the orders of the Baytalmal Town Council, of which he was, of course, by virtue of his office, a full member. In this particular event, however, the rest of the council voted to expel him from the council as well as to dismiss him from his position as Council Engineer.

My reading of the minutes of Town Council meetings and my observations at some of these clearly revealed that Technical Officers tend to be absent more often, and tend to participate in council proceedings less regularly than other councillors. For the Technical Officers,

attendance at meetings is seen as a less important aspect of the overall job they have to perform under difficult circumstances and most often with inadequate resources. (This will be abundantly clear when we discuss the functions of council departments). The Technical Officers clearly do not have the same commitment to the area they serve as do elected councillors. In conclusion, several comments may be made. The first is that there is a basic contradiction of allegiances: that of the elected or popular members is clearly either to their own interests or to those of one or other section of the community they represent, whereas the main concerns of the Administrative and Technical Officers are in regard to the career of each and to its advancement.

Secondly, and closely related to the first comment, is the fact of differing perceptions by different participants. For instance, the President of the Town Council told me that he holds the Administrative Officer personally responsible for any misconduct or inefficiency, but this view is definitely not shared by the Administrative Officer herself. It can thus be seen that ideals set out formally in the various laws and circulars governing issues like joint responsibility for decision-making and execution do not work out in practice.

Thirdly, there is the fact that most of the regular activities and actual workings of the council, such as general administration and correspondence, are in the hands of the Administrative Officer who is thus in a better position than either the popular members or the Technical Officers to know the ins and outs of the day-to-day situation.

The question naturally arises as to whether the last issue, in particular, is common to all bureaucratic situations or whether there is a political element unique to this particular situation. From my observations, I have concluded that there is a strong 'unique' political element in all the issues raised. Despite the official rhetoric about the right of full participation of elected councillors both in the

taking of decisions and in their execution, this becomes virtually impossible, and the kind of autonomy and efficiency aimed at cannot be achieved owing to the tensions in the system. The ideals underlying the intentions of the legislators are thus an illusion.

D. Functions of Local Government Councils:

I now move to a consideration of the functions and duties of Local Government Councils and will again dwell on their formal organisation before considering the specific case of Baytalmal's councils. We will start by looking at the formal functions of the Province Executive Council, and then move down to the level of the town and neighbourhood councils.

The 1971 PLG Act stipulates the following:

> "The Province Executive Council shall ensure that the services rendered by the Peoples Local councils are directed towards the benefit of the citizens of the area at the highest standard and are in conformity with national policy. The Province Executive Council shall be responsible for the promotion of the new ideas of the Peoples Local Government and for the coordination of the Peoples and official activities and for combatting the defunct political parties, sectarianism, racialism and tribalism." 55

In addition to these general directives the Act stipulates that the following more specific duties are to be performed by a Province Executive Council:

> "In particular the council shall have power: a) to make resolutions for the imposition of local taxes, rates and fees for licences in accordance with the provisions of any law relating thereto or in accordance with local legislation to be made by the council, b) to make resolutions relating to public order in the province and to make local orders to that effect, c) to make resolutions for the imposition of temporary local taxes on public entertainment, or on commodities or services in order to establish or to complete any public project in the province, d) to prepare the annual budget proposals for the province and to approve expenditure of money appropriated to the Peoples local councils in the province to be incurred by them after the budget has been approved...." 56

The Act also defines the following fields over which a Province Executive Council should have power: Economic Development, Education, Public Health, Public Works, Agriculture, Animal Resources, General Culture, Community Development, Social Welfare, Trade and Supply

and Public Order.

To clarify this, we may look at the specific items included under some of these fields. Under "Eonomic Development", for instance, are included items like: 1) Establishment and promotion of rural and home industries, 2) preparation of economic and social development plans according to the conferred powers etc. Under education, the duties included: 1) establishment and maintenance of primary, general secondary and high secondary schools for boys and girls, 2) the taking of any other measures which may consolidate the aims of education.

Under "Public Health", the following functions are stipulated: 1) establishment and maintenance of wards, health centres, medial laboratories, dressing stations, 2) promotion of health education, 3) undertaking of general cleanliness, undertaking of all local health services.[57]

Most importantly, it must be remembered that the Province Executive Council is the only corporate body below the national level. At this level there is a complete centralisation of power and resources, and the lower level councils are almost entirely dependent upon the province council for staff, equipment and authority to spend even the smallest sums of money.[58]

It is the function of a Province Executive Council to delegate powers to lower level councils in its province. In the case of Khartoum Province, a local order enacting this was issued in 1974. It specified the delegation of certain duties to the various levels of councils. The following is a summary of this order.

In the section on duties delegated to Town Councils, these are in several categories. Under "education" the duties of Town Councils (hence also Baytalmal) included: 1) creation, maintenance and payment of expenses of primary schools, 2) giving permits for opening of kindergartens, 3) supervision of adult education.

Other categories were Public Health, Public Works, Agriculture,

Animal Wealth, Culture and Communications, Social Progress and Commerce and Supply. The latter which is of particular importance in present-day conditions of shortages included the following functions: 1)Licencing of commercial activity and supervision of workers, 2) supervision of distribution of consumer goods, 3) supervision of prices.[59]

Following on the above description of formal intentions and stipulations, we may now appropriately raise questions as to what Baytalmal Town Council actually does, and to what extent it actually carries out the duties outlined above. To answer these questions, I present material gathered through my regular visits to Baytalmal Town Council between the months of August 1978, and March 1979, through interviews with the various council officials and councillors, and from a close reading of the minutes of council meetings.

I first started visiting the Council during the month of Ramadan and shortages of consumer goods was particularly acute for several reasons, including the deteriorating national economic situation, added to which was the occurrence of the rainy season which hampered ordinary transport from Port Sudan, and in addition to the increased consumption of particular goods (especially sugar) due to Ramadan. Also, petrol was especially scarce and was being rationed for the first time with different types of vehicles being allowed no more than limited intakes per day. The Khartoum Province Executive Council decided that Town Councils were to be charged with the distribution of petrol ration cards. Thus, especially during the month of August, most of the time in the offices was taken up with the simple procedure of distributing ration cards. Having referred to one duty that has consumed a lot of council time in the recent past, I now examine the more general nature of the council work and for the purpose of discussion will classify it into two broad categories: the first consists of work central to the every-day functioning of the council's various departments, and the second

of the council's meetings and the kind of issues that are regularly discussed.

In considering the first category we may look at what each department in the council does.

1) The Education Department: The head of this department usually makes daily rounds of primary schools, checking on their needs, functioning, etc. Those in charge of adult education have to do the same, making rounds of various adult education classes in Baytalmal. A major problem for this department is transport. There is only one car shared between the Education, Engineering, and Health Departments, which means that its use has to be coordinated (i.e. when it is functioning). Inevitably, then, visiting rounds are rather limited. The head of the education department also has to be in contact with the education department of the District Council, and to work closely with the education committee of Baytalmal Town Council.

During my period of fieldwork, the major issue related to education was a strike over pay organised by primary school teachers in Khartoum province. The Province Executive Council instructed that all administrative officers and heads of education departments at the Town Council level should be in the schools in order to encourage and protect those teachers who had not joined the strike. The Pronvice Commissioner also instructed that town councils should set up popular committees to supervise schools. Baytalmal Town Council met and first insisted that this was a "purely administrative duty", and that their responsibility was to build new schools and provide facilities for existing ones. The Administrative Officer and the head of the Education Department told them that the Province Commissioner had instructed that they were for the time being to set aside their interests in the facilities and building of new schools and to concentrate instead on dealing with the strike. This incident illustrates how the Education Department tends to work independently of the popular members of the Town Council and to

work more closely with the Administrative Officer and the District Council's Education Department. This is so despite the fact that several of the popular members are themselves teachers and are hence a valuable resource on the council.

2) The Health Department: I have already noted that the head of this department is the Health Officer. His major responsibility is to see to the cleanliness and sanitation of the area and particularly to garbage collection, and sweeping of the streets. Thirty seven workers are employed for both these tasks. The Health Officer is supposed to make daily rounds of the area, but is restricted in this by "the car" problem. The most important general point to note is that the Health Department does not have the resources to see to general cleanliness and sanitation in any adequate way. For example, there is only one garbage collection truck for the whole of Baytalmal, and even this is hired commercially by the District Council. Thus, there is no daily collection of garbage, added to which, since there is only one car for the transport of the Health and Education officers and the Engineer, there is no proper supervision of workers involved in cleaning the streets. Over and above these difficulties, there is the fact that as Baytalmal is one of the oldest areas of Omdurman, its problems of sewage and drainage are particularly acute. The net effect is that there is a good deal of stagnant water in the area and this naturally carries health hazards. Some of the inhabitants (especially in the more affluent areas, such as Mulazmin) pay the council workers additional money to clean the immediate environs of their homes.

There is a health committee within the Town Council, but it does not meet, and according to the Health Officer, it is in any case accountable to no one. Other duties of the Health Officer include the issuing of health licences for sellers of prepared foods, butcheries, green grocers, etc., in the area. This is usually done towards the end of the year, which is the time when the Health Officer is most active, especially

since the fees from issuing health licences are an important source of revenue for the council. Other duties of the Health Officer include deciding which houses are to be evacuated on the grounds of being unfit for habitation. Often, however, people who put in claims to have houses declared unfit are owners of property who wish to evict poor tenants with a view to improving or re-building the houses for renting them at much higher values. The decisions of the Health Officer are crucial in this respect. Thus, there is a general discrepancy between the formal duties of health departments as set out in the decree, and what Baytalmal Health Officer actually does. There are quite plainly insufficient resources to deal with the immense health problems of Baytalmal, and such resources as are available are used on tasks of relative unimportance such as deciding which individual houses are unhealthy, and the simple collection of fees for health licences.

3) The Engineering Department: This consists of the Chief Engineer, assisted by a building inspector. The Engineer's main role is severely limited by the ongoing re-planning of Baytalmal, over which he has absolutely no authority, but which is done by the Baytalmal Re-Planning Committee, which is quite independent of the Council. The Engineer's main tasks are thus reduced to issuing of building permits, revising building plans; and deciding together with the Health Officer which houses are unfit for habitation, whether from a health or structural point of view. In principle, theengineering department is also supposed to improve streets and their asphalting. But, in practice, this is not done, again largely due to the lack of resources.

4) The Co-operative Department: The Co-operative Officer is a recent addition to the council staff, appointed after the increased importance of cooperatives. He is a part-time officer, but his importance has grown rapidly since the development of acute consumer goods shortages. In the past few years, several cooperatives have become bankrupt as a result of corruption among their committees. The Cooperative Officer's

main duties are to supervise existing cooperatives, of which there are seven in Baytalmal and to direct the development of new ones. He is expected to ensure that they operate according to the law governing cooperatives. Being part-time, the Cooperative Officer is rarely at the Council and his presence is scarcely felt.

5) The Accounts Office: This is concerned with the collection of revenue, especially the local rates and commercial licences, and in helping with the council budget.

The Administrative Officer is expected to coordinate the work of all the departments, in addition to dealing with the specific problems of people, who come to the council, especially those wishing to have certificates and documents of various types made official through being stamped with the council seal.

The work of the Administrative Officer is essentially of a routine nature including especially the daily distribution of rationed consumer goods, dealing with the correspondence of the Council, fixing dates for Council meetings and issuing of notices of these to the members.

From my regular visits to the Council offices, I would estimate that the time taken up by the various activities is approximately as follows: At least half of the official working hours is on the distribution of consumer goods, the rest being devoted to correspondence, deciding on the use of Council facilities (especially transport), deciding on things like granting of licences, and receiving petitions and applications from people. Some of the work does, however, vary at different times of the year. The work that is constant throughout the year includes distribution of consumer goods and the local rounds of the area by Education and Health Officers, but preparations of the budget proposals takes place mainly from February to May, while the issuing of commercial and health licences starts in November of each year and lasts till January. From January to March much time is devoted to making sure that licence fees have been paid.

I now turn to the second category of council work namely the actual proceedings of the meetings which are usually held twice a month unless an emergency meeting is called for some reason. (One such emergency meeting was called, for instance, when the strike by Primary school teachers occurred). The agenda for Town Council meetings are prepared by the Administrative Officer.

I shall first comment on the way the council meetings are run. Most meetings begin at least half an hour later than the time fixed. This is usually a result of poor transport facilities and general difficulties of day-to-day life which mean that most councillors are late. While waiting for all members to arrive the early-comers take part in a discussion of a variety of issues, and on the views on them of various members. At one such meeting, I attended, these pre-meeting exchanges ranged from issues like the difficulty of controlling prices to comparisons between the present local government system with the former ones and especially, on their relative efficiency. The formal meetings begin with a roll call to ascertain who is present. A close study of council meeting minutes for one year, show that the level of attendance is low. The average nunber attending was 12, out of a possible total of 24. The highest attendance at any meeting was 18, and that was when the council president and vice-president were to be elected. Several meetings had to be abandoned because there was no quorum. In general, the attendance of women members is lower than that of men. Several women councillors to whom I spoke attributed this to inconvenient timing of meetings in the evenings and to difficulties of poor transport.

After the roll call has been taken, the Administrative Officer reads out the agenda, and presents items for discussion one by one. Items on the agenda can be classified broadly into several categories:

a) Petitions or applications by inhabitants of Baytalmal for the following:

1) commercial licences and for permission to convert sections of houses into small shops (small shop-keeing is an increasingly popular form of

supplementing income), 2) Reduction of house tax rates or reduction of fees on licences previously issued, 3) extensions of time before eviction from houses classified as unfit for habitation by the Council.
b) correspondence from higher levels, involving specific instructions, especially from the Province Commissioner. One example of this was referred to earlier in relation to the strike by primary school teachers, when the Commissioner requested Administrative Education Officers to stay continuously in the schools.
c) Issues relating to consumer goods distribution to how much each neighbourhood should receive, and to the system of distribution to be followed.

Often meetings of the council's specialised committees are called. There are several of these, the most important being the education, health, finance, consumer goods and central committees. Apart from the central committee, the other committes consist of several popular members who are elected by the Town Council and the official concerned. Thus, for example, the health committee is made up of several elected members and the Health Officer, and the central committee consists of the heads of the seven neighbourhood councils and the Administrative Officer. All such committes are permanent, but the council also often forms temporary committees to deal with specific issues on an ad hoc basis. Examples of the latter are the committees formed to look into alleged bribery involving a former council president.

I attended several meetings of the permanent committees especially the more important ones, namely, the consumer goods and central committees. Compared with Town Council meetings, the committee meetings deal with very specific matters. For instance, one consumer-goods committee meeting was called to reassess the distribution system of sugar, and a meeting of the central committee was called at the start of the rainy season to discuss the need for more drains. Decisions taken by the central committee do not have to go back to the council, whereas decisions

of other committees generally do.

a) My main conclusionson council meetings were that: 1) a lot of decisions are taken but there is very little discussion about how or when they are to be executed, 2) there is virtually no revision of the various decisions taken in the past, and little attention is paid to whether they were actually executed. In consequence, many decisions are not carried out and people who had submitted petitions commonly have to re-submit them to another meeting. This naturally slows down the whole process of administration..

b) Much work, especially that which is of an executive nature, is left to the Administrative Officer's own initiative and this has the effect of isolating the rest of the council from day-to-day issues and of wasting a lot of time through the need, which arises from time to time, to refer back to past actions.

c) Technical Officers attend council meetings less frequently than the popular members, and are always being blamed by other councillors for not carrying out their duties properly. In fact, during the period of my fieldwork the Health Officer was unanimously expelled from the Council, as the Chief Engineer had been at an earlier period. In both cases, new officers were appointed by the District Council and those expelled were transferred elsewhere.

Finally, if we compare the two categories of council work referred to above (i.e. the daily work and work done in council meetings), it is clear that everyday work is largely of an executive nature, although it also involves a good deal of decision-making concerning the allocation of the council's scarce resources. Council work at meetings on the other hand, involves mainly discussion and decision-making on a wide set of issues. Another difference is that the work of council meetings is more explicitly "political", each councillor trying to defend his or her own interests or those of the section of the community they represent.

Having examined the working of Baytalmal Town Council, I now look at the functioning of neighbourhood councils. Again several observations may be made. Firstly, meetings of the neighbourhood councils are less frequent than those of the Town Council and seldom take place more than once a month unless specific matters of greater importance arise. Secondly, meetings of the neighbourhood councils are usually held in the houses of one of the members due to the fact that these councils have no offices. Thirdly, the meetings are usually less formal than those of the Town Council, thus no minutes are taken.

The main duties of neighbourhood councils are to follow up the distribution of consumer goods at the neighbourhood level, to supervise operations of self-help and to advise the Town Council in cases where there are petitions or requests being submitted from their respective neighbourhoods. The assumption is that neighbourhood council members are likely to know more about individuals submitting applications. Some applications for commercial licences, for example have to be approved by neighbourhood councils before being submitted to the Town Council. In practice, nearly all such duties are carried out by the presidents of the neighbourhod councils who are members of the town council anyway. The approval of petitions and requests most often depending upon the personal relationship of a neighbourhood council president with the person submitting the application rather than on any objective assessment. We will see why this is so in the next chapter,

The central difference between the operation of neighbourhood councils and the Town Council is that the Administrative and the Technical Officers are only present full-time at the Town Council. This leads to a tendency for many to bypass neighbourhood councils altogether, going straight to the Town Council. The Town Council then insists that the person be referred back to his or her neighbourhood council. This wastes time and creates resentment against councils in general.

E. Relations Between Different Tiers of Local Government

The above point leads directly to the next issue of interest, namely

the relations between the various levels of local government councils and especially to the following: a) relations between Baytalmal's Neighbourhood Councils and Baytalmal Town Council, b) the relations between Baytalmal Town Council and Omdurman District Council, and c) the relations between Baytalmal Town Council and the Khartoum Province Executive Council.

<u>The Peoples Local Government Act</u> stipulates that

> a) "The Peoples Executive Council shall be a body corporate known as the Peoples Executive Council with perpetual succession and may sue and be sued in its own name, and shall have power to make contracts, and to own land. It shall have a seal which shall be witnessed by the signature of the Commissioner and the secretary of the Peoples Executive Council. [60]
>
> b) The Peoples Local Councils shall carry out the duties and powers assigned thereto by the Peoples Executive Council and shall function under its supervision and function." [61]

The single importance of these two stipulations is that they mean that there is only one corporate body at the province level, namely the Province Executive Council, and that this has a very different status to the District, Town and Neighbourhood Councils. In principle, therefore all the lower-level councils are equal in legal status in the eyes of the Province Executive Council, and that they can contract, or be in touch with, the Province Executive Council without going through the hierarchy of the various levels of councis.

Some of Baytalmal's councillors and the Administrative Officer, in particular, told me that whereas the relationship was not supposed to be "vertical", in practice it is, a crucial point here is that the Khartoum Province Executive Council, the Province Commissioner, and most of the central ministries are within easy reach of the inhabitants of Baytalmal with the right contacts in those places. Thus the lower level councils are often ignored and by-passed by influential persons who go direct to the higher authorities where functions and influence are concentrated. However, persons who do not have the right contacts, have to follow the regular "vertical" procedures, starting at the base or neighbourhood level. Here the notion of a "national-municipal system" elaborated by Ebel, to describe the city of San Salvador, is particularly useful.

For Ebel, a national-municipal system is a

> "system of political competition not limited to the political forces and groups within the city itself but also embracing national governmental institutions and the political elites controlling them." 62

From my observations it is clear that the "contact system" in Omdurman depends primarily upon one's social class position as reinforced or mediated by kinship and political allegiance. Thus a person who has a relative working on the higher levels of local government or in a central ministry has a much better chance of getting things done than one who has to go through the regular "vertical" procedure. The following are two illustrations of how the "contact system" works.

1) One person had a large garbage collection box in front of his house, and most of the people living on that street dumped their garbage there. Since garbage collection does not occur daily, the garbage naturally accumulated for days on end and was a nuisance and health hazard to the person concerned. He did not forward his grievance to his Neighbourhood Council, which is the body in principle concerned with local cleanliness and sanitation. Instead he forwarded his complaint through a relative working in the office of the President of the Republic directly to the President himself bypassing the local government structure altogether. The protest was brought back to lower local government levels and the garbage collection box was promptly removed and placed in front of someone else's house.

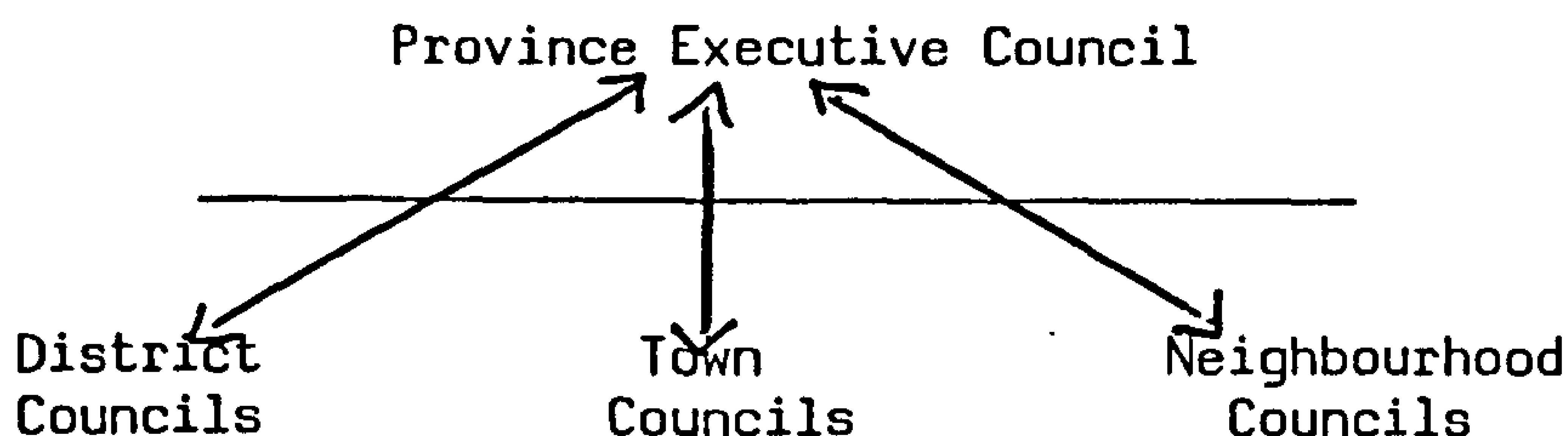
2) The second example concerns the distribution of land in Southern Omdurman. This was supposed to be done through the neighbourhood and town councils according to certain fixed rules of eligibility. What happened, however, was that several persons applied through their contacts straight to the Khartoum Province Commissioner rather than through the usual channels.

Both these examples illustrate that while all levels of local government below the Province Executive Council level are in principle

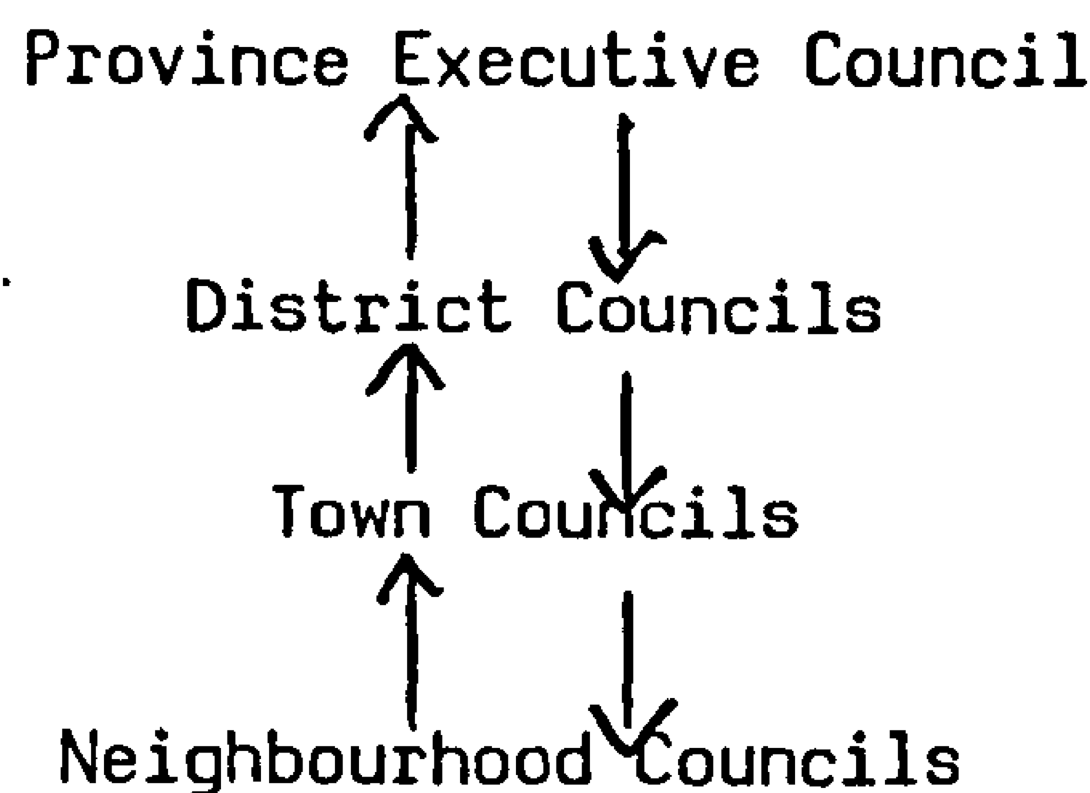
equal, and accessible to all, in practice they are not. They are only "equal" for those with the right contacts at the higher levels of local government and of central ministries. The difference between principle and practice is depicted in the following diagrams.

DIAGRAM NO.II: Relations between different tiers of Local Government

a) In Principle (and in practice for those with the right contacts)



b) In Practice (for those without the right contacts)



Against the above background description we may return to the different kind of relationships delineated at the beginning of this section.

1) Relations between Baytalmal's Neighbourhood Councils and Baytalmal Town Council:

The relations between these two levels is primarily advisory. Whenever a petition or some kind of application is being presented to the Town Council, the Neighbourhood Council must make recommendations or give advice concerning it. Generally, however, as a result of interviewing councillors at both levels, I found general agreement

concerning the fact that their relationships were marked by a lot of coordination. This can be especially related to the fact that in this relationship, the Town Council is clearly the dominant partner, particularly since neighbourhood councils possess no financial autonomy whatsoever. However, another reason for this smooth relationship is the easiness of contact between the two levels, especially since there is the element of personal knowledge.

2) <u>Relations between Baytalmal Town Council and Omdurman District Council</u>:

The general opinion of councillors regarding this relationship was that it was more complicated and that it was not possible here to maintain the kind of personal and face-to-face relations that exist between neighbourhood councils and the Baytalmal Town Council. Furthermore, the relationship can be seen to be more authoritarian and formal, especially since the District Council closely monitors Baytalmal's finances (aspects of their financial relationship will be considered in greater detail in the section on finance). Furthermore, from observing daily work at the Baytalmal council it was continuously clear that it was trying to maintain its autonomy in the face of encapsulation by the Omdurman District Council, and its orders and circulars. For instance, one time the Assistant Commissioner for Omdurman District formed a committee to investigate aspects of Baytalmal's replanning without consulting Baytalmal Town Council. The only action the latter could take was to send a letter to Omdurman District Council protesting their being ignored. The situation is of course further complicated by the various sets of intra-council relations and differing allegiances referred to earlier (see section on internal relationships of the Council), such as those between Baytalmal's education officer and her superior at the District Council level.

3) <u>Relations between Baytalmal Town Council and Khartoum Province Executive Council</u>:

In considering this relationship, one point that needs to be emphasised is the unique position of Baytalmal Town Council because the

Khartoum Province Commissioner (during the period of fieldwork) and simultaneously head of the Province Executive Council was originally from Baytalmal, and is presently living in one of its neighbourhoods. This meant that Baytalmal's inhabitants, together with its Town Council, see themselves as having a special claim on the Province Commissioner and the Province Executive Council and in effect they do. Several of Baytalmal's inhabitants have told me that they expect the Commissioner to treat Baytalmal in a special way and to give it favours. This "special connection" means that it is easier for members of Baytalmal's Town Council to meet with the Commissioner, than it is for Town Councils in other areas of Khartoum Province. In concluding this section on inter-council relations, it must be emphasised that the hierarchical nature of relations between councls, running virtically from the base (i.e. neighbourhood council level) to the top (i.e. Province Executive Council) where a large concentration of powers exist is very important. This, however, not being the case for persons capable of mobilising their "contact system", discussed earlier.

F. <u>Finance and Financial Problems</u>:

This section deals with several aspects of financing namely 1) general principles, 2) revenue and financial problems, and 3) the particular case of the Baytalmal Town Council.

1) <u>General Principles</u>:

Before considering aspects of the finances of local government councils which have succeeded the 1971 <u>PLG Act</u>, we may usefully consider the way in which local government was financed prior to 1971. The budgetary unit was the local council (in rural areas) or the municipality in urban areas, since both (with some exceptions) enjoyed corporate status. In addition, the various government departments within the province came under their separate ministry budgets. Hence, there were two types of budgets. There was the budget for each local authority or council, and the central budget for various ministry departments at the

provincial level.[63] Other features of pre-1971 local government finances included grants-in-aid, subsidies, and loans from the central government to local authorities. These constituted a major part of the revenue of local councils. There was a high degree of direction and control from the central government which took the form of budget approval, inspection and audit.[64] However, because of the central government's financial commitment towards local councils, the latter had become increasingly careless and arrears of taxes and rates had accumulated. This was not helped by inefficient systems of collection, and the nature of revenue itself.[65] As a result there had been a marked increase in central government aid which was not matched by increases in local government revenue.

The following figures for Sudanese local governments comparing contributions of local revenue and central financial aid to total revenue illustrate the point mentioned above:[66]

TABLE I: Local Government Revenue

Financial Year	Total Revenue £S	Central Financial Aid £S	Local Revenue £S
1966/67	18,385,300	14,249,290	4,136,010
1967/68	20,645,154	16,237,266	4,407,888
1968/69	23,882,299	19,466,283	4,416,016
1969/70	23,865,631	19,271,213	4,594,418
1970/71	27,870,214	22,821,320	5,048,894

The figures show that a large increase in central financial aid was out of proportion with such increases there were in local revenue. The financial situation of local authorities prior to 1971 was thus characterised by the following: a) Since all local councils (with few exceptions) had a corporate status, the budgetary unit was the local council, and b) the increased dependence of local councils on central government finance had led to increasing control by central governments over local councils.

What were the changes after 1971? One of the aims of the 1971

Peoples Local Government Act was to try to change the financial situation of local councils and the most important change effected was that, in addition to being the primary administrative unit, the province has become the sole financial and budgetary unit. This effectively ended the duality of central and local government council budgets. The financial year 1973/74 witnessed the first attempt to put into practice what was, in principle, a radical change.[67] Financial authority is now centralised in Province Executive Councils. More specifically, the budgets of the various departments of central ministries operating in the various provinces, which previously were part of the central budget, have under the present system become part of the unified Province Executive Council Budget.[68] Another important point in relation to the post-1971 arrangements, and particularly the centralisation of the Province Executive level, is that it aimed at alleviating some of the fears concerning the effects of complete financial autonomy, as it was thought that local councils would be able to defy the Province Executive Council, and that the richer councils would not agree to share revenues with poorer ones.[69]

Having given this general introduction on aspects of the financial arrangements that have resulted from the passing of the 1971 Local Government Act, let us look in greater detail at revenue of local government councils, before considering some of the financial problems faced by local government councils, in addition to finally looking at one such concrete case, namely that of Baytalmal Town Council and its finances.

2) Revenue and Financial Problems:

The revenue of local government councils comes primarily from direct taxes, which the central government has empowered local councils to collect. These are a carry over from the pre-1971 system of local government and are regulated by several laws including the following: 1) The House Tax Law, 1954. 2) The Business and Commercial Tax Law, 1930, 3) The Building Tax Law, 1918, 4) The Land and Date Palm Tax Laws,

1925, 5) <u>The Animal Tax Law</u>, 1925, 6) <u>The Ushur Tax Law</u>, 1924.[70] The continued reliance of local government councils on direct taxes, or direct sources of revenue such as the above, has meant a reproduction of some of the financial problems characterising the situation pre-1971. Firstly, at a time of rapid inflation the rates have remained practically static so that in real terms, their potential yield has decreased. Secondly, shortage of staff and transport, in addition to the weakness of sanctions for those who do not pay retard collection. Thirdly, popular willingness to pay taxes has been adversely affected by the paucity and poor quality of basic services.[71] The above, constitute the first problem of local government finance and concern the very nature of revenue on which it depends. The realization of this specific problem has led many people working in the field of local government to call for a share of indirect taxes accruing to the central government. This has been expressed in several newspaper articles.[72]

Besides the problem of the nature of revenue on which local government councils are forced to depend, there is the added problem that the post-1971 Act has entailed a a vast expansion of local government levels and personnel, whereas there has been no substantial concomitant change in terms of revenue, which has meant that a lot of money is spent on the administration's salaries. For instance, whereas Omdurman was before 1971 administered by a single municipal council, it now has over 100 councils.

Problems of finance and their aggravation in the field of local government and provision of services have led the present regime to lay an emphasis on local self-help as a means of increasing revenue and aiding local development. However, two points must be made in relation to self-help. Firstly, that it is the wealthier areas that are most able to help themselves and this, therefore, reinforces situations of inequality.[73] Secondly, it is no simple panacea for shortages of services. Self-help can in itself, create problems, it may licence

dominant social classes to allocate resources in ways not subject to normal government controls. It may be used by those classes to maintain their domination.

Within Khartoum Province, one such self-help scheme at the level of the Province Executive Council has been the formation of a joint corporation in 1978 together with an Arab investment company. The objective was to undertake several commercial ventures, including a hotel, a high-rise complex in central Khartoum, and a livestock farm. In these projects Khartoum Province Executive Council is donating the land.[74] Before making some comments on this particular type of project, it is important to mention that in the past fiscal year (1977/78) the revenue of Khartoum Province was £S5M, whereas its expenditure amounted to £S36M. By and large,however, such projects are only possible in provinces like Khartoum, where contacts with Arab investors are easier, and where there is more to attract Arab investors in the first place. This is so, largely due to factors such as higher land values and rents. Furthermore, projects like hotels and high-rise buildings are of no immediate benefit to inhabitants of the province, especially its rural areas. To repeat, the basic point being made is that self-help besides not being an immediate answer to all problems, can be problematic in itself.

3) The Finances of Baytalmal Town Council:

Above I have referred to aspects of the finances of Local Government Councils, concentrating especially on the problems involved. In this final part of the section on Finance, I look at a concrete case, that of Baytalmal Town Council. Here I examine material gathered from council records,from councillors, and from local government officials.

Baytalmal Town Council does not have corporate status. It is therefore not independent financially. As already stated, the only body having corporate status is the Pronvice Executive Council. Baytalmal Town Council presents its budgetary estimates (revenue and

expenditure) for the particular fiscal year in question to the District Council for Omdurman Town, as will all Town, Rural, Industrial and Market Councils in Omdurman District. The District Council combines these estimates making alterations and then presents them jointly to the Province Executive Council for Khartoum Province, where the authority of final approval of these budgetary estimates resides. The crucial question here is, what happens to these budgetary estimates once they reach the Province Executive Council level? What comes out of the Province level is often only 20-40% of what was originally asked for. Furthermore, this has meant that a lot of the local councils often tend to overestimate their actual needs, especially since no representatives from local councils are allowed to go to the Province Council or its Finance Committee to defend or explain their estimates.[75]

The above is a general account of how the budgetary estimates are treated after leaving Baytalmal Town Council, but we need to examine the processes at work within the Council which lead to the decisions on those estimates in the first place. Firstly, the neighbourhood councils have absolutely no influence on the estimates. Although there was once a move by several members of neighbourhood councils to press for their involvement in the process of making estimates, nothing came of it, as the Administrative Officer, flatly refused on the grounds that preparation of budgetary estimates was a technical matter, which neighbourhood councils would not be able to handle adequately.

What actually happens is that the heads of the various departments, (such as the Health, Education and Engineering Departments) will prepare their individual estimates and present them to the Town Council. The Council then has the task of approving them after discussions with various technical officers. In practice the Town Council usually approves them without any careful scrutiny. This further substantiates the points made in the section on relations within the council, namely that popular members are often isolated from the workings of the council.

Furthermore, even the council's finance committee has practically no role in the preparation of the budget. The process is in effect reduced to the making of rough estimates by the Administrative Officer and the Technical Officers heading the council's various departments.

Although the PLG Act was passed in 1971, the first experiment in making the province a budgetary unit only came in the fiscal year 1973/74. Even then, each District had a joint budget for the whole of that District. It was only in 1976 that Town Councils were first allowed to participate in drawing up their own budgetary estimates. The delay in the application of the PLG Act was due mainly to the fact that its financial system was a big change from the previous one and hence its application needed a lot of bureaucratic reorganisation. Next, we will consider types of revenue, in addition to comparisons of Baytalmal's revenue and expenditure. Revenue is divided broadly into three types. The first type includes items like house tax, building tax, and entertainment tax. The second category includes commercial tax and building permits tax. The third includes fees on health licences, health taxes and removal of stagnant water tax. Rural areas in comparison with urban councils like Baytalmal have additional sources of revenue from taxes on livestock, agricultural land, etc. Revenue estimation processes depend upon the type of revenue. The highest revenue is from house tax. (In 1977/78, for instance, house tax revenue was £S23,219 out of a total revenue of £S53,618). It is estimated yearly by committes made up of the council engineer, council accountant, administrative officer and a person owning property in the neighbourhood in question. The factors taken into consideration in estimation of the house tax is the location of the property, the type of building material used, number of rooms, etc. It usually comes to one-third of the monthly rent per year (hence if the rental value of a house was £S60 monthly, the house tax would be £S30 yearly). Within Baytalmal, Mulazmin alone (a first-class residential area), contributes £S13,970 of the above

specified total house tax figure for the whole of Baytalmal. If a person thinks that his or her house tax estimate is unfair, he or she make take the matter to an appeal committee.

Other types of revenue are fixed for the whole Province, and depend mainly on the kinds of local commercial activity that are present. Thus a small shop would have to pay about £S8 annually, whereas a wholesaler would have to pay £S15.

Revenue is collected by special staff employed by the council for that purpose. In the case of Baytalmal there are three collectors.

All of the above are permanent forms of revenue, another kind relates to sources that are not as permanent. An example of the latter are the rates that had to be paid for issue of ration cards when petrol was first rationed (August 1978). The fees on each card, paid monthly, were about 25 prastres. This more temporary type of revenue is considered as being levied for the Province Executive Council, and is taken directly there. The more permanent type goes to the District Council, where it is kept under Baytalmal Town Council's name.

Expenditure, is also divided into several sections. The first is that of Administration and includes items like electricity for the council, costs of correspondence, maintenance of council buildings, etc. The salaries of council officials as well as the monthly stipends of £S5 for all councillors are paid by the District Council. The second section is that of Public Health, and includes items like disinfectants and rent of cars. The third section is Primary Education. The fourth is Engineering and it includes items like the cost of digging seasonal drains and of drawing equipment.

Having outlined revenue and expenditure, I turn to the actual figures for both in Baytalmal Town Council for the fiscal year 1977/78 and I compare them with other councils in the Omdurman Town. Table II first shows revenue for the Town Councils of Baytalmal, Murada and Umdurman al-Jadida, in addition to revenue for one Rural Council within

Omdurman District and for the Market and Industrial area councils. It also gives the total revenue for the whole of the town.

In relation to the volume of revenue the following points can be made: 1) the highest revenue comes from the Market and Industrial Area Councils,£S314,296 and £S116,314) respectively. This is accounted for by the much higher volume of commercial activity there as compared with the more residential councils, such as Baytalmal, 2) conversely, the lowest revenue comes from Omdurman North Rural Council. The low revenue here can be explained by: a) the lower land value and lower quality of buildings which account for the lower house tax paid, and b) lower volume of commercial activity because of the relatively small number of shops and business enterprises. Thus, whereas commercial tax in the Market Council accounts for a revenue of £S36,000, in Baytalmal this is only £S1,859 and in the Rural Council it is only £S810. 3) when we compare Baytalmal Town Council's revenue with that of Umdurman al-Jadida, we find that Baytalmal's is greater. (£S53,618 vs £S48,932). This is a significant difference, especially since Umdurman al-Jadida has both a much larger area and larger population (Umdurman al Jadida has a population of 53,500 whereas Baytalmal's population is 21,396). Other features of both areas that explain this difference in revenue include the much lower land value in Umdurman al-Jadida, which is on the outskirts of the town, when contrasted with Baytalmal's central location. Another difference is the type of building material and type of houses, especially since two neighbourhoods within Baytalmal (Mulazmin North and South) are classified as first class residential areas, whereas Umdurman al-Jadida is classified as third and fourth class housing, and was until very recently, a squatter area (refer to chapter two). All of this has meant that house tax rates are much higher in Baytalmal than they are in Umdurman al-Jadida, being £S23,219 and £S12,900 respectively for Baytalmal and Umdurman al-Jadida. On the other hand if we compare rates from building permits (which can be taken

TABLE II: Local Government Revenue, 1977/1978 (Omdurman District) in Sudanese pounds

Item	Baytalmal Town Council	al-Murada Town Council	Umdurman al-Jadida Town Council	Northern Rural Council	Market Council	Industrial Area Council	Total for Omdurman District
1st Part (including House Tax and Building Tax)	45,008	61,500	39,232	11,185	199,976	61,186	623,140
2nd Part (including commercial tax)	4,840	11,690	8,890	1,320	63,070	37,728	173,600
3rd Part (including Health Licence Fees)	3,770	2,900	810	600	51,250	17,400	86,250
Total	53,618	76,090	48,932	13,105	314,296	116,314	882,990

as an index of the volume of building activity) we find that the figure in Baytalmal is only £S250 whereas for Umdurman al-Jadida it is £S5,000. This is, of course, a function of the histories of the two areas, Umdurman al-Jadida being a much newer and larger area where there is currently a lot of building activity.

We may now turn to the budgetary estimates made by the council in order to compare them with the amounts that were actually approved and hence spent.

TABLE III: Budgetary Estimates and Actual Amounts for Baytalmal Town Council

Item	Estimate 1977/78 £S	Approved 1977/78 £S
Education	10 million	6 m 3600
Health	54,499	1,150
Engineering	198,280	1,050
Administration	22,410	1,080

If we consider each item separately, a great discrepancy is noticed. Whereas the Health department estimated that it would need £S54,499 to carry out Public Health functions in Baytalmal, it only got £S1,150. Similarly, whereas the Engineering department made an estimate of £S198,280 it only got £S1,050. The above figures illustrate the point made earlier in the section on Local Government Revenue, concerning the practice of overestimating needs in order to get the maximum sum possible from the Province Executive Council which holds the final financial control.

Even bearing this in mind, however, the discrepancy between estimates and approved amounts remains strikingly large. We therefore need to question how Baytalmal Council copes with these large differentials between what it estimates it needs and what it actually gets. The most immediate result is the drastic cuts in services, (this is why, for instance, there is no daily collection of garbage in

Baytalmal). How this and other consequences affect relations with the community is the subject of a later chapter.

Another resort of the council has been to try to raise more revenue through its own initiatives. Thus, in 1978, it presented a project to the Province Executive Council for the development of the Shuhada stalls market area (refer to chapter II), which is within the council's territory. The project included the development of the area into a permanent complex of rented offices and shops, whose revenue would eventually accrue to the Council. After a year's silence, the Province Executive Council finally sold the area to a merchant. The above is an example of an ambitious way of raising revenue.

A more immediate way of raising money has been for the council to depend on self-help from the various neighbourhoods. This was resorted to in dealing with the kinds of services that were urgently required such as the digging of additional drains during the rainy season and the temporary hiring of an additional garbage truck. In relation to this kind of self-help, efforts have been made to prevent corruption and to check haphazard collection of contributions from inhabitants through the sale of what are called "popular-aid tickets" with values ranging between 5 and 50 piastres. However, as many of Baytalmal's inhabitants and councillors told me, this is not really working. In the words of one councillor "people are getting fed up with self-help". In fact there is a lot of cynicism concerning its futility and the fact that it was rapidly turning into a permanent feature of local government.

Furthermore, many of the councillors I spoke to said that the main problem of the council was financial. They all said that they thought fiancial autonomy would be the only solution for inadequate services. In effect, some councillors have been trying to assert their views on financial autonomy in various subtle ways. However, the domination of the Administrative Officer and her insistence that the rules and

regulations be followed at all times, have hampered this. For instance, at one time, the council was placed in charge of selling rationed charcoal. The official price was £S1.98 per bag, but the councillor concerned charged £S2.00 and kept the extra 2 prastres for a local cleaning campaign that his neighbourhood council was planning. On hearing of this, the Administrative Officer said that this was unauthorised action, and that the extra two piastres collected on each bag of charcoal had to be returned.

In conclusion, the following general points may be restated. Firstly, the lack of financial autonomy and the bureaucratic complications involved in spending even the smallest sums of money hamper the council's efficient functioning. (We will indicate reasons for this in the conclusion to this chapter).

Secondly, as seen above, revenue is extremely low when compared with expenditure. In addition, the sources of revenue are few and there are considerable problems in its collection.

Low revenue is also related to the fact that a large number of exemptions from,or reductions in, house tax and licences are granted by the council, in an attempt to gain local popularity. This is attested to by the fact that a majority of petitions presented by people to the council concern requests for reduction in, or exemption from, fees. Thirdly, the bad financial situation of the council has serious effects both on relations within the council and on relations between the council and the community. In relation to the former, the problem of finances causes much tension in the relations between popular members and technical officers. The popular members increasingly wish to assert their financial autonomy but are hampered by their lack of administrative autonomy within the council, especially in relation to the directives of the Administrative Officer. With respect to the latter (i.e. the relations between the council and the community) the financial paralysis of the council is not always understood as such,

but is often interpreted as a form of corruption. It is generally assumed that the finances of the councils are embezzled by councillors and officials. While there is corruption, that is only one part of the difficulties. The assumption of widespread corruption causes dis-illusionment at a time when the services provided by the council are needed just as much as, or even more than,before.

Conclusion:

The first section of this chapter gave a brief history of the development of the local government system in Sudan since the turn of the century till the present. There, we especially concentrated on the post-1971 changes since they are our primary concern in this thesis. The second section was devoted to an analysis of how the post-1971 local government system works in one particular locality, namely Baytalmal Town Council. Here I discussed the structure and formation of councils, the staff of local councils, relations within councils, functions of councils, relations between different tiers of local government, and finance and financial problems. A major theme pursued in this second section is that of the differences between the system in principle and practice or "reality". The formal structure and the "reality" are, however, inextricably interwoven and the "reality" is in part made up of the rules and regulations of the formal system even though they do not function as they were originally intended to. My view is that one of the reasons for the system not working is that there are major contradictions within it. In effect, due to these contradictions or problem areas, the aura of democratic participation and local self-development, initially one of the motivations underlying the propogation of the system, is preserved only in appearance and not in essence. The contradictions I have identified are the following: 1) emphasis on popular participation vs bureaucratic restraints. Here the internal relations between appointed and elected councillors, and the domination of the former are one reason why the

councils perform as they do. Whereas the existence of popular members seem to indicate that councillors have powers, the extensive authority given to the Administrative Officers prevent this from being exercised.

2) Emphasis on local development vs. lack of financial autonomy. Restriction of financial autonomy has led to the virtual financial paralysis of councils, and hence also to their inadequacy in dealing with pressing local problems and issues. Again, whereas in appearance councils are supposed to work towards the local self-development, the bureaucratic controls on their finances prevent this aim from being achieved.

3) Emphasis on local democracy and participation vs. undemocratic electoral procedures. The effect of electoral restrictions has been that only certain political views can be represented in councils. The image of councils as being vehicles for popular participation is negated by the reality of controls placed on candidates for membership and by the susceptibility to manipulation of the electoral procedures. In identifying the above contraditions, my aim has been to show that the radical appearance of the post-1971 local government system is scarcely borne in practice.

CHAPTER III: FOOTNOTES

1. Hinden, *op.cit.*, 197.

2. Warburg, (1971), *op.cit.*, 63.

3. *Ibid.*, 71.

4. Muhammad Ahmad Mahjub, *al-Hukuma al-Mahaliyya fī al-Sudan*, (1945) 43.

5. Warburg, (1971), *op.cit.*, 72.

6. Hinden, *op.cit.*, 197-8.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, 198-9.

10. This view is shared by several of the people I interviewed and who had been active in the nationalist movement.

11. Hinden, *op.cit.*, 198-9.

12. *Ibid.*, 200.

13. *Ibid.*, 201.

14. *Ibid.*, 202.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, *op.cit.*, 112-114.

17. *Ibid.*, 126-9.

18. Ali al-Sayyid al-Hubaybi, *Al-Hukm al-Mahali fi al-Sudan*, (1970), 17.

19. *Ibid.*, 20

20. *Ibid.*, 22.

21 "Yearly Report of the Ministry of Local Government", *al-Majlis*, No.89 (Feb.1959), 1.

22. C.A.G.Wallis, "Local Administration in the Sudan", *Journal of African Administration*, Vol.XIII (1961), 158.

23. Howell, *op.cit.*, 81.

24. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, *op.cit.*, 199.

25. Wallis, *op.cit.*, 158.

26. *Ibid.*, 158-9.

27. al-Magboul al-Amin al-Haj, "al-ahdaf al-thalatha wara' qiyam majalis al-mudiriyat", *al-Majlis*, No.115, (July 1961), 7-10.

28. Howell, op.cit., 81.-2.

29. Ibid., 83.

30. al-Shafi' Ahmad al-Shaykh quoted in Ga'afar M.A.Bakhiet, "Native Administration in the Sudan and its significance to Africa, in Sudan in Africa, ed. Yusuf Fadl Hassan (1968), 265-6.

31. Howell, op.cit., 48.

32. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, op.cit., 135-6.

33. Ibid.

34. Mukhtar al-Tayyib and Dayfalla al-Amin, "al-Malamih al-ra'issiya linizam al-hukm al-sha'bi almahali fi jumhuriyat al-Sudan al-dimuqrattiyya" al-hukmal-sha'bi al-mahalli, Vol.4 (Jan.1976), 37.

35. Ibid., 39.

36. Timothy C.Niblock, "A new Political System in Sudan", African Affairs, (1974), 412-13.

37. Sudan Socialist Union General Secretariat, Documents of the First National Congress, (Jan.1974), 6.

38. Ibid., 7-8

39. Niblock, op.cit., 416.

40. Ministry of Local Government, The Peoples Local Government Act, (1971), 1 (English version).

41. Ibid., 5.

42. Ibid., 7.

43. Niblock, op.cit., 414.

44. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, op.cit., 141-2.

45. Ibid., 145-6.

46. Ministry of Local Government, Murshid Takwin Majalis al-hukm al-Sha'bi al-Mahali, (1973), 11.

47. al-Sahafa (19th Dec.1977), 7 and (8th Dec. 1977), 10.

48. Ministry of Local Government (1973) op.cit., 8 (my translation).

49. Ibid., 16 (my translation)

50. Ministry of Local Government, al-Hukm al-Sha'bi al-mahali, qanunuh wa lawa'ihuh (1974), 54 (my translation).

51. Ibid., 54-55 (my translation).

52. Kenneth Davey, et al (eds.), Local Government and Development in the Sudan: The Experience of Southern Darfur, (1976), 4-8.

53. Ministry of Local Government (1973), op.cit., 17-18 (my translation).

54. Unpublished report by Baytalmal Town Council's Administrative Office, (1976).

55. Ministry of Local Government (1971) *op.cit.* , 6.

56. *Ibid.*, 7.

57. *Ibid.*, 21-30.

58. Davey *et al.*, (eds.), *op.cit.*, 4.

59. Unpublished Circular by Province Executive Council to lower level councils, (my translation), (1974).

60. Ministry of Local Government, (1971), *op.cit.*, 5.

61. *Ibid.*, 7.

62. R.Ebel "The Decision Making Process in San Salvador" in *Latin American Urban Research* ed. F.Rabinovitz and F.Trueblood, Vol.I (1970), 33-34.

63. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, *op.cit.*, 176.

64. *Ibid.*, 174.

65. Davey, *et al.*, (eds.), *op.cit.*, 60-61.

66. *Ibid.*

67. Mahdi Sheikh Idris, *op.cit.*, 240.

68. *Ibid.*, 177-8.

69. Development Administration Group, *Development Administration and Training* (1974), 24.

70. al-Tayib Rushwan, "Dirása Tahliliyya li tatawur qawanin al-hukuma al-mahaliyya", *al-Hukm al-Sha'bi al-Mahali*, No.5 (Feb.1973), 27.

71. Davey, *et al.*, (eds.), *op.cit.*, 13.

72. See especially *al-Sahafa* (31st Jan.1979), 3. and *al-Ayam*, (24th Sept. 1978), 3.

73. See similar ideas in H.K.Colebath, "Rural Services and Self-Help" *al-Hukm al Sha'bi al-Mahali*, No.6 (March 1973), 10-16.

74. *al-Ayam*, (8th Jan.1979), 1.

75. Davey *et al.*, (eds.), *op.cit.*, p.17.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF MEMBERSHIP IN BAYTALMAL'S COUNCILS

The previous chapter attempted to explain how the administrative system actually works in Baytalmal. In this chapter, I begin to examine the relation of the administrative system to the community it is supposed to serve. The main part of the chapter is devoted to the study of the membership of Baytalmal's councils, and to a discussion as to what this in fact tells us about local politics and the changing local social structure of the area. The chapter is arranged in three main sections which bear on the following questions. First, What are Baytalmal Councils' patterns of membership? Second, To what extent have the patterns of membership been reproduced over time and why? Third, What do the patterns of membership tell us about the changing nature of Baytalmal's social structure and about its local politics?

I Membership of Local Government Councils in Baytalmal

As seen in the previous chapter, the Peoples Local Government Act attempted to establish a system of local administration based on the principle of "indirect representation", with the higher local councils composed of representatives of councils at lower levels or tiers in the same area. It was also seen that Baytalmal is administered through two tiers of local government councils: the neighbourhood councils, one for each of Baytalmal's seven neighbourhoods, and a town council for the whole of the administrative division.

In the discussion to follow I pay more attention to the Town Council than to the neighbourhood councils. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the Town Council is more important in terms of its range of authority, its functions, and its revenue and financial responsibilities. Secondly, it is more formally constituted with a substantial number of appointed full-time staff, and with its buildings and other resources, such as cars. Thirdly, due to the principle of indirect representation, the Town Council members are drawn from neighbourhood councillors and thus reflect the lower tier of council.

Since the system was established in 1971, there have been three

council sessions. The first lasted from February 1972 to December 1973. The second from December 1973 to December 1977, and the third began in December 1977 and is due to last until December 1980. In the previous chapter we have seen that elections begin at the neighbourhood level where each council is made up of twenty-four members, of whom twenty are elected (including at least six women and four are appointed).

Elections are usually held in a public place such as a neighbourhood school or club. The date of elections is supposed to be announced in advance and to be advertised in newspapers. Elections are usually open involving a show of hands or standing up. No registration of voters takes place. We also saw that the absence of strict rules and procedure has been used by some candidates to ensure that only electors certain to vote for them are present on election day. Such manipulation takes many forms. Firstly, there is a tendency for the elections to be publicised through personal contacts and kinship relations rather than through any formal announcement. Thus, for instance, candidates knock on doors of the people they know to tell them of time and place of elections, and leave out the homes of people on whom they cannot rely to vote for them. Also, transport is often provided for selected "favourable" voters, and as there is no registration of voters, some candidates bring supporters to election meetings who do not even reside in the same neighbourhood. There is no effective way of controlling such irregularities, especially as the person responsible for running the elections, namely the administrative officer, does not reside in the community and is usually unable to differentiate between those who live or do not live in the neighbourhood concerned.

Secondly, since elections are "open" and this is very effective in tightly knit areas like Baytalmal, social pressure is brought to bear on electors to vote in the "right" direction. Many people say that they are virtually compelled to vote for particular candidates in the presence of members of their extended families. One spoke in the

following vein: "Do you think that if I hadn't voted for X I would have been left in peace? It would have been very difficult to live in this neighbourhood afterwards". What she meant was that if she had voted in the "wrong" way she would have been ostracised by the candidate's extended family, which was the largest in her neighbourhood. Another said: "If you come alone, and do not conspire, you are gone, you have no chance of winning". Thirdly, since elections are held at a fixed meeting, the time chosen for them is also subject to manipulation. People who cannot attend any particular election meeting automatically lose their vote.

The question may well be raised as to why elections are held this way. Neither the PLG Act of 1971 nor the 1973 Guide to the Formation of Peoples Local Councils stipulate that elections must be "open" or held as they are; it was only a circular issued by the Ministry of Local Government which stipulated the procedures I have described. In my view the reason for which is related to the contradictions of the PLG System (refer to conclusion of Chapter II) and the whole way councils perform. Thus whereas the official rhetoric is that councils are vehicles of democratic participation and representation, yet in actuality elected members tend to hold a limited range of political views in favour of the regime. It becomes apparent then that the "open" electoral procedures only preserve in appearance the official slogans, whereas they in fact work to ensure the undemocratic nature of these councils. This is elaborated upon throughout the present chapter.

Next, I dwell on the characteristics of Baytalmal's town councillors over the three sessions and especially on their age, education, occupations, political background, social background, and relations with each other. Information on these characteristics was gathered through intensive interviews with councillors for the Town Council's three sessions, but also from general observations, and from a careful reading of Town Council meeting minutes, and almost daily visits to the Town Council,

during my period of fieldwork.

First, however, I examine the turnover in council membership and the extent to which the same persons are constantly elected to the Town Council.

TABLE I: Turnover in Baytalmal Town Council Membership for Three Sessions

1st Session (1972/1973)

Male	Female
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	15 16 17 18 19 20

Second Session (1973/1977)

1 2 3 14 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	17 18 19 20 30 31 32

Third Session (1977/1980)

1 3 4 28 29 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41	17 31 32 42 43 44

From the above it can be seen that there are only 3 councillors who have been members of the Town Council over all three sessions since 1972. On the face of it this seems to indicate that membership has been largely "new" each session. But we shall see that the characteristics of members nonetheless create some regular patterns.

1) Age:

Tables II(a), (b) and (c) give the age of councillors for the three sessions.

TABLE II(a) First Session: 1972-1973

Age Range	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
20 - 30						
31 - 40	4	28.6	3	50	7	35
41 - 50			3	50	3	15
Over 51	10	71.4			10	50
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

TABLE II(b) Second Session: 1973-1977

Age Range	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
20 -30			1	14.3	1	5
31 - 40	6	46.2	2	28.6	8	40
41 - 50	2	15.4	4	57.1	6	30
Over 51	5	38.5			5	25
Total	13	100.1	7	100	20	100

TABLE II(c) Third Session: 1977-1980

Age Range	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
20 - 30	2	14.3	1	16.7	3	15
31 - 40	1	7.1	2	33.3	3	15
41 - 50	4	28.6	3	50	7	35
Over 51	7	50			7	35
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

The following points are of interest. Firstly, in all three sessions of the Town Council a majority of members were over 40 years of age, though the proportion over 40 fell a little during the second session. Women members were on average younger than the men in all three sessions. Secondly, in the second session the largest single age category was that of 31 - 40 years. The reason for this is explained below.

My interest in the age of councillors is related to the extent of their political experience prior to May, 1969. The older councillors had obviously had more opportunity for political experience in the earlier political parties, and hence are more likely to have definite political allegiances than the younger councillors whose political experience is somewhat limited to that gained since the regime of May 1969. This is important in our later discussion of the councillors'

political backgrounds.

2) Education:

Tables III(a), (b) and (c) show the educational standard of councillors in all three sessions.

TABLE III(a) First Session: 1972-1973

Education	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
Primary	8	57.1	3	50	11	55
Secondary	2	14.3			2	10
Gordon Memorial College	4	28.6			4	20
Teacher Training			3	50	3	15
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

TABLE III(b) Second Session: 1973-1977

Education	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
Primary	2	15.4	5	71.4	7	35
Secondary	4	30.8			4	20
Gordon Memorial College	4	30.8			4	20
Teacher Training	1	7.7	2	28.6	3	15
Post-Secondary	2	15.4			2	10
Total	13	100.1	7	100	20	100

TABLE III(c) Third Session: 1977-1980

Education	Males No.	Males %	Females No.	Females %	Total	%
Primary	5	35.7	3	50	8	40
Secondary	2	14.3			2	10
Gordon Memorial College	4	28.6			4	20
Teacher Training	3	21.4	3	50	6	30
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

The following points are of interest. Firstly, a majority of all councillors for all three sessions have had full primary education, and in the second and third sessions the majority have had more than this. Secondly, more female councillors than men have completed teacher training courses. Thirdly, in all three session, there was a significant percentage of men who had attended Gordon Memorial College, which was created by the British as a secondary institution and later developed into the University of Khartoum. The significance of this is that a majority of graduates from this college entered the ranks of the colonial governments' civil service. (In fact, according to Holt, the curriculum of Gordon Memorial College was "consciously planned, not to give a liberal education, but to provide adequately trained government employees".)[1] It is also relevant that the graduates of Gordon Memorial College constituted the backbone of the nationalist movement and later spearheaded the development of the first political parties. (See Chapter II).

3. Occupations:

Tables. IV(a), (b) and (c) show occupations of councillors for the council's three sessions.

TABLE IV(a) First Session: 1972 - 1973

Occupation	Males		Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Retired	5	35.7			5	25
Senior Civil Servant	1	7.1			1	5
Teacher			4	66.7	4	20
Merchant	4	28.6			4	20
Lower rank civil servant	4	28.6	1	16.7	5	25
Housewife			1	16.7	1	5
Total	14	100	6	100.1	20	100

TABLE IV(b) Second Session: 1973-1977

Occupation	Males No.	%	Females No.	%	Total	%
Retired	4	30.8			4	20
Senior Civil Servant	1	7.7			1	5
Teacher	1	7.7	4	57.1	5	25
Merchant	1	7.7			1	5
Lower rank civil servant	6	46.2	2	28.6	8	40
Housewife			1	14.3	1	5
Total	13	100.1	7	100	20	100

TABLE IV(c) Third Session: 1977-1980

Occupation	Males No.	%	Females No.	%	Total	%
Retired	4	28.6			4	20
Senior Civil Servant	3	21.4			3	15
Teacher	1	7.1	5	83.3	6	30
Merchant	5	35.7			5	25
Lower rank civil servant	1	7.1	1	16.7	2	10
Total	14	99.9	6	100	20	100

Several points concerning the occupations of councillors are of interest. Firstly, the comparatively large percentage of councillors who are retired, most of these come from government service, many are now engaged in commercial activities. Secondly, during the first and third sessions of the councils there was an appreciable representation of merchants, (especially when those who have engaged in commercial activities after retirement are added), whereas lower rank civil servants were more prominent in the second session. Thirdly, it can be seen that most of the women councillors were teachers. This is

simply due to the fact that up till now in Sudanese society teachers are the women who are most active in public life. They are, of course, one of the most educated sections of the adult female population.

There are thus very clear patterns of membership in terms of age, education,and occupation, and these patterns are clearest for the first and third sessions of the council, whereas the second session had councillors with somewhat different characteristics. Thus in the first and third sessions, the pattern of membership was characterised by a large incidence of elderly people, graduates of Gordon Memorial College, retired persons and merchants. In the second session, there were more young secondary school graduates drawn from the lower ranks of the civil service. The significance of these observations will become apparent as I discuss other characteristics of the members, and examine relations between them.

4) Political Background:

Before discussing the political allegiances and backgrounds of Baytalmal's councillors, it is necessary, to refer briefly to the political allegiances mentioned by the councillors, particularly, the parties involved. The general situation of Baytalmal as a whole is important in this respect. It was in Baytalmal that the headquarters of both the Umma and National Unionist Parties were located and it was here that most of the party leaders had their own homes. I will briefly dwell on the main political parties, starting with the National Unionist Party (NUP).

The first group to organise itself into a political party in the 1940s was the Ashiqqa (literally blood brothers). This was a group of young men many of whom came from Baytalmal, led by Ismā'il al-Azhari, whose family still reside there. The party strongly supported the call for independence from British rule and in doing so it propagated a policy of a "unity of the Nile valley",which would eventually lead to some form of union with Egypt. This group formed the core of what was later to

develop into the NUP. The Ashiqqa were primarily urban-based, enjoying the support of the emerging urban middle classes in particular.[2] (refer to Chapter II). In order to attract popular support in the rural areas, however, the Ashiqqa joined forces with the powerful Khatmiyya sect, and the NUP was eventually established in 1953. But after several years of uneasy partnership with the NUP, the Khatmiyya sect seceded in 1956 and formed the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which in effect became their mouthpiece.[3]

The NUP was the outgrowth of the more educated and secularised majority section of the Graduates Congress (refer to Chapter II). It developed into the party of the civil servants, small merchants, and other professionals, with strong support in urban areas, and especially in Omdurman. According to Fatima Mahmoud the NUP membership was largely

> "dominated by party capitalists and the educated civil servants and the urban masses". 4

Nugdalla draws a similar conclusion:

> "The leadership of the NUP tended to depend more and more on merchants and traders or the emergent bourgeoisies in their struggle for power. The bulk of their support was, therefore, the urban and suburban or semi-urban sphere - basically the middle-class sectors: merchants and traders, the gentleman farmer in the Gezira, and the intelligentia". 5

The NUP policy always favoured a middle position between its two rivals, the Umma and Peoples Democratic Party, especially in regard to its now cautious attitude to Egypt and to its continuous support for a mixed economic system favouring private businessmen.[6] The latter was especially evident between 1956 and 1966, when the bourgeois and petty bourgeois elements within the NUP grew in strength as foreign investment in the Sudan grew.[7]

The NUP's executive council at the party headquarters in Omdurman was dominated by an "old boy" network going back to the days of the Graduates Congress, and relying upon a well-functioning system of patronage for support.[8]

The primary rival of the NUP, namely the Umma Party, initially provided a voice for the rural and tribal groups, who opposed the influence of the urban-based Ashiqqa, and later the NUP. The Umma Party came into existence in 1945 and was primarily the political organ of the Ansar or followers of the Mahdi.[9] It has always favoured an Islamic Constitution and a free enterprise system to attract both private Sudanese and foreign investors. Its foreign policy has consistently been one of absolute opposition to any interference from Egypt.[10]

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as previously stated, was the mouthpiece of the Khatmiyya sect and was initially in partnership with the Ashiqqa (i.e. from 1953 to 1956). Its traditional support came from rural areas and it has always expressed Egyptian views and aspirations in the Sudan.[11]

During the second period of parliamentary rule (from 1964 to 1969), some of these alignments changed when the Umma Party split into two factions, one led by the Imam of the Ansar, Al-Hadi al-Mahdi, and the second by his nephew, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. The parliamentary majority was largely held by a coalition of the NUP and the Imam's faction of the Umma party. With the approach of the 1968 elections, however, the PDP formed an alliance with the NUP, called the Democratic Unionist Party.[12] But, with the advent of the present regime in May 1969, all political parties were banned, and they have been replaced by the hegemony of the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) and its organisations.

The Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) was described in the Constitution as the 'sole political organisation' of the May regime. Although the intention of creating one political organisation was announced early during the life of the regime, no concerted attempt was made to actually establish this organisation. This was partly due to the opposition of the Communist Party, whose support the regime needed during its early stages. Thus it was not until May, 1971, after the break with the

Communist Party, that a Preparatory Committee was established to make arrangements for the creation of the Sudan Socialist Union.[13] The SSU was essentially seen to be an institution

> "seeking to shift the balance of wealth and power in the country away from the traditional 'big families' who for so long had used their social influence to maintain a grip on economic resources in the country areas". 14

(For details on the organisational structure of the SSU see chapter on Local Organisations).

The above discussion provides essential background information for the understanding of the general political stances and sympathies of Baytalmal's councillors.[15]

TABLE V(a) The Political Allegiances of Baytalmal's councillors 1972-1973

Political Allegiances	Male		Female			
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Supports NUP	8	57.1	2	33.3	10	50
Supports Umma Party	2	14.3			2	10
Supports May regime	4	28.6	2	33.3	6	30
No particular political allegiance			2	33.3	2	10
Total	14	100	6	99.9	20	100

TABLE V(b) The Political Allegiances of Baytalmal's councillors, 1973-1977

Political Allegiances	Male		Female			
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Supports NUP	5	38.5	1	14.3	6	30
Supports Umma Party	2	15.4			2	10
Supports PDP			1	14.3	1	5
Supports CP			1	14.3	1	5
Supports SSU	6	46.2	3	42.9	9	45
No particular political allegiance			1	14.3	1	5
Total	13	100.1	7	100.1	20	100

TABLE V (c) The Political Allegiances of Baytalmal's Councillors 1977-1980

Political Allegiances	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %	Total	%
Supports NUP	10	71.4			10	50
Supports PDP			2	33.3	2	10
Supports CP			1	16.7	1	5
Supports SSU			1	16.7	1	5
No particular political allegiance	4	28.6	2	33.3	6	30
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

As regards the political allegiances of Baytalmal's councillors the pattern noticed is the following. Firstly, that once again political allegiances (as were the factors of age, education and occupation) are most similar for the Town Council's first and third sessions with the second session deviating from this noticed pattern. Thus in the first session 60% of councillors had specific political allegiances to the old political parties with a majority supporting the NUP. This is consistent with what we already know about this party's social base, which is drawn from the town's class of merchants and senior civil servants. These two occupations being preponderant in the council's first session. In the third session, while supporters of these political parties still constitute a comparatively large percentage, we find that the male councillors supporting the NUP, in particular, have increased.

Secondly, in contrast, the second session of councils is characterised by a decrease in the number of councillors supporting these political parties. Even these are characterised by a greater divergence including supporters of four of these parties (NUP, Umma, PDP and CP). Although among these the NUP is still the main party to which councillors owe allegiance. Thirdly, still in relation to the second session, the main point to be noticed is that a majority of councillors expressed support for the SSU. As regards this, it must be stressed that all six male

councillors falling in this category belong to the age group 31 - 40, and are all lower-rank civil servants. They are hence drawn from a different social class from that supporting the earlier political parties (excluding the CP). Also, it must not be forgotten that it was at the time of this second session (late 1973) that SSU units had first been set up and were relatively more active and popular than they are currently. Fourthly, one point not immediately clear from the above table, is the extent of this expressed support of councillors for the various political parties or organisations mentioned. In relation to the NUP, all councillors stated that they had been active members of the party. In fact at least three were among the party's founders. Supporters of the Umma party were equally active, supporters of the PDP meanwhile (all female) stated that their allegiance was more in line with their families support for the PDP. SSU supporters also said that they were active in SSU organisations, three of them were actually heads of their neighbourhood SSU basic units, while one was head of the Qism (the next higher level) and was for a period of three years working full-time at the SSU.

From the above, it is clear that a pattern of political allegiance of councillors exists, council membership in both the first and third sessions is characterised by the support of councillors for the NUP primarily. These councillors fall mainly in the over-51 age group, and are by and large either merchants or retired senior civil servants. Membership of the council's second session, on the other hand includes a preponderance of councillors who are much younger, are primarily lower rank civil servants, supporting the SSU.

5) Social Background:

I will examine here three variables, namely those of father's occupation, identity or place of origin and the marital status of female councillors. The following tables show occupations of councillors' fathers.

TABLE VI(a) Occupations of councillors fathers 1972-1973

Occupation of Father	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Merchant	7	50	1	16.7	8	40
Lower rank civil servants & (semi-skilled workers)	6	42.9	5	83.3	11	55
Professional	1	7.1			1	5
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

TABLE VI(b) Occupations of councillors fathers 1973-1977

Occupation of Father	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Merchant	4	30.8	1	14.3	5	25
Lower rank civil servants & (semi-skilled workers)	9	69.2	5	71.4	14	70
Professional			1	14.3	1	5
Total	13	100	7	100	20	100

TABLE VI(c) Occupations of councillors fathers 1977-1980

Occupation of Father	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
Merchant	6	42.9	3	50	9	45
Lower rank civil servants & (semi-skilled workers)	6	42.9	3	50	9	45
Professional	2	14.3			2	10
Total	14	100.1	6	100	20	100

The tables again show that there is most similarity between the first and third sessions, whose councillors came mainly from family backgrounds of commercial activity. On the other hand, councillors in the second session come from largely backgrounds of lower rank civil servants and workers. The point to be re-emphasised here relates to the different pattern of membership in the second session on the one hand, and the first and third sessions on the other.

TABLE VII(a) Places of Origin and Identity First Session 1972-1973

Identity or Place of Origin	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %	Total	%
Muwalladin	1	7.1			1	5
Danagla	13	92.9	5	83.3	18	90
W.Provinces			1	16.7	1	5
Total	14	100	6	100	20	100

TABLE VII(b) Places of Origin and Identity Second Session 1973-1977

Identity or Place of Origin	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %	Total	%
Muwalladin	1	7.7	1	14.3	2	10
Danagla	9	69.2	5	71.4	14	70
Gezira	3	23.1			3	15
W.Provinces			1	14.3	1	5
Total	13	100	7	100	20	100

TABLE VII(c) Place of Origin and Identity Third Session 1977-1980

Identity or Place of Origin	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %	Total	%
Muwalladin	2	14.3			2	10
Danagla	10	71.4	5	83.3	15	75
W.Provinces	1	7.1	1	16.7	2	10
Gezira	1	7.1			1	5
Total	14	99.9	6	100	20	100

I was interested in examining whether councillors of particular ethnic origins or identities had dominated the council, and whether this had any discernible consequences for council politics. As shown in Tables VII (a), (b) and (c), councillors of Danagla origin have predominated (90%, 70% and 75%). This is in keeping with my earlier observation that a majority of Baytalmal's population is indeed of Danagla origin. (Refer to Chapter II). Yet, despite this, it is clear from having interviewed councillors and from general observations that ethnicity or place of origin or identity does not play any role in council

politics. Rather, the important variables are the twin factors of political affiliation and social class. I dwell on this point later.

In examining the above two aspects of social background, I have attempted to establish two points: a) that Baytalmal's first and third councils of 1972-1973 and 1977-1980 were dominated by councillors whose family backgrounds lay mainly in commercial activity, whereas the second council of 1977-1980 was largely in the hands of councillors with less wealthy backgrounds, and from the lower ranks of civil servants or workers; and b) that despite the fact that councillors of Danagla origin were clearly dominant throughout the council's three sessions, this had little significance for council politics. Rather, as will be shown later, it is the factors of social class and political affiliation that are of crucial importance.

One other factor relating to family background is the marital status of female councillors. As the vast majority of adult females in Sudanese society do not participate in any form of public life, it is of particular interest to examine the status of women on the council.

TABLE VIII: Marital Status of Female Councillors for Baytalmal Town Council's Three Sessions

Marital Status	1972-1973	1973-1977	1977-1980	Total
Widow	1	2	4	7
Unmarried	3	3	1	7
Married with grown up children only	2	2	1	5
Total	6	7	6	19

It is clear from the table that the marital status of all of Baytalmal's female councillors is such as to allow them much free time, most of them being either widowed or unmarried, while those who are married have grown up children only. This shows that despite the quota of 25 percent set for female membership, participation by women is in

effect only open to relatively small specific categories.

6. Relationships between councillors

An attempt was made to study the kinds of relationships obtaining between councillors outside the council as it appeared from observation, and is a crucial factor affecting council politics. The most important relationships which I set out to establish were those of common political affiliation (including common political experience), of kinship, and of commercial or business links. Other links often closely related to the foregoing are those of life-long friendship and of being original inhabitants of Baytalmal.

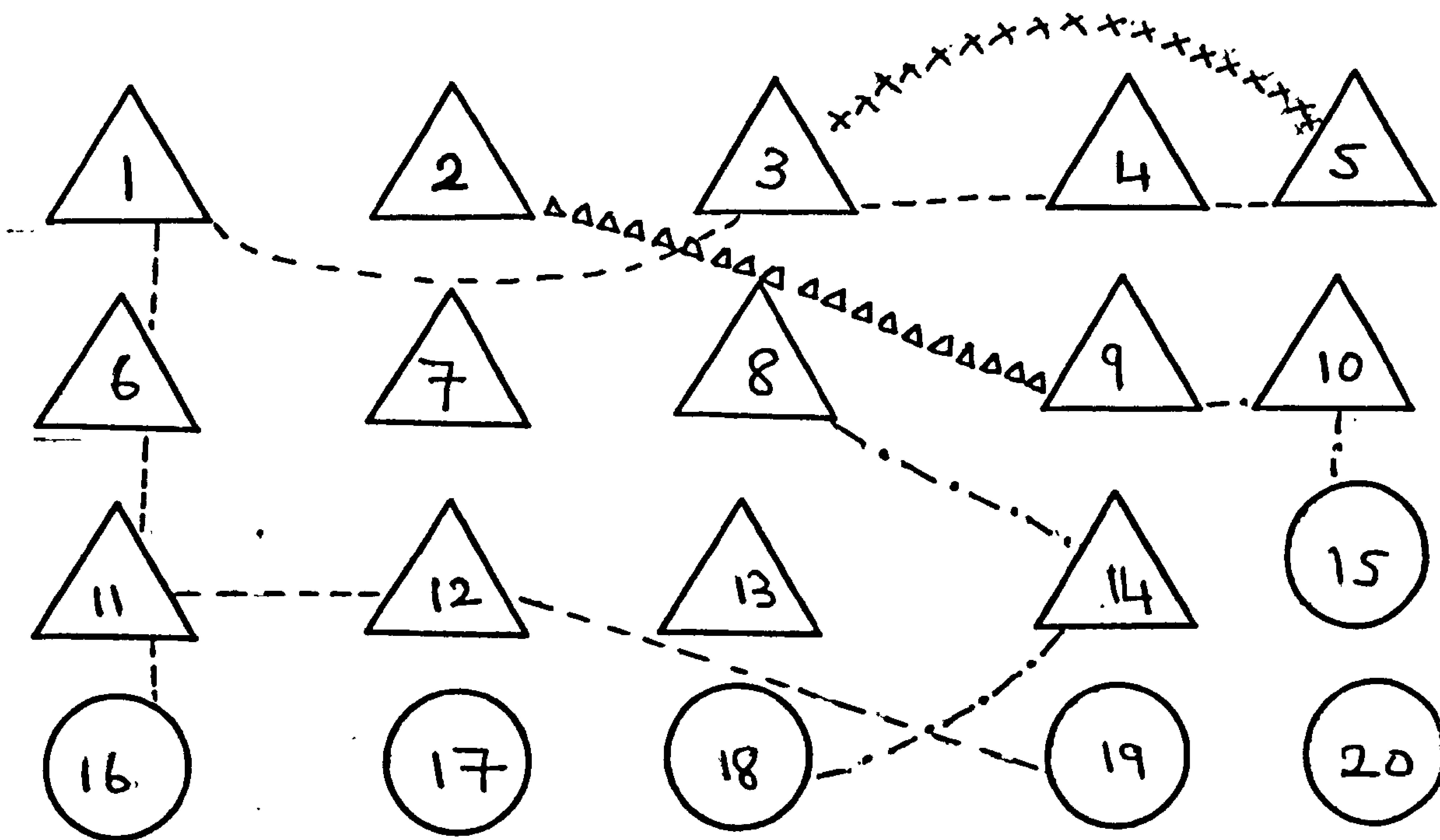
In the following charts I have combined these relationships to show how dense they are.

In looking at the internal relationships of councillors during the first session of councils, we notice that relations of common political affiliation are more important than those of kinship. Relationships between NUP supporters are especially strong and they clearly constitute an important factor in the council. There is some limited overlap between those linked by kinship and those bound by common political affiliation.

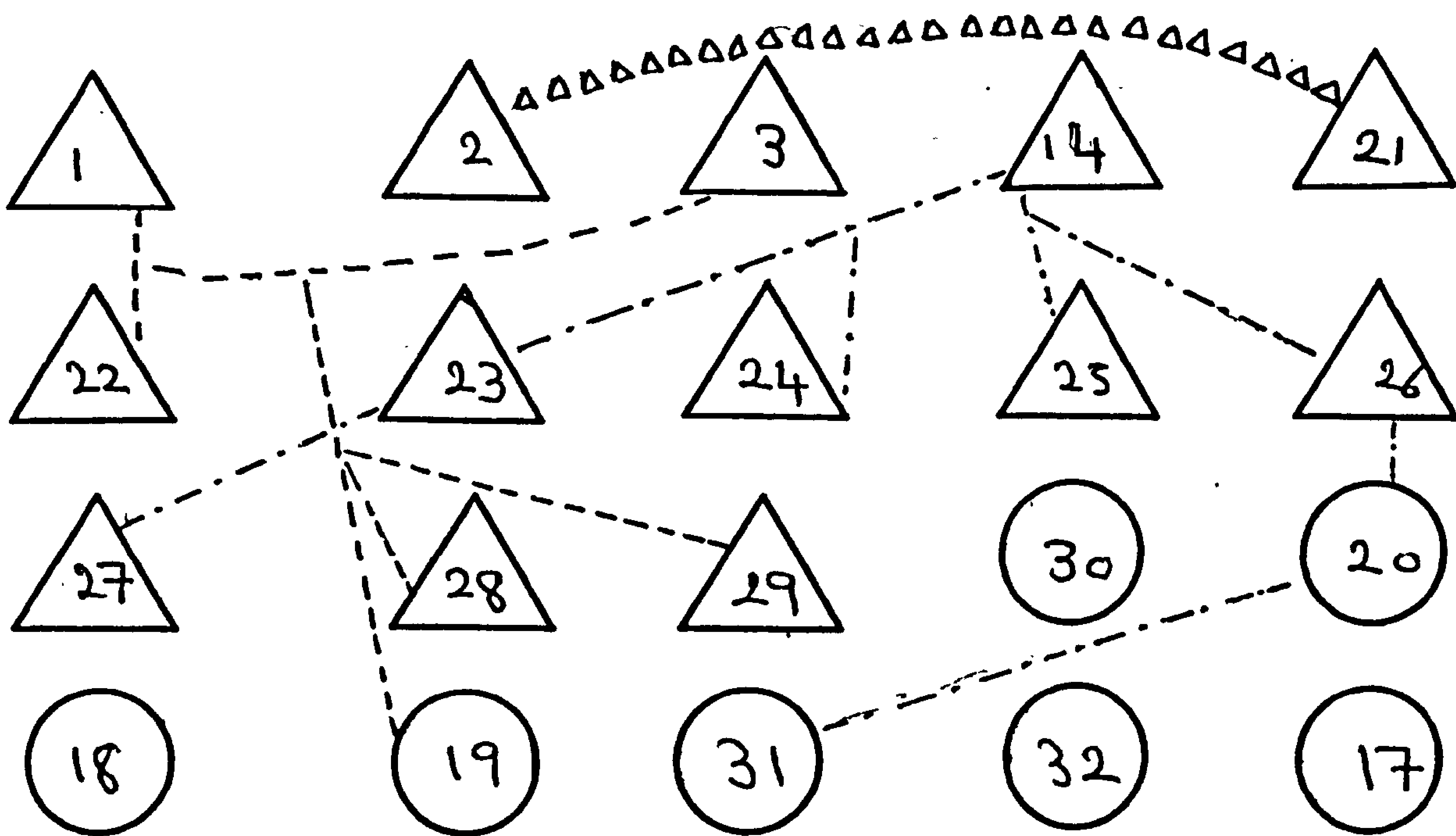
When we examine the links between councillors in the second session, once again relations of common political affiliation are most important. This time, however, the most common links are those between SSU supporters, rather than those supporting the NUP, and we find no kinship links at all.

The overall pattern of links in the third session strikingly differs from those in the first and second sessions, in that there now is considerable overlap between different sets of relations. Hence, the same councillors are not only bound by common political affiliation, but also by ties of kinship, added to which we find a new element that of commercial or business links. As regards the relations of kinship, four of the councillors are maternal cousins, two of whom are married

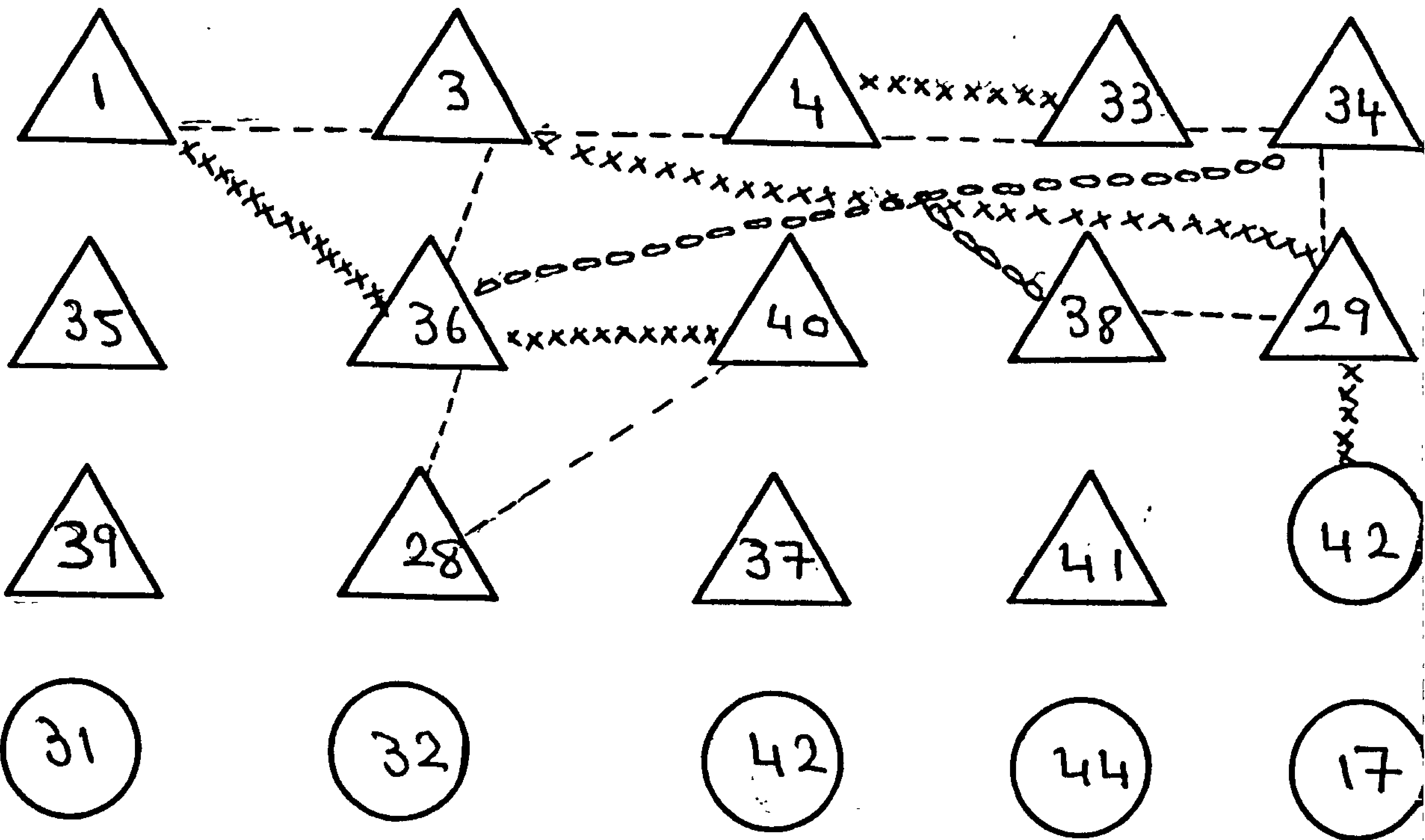
DIAGRAM III: Relations between Councillors for Baytalmal Town Council's Three Sessions



IIIa: First Session 1972-1973



IIIb: Second Session 1973-1977



IIIc: Third Session 1977-1980

KEY

----- NUP Supporters

-.-.-.- SSU Supporters

ΔΔΔΔ Umma Supporters

xxxxxx Kinship links (including affines)

ooooo Commercial links

to sisters. Several others are related through being affines.
In terms of business, three of the councillors have such a relationship, one being in charge of supplying goods from the Central Cooperative Union for the cooperative shop, of which one is in charge, or providing goods for the family shop owned by the other. Another important relationship not shown in the above chart is that of life-long friendship. This binds six of the male councillors who went to the same school, later worked in the Sudan Civil Service, and then all supported the NUP. Friendship relationships are not confined to the male councillors. The father of one of the female councillors, and the late husband of one, all belonged to the same group.

We may thus draw the following general conclusions about links between councillors. a) in all three sessions relations of common political affiliation (and hence what that entails in relation to the social bases of different parties, for instance) are paramount. b) in the third session, we see that these relations of common political affiliation are reinforced by the addition of two more sets of relationships, namely those of kinship and common business or commercial interests. Whereas in the first two sessions, relationships of common political affiliation were important, in the third session, we find a considerable overlap between these, kinship and business relations. Explanations of this will be given in the second section of this chapter.

In this section I have tried to answer the first question posed at the beginning of this chapter and have shown the patterns of membership that have existed in each of Baytalmal Town Council's three sessions. The main differences observed concern the preponderance in the first and third sessions of councillors who were older, who were either retired from government service or were merchants, and who were commonly avid supporters of the NUP. In contrast to this, we have seen that in the second session the councillors were younger and mostly drawn from the ranks of lower civil servants who supported the SSU. Both groups of

councillors represent different political and hence different class interests. These differences found expression in "cliques", (refer to introduction). In the section to follow, I discuss the question of the reproduction of council memnership, and hence of "cliques", and I examine the processes leading to this. In particular, I dwell on the reasons which account for the similarity of patterns of membership in the first and third sessions and for the difference between these and the pattern observed in the second session.

II Reproduction of Council Membership

As mentioned above "cliques" in the sense described in Chapter I were prominent on the council. These cliques had different characteristics during the council's three sessions, and we shall see that they represented different class interests. Before discussing these and the processes making for the reproduction of these cliques, we may usefully describe further characteristics of their members and, in particular, the difference between the overall profiles of what I refer to as the "traditional" and "modern" cliques.

The "traditional" clique in the third session of Baytalmal Town Council from 1977-1980, consists of six male councillors with the following common characteristics. 1) They are retired civil servants, three of whom are currently engaged in commercial activity; 2) they are over 51 years of age; 3)they have attended the same educational establishments, four of them having been to Gordon Memorial College; 4) they are closely bound together through relations of life-long friendship and kinship; 5) their extended families are similarly bound together, especially through the common factor of being among their neighbourhoods original inhabitants and of having come to Omdurman during the Mahdiyya; 6) most importantly members of this clique are also brought together by allegiance to the NUP, and were all politically active in that party from its inception; 7) they currently occupy the following important positions:

1. Presidency of the Town Council
2. Vice-Presidency of the Town Council
3. Presidency of four of Baytalmal's Neighbourhood Councils
4. Representative of the Town Council to Omdurman District Council
5. Representative of the Town Council to Khartoum Province Executive Council
6. Presidency of two of the basic SSU units
7. Presidency of the two most important Council Committees, Consumer Goods and Finance Committees
8. Permanent representative to Baytalmal Replanning Committee

The above is a description of the "traditional" clique, which I see as currently dominating the council, not only in terms of their common characteristics but also in terms of their influence over council activities, especially through their control of the above listed important positions.

From attending some meetings and reading the minutes of others, it was vividly clear that members of this clique participate more actively than other councillors and that they dominate discussions. This clique is made up of six persons. What about the rest of the councillors? These have some of the characteristics mentioned, but not others. For instance, some are related through kinship to members of the above clique and others have been NUP supporters or are members of families that were NUP supporters. Before explaining how the "traditional" clique developed in the first place (in 1972-1973) and how it was reproduced in 1977, I dwell on features of the "modern" clique.

During Baytalmal Town Council's second session, the "modern" clique was made up of eight councillors. Their main characteristics were as follows: 1) all were in the 31-40 years age group, 2) most had completed their secondary education and all were lower rank civil servants, 3) they were bound together by friendship rather than kinship or commercial links, 4) none owed allegiance to or was active in the old political parties and most were disillusioned with pre-May 1969 politics. They thus saw in the May regime and its SSU organisation, an alternative, 5) they all come from a lower social class than that of the members of the "traditional" clique.

The domination of the council's second session by the "modern" clique can clearly be seen as an attempt to challenge the "traditional" clique and the class which they represented. The development of the "traditional" clique in 1972 had been a response to the changing political and social scene and particularly to the banning of the old political parties and the ascendance of a different social class seeking dominance through the manipulation of the new political regime and its newly established organisations.

Despite differences the first session of Baytalmal Town Council exhibited some of the same characteristics of both the second and third sessions of the council. For instance, in terms of age structure, we find that the two age groups primarily represented are those of 31-40 (second session) and over-51 (third session). Similarly, in terms of occupation, the two dominant categories were lower rank civil servants (second session) and merchants or persons associated with them (third session). And in regard to political allegiance, we find both commitment to the May regime (second session) and commitment to the NUP (third session).

Despite this, members of the present "traditional" clique were still dominant in the first session, when they controlled both the presidency and vice-presidency (the incumbents were in fact the same two persons as presently occupying these offices). Yet, the first council did not have such strong and dense internal relationships between members of the "traditional" clique as in the present council. In particular there were fewer kinship and no commercial links between them.

During this first council, the "traditional" clique was dominant but relatively weak. It was thus replaced as the dominating influence on the council by the "modern" clique which, as we have shown, possessed rather different characteristics. It was dominated by a younger age group, which owed allegiance to SSU organisations and came from a lower social class. However, the "traditional" clique was able to recapture its dominant position during the present session by which time its own

internal links had been strengthened.

Town Council membership in Baytalmal has thus passed through three stages during its sessions. During the first stage it was dominated by the "traditional" clique which was still in the process of formation and not as closely knit as it later became. During the second session this clique was temporarily displaced, only to re-emerge as the ascendant force in the third session.

To explain the "defeat" of the "traditional" clique in the second session and its "reproduction" in the third, I will examine three sets of processes: a) National political processes surrounding the creation and development of councils and the local government system post-1971. b) processes within the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal, especially relating to the social structure of each neighbourhood and c) processes and events within Baytalmal Council relating to the way in which cliques operate and maintained themselves at particular points in time.

a) National Political Events and Processes:

As stated earlier, the Peoples Local Government Act was passed in November 1971, after the failure of the Communist-backed coup of July 1971. The first councils were being established in various parts of the country between December 1971 and early 1972. In Baytalmal the first councils were set up in February 1972. Meanwhile, the Sudan Socialist Union held its inaugural meeting on 2nd January 1972, when the President presented it with the regime's National Action Charter, a document which stated the basic principles of the regime. At that founding congress of the Sudan Socialist Union, the charter was ratified as 'the basic philosophy of the Revolution'.[16] However, it was not until mid-1973 that the first SSU basic units were established. Thus, the first councils were created before the SSU organisation was established.

It was in this situation that the "traditional" clique that was to dominate the Council in the first session wished to gain "political

prominence", or more generally to remain in the political arena. This was, in my view, one of the main reasons that candidates with strong allegiances to the traditional political parties (especially the NUP) sought places on the councils during these early stages of the May regime. They aimed to maintain representation of their class interests especially against the possibility that the May regime should fail and the traditional political parties be revived. For the older political veterans the new councils provided a way of channelling political activity temporarily. The development and dominance of the "traditional" clique was also facilitated by the fact that as the first session of councils followed on the failure of the communist-backed coup, many younger highly educated elements, who supported the left simply refrained from taking part in any political activity at that stage. Three additional factors also favoured the "traditional" elements: a) the existence of old political party connections and kinship networks which were used to ensure their election through an electoral system which was easily manipulated, (refer to earlier discussions in Chapter III and the present chapter), b) the absence at this stage in the regime's history of any grassroots political organisation supporting it, especially since the SSU's basic units were still in the process of formation and the old youth and women's Unions had been dissolved prior to July, 1971, in order to purge them of leftist elements, and c) the relative lack of consciousness concerning the councils and of any realization of what was to become at the local level. Thus there was comparatively little opposition to the traditional forces which came to dominate the first council.

It is interesting and at the same time ironic, that the primary aims underlying the creation of the new local councils was to combat the very interests (the remnants of traditional political parties, and the classes supporting them) that came to dominate them in the first session. Howell reports in a passing comment on a similar outcome in

El-Obeid

> "In the new council, the politically important families are still well represented. The deputy chairman, for example is the wife of the Nazer Abdel Gabar Zaki el Din, the previous deputy chairman. 17

He further adds:

> "Whatever new powers, obligations or even political attitudes the town councils may acquire under the new Local Government Act, in terms of the composition of the council, there is no significant change". 18

The first session of councils was supposed to complete its term in December 1974; but after the first SSU basic units had been established at the neighbourhood level and the SSU structure had been generally strengthened, the first councils were dissolved by early 1973 before they had completed their term. The regime had come to realize that the type of members dominant in the first councils was of the very kind that it wished to oppose (i.e. reactionary elements of Sudanese Society, remnants of the traditional political parties and their supporters). However, the regime had by now moved to a more centrist position than it had assumed prior to the abhorted communist-backed coup of July 1971. Thus, while still committed to combatting what it perceived as reactionary elements, it was also interested in isolating what it perceived as radical leftist elements. Hence, it passed new laws and regulations to control council membership. The newly formed SSU basic units were given the task of exercising this control by being asked to ratify all nominations for council membership, and thus giving them considerable power in regard to who could, or could not, be a candidate.

The immediate result of these measures was a different pattern of membership during the second session of councils beginning in December 1973, and in Baytalmal the new council was thus dominated by what I have termed the "modern" clique which was drawn from the class that was now supporting the regime. Council membership was for them a means of competing for the kind of power and socio-economic standing which had hitherto been the preserve of members of the class supporting the

"traditional" clique. They thus naturally used their relations with the regime to accomplish this, especially through their positions in the SSU and subsequently on local councils.

The next major political development affecting council politics came after the failure of the rightist-backed coup of July 1976, and the opening of a dialogue between the May regime and the opposition. This culminated in the official propagation of a policy of national reconciliation. This resulted in the call of certain elements of the opposition to work within the political system under a banner of national reconciliation. In effect, the regime was now occupying a position to the right of centre. One immediate consequence of this was to strengthen certain elements, specifically the "traditional" clique, which had dominated the first council. It led to their re-entry into the system after their temporary isolation and it contributed to their attempt to dominate councils even before the end of the second session in December 1977. In the end, too, it culminated in their success at the elections of December 1977.

The above developments occurred concomitantly with a rapidly deteriorating economic situation, and with the simultaneous rise in importance and change in the role of councils.

I have so far tried to explain the development of the "traditional" clique in Baytalmal's Town Council in the first session, the development of the "modern" clique in its second session, and the reproduction of the "traditional" clique in the third session by referring to political developments and processes at the national level, and by showing how these national political processes affected the position of classes at various stages in time. The topic that still needs discussion is the way in which these national processes manifested themselves at the level of the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal, and especially in relation to the social structure of each neighbourhood.

b) Processes within Baytalmal:

We have seen that the first councils were not allowed to complete

their full first term and were dissolved towards the end of 1973, after the first SSU basic units were in the process of establishment. The SSU basic units (contrary to the first local councils) came to be controlled by people younger in age, who were mostly lower rank civil servants coming from a different social class who formed a major base of support for the regime. We have seen how this class was using its support for and relations with the regime to challenge the dominance of the former class which was largely composed of big merchants and senior civil servants.

In Chapter VII, I will dwell on local organisatons (including SSU basic units), their membership and relationships with local councils, and on the structure of the SSU basic units. Here I must simply note that they constituted the most basic level of the SSU structure and had tasks of political supervision of local affairs and of mobilizing support for the regime from below.

In fact, however, they had begun exercising their "political supervision function" even before the formal dissolution of the first councils in December 1973. In particular, they had begun to complain about the performance of councils, saying these were inadequate and that their membership was counter revolutionary. Evidence for this includes a letter dated 16th September 1973, from the head of the SSU basic unit of Baytalmal North neighbourhood, addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Khartoum Province. This demanded that the council for that neighbourhood be dissolved as it never met, was not distributing consumer goods properly, and was simply not functioning. The letter and its content demonstrates that even before the formal dissolution of the first councils, SSU basic units controlled by a different membership had begun to exert pressure on them. In effect, the regime had come to realise that the type of membership of these first councils was contrary to what it saw to be its interests, specifically a membership that would aid the regime, and help preserve its stability. Finally,

what happened was that these first councils were formally dissolved and new elections held in December 1973. These elections for the second session of councils were controlled by the SSU basic units, who had to ratify all candidates running for council membership.

I now consider what happened at the elections of December 1973, in several of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, and I will show that competition between the main elements was not equal in all seven neighbourhoods. The degree and nature of competition varied according to the strength of each class in the various neighbourhoods. Two other factors must also be borne in mind: a) the principle of indirect representation which meant that there were two sets of elections, the first at the neighbourhood level, leading to the formation of neighbourhood councils, and the second for the Town Council, for which, as previously explained in Chapter III, the newly constituted neighbourhood councils were to form the electoral college, b) the open nature of the elections which rendered them subject to manipulation and abuse, and which meant that they were neither "free" nor "democratic" as official rhetoric and slogans claimed.

a) <u>Baytalmal Centre</u>

Situated between Baytalmal North and Baytalmal South, this is one of the most tightly knit neighbourhoods both socially and physically, of the three in old Baytalmal. It is dominated socially by a class of merchants, most of whom are related to each other through kinship and business connections. It is the neighbourhood where the present town council president resides. He belongs to a well-known family which has lived there since the Mahdiyya. He is a retired senior civil servant, and was one of the founders of the Graduates Congress and the Ashiqqa party and was later a prominent member of the NUP Executive Council. During elections for the first neighbourhood councils in 1972, he had been able to use his kinship and former political party connections to dominate elections, and was later also elected President

of the Town Council. In 1973, with the formation of the first SSU basic units, he was elected head of the SSU in Baytalmal Centre. However, during the second session of councils in December 1973, although he was able to ensure his election both to the neighbourhood council and Town Council , he lost the Presidency of the latter.

At the neighbourhood level, the outcome of elections depended largely upon the relative strength of the two contending classes, in addition to the relative strength of their leadership especially since elections were subject to manipulation. In Baytalmal Centre due to its specific social structure (namely the dominance of one particular class of big merchants), the "traditional" clique was thus able to maintain its dominant position. This also happened in some of the other neighbourhoods, as we will show. However, when it came to the Town Council level, Baytalmal Centre lost the Presidency owing to reduced numbers of "traditional" supporters from other neighbourhood councils.

b) Baytalmal South:

The case of Baytalmal South is very similar to the above. Here again, the neighbourhood is dominated by the same class (composed largely of big merchants but also of senior civil servants). In the first session of councils, it was the current vice-president of the Town Council who also is the head of the neighbourhood council. He is also a retired senior civil servant (the first Sudanese Prison Commissioner at one time) in addition to being one of the founders of the NUP and having a personal friendship with its leader and the one-time Prime Minister, Ismail al-Azhari, who also lived in this neighbourhood. As in Baytalmal Centre, he used kinship and political party connections to ensure his election to the first session, during which period he was vice-president of the Town Council. Also, as in the case of Baytalmal Centre, during mid 1973, with the formation of SSU units, he became head of the SSU unit for Baytalmal South. During

the second session, he managed to get elected to the Town Council, but he lost the vice-presidency he had formerly held.

To repeat, in the cases of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal North, the dominance of one particular class, with a prominent leadership, and the fact that no dichotomy developed between local council and SSU basic unit leadership, meant that (at least at the neighbourhood level) the "traditional" clique representing the interests of that class was dominant. Of course, it also controlled the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the Town Council during the first session (1972-1973), although it later lost them in 1973.

To what extent was the above sequence of events repeated in the other neighbourhoods of Baytalmal?

c) Baytalmal North:

Baytalmal North lies on the outskirts of Baytalmal, facing the river, and is an area where most replanning has been carried out. The effect of replanning has been that a lot of the neighbourhood's original inhabitants have moved to Omdurman's new extensions, especially al-Thawra. Despite this, the neighbourhood continues to have the largest population in Baytalmal namely 4,520.

The neighbourhood is clearly less affluent and less tightly-knit than are those of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South. Also, unlike the two cases reviewed, the dominant class is one largely composed of lower rank civil servants and there is a large element of skilled and unskilled workers, many of whom are employed in the departments of mechanical transport and of stores. As a result we find the traditional supporters of the NUP (namely the class of merchants and senior civil servants) have less influence in this neighbourhood. The above points have been given to provide a general context within which Baytalmal North's council politics may be examined.

Most of the membership of its neighbourhood council for the first session 1972-1973 were: a) in the 30-40 years group, and b) were either

workers or lower rank civil servants working in various government departments. During this first session, however, the representative to the Town Council followed the pattern of the two other neighbourhoods discussed above. He was a retired headmaster, in his late 60's and an ardent supporter of the NUP. Contrary to what happened in Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South, however, he was not able in mid 1973 to command enough traditional support to be elected to the presidency of the neighbourhood's SSU unit. What happened was that a group of people, consisting mainly of lower rank civil servants or workers, which later developed into the "modern" clique, gained control of the SSU basic unit. Hence, contrary to what happened in Baytalmal Centre and South, a division developed between the leadership of the SSU unit and the council membership. During the second session of councils, commencing in December 1973, the "modern" clique dominated the neighbourhood council and actually removed the former neighbourhood council president from the council altogether. The vice-president of the Baytalmal North's new neighbourhood council also became the President of the Baytalmal Town Council. He was only 30 years old at the time, and although having a lower rank government job, was working full-time for the SSU. Apart from a brief flirtation in the late 1960s with the Communist Party, from which he was dismissed (according to rumours, for dishonesty), he had not had any other political experience. As President of the Town Council during its second session, he thus contrasted in every way with the first president. He was much younger in age (30 vs 70), he came from a much lower socio-economic class,(and it is well known in Baytalmal that his father is a cannabis dealer). In Baytalmal it is said that for him the council presidency was a means of "quick gain and dishonest competition", (in the words of one councillor).

I discussed this man's presidency with several councillors, especially inquiring how he came to be elected. Some of those who had voted for him said that among the "qualifications" they had considered

him to hold were his friendship with the then commissioner of Khartoum Province, his alleged blood relationship with the President, his youth and, more generally, his connections in the higher levels of government especially through his position in the SSU. One councillor stressed that he had thought these "qualifications" would enable him to get things done for the council without always getting bogged down by bureaucratic procedures and red tape.

Such reports demonstrate some of the points made earlier concerning the fact that after the failure of the 1971 communist-backed coup, the May regime was searching for new bases of support, which it found to some degree in this "lower middle class", by and large composed of lower rank civil servants, which came to dominate the structures of the SSU and local councils between 1973 and 1977. This class was using its relations with the regime to challenge the hegemony of the dominant class in the area composed mainly of big merchants and senior civil servants, who had hitherto monopolised power and influence in the area.

To summarise, whereas in Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South neighbourhood council membership remained practically unchanged during the second session with the continued domination of the "traditional" clique, at the Town Council level, the situation was very different. In the first session, the "traditional" clique had held both the presidency and vice-presidency of the Town Council, but they lost both during the second session. In Baytalmal North, on the other hand, due to the cleavage between the leadership of the SSU unit and the council members, (and also due to the dominance of a different class), the "traditional" clique lost control even at the neighbourhood level.

d) Mulazmin South:

The most important feature of this neighbourhood is that the police barracks are located here next to the area of first class housing. The relations between the inhabitants of the barracks (constituting a numerical majority) and residents of the first class area are important

for any analysis of council membership in this neighbourhood. For the first session of councils, as in the case of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South, council membership was dominated by big merchants and senior civil servants inhabiting the first class residential area. The police barracks inhabitants were not equally represented, despite being a numerical majority. But with their development the SSU basic units came to be controlled by inhabitants of the barracks, with the consequence that during the second session they also dominated the neighbourhood council. At the level of the Town Council,however, there were representatives from both areas of Mulazmin South. There were also continuous disputes within the council between representatives of each of the two areas. During the present session, the police barracks were able to completely dominate both neighbourhood and Town Council membership, thus depriving the population of the first class residential area of any representation. (Several of the latter complained to me that the council is unrepresentative and should be dissolved).

The above developments in four of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods show how local processes have affected the reproduction of the "traditional" clique (and hence the interests it represents), at various periods of the councils' history. I have dwelt on the relative strength of the contending classes in the various neighbourhoods and shown to what extent they have been able to control their SSU basic units. This has been the most important immediate factor affecting the reproduction of the council's membership patterns.

I began this second section of the chapter by stating that the reproduction of council membership (specifically the "traditional" clique) would be explained by making use of three levels of analysis. I began by looking at national events and processes surrounding the development of councils, following which we looked at the neighbourhood level, and how processes within the neighbourhoods have affected reproduction or non-reproduction of the 'traditional' clique in specific

neighbourhoods of Baytalmal. In what follows, I examine events within Baytalmal Town Council, to see how changes in council membership have actually occurred.

c) Events and Processes within Baytalmal Town Council

We have seen that during the first session, the "traditional" clique was dominant (it controlled the offices of President and Vice-President), yet relatively weak, and still in the process of formation, but that it was 'defeated' in the second session when the council came to be dominated by the "modern" clique. Despite the fact that there were four members of the "traditional" clique in the second council, they were largely isolated and had little power or influence. All their moves were suspect and interpreted as attempts to revive the old political parties, and there were continuous and persistent disputes between them, especially between the President and the former President of the Council. Disputes took place, for example, over allegations that the new President was taking individual action without consulting the council, especially in relation to the replanning of Baytalmal. Generally, however, the basic underlying current in all disputes was the conflict between the different class interests represented by the two cliques. The temporarily weakened "traditional" clique representing the class of big merchants and senior civil servants, and the "modern" clique representing the interests of Baytalmal's lower middle class, who were using their relationships with the new regime to gain ascendance, and to challenge the dominance of the former class.

This situation continued until mid-1977, when changes began to occur coincidentally with two developments. The first, mentioned above, was the beginning of the policy of national reconciliation, calling in elements of the traditional opposition to work within the political system. The second came with the 1976 elections for SSU organisations which resulted in the headship of Baytalmal SSU Qism or division (next higher level above SSU basic units) by a different person, formerly

an NUP supporter and generally friendly with the "traditional" clique. The events within the council also coincided with the approach of the end of term of the second session of Baytalmal Town Council and the new elections due to be held in December 1977.

At one council meeting, a member of the "traditional" clique (the former vice-president of the council) accused the President of taking a bribe in connection with a licence for expanding a shop. The accuser said that he had heard of this through a contact of his in the National Security Organisation (al-amn al-qawmi), and through the Assistant Commissioner. Another member of the "traditional" clique said that this was an affront to the dignity of the council, and demanded that a vote of confidence be taken. The motion was seconded by the new head of Baytalmal's SSU Qism, who, as stated above was friendly with the "traditional" clique and an NUP supporter. The Administrative Officer and the Council Engineer also said that they had heard of the investigations through the Assistant Commissioner for Omdurman District. The Council President was enraged and said that the whole affair was a conspiracy by "remnants of the reactionary political parties". The ultimate outcome at the next council meeting held specifically to discuss the matter was that a vote of no confidence was taken, and carried and the President was dismissed.

Before this final meeting, I was told by one of the female councillors that the former President had contacted councillors of whom he was not sure (including this particular female councillor) to persuade them to vote against the President. She told me that he kept reminding her of her father's old allegiances to the NUP, and that she should therefore not fail him. It is rumoured in Baytalmal that this whole affair was "engineered" by the former vice-president, also a former judge.

At the same council meeting, with the renewed triumph of the "traditional" clique, the old council president was re-elected for the

remainder of the council's term, and the temporary isolation of the "traditional" clique had effectively ended.

At the elections for the present session of councils, the "traditional" clique recruited several new councillors, and succeeded in having several former councillors from the first session re-elected, and they regained control over the offices of President and Vice-President.Seven members who had belonged to the "modern" clique in the second session stood for election but were unsuccessful. At the neighbourhood level the position is similar with the elections bringing back a number of former councillors of the first session. In the neighbourhood of Baytalmal North, however, there was severe competition between supporters of the "traditional" clique and those of the "modern" clique. Some violent incidents were even reported with the allegation that they were instigated by the ousted president who lived in that neighbourhood.

III. Reproduction of Council Membership and Baytalmal's Changing Social Structure:

In the first section of this chapter, I examined characteristics of Baytalmal's councillors for the three sessions of Baytalmal Town Council. It was established that whereas characteristics of councillors for the first and present sessions were similar, membership of the second session of Baytalmal Town Council diverged from this pattern. This divergence was then described and an attempt to explain it using the concept of "clique", and distinguishing between the two different cliques was made. In the second section, I dealt with the issue of reproduction of council membership, and, more specifically of cliques, by relating them to a) national political processes, b) processes within Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, and c) events within Baytalmal Town Council.

In this final section, I attempt to answer one of the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter: What does this membership

pattern and its reproduction or non-reproduction tell us about the changing nature of Baytalmal's social structure and local politics?

The main point to be made here is that essentially the application of the PLG system, the setting up of the councils and the various administrative boundaries have in effect transformed Baytalmal from an area made up of several relatively independent communities into a politically-defined arena of conflict where various groups compete and conflict.

It follows then that the conflict between the new cliques described in its various stages above, is essentially a conflict between different classes and the class interests they represent. Hence, the dominance of particular cliques may be taken to signify the dominance of particular classes at specific points in time. The "traditional" clique represents the interests of the class of big merchants and senior civil servants, whereas the "modern" clique represents the interests of the "lower middle class" of Baytalmal, and is largely made up of lower rank civil servants and workers. The latter, as I have stated, have used their relationship with the State to gain dominance over the formerly dominant class, attempting to do this by controlling local councils and the SSU structure. However, the change in the State's base of support, particularly after the 1976 national reconciliation policies, has led to the domination of the "traditional" clique and the class interests which it represents in Baytalmal Town Council's Third Session (1977-1980). Hence, the application of the PLG system and the creation of these numerous local councils has in effect provided the instruments that are used by the various classes in their conflicts in the political arena. I should emphasise here, nevertheless, that I am not suggesting that classes or class conflict are new phenomena that did not exist prior to the setting up of local councils and the drawing up of administrative boundsries, I am only saying that these have provided a bounded arena for these conflicts of interest to work themselves out,

and has thus accelerated the development of "classes for themselves", capable of taking political action (refer to introduction). Conversely, I am arguing that after the application of the PLG system, Baytalmal, has seen the development of genuinely "local" politics (although, of course, with far reaching national ramifications), politics that are concerned with "local" issues, and conflicts between interests within the area. Furthermore, I am not suggesting that these developments were automatic responses to the creation of councils, rather that a long process was involved.

To fully appreciate these points it is useful here to recall the situation which preceded the PLG System, when the whole of Omdurman was administered by a single municipal council and when elections for this council were conducted along political party lines. The parties already represented class interests (refer to Chapter II) but the council was rather removed from the issues specific to each neighbourhood, and hence to each class in each neighbourhood. Moreover, the fact that the NUP (whose social base as I have shown was mainly composed of the towns merchants, middle-rank and senior civil servants) largely dominated Omdurman Municipal Council, meant that many people were disillusioned with its traditional political party politics as they had experienced little success in having their interests represented on the Municipal Council.

Also, in this situation, there was clearly more concern for national than local issues. The relation between local and national issues was also seen differently because the main political issues developing during the sixties were indeed by and large national ones. Omdurman was then a much smaller town, its basic services had not deteriorated to the extent they have today and local government revenue almost invariably covered most of the expenses in services.

Important aspects of this general situation changed drastically after the PLG Acts local councils were established. There were two

reasons for the changes: 1) local councils were now in an important sense "closer to home" and were in principle intended to be concerned with specifically local issues of self-development and the like, 2) local councils provided at least theoretically an excellent opportunity for people dissillusioned with traditional party politics to participate in political life.

As stated the change in the function of councils locally was not sudden however, and there were primarily two stages through which the relationship between Baytalmal's councils and Baytalmal passed. The first stage was in 1972-1973, (coinciding with councils' first session), when there was a general weariness concerning the newly established May regime and questions were being raised about its stability, especially after the communist-backed coup of July 1971. At this period there was a very limited understanding and awareness as to what councils were, and what functions, they were supposed to play at the local level.

It was in this situation that the "traditional" clique developed and subsequently dominated the council during its first session. Its aim at this early time was primarily to remain on the political scene in case the situation should change and the banned parties be allowed to resume their activities. Salient aspects of this first stage were: a) the absence of local level or grass roots organisations supporting the regime (the basic units of the SSU had not been established) and b) an economic situation much better than it is today with no widespread shortages of consumer goods, c)weak councils as they did not yet hold all of their present functions, consequently, there was little dependence on them.

The principal characteristic of the relationship between councils and Baytalmal was thus a wide gap between them, a factor which in itself facilitated the growth of the "traditional" clique and allowed its domination of the first council. So that at this early stage local councils had not yet begun to affect the articulation of class interests

as they now do.

The second stage of development can be thought of as beginning late in 1973, with the second session of councils. It was marked by the start of a more clearly defined relationshhip between the councils and Baytalmal, as councils began to become politically defined areas in the context of which Baytalmal's various interests were fought. This took place concurrently with the development of the first SSU basic units, the development of the "modern" clique and the ascendance of the class it represents, making use largely of the support it gave the regime at the time to gain such hegemony over both local councils, and most of the areas basic SSU units.

Of course, other important processes to mention here are the fact of the deteriorating economic situation, the development of acute consumer goods shortages for the first time, and the involvement of councils in the distribution of the now rationed goods. Added to which of course, is the beginning of an understanding of what councils are, and their functions. A further factor to be considered, was the increased devolution of functions to the new councils, which for the first time in 1973 began to have their own budgets, this year witnessing the first trial at making the province a budgetary unit, thus ending the pre-1971 duality of central and local government budgets. All of these latter factors together signified a growth of importance for councils and consequently resulted in a much greater measure of dependence upon them.

It was at this juncture hence that they came to develop into arenas for the various classes in the area to contest the range of resources councils dispensed. (for a discussion of these resources refer to Chapters III and VII).

During the second session of councils, therefore, the "modern" clique representative of Baytalmal's less affluent class especially making use of their relations with the State through the newly set up

SSU structure, were able to control:the council. During the third session of councils (1977-1980), while the dependence on councils grew, especially due to the aggravation of consumer goods shortages and extreme deterioration in services, the hegemony of the "modern" clique ended with the return once more of the "traditional" clique (and hence Baytalmal's affluent class of which it is representative) to control the council, this time making use of its newly developed support for the State.

The main point to be emphasised in relation to the two stages through which the relationship between Baytalmal and its councils has passed is that they signify two concomitant but related changes, the first is the change in the functions of councils locally and the second the change this effected in the social structure of the area, namely a marked articulation of the processes of class conflict.

Conclusion:

The first section of this chapter began with an analysis of electoral procedure, trying to ascertain how it affects the type of membership. Then, I examined characteristics of membership (including age, education, occupation, etc.), for Baytalmal Town Councils' three sessions. I then moved in the second section of the chapter to the question of reproduction of council membership, especially making use of the concept of "clique" to describe different membership patterns. I delineated two such cliques (the "traditional" and the "modern"), and tried to explain their dominance at particular points in the councils history by reference to three sets of factors, national events and processes, processes within the neighbourhoods, especially relating to their specific social structures, and finally by referring to events within Baytalmal Town Council.

In the final section of the chapter, I raised the question of how the reproduction or non-reproduction of cliques at particular points in time was indicative of changes in Baytalmal's social structure. I

showed that the effect of the application of the PLG system, the creation of councils and the creation of new administrative boundaries meant the transformation of Baytalmal into a bounded arena, where different class interests are pursued. I finally emphasised that this did not occur suddenly, but was a process that was affected by numerous factors, including the all important changing relationship between Baytalmal community and the councils.

CHAPTER FOUR: FOOTNOTES

1. Holt, (1961) op.cit., 195.

2. Bechtold, op.cit., 29.

3. Ibid., 28.

4. Fatima Babiker Mahmoud, op.cit., 293.

5. S.A.M.Nugdalla, "The Sudanese Political Leadership: A study of Elite Formation and Conflict in a Modernising Society" (Manchester, D.Phil., 1973), 16.

6. Bechtold, op.cit., 82.

7. Fatima Babiker Mahmoud, op.cit., 298.

8. Bechtold, op.cit., 80.

9. Ibid., 28-29.

10. Ibid., 82.

11. Ibid.

12. Howell, op.cit., 91.

13. Niblock, op.cit., 410.

14. Ibid., 413.

15. These responses have been given to me by councillors themselves during interviews, although several were very secretive about them. and tried to show they were no longer politically active in the sense of trying to revive these particular political parties, and said that at least formally they were committed to cooperation with the present government.

16. Niblock, op.cit., 408.

17. Howell, op.cit., 99.

18. Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

FURTHER ASPECTS OF THE POLITICS OF LOCAL COUNCILS: PERCEPTIONS OF COUNCILS AND VOTING TURNOUTS

In the previous chapter I analysed the pattern of membership in Baytalmal's councils, and I examined what this told us about the changing social structure of the area. In this chapter I look at two additional factors affecting the micro political processes of local councils in Baytalmal. These are: I: Perceptions of councils and their operation by Baytalmal's different neighbourhoods, and II: Voting behaviour in Baytalmal's different neighbourhoods.

I: The Perception of Councils by Baytalmal's Population

In this section, I make use of material gathered by questionnaire in the survey I conducted in Baytalmal. The primary aim of this was to assess local views and perceptions of the system of local government and the way it operates. As far as my general analysis is concerned, I suggest that local views and perceptions in themselves constitute an important factor affecting the functioning of councils in Baytalmal, but I am also interested in these perceptions and views on account of what they tell us about the social structure of the area, specifically the extent to which the councils are differently perceived by different sections of the population. I will therefore examine the following: A, Perceptions of council functions and evaluations of council performance B, Views on the types of decisions taken by councils, and C, Local suggestions for improving the councils and the way they operate.

A. Perceptions of Council Functions

Table I shows the responses given to the question: "Do you know what are the functions of local government councils?" The responses are classified by neighbourhood, because I am primarily interested in the differential perception of councils by different socio-economic categories, (rather than by sex or age, for instance) and in Baytalmal, as already established in the discussion of the socio-economic and demographic features of the area, differences in socio-economic status tend to vary between different neighbourhoods. (Other characteristics of informants are, however, given in appendix I). We must recall that there are

important socio-economic differences between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods and that the area can be classified into two broad categories. The first includes the neighbourhoods of Mulazmin North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South, in each of which the population is largely composed of merchants, professionals and senior civil servants. The second category consists of the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal North, al-Isbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al-Makki and the police barracks section of Mulazmin South, in which areas the population is in the main composed of lower rank civil servants and workers. (For details refer to Chapter II).

TABLE I: FUNCTIONS OF COUNCILS AS SEEN BY POPULATION OF BAYTALMAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

Functions of Councils	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
1.Performing Basic Services/ Serving the neighbourhood/ solving its problems	10	47.6	10	35.7	10	45.5	3	30	1	3.3	2	8.7	2	10	38	24.7
2.Dealing with Consumer Goods Shortages/Good Distribution of Consumer Goods	2	9.5	6	21.4	5	22.7	6	60	13	43.3	8	34.8	10	50	50	32.5
3.Providing and supervising Educational Services	6	28.6	2	7.1	4	18.2	1	10			1	43.3	2	10	16	10.4
4.Creation and supervision of cooperatives	1	4.8							3	10	2	8.7	1	5	7	4.5
5.Solving Public Health problems/Sewage/Sanitation			9	32.1					12	40	7	30.4	3	15	31	20.1
6.Administration of Area	1	4.8													1	.65
7.Collection of Local Taxes					2	9.1					1	4.3	1	5	4	2.6
8.Don't Know	1	4.8	1	3.6	1	4.5			1	3.3	2	8.7	1	5	7	4.5
Total	21	100.1	28	99.9	22	100	10	100	30	99.9	23	99.9	20	100	154	99.95

Several points emerge from this table. Firstly, there is a relatively widespread understanding of what council functions are. It is especially interesting to note, for example, that only 4.5% of informants said that they did not know what council functions are, and that all of these were women. The latter point assumes significance if we remember the fact, commented upon earlier, that the participation of Sudanese women in public life is very limited. In this particular case, the responses were also undoubtedly related to age (refer to appendix I for characteristics of informants).

Secondly, the function that received the highest rating was that of distribution of consumer goods and dealing with consumer goods shortages in general (32.5%). This is understandable when it is known that consumer goods shortages were during the period of fieldwork one of the salient features of Sudanese urban life, and that this constituted a major issue for local councils. (The involvement of local councils in the distribution of consumer goods is examined in greater detail in the last chapter of the thesis). Related to this is the fact that 4.5% of the sample saw the creation and supervision of cooperatives as an important function of local councils. (for details on cooperatives and their workings, see the next chapter on Local Organisations in Baytalmal).

Thirdly, in relation to differences across Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, it is seen that whereas Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods stressed councils' general functions, such as serving the neighbourhood or performing basic services, its less affluent neighbourhoods (Baytalmal North, al-Izbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al-Makki and the police barracks section of Mulazmin South) stressed more specific functions of councils, such as dealing with consumer goods shortages and the efficient distribution of scarce consumer goods. It can also be seen that the more affluent neighbourhoods stressed that one of the council's functions was the provision and supervision of educational services.

Generally, then, we may conclude that there is widespread consciousness concerning what councils are supposed to do, but Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods stress general functions and education, and its less affluent neighbourhoods stress the more specific, and for them more necessary, functions of the distribution of consumer goods.

B. Evaluation of Council Performance:

Here the question asked in relation to council functions was, "Are they performing those functions?". The following table shows the responses given:

TABLE II: EVALUATION OF COUNCIL PERFORMANCE BY THE POPULATION OF BAYTALMAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

Responses	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
a) Yes	2	9.5	4	14.3	4	18.2	2	20	3	10	5	21.7			20	13
b) No, because of financial problems	16	76.2	20	71.4	15	68.2	2	20	3	10	3	13	6	30	65	42.2
c) No, because of the corruption of councillors	2	9.5	3	10.7	2	9.1	6	60	23	76.7	13	56.5	13	65	62	40.3
d) Don't know	1	4.8	1	3.6	1	4.5			1	3.3	2	8.7	1	5	7	4.5
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	99.9	20	100	154	100

Before commenting on these findings, it is necessary briefly to explain the categories used in classifying the responses. Category (b) "Councils are not functioning because of financial problems" contains all responses which tried to explain the performance (or the lack of performance) of councils in terms of inadequate resources and financial difficulties especially the councils' lack of financial autonomy. Category (c) "Councils are not functioning because of the corruption of councillors" contains all responses which made allegations that councillors use councils for personal gain and enrichment and which either claimed or implied that this was the main reason for the low standard of council performance.

In relation to all responses given, the following points are clear; a) that only minorities of informants stated that councils were performing their designated functions, (13%) or that they did not know whether councils were performing their designated functions (4.5%), b) that the differences across Baytalmal's neighbourhoods is considerable with the affluent neighbourhoods seeing the councils as not functioning because of their financial problems and the lack of financial autonomy especially in relation to raising their own revenue. The percentages in this category of response were 76.2% for Mulazmin North, 71.4% for Baytalmal Centre and 68.2% for Baytalmal South, in sharp contrast to the lower figures of 20%, 10%, and 30% for the area's less affluent neighbourhoods where the councils' poor performance was largely attributed to widespread corruption and embezzlement of council resources by the councillors currently dominating council membership. The percentages were 60% for the police barracks section of Mulazmin South, 76.7% for Baytalmal North and 56.5% and 65% for al-Izbitaliyya and al-Sayyid al-Makki respectively.

These differences in views by different sections of Baytalmal's population can partly be explained by relating them to current domination of the council by the "traditional" clique which represents the interests

of Baytalmal's more affluent class composed primarily of merchants, senior civil servants and professionals. It is no wonder then that members of Baytalmal's less affluent class (largely lower-rank civil servants) who are not widely represented at the Town Council level, attribute poor and inadequate council performance to corruption by the councillors who represent Baytalmal's more affluent class. Meanwhile, informants from Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods, do not agree with this; they see the cause of poor performance by councils as being linked to the lack of financial autonomy of the council and its consequent lack of financial resources.

We may thus draw the following conclusions: a) there is quite a widespread understanding and consciousness concerning what council functions are. This understanding is to a large extent congruent with what the various laws and acts passed after 1971 state councils should do (refer to Chapter III). Nonetheless, there is some divergence between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods. Hence, its more affluent neighbourhoods find that the general function of provision of services (especially educational services) is what councils should do. Meanwhile, its less affluent neighbourhoods stress that the council's most important function is provision of rare consumer goods, and generally dealing with consumer goods shortages. Of course, this is related to the fact that whereas more affluent families can depend, at least to some extent, on their personal relations with merchants and councillors or the black market, Baytalmal's less affluent classes are compelled to depend upon goods provided by the council at the much lower official prices.
b) There is a widespread realisation that councils are not adequately performing the functions they are supposed to, and are generally inefficient. Here, there are differences between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods on the supposed reasons for this. Again, it is found that informants from the neighbourhoods of Mulazmin North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South (Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods), propose

the councils lack of financial autonomy and generally acute financial problems as the basic explanation. Informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods meanwhile see the basic cause of lack of performance to lie in the ensuing corruption characterising councils. I have stressed that this perception is related to the current supremacy of 'traditional' clique representing the interests of Baytalmal's affluent classes. It follows then that the rest of Baytalmal's population feels isolated. I must emphasise here that I am not denying that corruption exists or that it indeed hampers adequate council performance; neither am I questioning the role of chronic financial problems as one factor helping to explain council functioning. I am simply stating that the differential perception of councils by Baytalmal's neighbourhoods is an indication of the present position of councils in Baytalmal, namely that they are controlled by the area's more affluent class (through the 'traditional' clique), and hence the population from other areas perceives them as not functioning for that reason. This point will become even clearer as I look at other aspects of the perception of councils and voting behaviour.

C. Decisions taken by Councils

Here the specific question asked was: "What are some of the decisions taken recently by councils that have affected you or a member of your household personally?" The aim in asking this question was to ascertain the extent to which different neighbourhoods of Baytalmal were differentially affected by decisions taken by councils but it is interesting to note that most informants interpreted this question to mean decisions taken by councils "against them", rather than all decisions *per se*. I will elaborate upon this after showing the responses given to the question in the following table.

TABLE III: DECISIONS TAKEN BY BAYTALMAL'S COUNCILS WHICH AFFECTED INFORMANTS DIRECTLY

Decisions	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
1.Decisions concerning Distribution of Consumer Goods	5	23.8	7	25	7	31.8	4	40	16	53.3	12	52.2	9	45	60	39
2.Decisions concerning Distribution of Land			3	10.7	3	13.6	2	20	9	30	8	34.8	8	40	33	21.4
3.No decisions taken affecting informants personally	16	76.2	18	64.3	12	54.5	4	40	5	16.7	3	13	3	15	61	39.6
Total	21	100	28	100	22	99.9	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

Again from the responses given it is seen that the important difference lies in which neighbourhood informants belonged to and hence basically their class affiliation. Most informants from Baytalmal North, al-Izbitaliyya, al-Sayyid al-Makki and the police barracks section of Mulazmin South, stressed that decisions taken by councils that affected them related to the two areas of 1) Distribution of Consumer Goods and 2) Distribution of land in Southern Omdurman. In relation to (1) they maintained that the system of distribution was unfair and depended more upon personal and kinship relations with councillors in charge of distribution of goods rather than the set criteria. In relation to (2) informants said that frequently whereas they were eligible for the land being distributed and had fulfilled the regulations governing its distribution, they had been deprived of pieces of land which were rightfully theirs.

On the other hand, most informants residing in Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods stated that no significant decisions taken by councils had affected them. This is related to the fact that the population of these neighbourhoods do not depend wholly upon the council. Apart from the council's official distributions, they have the "right" contacts at the council. This is, specifically, the "traditional" clique currently dominating the Town Council's membership. So that, as in the case of perceptions of functions and evaluations of council performance, the different responses given concerning decisions taken by the council largely depend on whether or not informants belonged to Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods.

D. Suggestions for improvement of Councils

The specific question asked was: "In your opinion what would be the best way for improving the functioning of Local Government Councils?" The aim of asking this question was to try to uncover the degree of awareness concerning, "what was wrong with councils", and the extent to which people understood why they function as they do. Furthermore,

I have used the various suggestions made for improvement of councils by informants from different neighbourhoods as a way of further exploring evaluations of councils by different sections of Baytalmal's population. The following table shows the main suggestions made by informants.

TABLE IV: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

Suggestions	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
1. Regular checks of Councils by Neighbourhood	2	9.5	1	3.6	2	9.1	4	40	11	36.7	10	43.5	8	40	38	24.7
2. Changing Present Membership			1	3.6	1	4.5	2	20	8	26.7	6	26.1	4	20	22	14.3
3. Emphasising their role in dealing with consumer goods shortages			1	3.6	2	9.1	1	10	6	20	5	21.7	6	30	21	13.6
4. Giving them more functions and authorities	8	38.1	15	53.6	8	36.4	1	10	3	10			1	5	36	23.4
5. Creating an awareness concerning councils and their functions	11	52.4	10	35.7	9	40.9	2	20	2	6.7	2	8.7	1	5	37	24
Total	21	100	28	100.1	22	100	10	100	30	100.1	23	100	20	100	154	100

Differences once again appear in regard to suggestions made by informants for improvement of council functioning. The main suggestions made by informants from Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods are those of increasing the authorities of councils, especially regarding finance, and specifically allowing them to raise their own revenue. In addition, it was suggested that an awareness should be created at the neighbourhood level (through talks, leaflets etc.) concerning councils, their functions, responsibilities and problems. The rest of the informants, meanwhile, coming from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods, made the following suggestions: That councils be made subject to regular checks by the neighbourhoods they are intended to represent, that their present membership be changed, and that they should play a greater role in dealing with consumer goods shortages.

These responses are understandable both in the light of what we already know about differences within Baytalmal and the earlier differential perceptions of council functioning and explanations for lack of adequate council performance. Hence, clearly informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods, see that the only way for improving council functioning is changing their present membership, specifically the 'traditional' clique representing different class interests to their own. In fact, one informant told me that the current Town Council President (a member of the "traditional" clique) behaves as if the council is his "own private colony". Another suggestion made was that of creating a system whereby councils would be subject to regular checks by neighbourhoods. On the other hand for informants from Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods, the problem with councils is firstly that they do not have enough authority (especially financial), and secondly that Baytalmal's population does not possess enough understanding or awareness of councils and their operation, an understanding that has to be created before council performance can improve.

The point made earlier concerning the significance of the

differential perception of councils can once again be made here. Although important in themselves, these different suggestions for improving council performance must be related to two further points: 1) that they are made by different sections of Baytalmal's population and 2) that they reflect the current position of councils in Baytalmal. In relation to the first point they can hence be seen to indicate the changing social structure, especially the developing dichotomy between its classes. In regard to the second point, they further illustrate the position of councils, namely that they are by and large, currently controlled by the area's affluent class and hence have in themselves affected the social structure of the area by providing instruments for such conflict.

II Voting Turnouts in Baytalmal

In this section, I examine aspects of voting behaviour in Baytalmal. An effort is made to ascertain how voting can, like the differential perception of councils, contribute to a further understanding of local political processes. Two points must be explained in advance. First, there are no actual figures for local council voting in Baytalmal that might serve for comparison with my figures of voting records of people I interviewed. This is due to the fact that there is no registration of voters, and that elections are "open". Second, the high proportions of people who claimed to have voted at different elections must be examined in the light of the fact that my informants were heads of households and were consequently considerably older (see appendix I), and probably more politically active than other sections of the population. The following analysis must therefore be seen in such a context. The voting figures clearly cannot be taken as statistically representative of the whole of Baytalmal. I use them simply as an indication of trends characterising the older and more politically active sections. I do however still concentrate on the differences between neighbourhoods, since it is in this respect that voting behaviour can

most profitably be seen, especially in relation to my overall analysis of the politics of local councils in Baytalmal.

a) Voting turnout for local council elections:

The following tables show voting records of members of my sample for the council's three sessions, as well as their stated intentions for the coming elections.

TABLE V: VOTING TURNOUTS FOR BAYTALMAL NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCILS THREE SESSIONS

a) 1972 Elections

Did you vote?	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%	Total	%
Yes	3	14.3	3	10.7	2	9.1	1	10	2	6.7	3	13	2	10	16	10.4
No	18	85.7	25	89.3	20	90.9	9	90	28	93.3	20	87	18	90	138	89.6
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

b) 1973 Elections

Did you vote?	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%	Total	%
Yes	7	33.3	12	42.9	10	45.5	6	60	17	56.7	17	73.9	11	55	80	51.9
No	14	66.7	16	57.1	12	54.5	4	40	13	43.3	6	26.1	9	45	74	48.1
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

c) 1977 Elections

Did you vote?	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%	Total	%
Yes	13	61.9	18	64.3	16	72.7	7	70	19	63.3	16	69.6	12	60	101	65.6
No	8	38.1	10	35.7	6	27.3	3	30	11	36.7	7	30.4	8	40	53	34.4
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

TABLE VI: STATED INTENTIONS OF VOTING FOR 1980 ELECTIONS

Do you intend voting?	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%	Total	%
Yes	13	61.9	20	71.4	18	81.8	7	70	29	96.7	22	95.7	18	90	127	82.5
No	8	38.1	8	28.6	4	18.2	3	30	1	3.3	1	4.3	2	10	27	17.5
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

The above tables point to a marked trend towards increased participation in elections. (Here, of course, I am referring to elections for neighbourhood councils, the only tier of local government for which there are direct elections, elections for the higher levels being indirect and from within the already elected bodies; for details refer to Chapter III). We find that whereas only 10.4% of the sample said they had voted in the 1972 elections for the first session of local councils, the population increased to 51.9% in 1973 and to 65.6 in 1977, while 82.5% of informants said they intended to vote in the coming elections, due to be held in December 1980.

Before discussing possible explanations for this trend of increased participation let us look at differences within Baytalmal. The following points are clear. Firstly, there was not much difference in voting between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods for the first elections held in 1972. The voting turnout was low (as compared with later figures) for all the area. The reasons for this will be explained below, as I consider reasons given for not voting. Secondly, it can be seen that in the 1973 elections the turnouts although still low compared with the 1977 and projected turnouts, are comparatively higher for Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods than they are for the rest of Baytalmal. I discuss the reasons for this below but should first note that this is closely related to national political developments occurring in 1972-1973 which had important effects on the position of classes in Baytalmal.

Thirdly, it can be seen that at the last elections (1977) there was very little difference between turnouts in the various neighbourhoods. Voting was uniformly high ranging between 60 and 75% for the sample. Fourthly, stated voting intentions were also high for all neighbourhoods, but highest in Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods. We may now consider the reasons for all the above observations.

TABLE VI : REASONS FOR NOT VOTING

a) 1972 elections

Reasons for not voting	MN No	MN %	BC No	BC %	BS No	BS %	MS No	MS %	BN No	BN %	IZB No	IZB %	MAKKI No	MAKKI %	Total	%
1.Uncertainty concerning whole political system	16	88.9	23	92	18	90	8	88.9	27	96.4	19	95	17	94.4	128	92.8
2.Did not learn of elections	2	11.1	2	8	2	10	1	11.1	1	3.6	1	5	1	5.6	10	7.2
Total	18	100	25	100	20	100	9	100	28	100	20	100	18	100	138	100

b) 1973 elections

Reasons for not voting	MN No	MN %	BC No	BC %	BS No	BS %	MS No	MS %	BN No	BN %	IZB No	IZB %	MAKKI No	MAKKI %	Total	%
1.Views on the whole political system	10	71.4	13	81.3	11	91.7	1	25	3	23.1	2	33.3	1	11.1	41	55.4
2.Views on councils	4	28.6	3	18.8	1	8.3	3	75	10	76.9	4	66.7	8	88.9	33	44.6
Total	14	100	16	100.1	12	100	4	100	13	100	6	100	9	100	74	100

c) 1977 elections

Reasons for not voting	MN No	MN %	BC No	BC %	BS No	BS %	MS No	MS %	BN No	BN %	IZB No	IZB %	MAKKI No	MAKKI %	Total	%
1.Views on the whole political system	3	37.5	4	40	2	33.3			2	18.2	2	28.6	2	25	15	28.3
2.Views on councils	5	62.5	6	60	4	66.7	3	100	9	81.8	5	71.4	6	75	38	71.7
Total	8	100	10	100	6	100	3	100	11	100	7	100	8	100	53	100

Table VII shows the reasons given by informants for not voting for Baytalmal councils three sessions. My examination of these reasons will precede an analysis of voting behaviour. Firstly, as regards the 1972 elections, 92.8% of informants gave uncertainty concerning the whole political system, and concerning the extent to which councils were an integral part of it, as their main reasons for not voting. It must be borne in mind that these first elections came after the 1971 communist-backed coup, after which serious questions were being raised about the regime's stability.

Secondly, for the 1973 elections 44.6% of informants (especially in Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods) gave the reason of holding negative views on councils functioning (including crticism of their financial arrangements, etc.) as reasons for not voting. On the other hand, most informants from Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods, especially after the development of SSU structures and following the official rhetoric concerning the development of a new leadership that would combat "reactionary remnants of traditional political parties" and the class interests they represented, were still unsure of the May regime. Hence for the informants belonging to Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods, in the 1973 elections, uncertainty and ambiguity concerning the new political system certainly deterred them from voting.

But, as we have seen, in the 1977 elections voting was uniformly high. Here, the reasons given for not voting were largely related to views critical of the councils, rather than to the previous uncertainty concerning the national political system.

Above, I have examined two sets of variables, (a) actual and intended voting levels, and (b) reasons given for not voting at different points in time, specifically 1972, 1973 and 1977. I now relate the two sets of variables to each other in an attempt to explain voting behaviour in Baytalmal. In relation to (a) I showed that generally

there has been a trend towards greater participation in voting to the extent that over 80% of informants stated their intention of voting in the coming council elections. Apart from this, it was seen that in the 1972 elections voting turnouts were low for the whole of Baytalmal. When reasons given for not voting in those first elections are examined, it is found that they are primarily reasons relating to negative views concerning the whole political system of which informants were still uncertain, in particular, there was concern about the extent to which councils were politicized or were an integral part of the State. In 1973, meanwhile, it is noticed that voting turnouts, while continuing to be low, are comparatively even lower for Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods (Baytalmal Centre, Baytalmal South and Mulazmin North). If we relate this to reasons given for not voting in 1973, it is found that here most informants coming from these neighbourhoods stated their reason for not voting to be negative views concerning the whole political system. But it must be remembered that these elections followed the failure of the communist-backed coup, and that the regime was in a situation of finding a new base of support. It was hence formally both against "leftist" elements and "rightist" elements supporting the old political parties and their interests.

The population of Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods falls in the latter category and they refrained from voting in 1973. These elections were dominated by Baytalmal's lower middle class, largely composed of lower rank civil servants, and residing in Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods. where voting figures were much higher when compared with those from the rest of Baytalmal (refer to page 31). Indeed, it was the "modern" clique representing the interests of this latter class that came to dominate council membership in the second session of councils, as I have shown in the previous chapter.

In relation to the 1977 elections, it is noticed that voting

turnouts were uniformly high for the whole of Baytalmal (elections being especially competitive in particular neighbourhoods, such as those of Mulazmin South and Baytalmal North, reasons for this having already been indicated in the previous chapter).

In the 1977 elections, reasons given for not voting largely related to negative views on councils rather than to uncertainty concerning the national political system. This can, of course, be explained by referring to several sets of events especially the failure of the 1976 "rightist"-backed coup and the 1977 propagation of national reconciliation policies which meant a further "rightist" turn of the regime as it came to seek the support of the social classes previously supporting the traditional political parties. Here, I am especially referring to the class of big merchants, professionals and a lot of former senior civil servants. It was representatives of this class in the 'traditional' clique who, of course, came to dominate council membership between 1977 and 1980.

Above, I have tried to explain the voting behaviour of informants by relating it to political developments and to changes in the position of classes at the local level.

One other factor remains which has enormously affected voting. This is the worsening economic situation which has resulted in the numerous and intense shortages in basic consumer goods, a lot of which have been put in the charge of local councils for distribution. This factor has led many people, even those not necessarily in agreement with the political regime, to be concerned about councils and who controls them.

b) Voting turnouts for National Elections

Here, I am referring to the elections for the Peoples Assembly[1] held in January 1978 (i.e. immediately following the elections for local councils third session in December 1977). Although Peoples Assembly elections are by secret ballot, and possibly are not comparable in this sense, I was still interested to compare these figures for national

elections with those for local elections, trying to find whether there were significant differences, especially since the two sets of elections followed upon each other within a short time span. The following table shows voting turnout for the Peoples Assembly Elections.

TABLE VII : VOTING TURNOUTS FOR PEOPLES ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS (January 1978)

Did you vote?	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
Yes	13	61.9	23	82.1	20	90.9	6	60	17	56.7	15	65.2	12	60	106	68.8
No	8	38.1	5	17.9	2	9.1	4	40	13	43.3	8	34.8	8	40	48	31.2
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

As is clear from the table, not much difference exists between voting turnout for the last local council elections held and those for the Peoples Assembly, the percentages being 65.6 and 68.8, respectively. This comment relates to the whole area. Within Baytalmal, however, we find that Peoples Assembly voting figures for affluent neighbourhoods are relatively higher than for the less affluent (hence for Baytalmal Centre it is 64.3% vs 82.1% for Peoples Assembly elections, while for Baytalmal South the figures are 72.7% vs 90.9%).

In trying to explain these differences, I next consider responses given to the question: "What was the difference between the two elections?" A majority of informants (54.6%) said that there was a difference and those holding this view can be classified into two: a) those who said that there was greater enthusiasm for the Peoples Assembly elections (31%) (largely inhabiting Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods) and b) those who, in contrast maintained that there was greater enthusiasm for local council elections (69%). However, the question that is of interest concerns why there should be greater enthusiasm for national than for local elections, or vice versa, in the first place . Informants inhabiting Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods, largely maintained that there was greater enthusiasm for Peoples Assembly elections and contributed this to the suggestions: 1) that the Peoples Assembly was a more important and effective institution when compared with local councils, and 2) that several of the candidates who nominated themselves for Peoples Assembly elections were persons from the banned political parties, who had re-entered the political scene succeeding the propogation of the government's national reconciliation policies in 1977.

On the other hand, those who perceived greater enthusiasm for local council (largely inhabiting Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods, as stated previously), gave the following reasons: 1) Councils are more important entities in local areas, when compared with national institutions

such as the Peoples Assembly which is removed from local issues.

2) The greater competition over local council elections, is related to the conflict between the 'traditional' and 'modern' cliques, and classes supporting each.

What conclusions can we draw? Above, I have compared voting for Local Council as contrasted with Peoples Assembly elections, in addition to examining informants perceptions of differences between both. I found that generally voting for Peoples Assembly elections was higher in Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods. Again, in relation to perceptions of differences between both sets of elections, it was informants from these same neighbourhoods who saw that Peoples Assembly elections were surrounded by greater enthusiasm. Meanwhile, the rest of Baytalmal saw local council elections as being more competitive. These differences within Baytalmal can further be related to a) the degree to which specific neighbourhoods depend upon councils and b) the extent to which there was intense competition at the neighbourhood level surrounding council elections.

In relation to (a) then, informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods saw local council elections as more important, because they are compelled to depend more upon councils for the provision of basic services than are Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods. The latter are more concerned with ensuring their influence at the national level which is indeed what happened since the candidate who won the seat (beating the official SSU candidate) was a former member of one of the banned political parties and clearly therefore represented the interests of Baytalmal's affluent class.

As regards (b), it is clear that in Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods, there was greater competition surrounding local council elections in an attempt to counteract the control of the "traditional" clique. Thus, for instance, in the neighbourhood of Baytalmal North there were even incidents of violence reported in an attempt to influence the election outcome.

Voting Behaviour: Final Comments

The following comments need to be made: a) the above figures have to be seen in the context of the fact that they are characteristic of informants who are much older (and possibly more politically active). Their analysis can therefore only be used in an attempt to identify trends characterising the area, especially in view of the absence of actual voting figures with which they can be compared. b) despite this "shortcoming", they are valuable in that they inform us about several changes characterising Baytalmal's various neighbourhoods. The main change is the trend towards greater concern for councils and who controls them for various reasons which I have elaborated throughout this thesis. These include the increasing importance of councils locally, as the access to the resources they dispense becomes the crucial local issue. This is further related to the differential access of the areas classes to these resources, which is the dominant factor affecting how enthusiastic the population is regarding local council elections. Thus the increasing numbers of people who said they voted when elections for the councils' three sessions are compared is one measure of this concern for who controls councils. To explain differential voting figures between the neighbourhoods it is, of course, also necessary to refer to the factor of the relation of particular classes to the state at specific points in time. c) when elections for the Peoples Assembly were compared with those for local councils, I found that the areas affluent neighbourhoods were more enthusiastic about these national elections in view of the fact that they already controlled the local councils by means of the "traditional" clique representing their interests. The area's less affluent class, meanwhile, concerned about access to scarce resources distributed by councils were more interested in the local level elections, since they saw the Peoples Assembly to be somewhat removed from their local concerns.

Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter has been to develop the analysis begun in the previous chapter regarding the changing position and functions of councils as an important aspect of the micro-political processes in Baytalmal - processes which are currently affecting its social structure. I considered two factors, those of the differential perception of councils and of aspects of voting turnout in Baytalmal. I have emphasised the following points: 1) Both in relation to the perception of councils and to voting, important differences exist, differences which on analysis elucidate the changing position of councils and the changing social structure of the area. 2) More specifically, as regards the perception of councils, their operation and suggestions made for their improvement, two contrasting patterns were discernible each characterising a different class. The first pattern, characteristic of the area's affluent class, can be summarised in this way: the main function of councils is provision of general services, and the reason for their inefficient performance is seen to lie in their chronic financial difficulties. The second pattern, in contrast, characterised the area's less affluent class. For them, councils' main function is dealing with consumer goods shortages and the reason for their inefficiency lies in corruption and irregularities by their current membership. These two different patterns of perception I stressed were the consequence of the current position of councils, specifically that they are controlled by the "traditional" clique representing the interests of the area's affluent class and isolating the rest of the population.

CHAPTER FIVE: FOOTNOTE

1. "The two main central institutions defined in the constitution are the Presidency and the Peoples Assembly. The powers of these two institutions are in effect interwoven. The President has the power to appoint Ministers to execute his policies. The Assembly may question these Ministers and may by a two-thirds majority, force a Minister to submit his resignation to the President, but it cannot compel the President to accept this resignation. While the Assembly is not able directly to censure the President for his policies, it can by a two-thirds majority compel the President to subject any of his policies to a popular referendum. On the legislative side, the President, besides himself enjoying certain rights in legislation, can annul any bill passed by the Assembly, but the Assembly can overrule the President's annulment if a two-thirds majority in favour of so doing exists" Niblock, op.cit., 411.

CHAPTER SIX

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN BAYTALMAL

The central problem discussed in this thesis so far concerns the changing relations between the administrative and social structures of Baytalmal seen in the context of political and economic processes affecting the whole of Sudanese society. Thus in Chapter IV I attempted to explain the changing membership patterns of Baytalmal councils by relating them to national political developments and I examined these patterns in relation to the local social structure of the area. Further aspects of the politics surrounding local councils were then discussed in Chapter V, concentrating on perceptions of council operation by Baytalmal's inhabitants and voting behaviour. In relation to the discussion of membership patterns, perceptions of councils and voting behaviour, we saw that during the past decade the councils have increasingly become centres of class power and hence reflect the balance between classes in the area, and that this has particular significance at a time when access to basic services and scarce consumer goods is difficult for most inhabitants of the area.

In this chapter, I proceed to examine closely various local organisations in Baytalmal with the aim of showing the extent to which they, like local councils have affected the social structure of the area through becoming politically defined arenas for class conflict.

In addition to analysing the structure and operation of local organisations, I discuss questions concerning: a) their relation to local councils and the way in which these have changed over time, b) differences between the membership patterns of local organisations and councils, and c) what our knowledge of them contributes to an understanding of the changing social structure and changing nature of the micro-politics of the area.

The organisations I examine are: 1) Cooperatives, 2) Basic Units of the Sudan Socialist Union, 3) Parents' and Teachers' Councils, 4) Women's Units, 5) Youth Units, 6) Charity organisations. The first point to explain is the basis on which these organisations were selected

for special attention. I used two criteria to guide my choice: 1) Most are organisations which have some relationship with local councils, and which were established at the same time as local councils (i.e. after May 1969), 2) They are all organisations which were named by questionnaire respondents in answer to the question: "What organisations do you belong to?" It should be stressed, however, that these organisations vary considerably in their nature and this carries the advantage that they leave room for comparison.

I Local Organisations in Baytalmal:

A: Cooperatives:

1) Introduction

Before examining cooperatives in Baytalmal in some detail it is necessary to refer briefly to the Cooperative Movement in Sudan as a whole. Laws governing the establishment and management of cooperative societies were first made under the Cooperative Societies Ordinance of 1948, long before independence. There had been earlier attempts by the colonial government to foster cooperatives but it was only in 1948 that rules and regulations were promulgated to govern their organisation and proper functioning.[1] These rules and regulations remained in force until after the establishment of the new regime, when the Cooperative Act of 1973 was passed. This Act improved some of the weaknesses of the 1948 Ordinance in relation to matters such as the exemption of cooperatives from taxation and other commercial duties.[2]

At present, the share of the cooperative sector in Sudan's GDP is estimated to be only 0.8%. This being especially due to the structure and dynamics of the Sudanese economy, where the private sector's share amounts to over 48% and the public sector 50%.[3]

There are several levels of cooperative structures: 1) Elementary Cooperative Societies at the level of villages and neighbourhoods (as in Baytalmal), 2) Local Cooperative Unions at the level of districts

(as in Omdurman), 3) Regional Cooperative Unions at the level of Provinces (as in Khartoum Province) and 4) the National Cooperative Union which stands at the apex of the Cooperative structure.

The National Cooperative Union is responsible for carrying out the State's plan in the cooperative sector, the unification of cooperative societies at the national level, the coordination of all cooperative bodies and the assistance of all basic cooperative societies through their regional unions, and the pursuit of their aims, especially with help in importation, in marketing services, in obtaining of loans and the like.[4]

All primary cooperative societies (as in Baytalmal) are members of the local Cooperative Union of Omdurman and this is in turn a member in the Regional Cooperative Union at the level of Khartoum Province, while all Regional Cooperative Unions are members of the National Cooperative Union.[5]

Before considering some of the general problems faced by cooperatives, we may refer to one type of cooperative in particular, namely consumers' cooperatives as they are the only type found in Baytalmal. (Other types include agricultural, credit and marketing and flour mills cooperatives). As suggested from their name, the basic aim of the first mentioned cooperatives is to provide consumer goods and these are supplied to them by the National Cooperative Union through Regional and LocalCooperative Unions.[6] Generally, consumer cooperatives have been weak in the Sudanese cooperative movement as a whole because of stiff competition from wealthy and well-organised merchants. Despite this, the ever-increasing prices of consumer goods and the equally chronic shortage of them, prompted the Ministry of Cooperation, before its dissolution in 1979 to struggle to promote new consumer cooperatives especially in the Three Towns. Thus in Khartoum Province there are now 338 consumer cooperatives out of a total of 708 cooperative societies.[7]

The main problems faced by cooperatives are the following:

1) Financial Problems: Generally, the cooperative sector's financial standing is extremely weak and it has had to contend with the fairly high costs of borrowing. The financial limitations stem from the facts that the main source of capital of cooperative societies comes from membership subscriptions and that government support has been weak. There has thus been a vicious circle with respect to investment plans and surplus formation.[8] In an attempt to find an answer to the problem the government appointed a committee in 1976 to investigate the whole question of finance in the cooperative sector.[9]

2) The problems of the distorted images and perceptions people have of the cooperative movement

There are here two problems, one concerning the perceptions of people who join cooperatives, and the other concerning the perceptions held by merchants in the private sector. In relation to the former, the view of cooperatives (especially in urban areas) is simply that they are organisations dealing in consumer goods that are scarce on the open market. As a result many people join a cooperative only when there is a particular shortage of consumer goods (I shall deal with this aspect when considering cooperatives in Baytalmal). On the part of the private sector, there is always an apprehension of rivalry and competition by retail merchants.[10] This has prompted some merchants to join cooperatives with the aim of undermining the cooperative movement from within through corruption, embezzlement or the selling of cooperative goods on the black market.

3) Relations between the Cooperative Movement and Local Councils

We have seen that the cooperative movement was in existence long before the Peoples Local Government system and indeed, before independence. But, in principle, the cooperative movement is now supposed to be far more important than in the early days. From its inception the May government supported by communist and generally progressive elements, had set for itself the aim of promoting the cooperative sector to occupy

the position of the "second leading sector" (al-qitā' al-thani) in the economy, and cooperatives were seen to be the basis for the socialist way of developing the economy.[11] This initial aim soon fell through, especially due to the change in the nature of the State's support and its increasing encouragement to the private sector and its financial and other problems. The cooperative movement and the Peoples Local Government still share common ground of local self-development and especially the specific tasks of supply, distribution and control of consumer goods.

Under the PLG Act, one of the duties of the Province Executive Council stipulated in the section on community development is, "to promote, register and supervise cooperative societies of all kinds".[2] Cooperatives, however, were to fall under the authority of the Ministry of Cooperation, whereas Councils were responsible to the Ministry of Local Government. But over time several developments have led to changes in this initial situation. The first of these was the increased powers given to Provincial councils, culminating in the dissolution of the Ministry of Cooperation, as part of a national move towards decentralisation. Secondly, the worsening economic situation (especially since 1973) and the resultant persistant shortages in basic consumer goods have led to an increased and sudden interest in consumer cooperatives especially in urban areas which had hitherto been dominated by a strong retail trade. This heightened interest is documented both in the report by the National Committee Study on the Sudanese Cooperative Section (1979) and, as we shall see, is borne out by my study.

An increased interest in the cooperative sector combined with further devolution of powers to local councils, has culminated in the creation in 1978 of a new post at the Province Executive Council level, that of an Assistant Commissioner for cooperatives. The same has happened at the Town Council level with the addition of a new technical officer, namely

The Cooperatives Officer (See Chapter III).

It is the duty of the Cooperatives Officer to supervise existing cooperatives, paying particular attention to their financial affairs. He is also responsible for reviewing applications and for the registration of new cooperatives. But the Town Council carries no responsibility for aiding cooperatives financially, especially since they suffer from their own chronic financial problems. Indeed, neighbourhood councils in Baytalmal have recently started to use parts of the profits of cooperatives (where they exist) to supplement their resources for services at the neighbourhood level, although this is not such a widespread practice. In general, however, the cooperatives and the councils are in competition over the distribution of scarce consumer goods. The extent to which this is so will be clear in the next chapter where I consider consumer goods shortages as one of the principal issues of concern for Baytalmal's population. It was precisely the fear of such competition that led the first National Conference on Peoples Local Government held in January 1978, to recommend the following: 1) The representation of the cooperative movement on Peoples Local Councils, especially in the specialised supply and consumer goods committees. 2) The creation of joint institutions between the cooperative sector and Peoples Local Councils.[13]

In the above I have looked at aspects of the cooperative movement in Sudan in general, in addition to some of the problems it faces, specifically those of finance, and the strong competition from the private sector, in addition to peoples perceptions of it. I further documented that the rise of recent interest in consumer cooperatives in urban areas in particular (and hence also in Baytalmal) was related to and was a response to the aggravation of consumer goods shortages, rather than to a deeply ingrained belief in the cooperative movement. As regards the relations between local government and cooperatives, I stressed that there was overlap in their aims, and that especially in the context of the present shortages in basic consumer goods, that local

councils were trying to develop some measure of control over cooperatives, although this is still not well defined.

I now examine the specific case of Baytalmal's cooperatives, especially the rules governing cooperative membership, its characteristics and the relations between cooperatives and local politics.

4) Cooperatives in Baytalmal

The rules governing cooperatives include the following stipulations on eligibility for membership. A member

> a)"shall not be less than 18 years of age but a person below that age may become a member through his lawful guardian," and b) shall be resident or in possession of land within the area of the society's business in accordance with its by-laws but the society may admit to its membership any person having an interest in or connection with the society's activities or field of operation". 14

It is also stipulated that each member should own at least one share, although no member other than a society or union is allowed to hold more than 5% of the capital of any cooperative.

Applications for membership are submitted to the cooperative secretary, who presents them to the cooperative committee. An application must state the applicant's age, occupation,place of residence and it must include an acceptance of the rules of the cooperative. In addition, the applicant must pay an entrace fee. Should the committee not accept an application, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision at the first meeting of the cooperatives general membership.

The source of the cooperative's finance include: 1) Entrance fees, 2) The capital made up of shares, 3) Loans and Donations (from interested persons or institutions). The entrance fee used to be 5 piastres and the price per share £S1. In 1979, however, these were raised to 25 piastres and £S5 respectively. Once capital is collected, a committee is elected by the members consisting of a president, a secretary, a treasurer and seven other members. A person to work in the shop may also be hired. A letter is then written to the Local Cooperative Union declaring the cooperative's existence. Membership of the Cooperative

in the Local Cooperative Union costs £S100 per share, in addition to an entrance fee of £S10. After this, a supply card is issued, and the cooperative committee assigns a representative to collect goods from the Local Cooperative Union. Should there be a shortage of goods at the Local Cooperative Union, the members can buy goods on the open market, on condition that they keep to official prices. As several committee members told me, however, this is impossible and in practice they are totally dependent on supplies from the Local Cooperative Union,

The following table gives details on the seven cooperatives of Baytalmal.

TABLE I: COOPERATIVES IN BAYTALMAL (1978)

Cooperative	Neighbourhood	Rating given by Cooperatives Officer	Membership	Registration Date	Capital £S	Surplus £S	Deficit £S
1 Baltalmal sharq	Baytalmal North	Good	294	1976	1,728	2054,597	-
2 Baytalam al-Tadamun	Baytalmal Centre	Good	279	1975	1,380	-	474,398
3 Baytalmal al-Sadaqa	Baytalmal South	Good	270	1975	2,745	-	257,591
4 al-Sayyid al-Makki	al-Sayyid al-Makki	Good	240	1976	1243,500	125,868	-
5.al-Izbitaliyya	al-Izbitaliyya	Should be closed	204	1976	906,750	-	99,188
6 Mulazmin South	Mulazmin South	Should be closed	116	1975	705	-	2,560
7 Mulazmin North	Mulazmin North	Medium	112	1977	969	150	-

The following points may be noted: Firstly, all cooperatives were set up between 1975 and 1977, which is the period during which consumer goods shortages became a persistent and practically permanent feature of urban life. Secondly, the cooperatives that are making a profit are those in Baytalmal North, al-Sayyid al-Makki and Mulazmin North. The remaining four have severe financial problems, though some worse than others.

At one Town Council meeting the Cooperatives Officer in 1978 recommended in his report that the cooperatives of Mulazmin South and al-Izbitaliyya be closed down which is what actually occurred late in 1976. The main reason for this was widespread corruption and embezzlement and the illegal selling by committee members of cooperative goods on the black market. The report further added that committee members were not cooperating among themselves and were continually in disagreement. He also complained that the amount of goods supplied by the Local Cooperative Union was insufficient for the number of existing cooperatives in Baytalmal which meant that they often had to buy goods on the open market at much higher prices.

The membership of cooperatives as of other local organisations in Baytalmal is shown in Table II. These figures are from the survey I conducted in the area.

TABLE II: MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN BAYTALMAL

Local Organisation	MN	BC	BS	MS	BN	IZB	MAKKI	Total	%
Cooperatives	7	9	8	6	17	12	13	72	46.8
SSU Basic Units	2	4	2	3	8	6	2	27	17.5
Parents & Teachers Councils	5	4	5	2	3	1		20	13.0
Womens Units	1	2	3		2	4		12	7.8
Youth Units		1						1	.6
Charity Organisations	4	4	4		2	1		15	9.7

Several points may be noted from the table: a) Cooperatives have a larger membership (46.8%) than any other category of organisation. (Here it should be noted that a further 8.14% said they were members of cooperatives at their places of work). More informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods said they were members of cooperatives. (57.8% as contrasted with 33.8% for Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods). This is because as previously indicated the inhabitants of the latter neighbourhoods can afford the prices of the black market or have personal or kinship relations with merchants who are able to supply these scarce goods and are thus not wholly dependent on councils or cooperatives for these. b) The same difference characterises membership of SSU basic units, membership of which is again much higher for residents of Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods (11.3% vs 22.9%). I shall explain the reasons for this when I later consider the case of SSU basic units in detail. c) In contrast, the membership both of Parents and Teachers Councils and of Charity Organisations is larger for residents of Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods (19.7% vs 7.2%). Again I refer to the reasons for this later.

The age, and occupational characteristics of members of cooperatives are shown in the following tables:

TABLE III: AGE STRUCTURE OF COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

Age Group	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
31-40			1	11.1	1	12.5	1	16.7	4	23.5	2	16.7	3	23.1	12	16.7
41-50	2	28.6	3	33.3	3	37.5	4	66.7	7	41.2	6	50	6	46.2	31	43.1
51 +	5	71.4	5	55.6	4	50	1	16.7	6	35.3	4	33.4	4	30.8	29	40.3
Total	7	100	9	100	8	100	6	100.1	17	100	12	100	13	100.1	72	100.1

TABLE IV: OCCUPATIONS OF COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

Occupation	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
Merchants	1	14.3	3	33.3	2	25			2	11.8	2	16.7	2	15.4	12	16.7
Professional	3	42.9	1	11.1	1	12.5	1	16.7	1	5.9					7	9.7
Senior Gov't Officer	2	28.6	1	11.1	1	12.5									4	5.6
Middle rank Gov't officer			1	11.1	1	12.5			3	17.6	2	16.7	3	23.1	10	13.9
Lower rank Gov't officer			1	11.1	1	12.5	5	83.3	7	41.2	5	41.7	7	53.9	26	36.1
Housewife	1	14.3	2	22.2	2	25			4	23.5	3	25	1	7.7	13	18.1
Total	7	100.1	9	99.9	8	100	6	100	17	100	12	100.1	13	100.1	72	100.1

Firstly, a clear majority of members fall in the over 40 age group. This is understandable when we recall that the main reason for joining cooperatives is access to scarce consumer goods at official prices. It is, therefore, the responsibility of older household heads (especially male, female members of cooperatives only being 23.6% in my sample), to provide for their households. Secondly, it is found that a majority of members are lower rank civil servants which is explained by my earlier observation that it is lower rank civil servants who are not able to afford the exhorbitant prices of the black market, and who do not usually have the "right" contacts with merchants, as many residents of the more affluent neighbourhoods have.

From the above, it becomes clear that joining cooperatives is at present an economic necessity for many people owing to the persistant shortages in basic consumer goods. The importance of cooperatives has further been shown by responses to one question included in the questionnaire, where respondents were asked to rate cooperatives and other local organisations (and local councils) according to the benefits they provided in the area. 47.3% of informants ranked cooperatives as being the organisation providing most benefits in the area, 23.7% ranked them second and only 6.8% ranked them lowest.

I now turn to the most important question posed at the beginning of this chapter concerning the extent to which local organisations constitute a part of the political arena within which classes in the area contest their various interests. This question above was partially answered when I showed that the cooperative's membership is largely drawn from the area's less affluent neighbourhoods, but I will elaborate on this by considering in greater detail the case of particular cooperatives operating in Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, those of Mulazmin South, Baytalmal North, and Baytalmal Centre.

The Cooperative of Mulazmin South

It will be recalled from earlier discussions of Baytalmal's various neighbourhoods (refer to Chapter II) that this is the neighbourhood with the smallest population in Baytalmal, and also that it has the peculiar feature of a first class residential area next to the police barracks with the latter housing a majority of the population (about 800 to 900 persons out of a total of 1,435).

In Chapter IV I discussed the case of the neighbourhood council of Mulazmin South, showing that during the council's first session of 1972-1973, membership was as in the case of several of Baytalmal's other neighbourhoods dominated by the class of big merchants and senior civil servants. At this juncture, the police barracks were not equally represented on the council as there was no awareness of councils and people were not yet forced to depend on them. We also saw, however, that with the rise of the SSU, its basic unit in the neighbourhood fell into the control of inhabitants of the police barracks. Consequently, during the second session of councils the police barracks inhabitants came to dominate the neighbourhood council. At the level of the Town Council, however, there were representatives from both classes in Mulazmin South and there were continuous disputes on the Town Council between representatives of the two classes. And, during the present session, the inhabitants of the police barracks have completely dominated the council and the population of the first class residential area have been isolated.

It is against this background that we have to discuss Mulazmin South's cooperative which was first established in 1975 (i.e. during the second session of councils)

Only two of the cooperative's committee (totalling ten persons) were inhabitants of the first class residential area, whereas the rest were from the police barracks. As in the case of the local council, the committee was in continuous dispute. The committee members belonging

to the class of big merchants were continuously accusing, mainly through gossip, members belonging to the police barracks of favouritism in selling more goods to the inhabitants of the police barracks. They also made allegations of corruption, especially of illegally taking the cooperatives supplies and selling them on the black market at exhorbitant prices with the aim of personal gain (one particular allegation concerned the cooperative's quota of dabalan, which is a cheap type of material locally made, but much in demand).

The committee members from the police barracks denied these allegations, although they maintained they needed the goods more, since, unlike the inhabitants of the neighbourhood's first class area, they could not afford to buy them on the black market. These accusations further emphasised the differential needs of the two classes, especially in relation to the type of goods the cooperative was to sell.

Anyhow whatever the truth in these allegations of corruption, they underlined the basic conflict between the two classes in the area, and the cooperative became part of the arena in which the conflicts of Mulazmin South were pursued. In the end, the cooperative had a large deficit, went bankrupt, and was closed. Since then the inhabitants of the first class residential area have begun to organise a separate cooperative to caterfor their own needs. It is interesting to note that this move has taken place during the third session of councils (1977-1980) when inhabitants of the police barracks hold sway on the council to the almost total exclusion of the first class residential area.

The case of the cooperative of Mulazmin South illustrates how one local organisation, like local councils has also become a centre of class power.

The Cooperative of Baytalmal North

We have seen that the neighbourhood of Baytalmal North has the largest population in the area and is largely dominated by a class of lower rank civil servants and that, although its SSU basic unit is

largely dominated by a class of lower rank civil servants, the neighbourhood council is currently dominated by members owing allegiance to Baytalmal's "traditional" clique. (It has been stated to me on numerous occasions while conducting fieldwork in the area that members of the present neighbourhood council were "coopted" by the "traditional" clique) yet the cooperative committee is composed primarily of those who dominate the SSU unit. Hence, whereas the class of lower rank civil servants dominates the cooperative committee and that of the SSU basic unit, the neighbourhood council is dominated by persons owing allegiance to Baytalmal's "traditional" clique (whether or not the latter have actually been coopted by the clique is a matter of debate).

What has happened is that Baytalmal North's cooperative is the most efficient in the whole area with a large surplus profit. This is largely due to the fact that, contrary to the case of Mulazmin South, it has been dominated by one particular class, hence minimising disputes among its committee members. (I do not imply that the only measure for a cooperative's success is cooperation among its committee, but this is clearly an important factor).

Baytalmal North's cooperative is thus one case where a local organisaton has not provided an arena for conflict. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the neighbourhood is,unlike Mulazmin South, largely dominated by one class, and the second that conflict here takes place <u>between</u>, rather than <u>within</u>, organisations. The conflict here is between the cooperative and SSU basic unit on one hand, and the neighbourhood council on the other.

<u>The Cooperative of Baytalmal Centre</u>

Again, the case of this particular neighbourhood's cooperative provides a contrasting case to the two considered above. As stated previously, this neighbourhood is by and large dominated by a class of big merchants, professionals and senior civil servants, who dominate both its neighbourhood council and basic SSU unit. Its cooperative

committee is largely drawn from the same class. The consequence of this for the cooperative's operation has been that it is working smoothly and no disputes along class lines exist between its members. Although not currently making profit, it only has a slight deficit.

I have above considered three divergent cases of cooperatives in Baytalmal: a) In the first (Mulazmin South) the cooperative was not dominated by any one class, hence provided an arena for the area's two classes to conflict. b) In the second (Baytalmal North) the cooperative committee was dominated by a single class, as a result conflict existed between rather than within local organisations notably between the local council, on the one hand, and the cooperative and SSU basic unit on the other. c) In the third (Baytalmal Centre), the cooperative committee, the local council and SSU basic unit, were drawn from the same class,and consequently no conflict whether between or within these various bodies occurred. So, to respond to the question raised at the outset of this chapter: To what extent have local organisations like local councils provided arenas for the conflict of classes?, the response would be that this largely depends on the balance of classes in the area, hence in Mulazmin South (Case I) cooperatives did provide such an instance, they did not in Baytalmal Centre (Case III), whereas in Baytalmal North they provided the opportunity for one class to challenge the neighbourhood council which was representing different class interests, specifically those of the "traditional" clique.

In this section of the chapter, I started with a brief introduction on the cooperative movement in the Sudan and some of the problems it faces. I then examined the situation of cooperatives in Baytalmal, their membership characteristics, and finally the case of three of the areas cooperatives, with the question in mind of: To what extent can their role be compared with that of local councils in terms of providing contexts for various interests in the neighbourhoods to be fought out?

B. Sudan Socialist Union Organisations:

1. Introduction

Next, I look at another local organisation operating in Baytalmal, namely the SSU. As stated previously, whereas the Peoples Local Government Act was passed in late 1971, the basic structure of the SSU came in 1972. A preparatory committee was established to make arrangements for the creation of the Sudan Socialist Union. This committee prepared a document, the "Basic Rules of the SSU", which was presented to and passed by a founding Congress of the SSU in January 1972.[15] The constitution meanwhile was only ratified in 1973. The importance of this sequence of events lies in the fact that the development of the PLG system preceded a lot of crucial political developments, which later came to affect the relationship between and functioning of these two bodies. Furthermore, the creation of both the Peoples Local Government and the Sudan Socialist Union was orchestrated by different political groupings, a fact which also came to affect the relations between them. Thus, whereas the Peoples Local Government was practically the individual creation of the late Dr. Ja'far Bakhiet, the thinking behind the creation of the SSU could be attributed to a section of the communist party and a group of Arab Nationalists.[16]

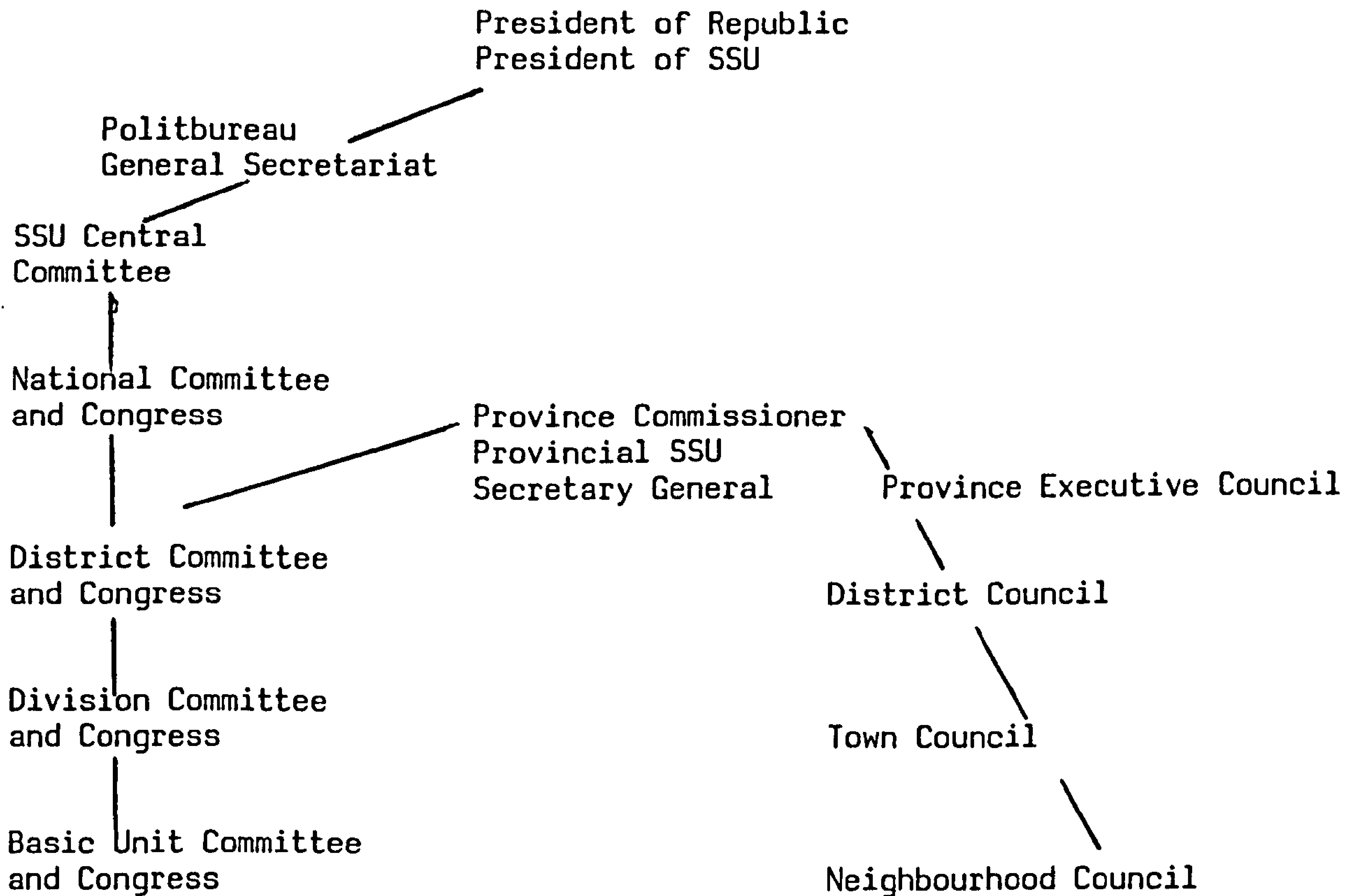
Before speaking more specifically about SSU basic units in Baytalmal, I will give a brief introduction on the position of the SSU and its functioning. The SSU held its inaugural meeting on January 2, 1972, at which Nimeiri presented it with his regime's National Action Charter. That body's national conference then discussed the Charter and approved it by mid-January, thus laying the bases of the Union's activities within the framework of the government's adopted policies.[17] The Union was essentially envisaged to be a radical institution that would transform the existent balance of wealth and power. To perform this role the SSU was not to be open to all, especially those who had been active in the old political parties, particular emphasis was to be placed on

attracting elements which had proved themselves committed to such transformation.[18]

The structure was to be as follows: at the base were a network of 'basic units', each unit was to elect its own committee. Above that there was a committee at the branch, district, sub-province, and province levels, each with its own conference. The conference at each level was to consist primarily of representatives from the conference at the level below, and the committee would be elected by the conference at its own level. At the national level, meanwhile, there was the National Congress (constituted of representatives from the provincial conferences, and some appointees), the Party Presidency (elected by the National Congress) the Secretariat General (appointed by the Party President), the Central Committee (one half appointed by the Party President and one half elected by the National Congress) and the Political Bureau (elected by the Central Committee on the nomination of the Party President). The structure was begun to be built from below until it was complete by January 1974, with the holding of the first National Congress.[19]

The following diagram will help clarify the various levels of the structure especially as it compares with the various tiers of the Local Government structure.

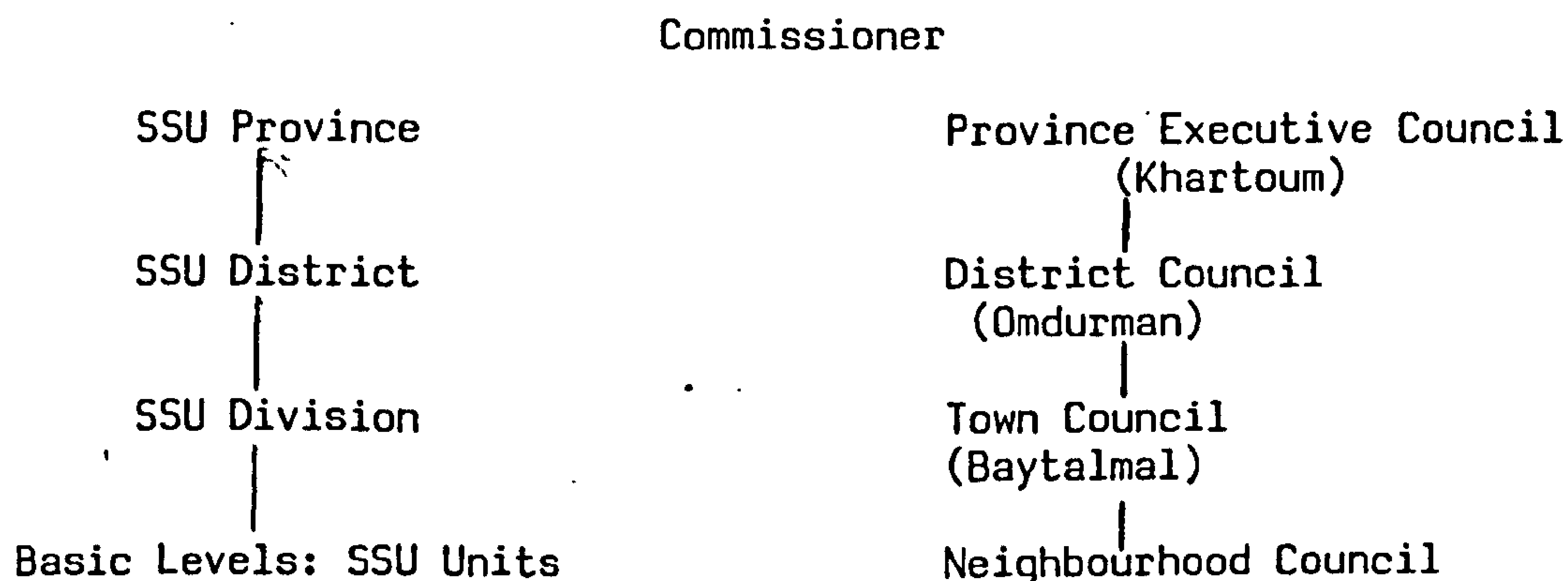
Diagram IV: SSU and Local Government Structure



Hence, as can be seen from the above chart, the various levels of the SSU correspond to those of the Local Government System, with one important difference, namely that the Province Commissioner provides a kind of link between both systems, since he is simultaneous head of both the Province Executive Council and SSU Provincial Committee. This particular point has been surrounded by a lot of controversy and discussion, especially succeeding the suggestion by Commissioner of Southern Darfur province that these two posts be separated, which would have meant a dichotomy in terms of personnel between SSU or the political structure, and Local Government or largely executive side. This controversy was aired in several articles in al-Sahafa daily newspaper, (several issues between 13th January-23rd January 1979).

Those who were against the separation of these two posts emphasised that such a separation would mean a lot of conflict between the two structures, since the executive side would be isolated from the pditical one, and hence could mean the unrealistic demands of the latter and its working in isolation from the political realities of the country. Those supporting the separation of both posts said the contrary, emphasising that at present conflicts already did exist, since relations at the more basic level were not well defined, and were conflicting whereas at the higher levels there was this connection (through the Province Commissioner), who would be in conflict between his political duties and executive one pertaining to the needs of the province. The following diagram will show this complex relationship:

Diagram V Relations between SSU and Local Government Structures



So that what happens is that the Province Commissioner is the only official with authority to solve conflicts between these two structures. The important thing to note from the above discussion is that the way SSU structures are set up in comparison with those of the Local Government system have created a lot of conflicts. These being partly due to the history of the development of both structures. As was indicated, the PLG structure preceded the setting up of the SSU and hence the latter had to accommodate to some degree to the already existing reality of the former.

Since I am primarily concerned with the more basic levels of both structures, I will next consider the functions of SSU basic units, before looking more specifically at the case of Baytalmal. As seen in Diagram V the most basic level of SSU organisation is the basic unit. The opening of registration for membership of basic units is announced, and membership cards are distributed after membership fees are paid. The minimum size of this Congress of the basic unit is 100 persons. Succeeding this the basic units committee is elected by the Congress. The committee is made up of eleven persons, who in turn elect a president for the unit. The eleven persons are each in charge of a specific function, as services, administration, etc. Membership in the SSU is a pre-requisite for participating in elections of the SSU basic unit committee. The type of election is decided upon by the Congress.

The formal functions of SSU basic units are in general terms to create a consciousness in the neighbourhood concerning government policy and generally according to several basic unit heads represents"political authority at the neighbourhood level". They are supposed to politically supervise the neighbourhood, conduct campaigns, give talks to explain policy directives and government positions on those policies. Hence, the SSU was to be "a revolutionary socialist vanguard, embracing the forces of our working people."[20] So far there have been three sessions of SSU units, the first lasting between 1973-1976, the second 1976-1979, there have recently been (Dec.1979) elections for new units when there have been many allegations of corruption and tampering with the results, with the consequence that many of these especially in Omdurman have had to be repeated.

2. Relations Between SSU Basic Units and Local Councils

As stated the basic aim of the SSU was for it to be a radical institution that would bring about the "transformation of Sudanese society". At the local level this was to be achieved through the pressure

that the SSU's basic units were to bring upon local councils, through seeking the selection and election of radical forces into local councils, which would in turn result in radical policies by local councils.[21] Of course, in the coming consideration of Baytalmal's basic units, I will be investigating to what extent these aims have actually materialised.

These relationships between SSU basic units and local councils only assumed importance in 1973 when the first such units were set up, and which was during the first session of councils (1972-1973). Previously, administrative officers at local councils were supposed to take up some of these political duties.

Succeeding the setting up of the first basic units, these first councils were dissolved before completing their full three year terms. The Guide to the Formation of Peoples Local Government Councils (1973) was issued by the Ministry of Local Government, parts of which addressed the specific point of relations between these two bodies. This guide stipulated that candidacy for local council membership had to be ratified by SSU basic units, automatically giving SSU units some control over local council membership. This guide also gave popular organisations (such as Womens and Youth units) the right to forward candidates for neighbourhood council membership.

Further, it has stipulated that the head of a local council should not simultaneously be head of that neighbourhood's basic unit, neither should he/she be simultaneously head of womens or youth organisations. Also, a circular from the former Ministry of Local Government stipulated that representatives of SSU units were to attend all local council meetings. Apart from the above directives no formal guidelines exist to regulate the relationships between these two entities. This has led a special committee of the Peoples Assembly to suggest that the relationship be legally spelled out to avoid conflict and overlap.[22]

However, how does the above relate the case of Baytalmal? To what extent has the control of SSU basic units over candidacy for local

council membership actually resulted in the entry of radical forces into the latter?. And of course, to what extent have SSU basic units also become a part of the political arena.

As noted in Chapter IV, the relationship between these two entities has not been uniform for all of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods but rather (as in the case of cooperatives), is largely dependent upon the circumstances of each neighbourhood, and the varying processes working within them. The fundamental fact affecting the relations between these two bodies has been the extent to which their membership is the same or at least similar, to the extent of representing the same class interests. Thus, in cases where the membership of both overlaps, clearly no conflict can exist, since it is the same persons controlling both. It is only in cases where membership of councils and SSU basic units is different that conflict between them occurs. It is evident then that in the former situation (i.e. where membership is overlapping), the basic aim of allowing SSU basic units to exercise some control over the types of people who become councillors is rendered meaningless, since it is the same people who control both. In fact, a head of one of Baytalmal's neighbourhood councils and simultaneously head of the SSU basic unit, told me that often succeeding meetings of the neighbourhood council, they would immediately start a meeting of the SSU basic unit.

On the basis of the above delineated situations, Baytalmal's neighbourhoods can be divided broadly into:

1) Neighbourhoods where membership of SSU basic unit committees and local councils is separate.

2) Neighbourhoods where membership of SSU basic unit committees and local councils are the same.

Neighbourhoods falling in category (1) are those of Baytalmal North and Mulazmin South (the latter during the second session of councils). In both these neighbourhoods numerous conflicts exist between the two

bodies concerned. Thus, for instance, in Baytalmal North, the SSU Basic Unit sent a letter to the Assistant Province Commissioner complaining about the lack of performance of the Neighbourhood Council, especially in relation to distribution of consumer goods, and recommended that it be dissolved altogether, and that new elections be held. Furthermore, during elections for the 3rd session of councils, there was severe competition and even incidents of violence (although unsuccessful) mounted by the members of the SSU basic unit (who all belonged to the "modern" clique dominating Town Council membership during the second session), in order to influence the outcome of the elections.

Meanwhile, neighbourhoods falling in category (2) are those of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South (dominated by the class of big merchants, professionals, senior civil servants), in addition to those of al-Isbitaliyya and al-Sayyid al-Makki dominated by the class of lower rank civil servants. So, in relation to SSU basic units in Baytalmal, two important comments are in order. Firstly, that the relations between them and local councils is dependent upon the extent to which their memberships overlap, and hence that they have become separate centres of class power in only some of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, specifically those falling in category (1). The second remark concerns one of the aims underlying the creation of SSU basic units, namely that they make for the "radical transformation of Sudanese society". Again, we have seen that this depends upon who controls them. In the neighbourhoods of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South (category (2)), in particular, it is the remnants of traditional political parties, and the class supporting them, who control both SSU and local councils. Hence it is these very "reactionary" elements which are in control. This is at the level of the neighbourhood and hence concerns the relationship between SSU basic units and neighbourhood councils. But what about the level of the Town Council, and its corresponding SSU level which is

the SSU division or Qism? What sorts of relations exist at that level?

As stated above, a circular from the former Ministry of Local Government has stipulated that representatives of SSU divisions should attend all Town Council meetings. It is significant that the present head of the Qism belongs to the "traditional" clique, hence minimising the potential control of that body over council affairs. This person is a former NUP supporter, and is always in agreement with the "traditional" clique, as is evident from Town Council minutes, and my talks with him. In fact, he had a hand in the ousting of the former president of the council (refer to Chapter IV). So, whereas at the neighbourhood council level, relations between SSU and local councils are dependent upon the circumstances of each neighbourhood, at the Town Council level, there is absolutely no conflict between the two structures, both being currently controlled by the "traditional" clique of Baytalmal.

3. Membership Characteristics of SSU Basic Units in Baytalmal

In Table II I indicated that 17.5% of the sample were members in their neighbourhoods SSU basic unit (as compared with 46.8% membership for cooperatives). I also indicated that most of this membership tended to be drawn from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods. This can be explained by relating it to the fact that SSU membership, as stated previously, has been a means for Baytalmal's less affluent class (especially during the second session of councils) of challenging the dominance of the "traditional" clique. However, following the 1977 national reconciliation policies, with the State's support of the "traditional" clique and the class it represents (that of big merchants primarily), the class composed of lower rank civil servants is currently supporting a different section within the State (that being the main reason for the annulment of the most recent SSU elections (Dec.1979) in Omdurman, because their outcome favoured that particular section).[23]

It must be stated that reasons for membership of cooperatives as over and against membership of SSU basic units is not basically different, both

being motivated by the desire to challenge the dominance of the "traditional" clique, representing Baytalmal's affluent class, one economically (cooperatives), the other primarily politically (SSU Basic Units).

The table below give details on membership characteristics of SSU units ~~cooperatives~~ in relation to age and occupation.

TABLE V: AGE STRUCTURE OF SSU BASIC UNIT AND MEMBERS

Age Group	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
20-30			1	25			1	33.3	2	25	2	33.3	1	50	7	25.9
31-40	1	50	2	50	1	50	1	33.3	4	50	4	66.7	1	50	14	51.9
41-50	1	50	1	25	1	50	1	33.3	2	25					6	22.2
Total	2	100	4	100	2	100	3	99.9	8	100	6	100	2	100	27	100

TABLE VI: OCCUPATIONS OF SSU UNITS MEMBERS

Occupations	MN No.	MN %	BC No.	BC %	BS No.	BS %	MS No.	MS %	BN No.	BN %	IZB No.	IZB %	MAKKI No.	MAKKI %	Total	%
Professional			1	25											1	3.7
Middle Rank Gov't official	2	100	1	25	1	50			1	12.5					5	18.5
Lower Rank Gov't official			2	50	1	50	3	100	6	75	5	83.3	2	100	19	70.4
Housewife									1	12.5	1	16.7			2	7.4
Total	2	100	4	100	2	100	3	100	8	100	6	100	2	100	27	100

In relation to the age structure of SSU members, we see that clearly most fall in the 31-40 age group, (this being the same age of the group composing the "modern" clique.) Meanwhile in relation to occupations, we see again that most are lower rank civil servants, which only helps validate some of the claims I have made above about the membership of SSU basic units in relation to that of local councils. Only about 7.4% of SSU basic unit members are women.

Above, I have considered aspects of two local organisatins currently existing in Baytalmal, cooperatives and SSU basic units. In relation to these two organisations, I have tried primarily to answer the question: To what extent has their position been similar to that of local councils, particularly as arenas for conflict between the areas classes? In response (besides indicating that indeed they,like local councils, possessed specific membership characteristics), I showed that this was dependent upon the circumstances of each neighbourhood, and by categorising these neighbourhoods I indicated instances both of neighbourhoods where these organisations served as arenas of conflicts and other instances where they did not, and have given reasons for each.

C. Popular Organisations

Next, I look at three other local organisations,collectively called "Popular Organisations" (Munazamāt Jamahiriyya) and which are under the control of SSU Basic Units (see Diagram IV). These are womens units, youth units, Parents and Teachers Councils and Village Development Committees (with which we shall not be concerned here). To quote from documents of the First National Congress of the SSU (1974) in relation to the aims of these organisations:

> "...popular revolutionary organisations represent organisational frameworks devised by the revolution to organise the masses and mobilise their potentialities for nation-building". 24

Furthermore, the regime believed that these organisations would be radical by their very nature, because basically they were interest groups, and the demands of each would act to change some basic

aspects of traditional society with the womens union called for womens rights, the youth union calling for a role for youth in society, etc..[25]

It was, moreover, thought that closely allied with radical elements these organisations would be represented in local councils leading them to adopt radical policies.

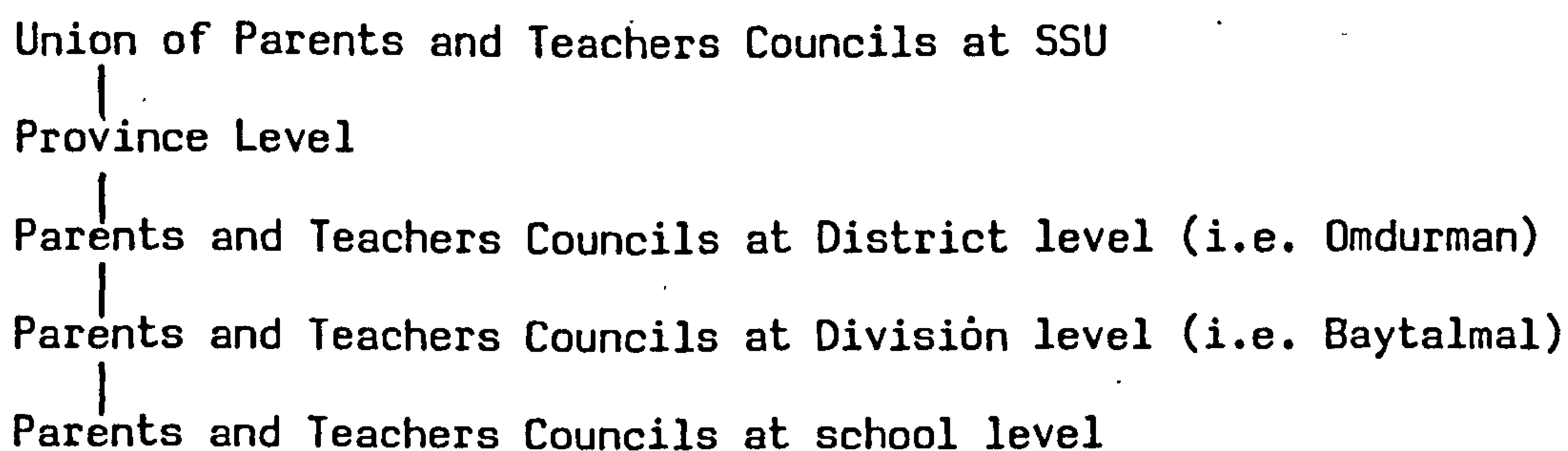
Nevertheless, regardless of official rhetoric and its underlying aims, the existence of this multitude of organisations (local councils, SSU basic units, cooperatives, Youth units, Womens Units, Parents and Teachers Councils and village development committees), has led to complaints by many (including members of local councils) that there is a lot of overlap between them and that they in effect, constitute a fragmentation of efforts and a waste of already scant economic resources available for their operation. In addition, there is the fact that they are creating confusion in peoples minds regarding what they are supposed to do, and in fact, what they can do given the present economic situation. Such complaints have been included in a report on the re-organisation of Khartoum Province's administration (1974) which stated that the existence of so many organisations was creating a lot of problems and was leading to fragmentation of efforts. The report suggested that all these organisations be brought under the direct jurisdiction of local councils.[26] Similar proposals have been made in a report entitled, "Local Government and Development", which also emphasised the need to cut down the number of organisations existing at the local level, thus making for more consolidated action.[27] Below, I will consider each of these organisations in turn beginning with Parents and Teachers Councils.

1) Parents and Teachers Councils

According to the documents of the First National Congress of the SSU (1974), Parents and Teachers Councils, have been established to contribute towards greater coordination between the home and the school for education to fulfil its mission comprehensively. But how true is this

actually? Parents and Teachers Councils are supposed to supervise the administration of schools and their maintenance. They are consulted on particular issues such as admission committees. Every school has such a council. These councils are by election. The schools general committee nominates specific persons who are parents of pupils in the school, but who primarily live near the school. Another criteria mentioned to me by one such member, although not formally admitted to, is that members "should have prominent socio-economic positions". Elections then occur at the school premises for the creation of the council which is made up of eight elected members and three appointed teachers. The council is headed by the headmaster/mistress of the school. Just as in the case of the previous two organisations, the following structure exists:

<u>Diagram VI: Structure of Parents and Teachers Councils</u>



Again, the structure is one of indirect representation, the local Parents and Teachers Councils will elect representatives to the division level and so on. But what about the actual working of these councils and how effective are they? From having spoken with several members of such councils, it is clear that their primary functions is arranging for self-help, largely in the form of finance for the running of these schools, hence the emphasis (although not explicit), that members of such councils must be prominent citizens of their neighbourhoods. This particular point will become clear when I consider membership characteristics of these councils.

In Baytalmal, there are at present 6 primary schools, 6 junior and 6 secondary schools. Each school has such a council. An important

thing to note about members of these councils is what has been mentioned to me by several of them, namely that a lot of them are not active in other organisations, but only active in Parents and Teachers Councils. They attributed this to the fact that in their view Parents and Teachers Councils present real opportunities for contribution, which they saw to be different from the case of other local organisations, which in the words of one such member "are simply fields for political squabble." They, hence, saw Parents and Teachers Councils as serving a specific cause, education, and serving it well. This is especially attested to by the type of membership characterising these organisations, as will be shown.

With reference to the relationship between these councils and the local government structure, it can be said that both entities are concerned with education, however with different emphasis. Local councils represent the distribution of official resources allotted to education, whereas Parents and Teachers Councils represent the local efforts to fill in the many gaps resulting from the former's lack of resources. I asked the Administrative Officer of Baytalmal Town Council whether there were any regular meetings between both to coordinate efforts, regarding the running of schools. She told me that no such meetings took place, this is despite the fact that Baytalmal Town Council has a specialised education committee, all of which brings to mind the points made earlier concerning the multitude of local organisations and bodies with overlapping and often conflicting specialties.

Next, I examine some of the characteristics of members of Parents and Teachers Councils. It will be recalled that 13% of my sample said they were members in such councils.

TABLE VII: AGE STRUCTURE OF MEMBERS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS COUNCILS

Age Group	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
20-30																
31-40									1	33.3					1	5
41-50	2	40	2	50	2	40			1	33.3	1	100			8	40
51 +	3	60	2	50	3	60	2	100	1	33.3					11	55
Total	5	100	4	100	5	100	2	100	3	99.9	1	100			20	100

TABLE VIII: OCCUPATIONS OF MEMBERS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS COUNCILS

Occupations	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
Merchant	2	40	2	50	3	60									7	35
Professional	2	40	2	50	1	20	2	100			1	100			8	40
Senior Gov't official	1	20			1	20									2	10
Lower rank Gov't official									1	33.3					1	5
Middle rank Gov't official									2	66.7					2	10
Total	5	100	4	100	5	100	2	100	3	100	1	100			20	100

As shown in the table on page 282 the membership of Parents and Teachers Councils is largely drawn from Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods. This is understandable in the light of what we already know about the basic aims of these councils, namely raising of funds and arranging self-help to assist schools, and tide them over the gaps in the resources allotted to them by local councils. Bearing this in mind, the two tables above give some of the characteristics of these council members. Thus, in relation to age, they largely fall in the over-40 age group, with 55% falling in the over 51 age group. As regards occupations, meanwhile, we see that most are either merchants (35%) or professionals (40%), none of them were women. Hence the members of these councils are actually among the older and more prominent (especially financially) of the area's inhabitants. Again, this is understandable, and related to the function of these councils, namely as bodies organised to assist financially the educational establishments existent in the area.

Two questions remain to be dealt with in relation to this particular organisation. Firstly, how effective are Parents and Teachers Councils, and secondly, to what extent have they played the same roles in Baytalmal as have local councils, together with cooperatives and SSU Basic Units, as arenas for class conflict? I will deal with these questions in turn.

Firstly, how effective are Parents and Teachers Councils? The basic criterion for the success of these councils is of course the amount of funds they are able to raise, this is in turn dependent upon the wealth of the members of the council, and the area where the schools are located, in addition to the extent of their relations or contacts with higher levels of decision-making where official resources are originally distributed. In relation to both of these criteria, hence Parents and Teachers Councils in Baytalmal are comparatively well off, serving to fill in a lot of the gaps (e.g. in relation to supply of books, buildings

or equipment) left open due to the bad financial situation of Baytalmal Town Council.

In relation to the question of the extent to which Parents and Teachers Councils as a local organisation operating in Baytalmal have provided arenas for conflict, two points can be made, a) clearly, as I have indicated their membership is dominated by a single class in Baytalmal, that class which is capable of raising funds to assist schools, and which moreover, has enough connections at national level to provide needed resources for those schools. Secondly, these councils assist both government and private schools in the area, but generally this means that these particular schools are in a better state financially than are many schools in less affluent areas of Omdurman, for instance. b) It can be drawn, from the above observations, that Parents and Teachers Councils (although perhaps not directly as in the case of cooperatives or SSU basic units) have provided a vehicle for one particular class to assert itself.

2. Womens Units

Before discussing these units, a few details will be given on some of their precursors. The first women's organisation called the Women's League, was set up in 1946 by a group of women closely affiliated with the Sudanese Communist Party. Its membership was largely of educated urban women. By 1951, it developed into the Sudanese Women's Union and its membership extended to include working and peasant women. By 1955 it began to publish the progressive magazine The Women's Voice, which took radical stands on issues ranging from questions of neocolonialism to articles which attempted to educate its readership in many spheres related to the situation of women. In the events of October 1964, the Sudanese Women's Union was especially active. Similarly, it constituted one of the progressive groupings which initially backed the regime of May 1969.[28] However, with the rightist leanings of the regime especially since 1971, this original Women's Union was dissolved and reorganised

under the auspices of the SSU. Women's units though representing the interests of Sudanese women were seen to be one of the organisations that would play an important role in the process of transformation of Sudanese society, especially through radically altering the status of women, and allowing for their greater participation in local development. (The 25% quota for female membership in local councils is part of this original conception). But to what extent has this actually happened?

The structure of the present women's organisation is similar to that of SSU and the other popular organisations, starting at the neighbourhood and going all the way to the national level, through indirect representation. Again as in the case of SSU units, women's units are controlled by committees each made up of 15 members. Among these is a head, a treasurer, and one member each responsible for health, education, etc. They are financed by members subscriptions and donations. Their functions include holding of talks for raising consciousness of women on numerous subjects such as health, sanitation, etc. However, when I talked with one of the head of Baytalmal's Women's units, she complained of a general lack of enthusiasm and apathy among the women. She attributed this to the pressing concerns of getting daily basic foodstuffs and the inability of these Women's units (especially due to weak finances) to deal with this basic problem. Another reason was that succeeding the dissolution of the original Women's Union in 1971, a lot of its progressive elements simply refrained from participating in the new Women's units. Thus 18.7% of my female samle (n = 75) said they used to belong to the now defunct Women's Union, whereas 16% were members of the present Women's units.

Another point concerns the relationship between these Women's units and local councils. I discussed this with Baytalmal's Administrative Officer, who told me that whereas in pricniple there was supposed to be cooperation between Women's units and local councils in local development

efforts, supervision of correct distribution of consumer goods, conducting local cleanliness campaigns etc., yet in her words "... Women's units in Baytalmal are sleeping", so that as a result very little cooperation takes place. This is despite the fact that many female councillors are simultaneously members or even heads of their Women's units.

The general ineffectiveness of this particular organisation is further attested to by the generally low ratings it has been given by informants in Baytalmal. Only one informant rated Women's units first in terms of providing services in the neighbourhood, 8.4% ranked it second and 10.7% ranked it third.

Next, I look at some of the characteristics of members of these Women's units.

TABLE IX: AGE STRUCTURE OF WOMENS UNITS MEMBERSHIP

Age Structure	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
20 - 30	1	100	1	50	1	33.3			1	50	1	25			5	41.7
31 - 40			1	50	2	66.7			1	50	2	50			6	50
41 - 50											1	25			1	8.3
Total	1	100	2	100	3	100			2	100	4	100			12	100

TABLE X: OCCUPATIONS OF WOMENS UNITS MEMBERS

Occupations	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
Middle rank Gov't Officer	1	100	1	50	1	33.3									3	25
Lower rank Gov't Officer									2	100	3	75			5	41.7
Housewife			1	50	2	66.7					1	25			4	33.3
Total	1	100	2	100	3	100			2	100	4	100			12	100

In relation to age, we see that most members fall in the below-40 age group, with a large proportion falling in the 20-30 age group (41.7%). This fact is significant in that it means that this particular group have not been active in the earlier now defunct Women's Union. In relation to occupation, meanwhile, we see that most are employed with only 33.3% who are housewives (the husbands of the latter being mostly lower and middle rank civil servants, and hence belonging to Baytalmal's less affluent class). Furthermore, although not clear from the above tables, 10 of the 12 informants are also members in their neighbourhood SSU Basic units. These two facts suggest that membership of Women's units is closely related to SSU membership, and hence is part of the attempt of Baytalmal's lower middle class to challenge the dominance of the "traditional" clique. This is further attested to by the fact that one of the members of the "traditional" clique was able to oust one of these women, who was head of her neighbourhood's Women's unit, and besides being very enthusiastic was always trying to make the unit function. However, she was continuously directing accusations at the "traditional" clique, and said to me that they were a "bunch of thieves". It is also significant that whereas she was a member of the Town Council during the second session (and was a member of the "modern" clique), during the present session of Baytalmal Town Council, she was not elected. The point I am making here essentially is that the intimate relation between Women's units and SSU basic units makes them one more vehicle for Baytalmal's less affluent classes to challenge its traditional clique and the class interests it represents. The main problem, however, is that these units are on the whole ineffective and not functioning, for various reasons, we have already outlined above.

3. <u>Youth Units</u>

This is another of these "popular organisations" that was supposed to work towards the "transformation of Sudanese Society" and as in the case of Women's units developed as a substitute succeeding the dissolution

of the progressive Sudanese Youth Union in 1971. As in the case of the Women's units, Youth units have developed into organs greatly related to SSU structures. This particular fact has in effect meant that a lot of progressive youth have refrained from participating in these units. This together with (as in the case of Women's units) lack of finance, has meant the relative incapacity of these units for acting in any sort of concerted way. This is to the extent that three of Baytalmal's neighbourhoods do not have any such units to begin with. The structure of these units is similar to that of Women's units also beginning at the neighbourhood level continuing all the way up to the national level. As for their relations with local councils, such relations are practically non-existent, since these units exist only in name. The only incident in which such a relationship could have developed occurred during the second session of councils (1973-1977). Succeeding the ousting of the former president, the head of Youth organisations in Baytalmal went to the council and demanded seeing Town Council minutes of the particular meeting during which the former council president was ousted (see Chapter IV). The Administrative Officer refused, and here this person accused her of complicity with the "traditional" clique, of disloyalty to the May regime, and further, he threatened that he would use his connections in the SSU to oust her as well. The Administrative Officer raised the issue at the next Town Council meeting and demanded that a letter of protest be sent complaining about the behaviour of the youth representative. This particular incident illustrates two points already made, first the absence of relations between these two entities, i.e. local councils and youth units and secondly, the excessive politicization of these units and their intimate relations with the SSU. The general lack of enthusiasm of Baytalmal's population concerning these organisatons is attested to by the fact that only one person from the total sample of 154, said they were a member of Youth units. In addition, when asked

to rate youth organisations, in terms of the services they provided, no one ranked them in either first or second place and only 1.5% rated them in third place. Most informants refused to rate them at all.

Finally, in relation to "popular organisations" particularly Women's and Youths units in Baytalmal, the following points can be made: 1) Although they were originally set up to aid in the "radical transformation of Sudanese society", this has not actually occurred primarily due to the fact of their ineffectiveness, whether due to financial reasons or the fact that a lot of the area's progressive elements have simply refrained from participating in them. 2) Consequently, they have become one more vehicle, although a rather ineffective one for the area's less-affluent classes to confront its "traditional" clique. This however is not successful, since besides being ineffective due to financial reasons, the higher levels of the SSU which control these organisations are currently also dominated by the "traditional" clique.

D. Charity Organisations

The final local organisations I will be considering is charity organisations. The aim of these organisations is helping of neighbourhood's inhabitants during various crises or events especially deaths, marriages and births. Aid is either in the form of money contributions or in kind, for instance providing foodstuffs, tents, chairs, etc., or both. These contributions are collected monthly from members, the rate depending upon the neighbourhood and upon how much individuals can pay, usually anywhere between 25 piastres and £S1 monthly. These organisations have presidents, although not by formal election, the president usually being among the elders of the neighbourhood. No regular meetings exist.

The recipients of these sort of mutual aid are families undergoing such life-crises as marriages, and deaths within the particular neighbourhoods, when extra financial aid is needed.

On asking members of these organisations when they first started,

no one could give me a definite date. However, there seemed to be agreement on the fact that these organisations "have always existed", and were just a formalisation of the kind of cooperative relations existing within Baytalmal's neighbourhoods.

As is clear from table II the membership of these organisations is largely drawn from the areas more affluent neighbourhoods. This is understandable, since clearly the inhabitants of these neighbourhoods are more able to afford the monthly contributions. These organisatons do not exist in all of Baytalmal, for instance no such organisation exists in al-Izbitaliyya. This is related to the fact that this neighbourhood's original inhabitants are increasingly leaving it (see Chapter II for details) and relations with those who have moved into the neighbourhood are not as strong as to warrant setting up such organisations. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in Mulazmin South, two such organisatons exist, one for the police barracks and the second for the inhabitants of the first class residential area.

There are no formal relations between these charity organisations and local councils, except perhaps with respect to instances of overlapping membership. In fact the general image of these organisations in Baytalmal is that they are 'apolitical', having nothing to do with councils, SSU etc. In actuality of course, the very fact that their membership is largely drawn from Baytalmal's affluent classes makes them inherently political. This is, of course, especially attested to by the case of Mulazmin South, where two such organisations exist, catering for the two classes existing in the neighbourhood.

Below I examine the age structure and occupations of members of charity organisations. Eleven per cent of my sample were members of these.

TABLE XI: AGE STRUCTURE OF CHARITY ORGANISATION MEMBERS

Age Group	MN No	MN %	BC No	BC %	BS No	BS %	MS No	MS %	BN No	BN %	IZB No	IZB %	MAKKI No	MAKKI %	Total	%
20 - 30					1	25									1	6.7
41 - 50	2	50	1	25	1	25			2	100					6	40
51 +	2	50	3	75	2	50					1	100			8	53.3
Total	4	100	4	100	4	100			2	100	1	100			15	100

TABLE XII: OCCUPATIONS OF MEMBERS OF CHARITY ORGANISATIONS

Occupation	MN No	MN %	BC No	BC %	BS No	BS %	MS No	MS %	BN No	BN %	IZB No	IZB %	MAKKI No	MAKKI %	Total	%
Merchant	2	50	2	50	1	25									5	33.3
Senior Gov't Official	1	25			1	25									2	13.3
Lower rank Gov't Official									1	50					1	6.7
Professional	1	25	2	50	1	25									4	26.7
Middle rank Gov't official					1	25			1	50	1	100			3	20.0
Total	4	100	4	100	4	100			2	100	1	100			15	100

As seen above, most members of these organisations fall in the over 51 age group, and are either merchants or professionals. Both these facts are understandable in the light of what I have already said about these organisations, specifically that they arrange mutual aid for their neighbourhoods inhabitants during times of crisis. This is the function of the elders and more affluent inhabitants of Baytalmal. So in concluding about Charity Organisations, whereas they are not outwardly "political" in relation to their operation, yet in actual fact are inherently so, as I have shown, especially in relation to their type of membership and where they exist in Baytalmal.

Conclusion

The main question with which I began this chapter was: To what extent have local organisatons like local councils affected the social structure of the area through providing politically-defined arenas for the conflict of its classes? In trying to deal with this question, I looked at a) the structure and workings of several local organisations in Baytalmal, b) their membership characteristics, c) their relations with local councils and consequently their involvement in the local politics of the area.

I showed that generally the specific conditions of each neighbourhood plus the aims of the particular organisation under question, were the two factors determining the extent to which local organisations provided such arenas for conflict of class interests. a) in relation to the conditions of each neighbourhood, the crucial factor is the extent to which it is the same class that controls all or most of these local oeganisations, b) in relation to the aims of the local organisation the important thing is the amount of resources it commands. As regards (a), in neighbourhoods where the same class controls all or most organisations, they clearly do not affect the local social structure or the accentuation of class conflict at the neighbourhood level. In contrast, in neighbourhoods where different classes control

different organisations (e.g. Mulazmin South and Baytalmal North), these organisations occupy such a position of providing arenas for conflict, again at the neighbourhood level.

Thus, in Baytalmal North, the conflict is between the neighbourhood council on the one hand controlled by persons owing allegiance to the "traditional" clique and the class currently controlling the cooperative and SSU Basic unit. In Mulazmin South, meanwhile, as I have demonstrated, conflict was within the cooperative committee, finally resulting in its closing down, and the development of two separate cooperatives.

Factor (b) specifically concerns the local organisation itself and the amount of resources it commands. Here then, there is clearly a difference between the position of cooperatives on the one hand and Women's units on the other. Clearly, the former due to its structure and functions is more susceptible to being used as an arena by the area's classes than is the latter.

So, my response to the initial question raised is that dependent upon the structure of the neighbourhood concerned and the structure and position of the local organisation under consideration, local organisations do indeed provide such bounded arenas for class conflict as have local councils.

CHAPTER VI: FOOTNOTES

1. W.S.Mann, Cooperative Movement in the Democratic Republic of Sudan, (1978), 47.
2. Ibid, 14
3. Ministry of Cooperatives, Commerce and Supply, National Committee Study on Long-Term Strategy for the Cooperative Sector in the Sudan, (1979), 32
4. Mann, op.cit., 18
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 38-9.
7. Ibid.
8. Ministry of Cooperatives, Commerce and Supply, op.cit., 42.
9. Mann, op.cit., 48
10. al-Sahafa, (2nd Sept. 1978), 4-5.
11. Mann, op.cit., 48
12. Ministry of Local Government, (1971) op.cit., 26.
13. "The Role of the Cooperative Movement Through the Organs of the Peoples Local Government", Paper presented to the First National Conference on Peoples Local Government, Khartoum, (Jan.1978), 15.
14. Mann, op.cit., 24.
15. Niblock, op.cit., 410.
16. Ibid., 412-3
17. Bechtold, op.cit., 121.
18. Niblock, 413.
19. Ibid., 410.
20. Ibid., 414.
21. Ibid.
22. Peoples Assembly Select Committee for Study and Review of Peoples Local Government, Final Report, (May 1976).
23. See issues of al-Sahafa during December 1979.
24. Sudan Socialist Union General Secretariat, op.cit., 29.
25. Niblock, op.cit., 414.
26. Muhamman Ibrahim Abu Salim (1974) op.cit., 14-18.
27. Davey et al., op.cit., 34.

28. C.Lobban, "The Women's Movement in the Sudan and its impact on Sudanese Law and Politics", Paper presented to Symposium on the Changing Status of Sudanese Women, Khartoum (Feb.1979), 2-9.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IMPORTANT ISSUES IN BAYTALMAL: CONSUMER GOODS SHORTAGES AND REPLANNING

The aim of this chapter is to present an analysis of two important issues in Baytalmal over recent years. These are the shortages in consumer goods and the replanning of the area. Both are important for us in two senses: a) They have affected and continue to affect the population as practical issues and b) they are highly significant for any analysis of the administration of Baytalmal in relation to its changing social structure, which is the central problem of this thesis. I will elaborate on the importance of these issues. Both issues were given a high rating by respondents in my survey when I asked them which issues or problems they perceived as important in their neighbourhoods (For details on other issues that were mentioned as important in Baytalmal's various neighbourhoods, see Chapter II). Another reason for my choice of the two issues is that whereas the shortage of consumer goods is important in all Sudan's urban areas, the replanning problem is specific not only to Baytalmal but even within Baytalmal to its older neighbourhoods, namely Baytalmal Centre, South and North. Studying these two issues thus provides us with differing insights. This is also the case because of the very different natures and histories of the two. Their analysis thus sheds light on the extent to which the councils and the numerous administrative boundaries set up after the passing of the PLG Act in 1971 have influenced the processes of class conflict in the area. I should point out here that this is the main difference between my use of issue analysis and that of the Pluralist school. For the pluralists, issue analysis was the means of "disproving" that a single power elite exists in a particular community and proving that power was widely distributed and that communities had a pluralistic power structure. In contrast, my main aim in examining these two issues is rather to highlight my earlier analyses about the changing social structure of the area and how local councils are related to this, rather than to simply prove or disprove statements concerning the existence of elites.

In earlier chapters, I have looked at: a) the actual functioning

of the administrative structure in Baytalmal, its basic contradictions, and some of the problems it faces; b) the changing pattern of membership in the councils with particular emphasis on the domination of two "cliques" at particular points in the history of local government in the 1970s as a reflection of the position of classes in the area and of their respective relations with the State, c) further aspects of micro political processes surrounding councils especially as evidenced from perceptions of council operation and voting turnouts and d) local organisations in Baytalmal and the extent to which they have also acted as centres of class power.

In now examining the "natural history" of two particular issues, we may reconsider the earlier analyses in such a way as to bring them together and thus present a more incisive and coherent account of what is happening to the relation between Baytalmal's administrative and social structures.

Issue I: Consumer Goods Shortages

This first part of the chapter is presented in three subsections: a) reasons for shortages and their periodisation, b) the role of councils in the distribution of goods, c) community reactions and differences between neighbourhoods in Baytalmal.

a) Reasons for shortages and their periodisation

The shortage of many consumer goods has in recent years been and remains, one of the most serious problems affecting many aspects of daily life in Sudanese urban society , and it has affected social and political relations at various levels. The endless queues of people in front of shops, cooperatives and bakeries are a familiar sight in the cities and towns of the country. The shortages are so salient a feature of the urban scene that there has developed a whole new "culture" for dealing with them and for coping without regular supplies of certain basic goods which were previously regarded as essential for daily life. The list of goods in short supply expands and contracts at different times, but basically it invariably includes sugar, bread, petrol, kerosene,

soap, cooking oil, rice and cement.

The devleopment of a "culture" for dealing with shortages has included, and affected social relations throughout urban society, though differentially for socio-economic classes. For example it is more difficult to entertain friends and family members and to offer them hospitality than it was only a few years ago. This is a matter of everyday observation and it was borne out in responses to one question included in my survey questionnaire in Baytalmal, namely "What have been the most important changes affecting your neighbourhood, socially?" Here, most informants from the area's less affluent neighbourhoods said that there had been a reduction in the volume and the intensity of social relations and they attributed this primarily to economic reasons.

There are also more specific aspects to this "culture". The storing and hoarding of consumer goods to anticipate shortages, but also thereby creating more shortages was previously unknown but has become common. Shortages have precipitated thus many changes in consumption patterns.

In order to place these shortages in their proper historical context, it must be stated that they have in the late 1970s been more accute than at any time since the Second World War, which was the first time that certain basic foodstuffs were rationed. A full explanation of the causes of these shortages would entail a detailed analysis of the Sudanese economy since colonial times, and its specific characteristics in relation to other underdeveloped economies.[1] As this falls far beyond the scope of the present thesis, I limit myself to the more immediate "causes".

One of the historical events that has affected shortages is, of course, the 1973 oil embargo, after which prices rose sharply and fluctuated considerably on world markets. One consequence in the Sudan was that the government placed several consumer goods under its direct supervision and has sought to control their distribution. Several reasons stemming from the local national situation necessitated this:

a) the shortage of foreign currency to cover import costs, b) seasonal variation in the availability of goods, c) scarcity caused by problems of transport, d) problems with development schemes that intended to increase local production of some of the goods in short supply, especially sugar. The problems of the Kenana sugar scheme are a case in point. An initial feasibility study had estimated its cost to be £80 million. It was initially planned to produce some 300,000 tons of refined sugar per year, expanding to a capacity of 1 million tons. However, construction delays, alleged mismanagement and corruption made the estimated cost of its completion rise to £330 million.[2.] e) organisational reasons relating to systems of distribution and administrative problems. Other crucial national circumstances that have aggravated the consumer goods shortages include rapid population growth and changing consumption habits. Different combinations of the above factors have at different times resulted in the recent acceleration of these shortages in one or other commodity. To repeat, the above factors may be regarded as the "immediate causes" of various shortages, but it is obvious these have operated within the context of the malformation of the Sudanese economy and of its specific historical development since colonial times.

The stark fact is that since 1973, rises in world prices, coupled with scarcity of certain commodities have coincided with an increasing demand for them. The main goods under concern are sugar, oil, kerosene, cement and petroleum, though this list has been subject to expansion or contraction depending on both international and national factors of the kind referred to above. The most recent shortages all began after the 1973 rise in prices. Yet even during this period, and especially during and since the time when I began my fieldwork, various "peaks" in these shortages can be delineated. The first of these was during the month of Ramadan (July-August) in 1978. Ramadan is always characterised by increased consumption of certain goods, especially sugar. In 1978, it

also coincided with the rainy season and thus with the effects of the rains on transport. Thus it was during this month that petrol was rationed for the first time (see pages 313-14 for details on petrol rationing). The second peak of shortages occurred one month later, and was a result of "over-consumption" during Ramadan.

Another important point to discuss is that there are several organisations and groups involved in the distribution, purchase and sale of goods and that each of these has different interests and perceives the situation differently. The main organisations and groups involved are the following: 1) the ministries of Commerce and Industry, 2) the Province Administrative structure charged with distribution, 3) Wholesale Merchants, 4) Retail Merchants, 5) Cooperatives, 6) Consumers. It is therefore necessary to bear in mind the differing involvement of all of the above interests and this will become clear as I discuss the distribution and availability of particular goods. My discussion will, however, lay stress primarily on the role and functioning of the Province administrative structures (including local councils) and the consumers and their views and attitudes.

The above remarks are intended to provide a framework for the discussion of the consumer goods shortages that have plagued Sudanese society during the 1970s and particularly since the world rise in prices in 1973.

In the next section I consider the involvement of specific interests in the general problem.

b) <u>The Role of Local Councils in Consumer Goods Shortages</u>

In regard to distribution of goods the PLG Act stipulated that the councils were:

> "To regulate and licence trade business in the Province, to supervise workers, and to submit necessary recommendations to the Ministry of Economics, Trade and Supply. 2) to ensure the adequate supply of commodities and foodstuffs of prime necessity and to control its distribution. " 3

Thus, since 1971, the prime organs for the distribution of consumer

goods in short supply have been the local councils with the Province Executive Council at the apex of the structure they form. But although it is the PEC as a whole which is responsible for the control and distribution of goods, there are specialised committees in charge of this. These committees are found at all levels of council hierarchy and are called Supply and Consumer Goods Committees. At the province level, the committee includes at least six popular members (representing each of the Three Towns), and is headed by the Assistant Commissioner for Commerce and Supply. At the District level, the committee is headed by the Administrative Officer in charge of supplies for the District, and at the Town Council level by the Town Council's Administrative Officer.

Before discussing the case of particular goods, it must be noted that Khartoum Province has some 'unique' problems in relation to the supply and availability of consumer goods, owing to several factors: a) its position as the primary commercial and industrial centre of the country, b) its consumption habits which are in many ways different to those of other areas, c) its geographical proximity to several other provinces which means that its supplies can with relative ease be smuggled into these provinces where their value is often much higher than in Khartoum Province itself. To demonstrate how the relationship between the interests of different groups operates in practice, I consider the availability and distribution of several goods.

In examining these cases, I stress the way in which the shortage of consumer goods has led to a situation in which access to supplies is a resource affecting the relationship between Baytalmal's administrative structure and its people and that it is one of the stakes which has increasingly turned the local councils into centres of class power.

"The Politics of Sugar"-

Before discussing the distribution of this particular commodity, I need to stress its importance in the Sudanese diet. Heavily sweetened tea is a major popular source of energy, and usually constitutes the

only dessert after meals. Before 1975 a special "sugar unit" was responsible for the import of the commodity and it was controlled by the Department of Customs. In January 1975, however, the Sugar Corporation was formed with the primary aim of supplying sugar, whether through importation or through local production, and this was established as part of the Ministry of Finance, though the distribution of sugar became the responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce and Supply. The Board of Directors of the Sugar Corporation meets annually to determine the sugar needs of each province according to its population size and consumption habits for a period of twelve months. The amount to be issued to each province is determined at the meeting and made known to the Province Commissioners, who then make arrangements for the purchase and transportation of the allocated quantities to their respective provinces. Province Commissioners appoint local traders to transport the sugar from Port Sudan or Khartoum as the case may be. Local traders then usually appoint wholesalers in the capital to make the necessary arrangements and these wholesalers sell the sugar only to the traders who appointed them.[4]

After making the estimates of need, the corporation invites tenders through the press for the importation of sugar which is done through local agents of international companies. The acceptance of particular tenders depends on matters such as price and agreement on deferred payments. The sugar is delivered to Port Sudan by the companies concerned. Despite the fact that estimates of requirements are made for each province, in practice there are large discrepancies between actual needs and the amounts of sugar that becomes available. This is due both to the difficulty of making correct estimates for population size which is changing through migration between provinces, as well as from neighbouring countries, (notably Ethiopia and Uganda) and to the basic economic difficulties mentioned earlier such as the availability of foreign currency to pay for imports. Thus, for example, in the year

1978-1979, the quota for Khartoum Province was 3,500 bags of sugar daily (i.e. 350,000 kilos), one official estimate made at the province headquarters suggests that there was a deficit in the amount actually obtained of about 100,000 kilos or 1,000 bags per day.

The quota for any province is distributed through two channels: a) Cooperatives and b) Local Councils. In the case of Khartoum Province the cooperatives get 1,400 bags daily for distribution as follows:

Khartoum	:	500 bags
Omdurman	:	400 "
Khartoum N.	:	400 "
Total		1,300 "

The Regional Cooperative Union gets 100 bags. The balance of 2,100 bags is distributed by local councils each of the Three Towns getting 700 bags daily. Each Town or Rural Council in the three districts then gets an amount of sugar based on the proportion of the total population made up by its inhabitants. In Omdurman the percentages are as follows:

al-Mahdiyya	9
Umdurman al-Jadida	14
al-Thawra	12
Wad Nubawi	10
al-Murada	9
Baytalmal	8
Omdurman Market Council	8
Abu Anga	6
al-Masalma	6
Southern Rural	6
Northern Rural	3
Western Rural	3
Abu Si'id	6
Total	100

The percentages each neighbourhood council gets in Baytalmal are also based on population and are as follows:

Mulazmin South	8
Mulazmin North	12
al-Izbitaliyya	12
al-Sayyid al Makki	12
Baytalmal North	16
Baytalmal South	16
Baytalmal Centre	16
Schools in vicinity of Baytalmal	8
Total	100

The 700 bags per day referred to above are an average amount when the shortage is not severe, but the actual amount distributed is quite often much less than that, and sometimes no sugar is distributed at all. For instance, during the time I was doing my fieldwork no sugar was distributed on 2nd, 8th, 9th, and 23rd October or on 4th, 5th, 6th or 8th and 9th November 1978.

However, if 700 bags were actually distributed to Omdurman District on a given day, Baytalmal got 56 bags and its smallest neighbourhood Mulazmin South got 15 bags of the whole, its largest neighbourhood, Baytalmal North, got approximately 30. In effect, this meant that a household would get from 3 to 5 pounds of sugar per week through the councils. But a member of a cooperative in the neighbourhood, would also get some supplies from there, and anyone who was also a member of a cooperative at his worplace, would get still further supplies.

We saw that within the Province distribution is the responsibility of the PEC and the Province Commissioner, aided by supply committees. The following process occurs daily. Firstly, the administrative officer in charge of supply at the District Council level gets information from the PEC on the amount of sugar being distributed, as well as a list of merchants (elected by the Union of Wholesale merchants), who have bought sugar from the Sugar Corporation and collected it from the warehouses. The Administrative officer at the level of the District Council then distributes the allocations to each Town or Rural Council within the District. In addition, he writes an invoice to the Administrative officer of each local council specifying the amounts

and giving the names of wholesale merchants. The administrative officer at the Town Council level already has information from the Neighbourhood Councils on the number of retail merchants owning shops in their respective areas. These merchants collect the permits from the Town Council and get the sugar from the wholesale merchant before selling it in their shops. On special occasions such as marriages and deaths when there is an increased demand for sugar, a person may apply to the Town Council through the Neighbourhood Council President who has to approve the applications, for larger allocations. However, during the course of my fieldwork I heard some councillors saying that this practice should be restricted, as it was being abused by some neighbourhood council presidents in an effort to gain local popularity.

The above description of the way in which sugar is distributed refers to periods when the system is working smoothly, and I have not referred to some of the major problems involved. I now refer to these which are not peculiar to the distribution of sugar, but are shared to a greater or lesser degree by the other consumer goods under official control.

The first problem arises out of the involvement of commercial interests. I have already alluded to this at the beginning of the present section, when enumerating the groups of interests involved in distribution. The main concern of the merchants is naturally to maximise their profit. Hence, their role is crucial in any situation of scarcity and heightened demand. In recent years the black market in sugar has flourished and it is estimated that between 30-40 per cent of the available sugar finds its way into the black market. At such times the selling of sugar according to official procedures is scarcely profitable for retail merchants as they would only make 5-6 piastres profit on a bag of 100 kilos. And even this profit is only made if the bag weighs exactly 100 kilos; if it is slightly underweight, or if some of the sugar is lost in handling the merchant may actually lose rather than gain. To counteract

this risk, retail merchants commonly sell sugar on the black market either outside Khartoum Province, where prices are higher and shortages more intense, especially due to problems of transport, or within Khartoum Province to owners of sweet shops and cafe's, whose businesses require considerable supplies or, more generally to anyone who can afford the black market prices. Thus a bag of sugar that would normally cost about £S40-50 may be sold for as much as £S150. One merchant suggested to me that the import and distribution of sugar should be taken out of government hands and left to merchants who would ensure the import of sufficient quantities to satisfy the market.

The adverse effects of the involvement of commercial interests in the present system is widely recognised. Both the Minister of Commerce and Supply and the Commissioner of Khartoum Province have crticised the present situation and have emphasised the negative role of brokerage assumed by whdesale merchants. In referring to the situation in the provinces in particular, the Minister stated that commissioners often send too many commercial agents to get their quotas and that they were often not paid on time with the result that merchants are strongly tempted to sell the supplies at their own prices.[5]

One well-known incident illustrates the above. In September 1978, the merchants designated by Southern Darfur's commissioner were unable to collect their quota for that month due to damage caused by heavy rain to the railway track and the impossibility of road transport for the same reason. On hearing that the quota for Southern Darfur had not been collected a Khartoum merchant applied to the Director-General of the Sugar Corporation for permission to transport the consignment. The Sugar Corporation issued the necessary documents to him, thus allowing him to transport the entire load to Southern Darfur, and cabled the Province's Commissioner accordingly. In the event, however, the sugar had been sold on the Omdurman black market within two days.[6]

Similar instances of fraud and corruption include the case reported by an investigative committee which found that in Omdurman District between 1st and 12th August 1978, a total of 537 bags of sugar, amounting to about 19% of Omdurman's quota for that period, was given by the Sugar Corporation to individual merchants without the knowledge of the Province Authorities.[7]

The direct involvement of commercial interests through the fact that some merchants are councillors has also had important consequences. Awareness of this as a potential problem has been aired in numerous protests and in letters to the daily press. Dissatisfaction has been expressed on two counts: a) that councils are dominated by merchants, b) that they are actively engaged in the black market and thus helping it to flourish. One letter to the press complained that: "sugar disappeared the day councils became involved in its distribution". Other letters have called for changes in the PLG Act, demanding that merchants should not be accepted as candidates for council membership.[8]

In Chapter IV we saw that merchants have been well represented on the Town Council especially in its third session, when they represented 25% (vs. 5% in the second session) of the council membership. Their presence on the council in 1977-1980 is an important aspect of the domination of the "traditional" clique, representing Baytalmal's affluent class, which is largely composed of merchants and it is of interest to note that this domination coincided in time with the growing shortage of consumer goods. This has meant that through personal and kinship relations with the "traditional" clique, Baytalmal's affluent class is frequently able to get more goods than they are legally entitled to, whereas the area's less affluent inhabitants largely have to depend on the councils official distribution system.

During the course of my fieldwork, I encountered many cases of people from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods complaining to the Administrative Officer about the inadequacy of the system of sugar

distribution. In one particular instance, the Administrative Officer insisted that she had given the permit to the merchant concerned, but it later transpired that the merchant had sold it on the black market.

One may at this stage question the relevance of the above discussion to my analysis. My concern is to analyse the consumer goods shortages as an issue affecting the relations between councils and Baytalmal and one that has helped transform councils into centres of class power. The "politics of sugar" is especially important in this respect since it shows the involvement and intertwining of various interests, namely those of merchants representing Baytalmal's affluent class, the formal administrative structure, and the less affluent consumers.

Another problem in the distribution of consumer goods by councils arises from the common insistence by neighbourhood shopkeepers that people may get sugar only if they buy other goods as well from the same shops. For instance, if a person wants to buy sugar, he or she also has to buy another commodity sold (e.g. tea), although they may well not wish to do so.

In general, we thus see that a primary problem in the distribution of sugar stems from the position of merchants and middlemen and from the way in which their interests conflict with those of both the administrative structure and the majority of consumers. The following diagram 1 depicts the complex web of official relationships and interests that ensues. The black market, however, operates to a greater or lesser extent at all levels.

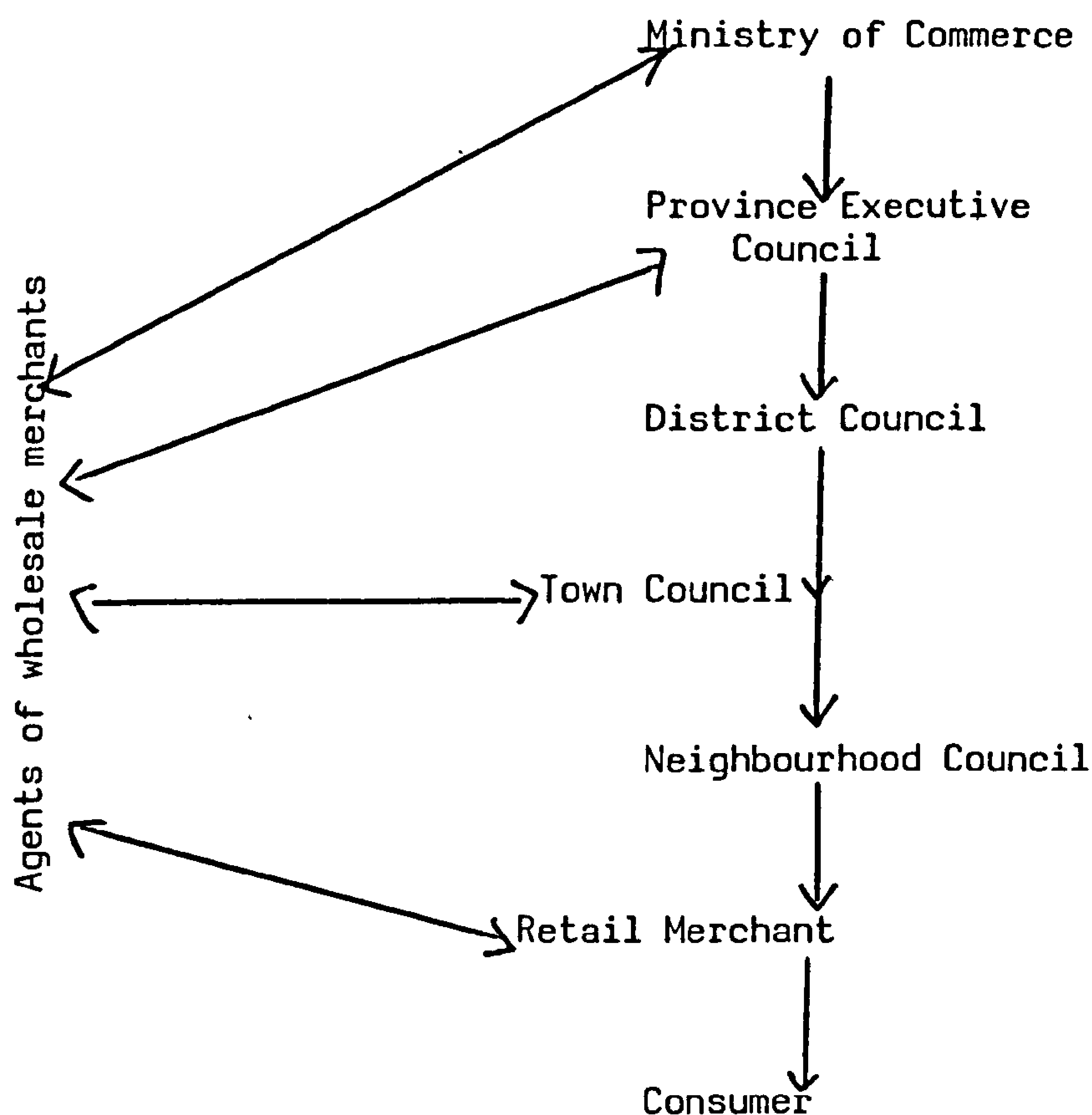


Diagram VII Official Relationships in Consumer Goods Distribution

Further problems include the following:

1) Consumer goods have to pass through a series of channels between organisations whose communications with each other is poor. This allows misconduct and corruption, especially in the absence of effective supervision and control.

2) The complex bureaucratic procedures involved, particularly in relation to information and the issue of permits and invoices equally renders the system open to corruption and slows down distribution in a way which aggravates shortages.

3) In practice there is little or no control over who gets what, especially on account of overlap in functions between cooperatives at the workplace and in the neighbourhoods.

4) A lot of council time is expended on carrying out of the bureaucratic procedures of distribution . This has led many councillors and administrative officers to suggest that the distribution of goods should be

removed from the jurisdiction of councils and given to either the SSU organisations or the cooperatives or to a combination of both. These suggestions have also been made by Davey et al., (1976) in a report entitled Development and Local Government in the Sudan. The report states that the

> "...continuing problems are the need to improve the criteria for supply and the system of distribution. Two possibilities are the use of the SSU and its affiliated organisations or cooperative societies to supervise or take over distribution from administrators and councils".

The report continues:

> "The continuing questions are whether and how the SSU or cooperative societies should fulfill these responsibilities and whether this change-over would free local government administrators and councils for more constructive work?" 10

A report on the reorganisation of the administration of Khartoum Province had as early as 1974, made similar complaints to the effect that too much time was taken up by distribution of consumer goods to the neglect of the other crucial functions of councils. The report in all seriousness stated that at present local councils should be called "consumer goods councils."[11]

I have dwelt on the "politics of sugar" as sugar is one of the most important commodities handled by councils, and probably that which most people need in a very direct way. However, the councils are also involved in the distribution of other goods. Some of these are distributed differently and I shall briefly describe the ways in which petroleum and flour are handled.

Petroleum:

The involvement of councils in relation to petroleum is confined to the distribution of monthly ration cards and the supervision of the three gas stations that fall within Baytalmal administrative division. This responsibility first came into effect in July, 1978, and remains in force as the official way of supplying petrol.

The Administrative Officer checks petrol stocks daily against the quantities received from the province. Two types of ration cards are distributed: those for taxis which allow them 6 gallons of petrol daily, and those for private cars, in turn subdivided into two types: a) cards for small vehicles allowing them 4 gallons every three days and 5 gallons every 3 days and b) cards for larger vehicles allowing 5 gallons every three days and 6 gallons for the other three days. (In all cases this is of course subject to the availability of petrol).

As in the case of sugar, there is a lot of corruption but, as fewer organizations are involved and wholesale merchants have no hand in the matteer, there are fewer bureaucratic problems and the primary issue is the scarcity of petrol with dire consequences for public transport (i.e. taxis and box cars) and immense inconvenience for those who are forced to depend upon it.

Flour

Flour is distributed straight from Province headquarters to bakery owners. The estimated needs of the whole province amount to 5,400-6,400 bags daily but only 3,000 bags were being distributed to the 528 existing bakeries in the three towns at the time of my fieldwork. The total quota for the province is 6,000 bags which means that the balance of approximately 3,000 is being sold illegally on the black market. The bakery owners are often compelled to buy flour from the black market which they should have received through official channels. The difference in price of £S6.5 per bag amounts to a total difference of £S19,500 daily for the province. In effect this means that by the time the bread reaches the market, the population is paying around £S50,000 extra daily.[12] At one time there was a debate in the Town Council as to whether one baker should be reported to the police for buying flour on the black market, but the council decided not to proceed when the baker convinced them that this was the only way for him to provide the bread which was badly needed in the area.

We have seen how some consumer goods are handled and noted the causes of the shortages. I also dwelt on the kind of problems involved in distribution. The relationship between local councils and commercial interests is quite crucial as regards some of the goods. Concern over these matters is widespread as shown in press-coverage it receives.

My interest in various aspects of consumer goods shortages derives from the implications for the relation between councils and Baytalmal and especially the changing position of councils in the conflict of class interests and the impact of this on the social structure of the area. The shortages and the way they have been handled has spurred the articulation of processes of class conflict as I proceed to stress.

C. Community Reactions and Differences Within Baytalmal

In this sub-section I examine three main issues.

First: Consumer behaviour in response to the shortages and views of the role played by councils.

Second: Differences between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods, and what these tell us about the changing local social structure of the area as a whole.

Third: The importance of shortages as a factor affecting change both in the position of councils, and in the local social structure.

Two questions on consumer behaviour were included in the questionnaire: a) How do you get your goods during consumer goods shortages?, and b) what role is played by local councils during these shortages? The following tables show the responses to both questions.

TABLE I: CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR DURING SHORTAGES

Categories of Response	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
1. Storage of Goods in anticipation of shortages	6	28.6	8	28.6	5	22.7			2	6.7	1	4.3	3	15	25	16.2
2. Cooperatives	1	4.8	3	10.7	3	13.6	3	30	10	33.3	5	21.7	6	30	31	20.1
3. Usage of Personal Relations with merchants and councillors	3	14.3	5	17.9	4	18.2	2	20	1	3.3	2	8.7	1	5	18	11.7
4. Dependence on the Black Market	10	47.6	7	25	7	31.8	2	20	2	6.7	2	8.7	1	5	31	20.1
5. Dependence on goods distributed by Councils	1	4.8	5	17.9	3	13.6	3	30	15	50	13	56.5	9	45	49	31.8
Total	21	100.1	28	100.1	22	99.9	10	100	30	100	23	99.9	20	100	154	99.9

One general comment must be made before explaining the responses. Most respondents said they relied on combinations of the above responses, but I have shown the categories that respondents said were their "primary" means for acquiring consumer goods during periods of shortages. Thus, for instance, when respondents said they got goods from both cooperatives and the black market, but depended primarily on the black market, I have tabulated the latter category.

The responses shown in the table indicate that consumer behaviour is closely related to the neighbourhood in which informants lived and hence to their socio-economic class. Thus, we see that there were two dominant patterns of consumer behaviour. a) dependence upon storage of goods in anticipation of forthcoming shortages, usage of personal and kinship relations with merchants and councillors, and reliance on the black market and b) dependence on Cooperatives (whether in the neighbourhoods themselves, or workplaces), and goods distributed through councils at official prices. The first pattern is characteristic of informants coming from Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods, namely Mulazmin North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South, and the second of informants from Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods. Thus, for instance, if we compare one of Baytalmal's affluent neighbourhoods (Mulazmin North), with one of its less affluent neighbourhoods, (Baytalmal North) we find that whereas 47.6% from Mulazmin North said they depended upon the black market, only 6.7% from Baytalmal North claimed to do so. Furthermore, in relation to pattern (b) 50% of informants from Baytalmal North said they depended upon goods distributed by the council, but only 4.8% of Mulazmin North informants gave this response.

It is hence evident that consumer behaviour during shortages depends to a large extent on social class. The same is true in relation to the role played by local councils as shown below.

TABLE II: PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY LOCAL COUNCILS DURING CONSUMER GOODS SHORTAGES

Views on the role played by Councils	MN		BC		BS		MS		BN		IZB		MAKKI			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total	%
1. System of Distribution involves widespread corruption is unfair			1	3.6			3	30	15	50	15	65.2	8	40	42	27.3
2. Cooperatives are more effective	3	14.3	4	14.3	2	9.1	3	30	9	30	6	26.1	10	50	37	24.0
3. Councils do their best but shortages are intense	7	33.3	13	46.4	9	40.9	4	40	3	10			2	10	34	22.1
4. Councils play no effective role	11	52.4	10	35.7	11	50			3	10	2	8.7			41	26.6
Total	21	100	28	100	22	100	10	100	30	100	23	100	20	100	154	100

Once again we note two patterns of response that are related to neighbourhood (and by extension to social class) we see that the view that role of councils involves a lot of corruption in contrast to the more effective role played by cooperatives is largely held by inhabitants of Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods. In contrast, those who consider that councils play no role during shortages, or that they do their best but that the causes of shortages are beyond their control, are mainly those who reside in Baytalmal's more affluent neighbourhoods.

Consumer Goods Shortages in Baytalmal: Final Comments

1) In analysing aspects of consumer goods shortages, I have emphasised that they have enhanced the importance of councils. This has naturally heightened public interest in the questions of who controls them and what class is primarily represented by the council members.

2) In considering the community's reactions, to shortages, I emphasised differences within Baytalmal, both in regard to consumer behaviour during shortages and to perceptions of the role of councils at these times. To reiterate my analysis of consumer goods shortages as an important issue in Baytalmal has been guided by the view that they are an important resource that has changed the position of councils in the area and transformed the role of councils, making them increasingly important as arenas for the area's classes to conflict, in the process increasingly making them classes capable of political action.

Issue II: Baytalmal Replanning Scheme

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the replanning of Baytalmal is another issue of high importance to its population, and especially for those residing in the areas affected (i.e. Baytalmal North, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South). Unlike consumer goods shortages however, it is an issue specific to Baytalmal which is the only area within Omdurman where replanning is currently taking place. Thus, Baytalmal presents differences both to old areas that are not

being replanned and to the new extensions where planning is taking place from scratch.

Another difference between the issue of shortages and that of replanning is that the former has only developed since the setting up of councils, whereas the latter has been an issue since the replanning scheme was begun in the 1950s, and hence before the establishment of local councils in 1971. The important point here is that it is the creation of the councils which has turned replanning into a specifically local issue and thus given it more local political significance. It has in fact become a crucial "stake" for Baytalmal's two cliques. I shall first outline the replanning scheme's history and development and then consider its current implications.

History of Replanning of Baytalmal

After the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest in 1898 the new administration settled in freehold any Sudanese who claimed land in Omdurman. The town was not replanned from scratch as was Khartoum. Instead, the administrators simply fixed on their maps the existing irregular lay-outs of the Khalifa's regime. Further partition under Shari'a law by breaking down and subdividing the larger plots only increased the confusion.[13] The report by Doxiadis Associates in 1959 similarly maintained that:

> "Omdurman confronts the problem of replanning certain residential areas mainly because of the prevailing narrow and irregular street pattern. The solution of these problems becomes very difficult because there is no overall plan, which should guide the replanning of small areas." 14

Thus many of Baytalmal's contemporary problems (e.g. sewage, narrow and uneven streets) are related to the historical development of Omdurman as an unplanned "native" town which was neglected in contrast to Khartoum and Khartoum North. In December 1953, however, the colonial government began to consider the complete replanning of Omdurman and a map specifying both present and future land use was drawn up. The Central Town Planning Board (CTpB) agreed and set aside £S3,000 to begin

the replanning of Baytalmal and Abu Rof, the oldest areas of Omdurman, and to work on the rest of Omdurman after completion of that scheme. The rationale for the scheme was put as follows by the secretary of the CTPB in a letter to the commissioner of Khartoum Province written in 1956:

> "Omdurman as it is called the 'mother of the Sudanese Towns' consists of the most important Sudanese families that is apart from its history. Furthermore, it is the focal point for any activities in the Sudan, whether it is political, social, traditional, commercial or religious. It is a real shame to see the biggest town of the country in such state of bad planning while other similar towns are developing and advancing rapidly. This state of affairs is attributed to the fact that no attention had ever been paid in the past to this important spot of the Sudan and people were left to develop their lands haphazardly without rules or regulations and with no notice paid to Public Health requirements...."

He added:

> "I would like the government to treat this replanning proposed as a national scheme and to push it through whatever the costs may be in order to bring this town up to the standard of other towns in the Sudan." 15

The importance of this letter is that it shows a change in attitude towards Omdurman especially, as contrasted with the former official attitude of neglect. This was doubtless due in considerable part to the increased political activity characterising the town during the 1940s and 1950s, especially with the political movements leading to the rise of the national, political parties. We may recall that Baytalmal was one of the areas in Omdurman which accommodated many of these political movements, and that the town's middle class spearheaded those developments. Baytalmal's population was then largely made up of middle rank civil servants and small merchants. (See Chapter II) Thus the change in attitude, culminating in the idea of a replanning scheme, can be seen as an integral part of an effort to appease the town's inhabitants who were leading the anti-colonial movement, and who were in many cases residents of Baytalmal. Before the implementation of the scheme the area included 3,730 plots, 75% of which had illegal frontages, or were below the legal size in area. Furthermore, about 85%

of its streets were narrow lanes many of which were deadends.[16] Table III below compares Baytalmal as it was in 1960 and the changes which the scheme hoped to effect.

TABLE III: BAYTALMAL BEFORE AND AFTER REPLANNING

	Area of inhabitated plots sq.m.	Population	Individual shares of land in sq.m.	Area of public spaces and streets
1960	1,236,023,6	21,426	57,68	227,9764
After the scheme	1,093,800,5	16,459	66,45	370,1195

(It should be noted that "Baytalmal" here also includes the neighbourhood of Abu Rof, currently a part of a different Town Council, that of Wad Nubawi).

The scheme was to be executed in line with the Replanning Ordinance of 1950. The ordinance stipulated that after the declaration of the intention of replanning by the Province authority, this should be mentioned in the Gazette, and that thereafter no new buildings or structural repairs should be executed without the permission of the province authority. A replanning officer was to be appointed by that authority, following which a Replanning Commission was to be set up, made up of the Replanning Officer, a representative of the Province Authority and a third member appointed by the aforementioned officer, "who in making such appointment should so far as practicable take into consideration and give effect to the whishes of the persons interested".[17]

The following estimates were made for the scheme, including an improved system of drainage, markets, expansion of streets and provision of other essential services. This, therefore required the movement of people out of Baytalmal to a spillover area in Western Omdurman (al-'Arda) and to al-Thawra.

Estimates for the scheme: (1956)[18]

	£S
1. Value of buildings and land	305,661
2. Value of land in spillover ares	518,750
3. Electricity	12,131
4. Watermains	24,302
5. Roads	100,000
6. Telephones	10,000
7. Salaries of Replanning Staff	3,584

However, protests against the scheme were not only voiced by Baytalmal's population (for reasons we will outline below), but also by various other officials including the Khartoum Lands Commissioner and Town Planning experts (including Doxiadis Associates). The latter suggested that as the area was largely freehold it would be very expensive to replan (because of compensations to be paid) and that the money should be spent on planning new areas instead.

Baytalmal's population was, however, primarily concerned about the disruption of social and kinship relations which would have occurred as a result of the movement to the spillover area. This was clear from letters of protest to various officials. To quote one such letter dated 30/9/1956 and addressed to the Prime Minister:

> "We have made clear the harm that would affect the population, especially the poor among them, especially since this replanning is the work of foreigners, who do not know the financial standing of the population or our traditions, particularly since replanning would mean that a lot of the areas houses would have to be rebuilt, something the poor among its inhabitants, cannot afford...etc." 19

In the light of such criticisms, the CTPB in 1958 formed a sub-committee to re-examine the scheme. As a result, the plan was revised in 1960, and included the following stipulations:

> "That the revised plan should to start with mainly provide for a road system for the main roads and arrangement of blocks. Internal plot arrangements should be left for the replanning commissions to be appointed under the replanning ordinance. That when the revised plan is approved the replanning area should be split into phases for executing. The gazetting of Abu Rof and Beit elMal areas for replanning should continue". 20

It is important to note that during this seven year period (1953-1960), the people of Baytalmal still did not know whether the scheme would go through. Thus they could not build, or improve existing buildings; neither could they sell land.

Furthermore, subsequent changes in government, as a result of the 1958 coup-d'etat, the 1964 revolution and the return of political parties, and the consequent frequent turnover in government personnel and those in charge of the scheme, meant that it did not get off the ground until 1966, when £S12,175 was given to the newly appointed commission as a preliminary sum to start replanning. The area chosen for the first stage of replanning was what is known as Baytalmal South (refer to map). The replanning involved opening many streets which were dead ends, making sure that plots were in block shape, and that they conformed to the legal minimum area of 300 sq.m. each. In this process, of course, much demolition would be necessary. Compensation was to be in the form of either alternative plots of land in the designated spillover area or in cash. Compensation by plots of land in spillover areas was to be for plots completely destroyed through replanning.

However, owing to the slow pace of the scheme's development (1953-1966), there were large increases in the value of land, and in the general costs of replanning. Thus further estimates were made by the Replanning Commission:[21]

Value of land	£S47280,610
Compensation	£S61888,180
Deficit	£S14607,570

This deficit reached £S7435,500 by 1969/70. Thus, whereas officials in the late 1950s had though there might be a gain in the scheme by 1967, it was actually losing.

Besides the sharp rises in the financial costs during the 1960s, other reasons for slowing down the scheme were primarily political.

Many of the leaders of the political parties during the 1960s lived in Baytalmal. To gain and ensure local popularity, they continually slowed down the scheme, responding to local protests. The Baytalmal Replanning Commission, at this time, was particularly wary of handling plots belonging to the Khatmiyya religious sect and their mouthpiece, the Peoples Democratic Party. Consequently, the scheme made very slow progress until the setting up of the first Peoples Local Councils in 1972.

Baytalmal's Replanning after the setting up of Local Councils

The main point to emphasise in this section is that although replanning was an issue of some importance to Baytalmal's population since the inception of the Baytalmal Replanning Scheme, it has become an issue of much greater importance since the setting up of local councils in 1972. We may discuss the reasons for this in detail. In discussing the issue of consumer goods shortages, I indicated that three principle sets of interests were involved (those of the consumers especially the less affluent among them, the commercial interests, including those of some councillors, and those of the local government hierarchy). In considering replanning two main bodies of interest can be delineated. These are the interests of 1) Baytalmal Town Council (depending upon which clique controls it) and 2) Baytalmal's Replanning Commission. I will discuss each in turn.

As stated the Baytalmal Replanning Commission was set up in 1966 to undertake the replanning of Baytalmal. It was constituted of a Replanning Officer and two other members residing in the area, all appointed by the Province Commissioner, and was directly responsible to him and to the CTPB. After the setting up of local councils in the area in 1972, the CTPB was dissolved and all planning became the responsibility of local councils as stated in the 1971 PLG Act. Thus:

> "1) Organisation of building by making regulations for this purpose, 2) Organisation, planning and replanning of towns and villages and implementation of those schemes, 3) Disposition of Government land for all different purposes in

accordance with existing laws." 22

However, despite this, the Replanning Commission worked independently of Baytalmal Town Council. It was directly responsible to the Province Commissioner and as such answered only to him, as was the situation prior to the setting up of councils. This situation further developed especially during the earlier years (1971-1974) as local councils were still in the process of formation and consolidation and did not yet possess independent budgets. All these circumstances led to the relative independence from local councils of Baytalmal's Replanning Commission. This happened despite the fact that Baytalmal Town Council nominated two members to the Replanning Commission. The Commission never invited these two members to meetings, and their membership in effect remained a nominal one. This was largely because of the Commission's resentment of the local council's increasing authority and its fear of becoming a minor body under the jurisdiction of Baytalmal Town Council once the latter started to undertake its planning and replanning functions stipulated in the PLG Act. This fear was in fact expressed in a personal conflict between the Replanning Commission (but specifically the Replanning Officer) and the Council Engineer. The Replanning Officer refused to show the replanning map to the Engineer. Meanwhile, the Engineer clearly needed this plan, especially if he was to take any action in improving the streets in Baytalmal.

Numerous protests were coming into the Town Council centering on the following two issues: a) the fact that the replanning process was taking an extraordinarily long time and that consequently people were unable to make the improvements they wished in their houses and b) the unfairness of compensations for land lost, which many claimed were not uniform.

Generally, the relations between Baytalmal Replanning Commission and Baytalmal Town Council, and consequently the development of Replanning as an issue, can be seen to have passed through several stages. These

were:

1) 1972-1973: This period saw the setting up and consolidation of local councils, and coincided with their first session when the 'traditional' clique gained supremacy. During this stage councils were not able to exert any influence on the Replanning Commission as they were still largely concerned with their own formation and with questions regarding the stability of the whole political system. People were still not aware of the potential importance of local councils and were unsuccessfully protesting about replanning in letters to officials at higher levels of government.

2) 1973-1977: This second stage of the relations between Baytalmal Town Council and Baytalmal Replanning Commission, occurred with the development of the "modern" clique. The new council president belonging to this clique, became a member of the Replanning Commission. It was during this second stage that replanning really became an issue of great importance, especially as it became a matter of contest between Baytalmal Town Council's two cliques. The 'traditional' clique made two accusations against the 'modern' clique. Firstly, it saw that the 'modern' clique was simply accepting the independent status of the Replanning Commission and was not fighting or arguing with Province authorities over this issue. Secondly, by extension, the 'traditional' clique accused the 'modern' clique of not doing anything about the many protests that began to be lodged at the Town Council by Baytalmal's population over grievances about the Commission's policy of compensation. More specifically, the 'traditional' clique was accusing the Town Council President, (also head of the 'modern' clique) and who was simultaneously a member of the Replanning Commission of complicity with the Commission, and of involvement in widespread corruption concerning compensation. They claimed that this was the main reason for his maintaining that the Replanning Commission was a body independent of Baytalmal Town Council, and that it should continue in that status. Furthermore, the 'traditional' clique maintained that replanning was taking such a long time because

it was in the interests of the Replanning Commission's members (including the Council President) and the Replanning staff (including about 10 persons who were all drawing salaries and funds for the replanning operations).

From having examined Town Council meeting minutes from this period, it is clear that the 'traditional' clique was continuously using the issue of replanning in its conflict with the 'modern' clique. Thus, whereas replanning had been important in Baytalmal for a long time, it was now transformed into a critical stake for Baytalmal Town Council's two cliques to fight over. This situation continued with the ousting of the Town Council president and the reascendance of the 'traditional' clique. This signalled a new phase in the relationship between Baytalmal Town Council and Baytalmal Replanning Commission. Thus, whereas in the first stage (1972-1973) Baytalmal Town Council was engaged with consolidating itself to the exclusion of much concern over the Replanning Commission, during the second stage (1973-1977) replanning became a live issue between the council's two cliques. The 'traditional' clique saw that the independence of the Replanning Commission was deliberately fostered by the 'modern' clique and the then Town Council President, (also a member of the Commission), in order to facilitate the widespread corruption involved, and to prolong even further the processes of replanning.

3) <u>1977-1980</u>: The third stage,coinciding with the third session of councils and the dominance of the 'traditional' clique, signalled another new phase in the relationship between Baytalmal Town Council and Baytalmal Replanning Commission. It saw the permanent appointment of the Council President to the Replanning Commission, consequent upon several meetings between Baytalmal Town Council and the present Province Commissioner, with the idea of speeding up Replanning but, more importantly, of ending the independence of Baytalmal Replanning Commission from the Town Counci. However, since this took place towards the end of my period of fieldwork, it was much too early to assess the

actual outcome.

Above, I have concentrated upon the development of the relations between Baytalmal Town Council and Baytalmal Replanning Commission, through various points in time and shown that this was dependent upon which clique was in control of the council.

I will now briefly consider how classes in Baytalmal have been differentially affected by the replanning process, remembering that replanning only concerns Baytalmal's original neighbourhoods, specifically those of Baytalmal South, Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal North. Replanning has further reinforced the differences between Baytalmal's classes. I should reiterate at this point that replanning in Baytalmal has had two main aims: Firstly, to make streets follow regular shapes and secondly, to make plots conform to block shape of at least 300 metres each. To accomplish these two aims, many buildings had to be demolished. Owners whose buildings were completely destroyed were given compensation in one of the designated spillover areas in two of Omdurman's new extensions, al-'Arda and al-Thawra, and hence have had to move out of Baytalmal. One of the first effects of replanning has thus been a reduction in Baytalmal's population. I found it impossible to get accurate figures on the number of people who actually moved out because the Replanning Officer was extremely uncooperative in this respect. However, from records in the Department of Housing, I found that a total of 774 plots were actually given as compensation in the spillover areas, of these, roughly half have been built and occupied. The failure of others to build new houses has largely been due to difficulties involved in acquiring building materials, which are very scarce and are sold at exhorbitant prices. Thus, those who have occupied their new plots are mainly wealthier people who could afford the high costs of building; those who could not have sold their pieces of land and sought alternative cheaper accommodation in Baytalmal. Thus, one of the first differentiating effects of replanning has been that the people who have tended to remain in Baytalmal are those who were

not able to afford the high cost of building elsewhere.

In the case of plots that were only partially destroyed to accommodate new streets or improvements in old ones, there have been two patterns: a) some of the plots have been reduced in size especially for owners who could not afford to move out of Baytalmal. (This particular pattern assumes more significance if we consider it in the context of the general housing crisis in the Three Towns and of mounting population pressure.) Thus in effect people falling in category (a) have had to contend with the problem of an increase in overcrowding, and this is one reason for the high incidence of both extended and compound family households in the area (for details refer to Chapter II). This pattern has been especially common in Baytalmal North, which, as we have shown several times, is one of Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, especially in Baytalmal North, another development due primarily to lack of funds is that the sites of many houses that have been demolished have not been cleared by the Replanning Commission. As a result many of these sites are currently being used by squatters and as hideouts for burglars. The latter, in particular, are causing serious security problems in the area. In contrast, sites in the more affluent neighbourhoods of Baytalmal Centre and Baytalmal South have been cleared independently by local efforts when the Replanning Commission failed to do so.

Above, I have described one of the effects of replanning on Baytalmal's less affluent neighbourhoods, specifically that residents have been compelled to remain in Baytalmal securing either cheaper accommodation (for those whose houses have had to be totally demolished) or opting to remain in smaller plots. Both of these effects, I have stressed, must be placed in the context of the current housing shortage and mounting population pressure on already existing facilities (here especially referring to sewage problems).

Pattern (b) on the other hand, is found mainly in the more affluent neighbourhoods of Baytalmal Centre and BaytalmalSouth, where replanning has had a different effect. Here the residents whose houses have become too small as a result of replanning have moved out of Baytalmal seeking accommodation elsewhere. Those who have stayed have bought up the small remaining plots to expand their previous houses, and have improved their sewage systems. The result is that the area now has many large, even two-storeyed, houses. This is in sharp contrast to the situation in the less affluent neighbourhood of Baytalmal North where as stated above, people affected by replanning have been forced to contend with smaller houses.

The point to stress is that the differential effects of replanning in Baytalmal have acted to reinforce the already existing differences between classes, and that this is taking place in a situation of housing shortage and of increasing population pressure.

Replanning in Baytalmal: Final Comments

The following final comments can be made. 1) I began this section by indicating that replanning as contrasted with consumer goods shortages is an issue specific to Baytalmal (and even within Baytalmal to its old neighbourhoods of Baytalmal North, Centre and South). Moreover, I showed that whereas consumer goods shortages was an issue developing after the establishment of councils (thus giving them increased importance and greatly affecting their position locally), replanning had been an issue prior to 1971, but that the creation of councils transformed it into an issue of crucial importance as it became a stake contested by the council's two cliques. 2) I considered the history of replanning in the area relating it to the change in the colonial government's policy towards Omdurman after the development of numerous political movements which culminated in the rise of the first political parties. 3) I then considered the various interests involved in replanning, concentrating, in particular, upon relations between two of those interests. Specifically I examined the changing relations between Baytalmal Town

Council and Baytalmal Replanning Commission. 4) Finally, I considered the actual effects of replanning on the area, emphasising that in the context of the current housing crisis, it had actually reinforced the differences already existing between the areas classes.

Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter has been to present an examination of two issues that are important both for the population of Baytalmal and for our overall analyses in this thesis. The issues have been those of Consumer Goods Shortages and Replanning of Baytalmal. In the consideration of both, I have emphasised that both are issues in which local councils have been widely involved and that consequently they have constituted important resources for the cliques dominating local councils to fight over, and by extension for the classes of Baytalmal to contest and conflict over. In relation to both, I have emphasised that they have had differential effects on the area's classes. Thus, in relation to the issue of shortages, I showed that whereas the areas less affluent classes were forced to depend to a large extent on goods distributed by the councils, its affluent classes were able through personal relations both with councillors (a lot of whom are merchants), in particular, to gain access to more goods. In relation to replanning, meanwhile, we saw that it had differential effects in the area. Hence, whereas those who could afford it, either moved out or changed their houses by buying adjoining plots affected by replanning, the area's less-affluent classes were forced to either seek cheaper accommodation or to be content with smaller plots, all this in a situation of increased population pressure, and a difficult housing situation.

The main argument I have been proposing throughout this thesis is that the setting up of councils after the drawing of specific administrative boundaries, consequent upon the passing of the PLG Act in 1971, has had the effect of creating a bounded arena where the areas classes can conflict, and that furthermore, this has had the effect of

stimulating such processes of class conflict, especially in the context of rare resources. What I have attempted to do in this chapter is to analyse this process, in relation to two of these rare resources, namely consumer goods and land.

CHAPTER VII: FOOTNOTES

1. See Abd el Muhsin Mustafa, "The Structural Malformation of the Sudanese Economy", Economic and Social Research Council Bulletin, (1975), No.24.

2. P.M.Holt and M.W.Daly, The History of the Sudan from the Coming of Islam to the Present Day, (1979), 211-12.

3. Ministry of Local Government, (1971) op.cit., 28.

4. Alfred Lagune Taban, "Bitter Taste of Sugar", Sudanow, (Nov.1978), 23.

5. al-Sahafa, 31 March (1979).

6. Taban, op.cit.

7. Sharif Tambal, "Ala Khafif", al-Sahafa, 20th Sept. (1978).

8. Ismāil al-Haj Musa, "Ru'us Aqlam", al-Ayan, 12th Sept. (1978).

9. Muhammad Ahmad al-Dani, "Dawr Majlis al-Madina Ka adah li tawzi' al-Mawad al-Tamwiniyya", Majallat al-Sudan lil idara Waltanmiya, Vol.10, (1976), 9-22.

10. Davey et al., (1976), op. cit, 138.

11. Muhammad Ibrahim Abu Salim (1974) op.cit., 13-14.

12. "al-Nas Walhaya", al-Sahafa, 9th Jan.(1979), 12 and 27th lecm.(1978) 10.

13. J.W.Kenrick, "The need for Slum Clearance in Omdurman", Sudan Notes and Records, Vol. XXIV (1953), 281.

14. Doxiadis Associates, Omdurman: A Long Term Program and a Master Plan for the Development of the Town, (1959), 220.

15. Letter from Secretary CTPB to Commissioner of Khartoum (March 1956) in files on Replanning of Baytalmal in Dept. of Housing, Khartoum.

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19. Letter from Baytalmal's population to Prime Minister, (Sept.1956), Dept. of Housing, Khartoum.

20. Minutes of meeting of CTPB on Revision of the Replanning Scheme, (Sept.1960), Dept. of Housing, Khartoum.

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22. Ministry of Local Government (1971) op.cit.

CONCLUSION

This conclusion has three main aims, a) to provide a summary of the principal findings of this thesis, b) to relate those findings to some of the prevailing debates on Third World Urbanisation and c) deriving from the above, to formulate specific questions that could usefully serve as guidelines for future research.

a) The main aim of the thesis was to explore the relations between the changing social structure of an urban community and the wide-reaching innovations in its administrative system, effected in the context of the overall processes of change in Sudanese society.

Several conceptual frameworks were first considered in order to assess their potential value for the analysis. These included studies of Western urban areas. Two groups of such studies examined were American Community Power and French Structuralist studies. After a critical review of the former I established that they were clearly of little use in an analysis of the problem at hand and, in fact, even for analyses of Western communities which they had been originally devised to study. Their main drawbacks, as I see them, are: 1) their concentration on the local community to the almost total neglect of the national context, (and specifically the State) within which they exist. 2) their dependence on the concept of "elite" and their attempt to answer the simple question: Does a single elite "rule" the community, or is there more than one elite dependent on the particular issue at hand?

I had been originally interested in examining this group of studies because of their focus on the social structure of particular communities, which I found to be relevant. However due to their drawbacks, outlined above, I have in this thesis only made cautious use of their method of issue-analysis. In relation to this, I have not, contrary to the American Community Power school, tried to answer the question of whether or not a single power elite exists. Rather my analysis of specific issues has aimed at highlighting my overall analysis of the changing social structure of Baytalmal as this is related to the changes in its

administrative structure. Furthermore, in my analysis of two issues (especially regarding the issue of consumer goods shortages) I have tried to demonstrate the intertwining and the relations that exist between groups of interests at different levels, i.e. at the level of the community (e.g. the consumers), or at the national level (e.g. government policies on distribution of goods), or even at the international level (e.g. world fluctuations in prices). In contrast, the Pluralists in particular among Community Power theorists concentrate on analyses at the local level, which is understandable given their exclusion of wider contexts, surrounding local communities, a serious drawback already pointed to above.

French Structuralist Studies were then considered (concentrating especially on the work of Manuel Castells). Castells' concentration on social classes and how different social classes get what they want in relation to scarce urban resources distributed by state-controlled organisations were considered especially relevant to the problem of this thesis. His concentration on urban social movements as the only means of affecting meaningful urban change was less relevant, especially in view of the critiques made of it (especially by Pickvance and Dunleavy). The main point I stressed in relation to Castells' position is that for him these concerns were practically accepted apriori as part of the theoretical perspective he adhered to. In the context of this study the principal task was rather to empirically test the truth of these assumptions. So rather than to begin with the assumption that the scarce resources dispensed by state-controlled organisations were accentuating urban contradictions and ultimately led to the almost automatic rise of urban social movements (if one were to take Castells literally), the problem was to empirically determine the actual development of these processes. As a result I have shown that state-controlled organisations (local government councils in this particular case) through distributing scarce urban resources and in a situation of extreme and increasing

economic difficulties, were indeed affecting the articulation of processes of class conflict. However, this has not reached the stage of the actual development of Castells' type of urban-social movements (the particular features of the current Sudanese political scene are the crucial factors here), although this is a point to be determined through future empirical investigation.

Hence, in relation to the two groups of Western urban studies examined, whereas I did not accept the basic questions asked by the American Community Power theorists, in relation to the structuralist position, I took the questions as a starting point for empirical analysis.

Studies of Third World urban situations were also considered. These also fell into two categories: a) those concentrating on an analysis of the political process in specific communities only, (Epstein, LaFontaine, Baker and Furedi) and b) those that tried to explain that process by relying on a world-systems perspective (Lubeck and Walton). The point made in relation to both groups of studies was that in order to arrive at a more lucid understanding of the political process in Third World urban areas, empirical micro studies of specific communities and their particular problems must be informed by analyses of their wider context, through a national or world-systems perspective. It follows then that from the start I emphasised that the problem of this thesis must be placed in the context both of the historical development of Sudanese society and its contemporary processes (particularly political ones).

I therefore found it necessary to begin by looking at the historical development of Omdurman and its particular social structure before considering the development of Baytalmal's social structure. As a result of this analysis I particularly emphasised both the differences within Baytalmal, and the differences between it and the rest of Omdurman.

The administrative system was then analysed in detail, against a background of its historical development and the general political processes surrounding it, before examining the specific case of Baytalmal's local

councils and the multitude of problems they encounter. As regards the operation of the administrative system, one explanatory factor suggested was the set of contradictions inherent in the system, which in effect run counter to the official image of councils as vehicles of democratic participation and local self-development.

I then moved to the level of the community and its relations with councils. Specifically, the changes characterizing the membership of Baytalmal's councils was analysed employing the concept of "clique". It was estabished that the domination of different cliques at specific points in the councils' history was an indication of the position of classes at those same points in Baytalmal's history, and of their relationship with the State.

Further aspects of the politics surrounding Baytalmal's councils were discussed in the consideration of the differential perception of local council functioning by Baytalmal's neighbourhoods and the characteristics of voting behaviour in Baytalmal. As regards my analysis of the changing patterns of membership, differential perception of councils and voting behaviour in Baytalmal, the three main points established were: 1) that in the situation of economic deterioration and extremely scarce resources distributed by councils, councils were developing into bounded political arenas in which the area's various interests were contested and 2) this has had the effect of articulating and sharpening processes of class conflict locally and 3) consequently the main change I have tried to emphasise was the development of Baytalmal from a situation where it was composed of several relatively independent communities to one where it was increasingly defined by the characteristic of the existence of two main classes contesting in the context of councils the limited range of resources available.

These same three points were again made in the analysis of local organisations in Baytalmal and the analysis of two issues rated highly by the area's population. In relation to the latter, although a form

of issue-analysis was employed, this was markedly different from the way it was used by the American Community Power school. The latter's aim in using issue-analysis was to "prove" that power is widely distributed in communities and that dependent upon the issues of current importance a pluralist power structure was found. My aim in contrast was to further support my foregoing analysis and illuminate aspects of it. Specifically, I was trying to establish the current position of councils in Baytalmal, that they were providing instruments for conflict of class interest at the local level. So that contrary to the American Community Power school, I was not interested in the simple question of whether or not a single power elite ruled the life of the area in question.

Finally, the point I have tried to emphasise throughout this thesis is the following: the formal system of Peoples Local Government is characterised by certain basic contradictions that are not in line with official slogans surrounding its initial development and propagation. This has meant that in Baytalmal the system rather than acting as an instrument of popular participation, its contradictions together with the facts of the current economic situation have allowed the control of the affluent class of the area over that system. This has been furthered by the changed relation of this class with the State. {Consequently, the propagation of this system has affected the social structure of the area by accentuating processes of the conflict of its class interests}.

b) <u>The problem in relation to current debates in Third World Urbanisation</u>

Clearly the main issue for any debate on the Third World relates to the question of underdevelopment, its causes, and ways of engendering development. Bearing this in mind, however, the issues raised in this thesis can be related to two principal questions of current interest in studies of Third World urban areas. These are: 1) The unforeseen consequences of planning. In relation to this, my analysis has shown that despite the basic intentions of the PLG Act, the consequences of

its application have not matched its original intentions. We saw how it had originally been intended to provide a network of democratically-elected councils that would ultimately work towards the aims of local self-development and an improvement in basic services. This, as is evident from the analysis, has not occurred. Rather, the unforeseen consequences have been that councils have not been genuinely representative of all interests. Furthermore, in the context of the current economic situation, this has meant that there is an absence of uniform access to even the scarce services and resources available. The issue of the consequences of planning clearly goes beyond the field of administrative structures which has been our main focus in this thesis, and extends to numerous spheres, whether they be those of housing, education or health. Studies investigating planning, and its consequences in various spheres of urban life are clearly needed.

2) The second issue follows upon the above and relates to the quality of daily life under conditions of constant shortage in basic services and amenities. I have already alluded to this in Chapter VII, where I briefly discussed the development of a new urban "culture" dealing with persistent consumer shortages. Clearly, further studies are required of how people cope with such conditions, whether they be in the fields of consumer goods, or deterioration in things like public transport, educational or health services. (In relation to Western cities, Ray Pahl in his article "Employment, Work and the Domestic Division of Labour", (1980) has already begun such an analysis).

c) Above I have talked about some of the general directions for future research that the analysis in this thesis lead to. More specifically, however, and deriving from the main findings of the study there are clearly two sets of particular questions regarding future research can be posed: a) the first set of questions relates to future developments in Baytalmal itself. Specifically, is the situation which has been the subject of this study likely to be changed? (especially in view of the

likely and inevitable deterioration of the economic situation and consequently of services) and, if so, what directions will these changes take? Are urban social movements - of the kind analysed by Castells - likely to develop? The main point calling for attention in future studies will relate to changes in the socio-economic make-up of the population, particularly due to the ecological position of the area and its centrality viz-a-viz the rest of Omdurman. b) the next set of questions concern the following: To what extent is the picture of what is happening in Baytalmal being reproduced in other urban or even rural communities? More specifically, what is happening in the town's new extensions, where clearly the population is less urbanised when compared with that of Baytalmal? Another important question is: To what extent are other forms of identification (e.g. ethnicity) being mobilised?

Still, another important question relates to the differential need for services. Hence, the situation in areas like Khartoum's first class extension can be profitably compared with areas of shanty housing. In the latter case in particular, the main issue is one of allocation of new services rather than access to already existing ones.

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APPENDIX I

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

This appendix is intended to serve two primary purposes: firstly to discuss the methods used in gathering data for this study and, secondly, to review briefly the experience of doing fieldwork and especially to consider the manner and extent to which that experience may have affected the research results.

Fieldwork was conducted between July 1978, and April 1979, and again in December 1979 and January 1980. I started in July 1978, with a general interest in studying problems of administration in Omdurman. My interest in problems of administration stemmed from the general complaints voiced by people concerning the administration of basic services which were greatly deteriorating. This was so despite the fact that the 1971 reorganisation of local government had specifically aimed, interalia, to improve local basic services. In addition, the severe shortages in essential consumer goods at this period were partly blamed on inefficient and faulty administration. I located my study in Omdurman for two reasons. One is that it has generally been under-studied and I was therefore interested in finding out about both specific and general problems there. A second general reason is that Omdurman occupies a very special historical role in Sudanese society.

Having chosen to study the problems of administration in relation to the local social structure, I decided to focus primarily on one of its oldest neighbourhoods, namely that of Baytalmal. I was particularly interested in this area because it was long established and thus contrasted sharply with some of the town's new extensions. However, once having started, I discovered that there were two "Baytalmal's, one was the old neighbourhood, and the other was Baytalmal administrative division which included four neighbourhoods in addition to "old Baytalmal". Two of these additional neighbourhoods were especially different in terms of history and of their socio-economic characteristics. I was thus faced with making a choice between administrative Baytalmal (which was, of course, the larger unit) and "old Baytalmal".

I chose the former, since I was primarily interested in problems of administration. My choice also allowed me to consider two further questions that interested me: 1) the effect of drawing new administrative boundaries and the political significance of these for the social structure of the area, and 2) the possibility of drawing various comparisons between Baytalmal's neighbourhoods.

As my work developed, I began to narrow down my initial ideas of studying "problems of administration". Instead, I debated whether to lay primary emphasis on the "community" or the "administration", but I soon came to realise that they were inseparable and that it was the relations between them which called for analysis as a crucial issue, especially on account of the implications of the relations between them for an understanding of the changing social structure of the area.

In conducting fieldwork I have not relied on one method or technique to the exclusion of others. Instead, I tried throughout to use a combination of methods - systematic observation, formal interviews, questionnaires, documentary materials and oral history. I usually visited the Baytalmal Town Council building practically every day; here I would observe the daily working and operation of the council, and talk to the staff employed there. I also conducted interviews with all persons elected as Town Council members during the three sessions of councils. These interviews were conducted on council premises or at councillors' homes, or at workplaces. I also conducted numerous interviews with various people who were either currently working in the field of local government or who had in the past had connections with Sudanese local government. Finally, I conducted a questionnaire survey among the population of Baytalmal. This needs to be discussed in some detail if its advantages and limitations are to be fully appreciated.

The Survey

The main objectives of the survey were the following: a) to gather systematic information on the characteristics of the inhabitants, especially demographic and socio-economic ones, b) to discover what

the inhabitants regarded as the major issues of concern, c) to assess perceptions of the changes currently affecting the area and the way in which councils function. As may be seen from the questionnaire, (see appendiex II), the above aims were pursued through specific questions. But to a large extent the value of the survey stemmed from the opportunities it offered me to get into conversation with respondents, to ask all manner of unplanned and open-ended questions, and to make a series of observations on the various neighbourhoods of Baytalmal.

The Sample

I had at first hoped to apply the questionnaire survey to a random sample of household heads. Various practical difficulties made this impossible and I settled for a sample which was stratified according to neighbourhood, which contained an approximately equal number of males and females and which is broadly representative of different socio-economic strata. The sample was partly built up progressively as one informant would give me the name of another who would be likely to cooperate. This probably accounts for the fact that the sample ended up by having a much higher number of politically aware people (as witnessed by voting figures given in Table V of Chapter V). As is abundantly clear in various results shown throughout the thesis,however, the sample did provide a wide variety of attitudes and opinions, which differed primarily according to the factor of socio-economic standing however.

In choosing the size of the sample, the unit taken into consideratin was that of the household (rather than individuals or nuclear families), because in my opinion this was a more meaningful unit, whether administratively, economically, or socially. I will briefly explain why I consider this to be so. First, the household is the unit for which local rates are paid; and it is also the unit according to which consumer goods are distributed by councils. It is thus an administrative

entity of significance. Secondly, especially in cases of extended family household (making up 57.1% of the sample) members of a household (rather than a nuclear family) will cooperate economically and socially in sharing provisions, in cooking, in keeping house etc. Thirdly, the household tends to correspond with the concept of "hosh" or "bayt". People will normally refer to so and so's "hosh" or "bayt" rather than to his or her nuclear family. Sampling nuclear family only would have led to the exclusion of several forms of residential structure which are in themselves meaningful, such as extended and compound family households. Finally, of course, in terms of practical convenience, a household is a physically separate and bounded entity, whereas the nuclear family is not necessarily so.

Although I collected detailed information on the demographic composition of the whole household, the questions in the survey were actually directed at the head of the household or to his wife (in a few cases a woman was head of the household). I was basing this on the fact that the head of the household is usually the principal decision-maker or at least has a greater influence on the rest of the household in matters related to local political issues.

I selected roughly 5% of households in each neighbourhood (see Table I), hence giving more weight to the larger neighbourhoods such as Baytalmal North and Baytalmal Centre than to ones like Mulazmin South. In choosing sample size I depended on unpublished population figures from a count taken by Baytalmal Town Council in 1974, (the 1973 census figures were for the whole of Omdurman, and gave no indication of the population size of individual neighbourhoods). The following table shows the size of the sample per neighbourhood and the sex of the respondents.

TABLE I: SIZE OF SAMPLE

Neighbourhood	Population	No.of House-holds	Total No Informants		F	M
1.Mulazmin North	3517	416	21	5.0%	10	11
2.Mulazmin South	1435	180	10*	5.6%	5	5
3.Baytalmal Centre	3435	580	28	4.5%	13	15
4.Baytalmal North	4520	602	30	5.0%	15	15
5.Baytalmal South	3133	425	22	5.2%	11	11
6.al-Izbitaliyya	2795	487	23	4.7%	11	12
7.al-Sayyid al-Makki	2561	416	20	4.8%	10	10
Total	21,396	3,105	154	5.0%	75	79

* Of these, six informants were chosen from the police barracks area which has a larger population size and four from the area of first class housing.

Characteristics of Informants

TABLE II: AGE STRUCTURE OF INFORMANTS

Age Range	M	%	F	%	Total	%
20-30	6	7.6	15	20.0	21	13.6
31-40	16	20.3	22	29.3	38	24.7
41-50	28	35.4	25	33.3	53	34.4
51 +	29	36.7	13	17.3	42	27.3
Total	79	100	75	99.9	154	100

As indicated earlier and as seen from the above table, most informants fall in the over 40 age group. This is, of course, related to the fact that questionnaires were directed at heads of households.

TABLE III: OCCUPATIONS OF INFORMANTS

Occupation	M	F	Total
Housewife only		54	54
Professional	11	1	12
Merchant	18	1	19
Senior Civil Servant	6		6
Middle rank civil Servant	13	16	29
Lower rank civil servants and workers	31	3	34
Total	79	75	154

The following chart on the classification of government jobs is the basis on which I determined the categories of Senior Civil Servants, Middle Rank Civil Servants and Lower Rank Civil Servants. This classification is currently in the process of alteration by the government but the new scheme has not yet been fully applied.

Senior Civil Servant	Group I	Undersecretary
	Group II	
	Group III	Deputy undersecretary
	Group IV	
Middle rank civil servant	Group V	Assistant undersecretary
	Group VI	
	Group VII	Department Head
	Scale B	Head of section
Lower rank civil servant	Scale DS	Inspector
	Scale Q	Head clerk
	Scale F	Middle level clerk
	Scale G	
	Scale H	
	Scale J	
	Scale K	

At the beginning of this section on methds and methdology, I stated that besides explaining the technical methods used I would make comments on the actual experience of fieldwork and on aspects of it that may have affected the study. These factors include my own sex and age and my family relationships and background.

Obviously the fact of being female had a tremendous influence on what informants said, how much they said, and in a more general sense on how they reacted to me. Being a woman made male informants, in

particular less suspicious of me, especially when what they were saying could be construed as "politically sensitive". Of course, the underlying assumption is the stereotypical image of Sudanese females; they do not dabble in politics, hence it is considerably less likely that they would be government informants. A male researcher would probably have met with greater reticence on the part of informants in a similar situation.

Furthermore, being a woman, meant that household heads allowed me easy access to their homes and to speak freely with their wives and daughters, I was always allowed into the inner sections of households, traditionally reserved for females and close relatives, rather than being restricted to the 'bayt al-rujal' or outer sections of households where men would be received.

Another factor was that of education. Here attitudes towards Sudanese educated women were of special relevance. I continuously felt that my informants respected the fact of my education, (perhaps more so in Baytalmal which has a relatively high educational standard,(see Chapter II), and were anxious to help in any way possible.

Age was another important factor. Being considerably younger than a majority of my informants, they took great pains to talk about historical aspects of local government councils, the history of Baytalmal and its development through various periods in time.

However, the most important factor was that of family background and connections, whether through actual blood-ties, affinal ties, friendship or even business connections. Informants were very interested to find out about me, who my mother's family was, who my father's family was, where I lived, whether or not I was married, why? and so on. These questions usually preceded my own and consumed a lot of time. On finding out that I came from a relatively large and well known family in Omdurman, many informants always pointed out connections and ties with me, many of which I myself had not even been

previously aware. On the whole, I could safely say that this particular factor was also in my favour. It made people even less suspicious of me and the fact of my fieldwork and their reactions to my questions were probably more frank than would otherwise have been the case.

APPENDIX II

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire No.________________________________

Neighbourhood____________________________________

Part I Background Information

1. Type of Household:

   Nuclear____________________
   Extended___________________
   Compound___________________

2. Household Composition:

No.	Sex	Age	Relationship to Head	Place of Birth	Length of Residence		Education	Occupation
					T	N		

3. Relatives living in the Neighbourhood:

   Do you have any relatives living in this neighbourhood?

4. House Ownership:

   Rented____________________Owned____________________

5. Membership in organisations, specify post and frequency of participation:

   SSU Unit
   Womens Organisations
   Youth Organisations
   Parents and Teachers Councils
   Cooperatives
   Clubs
   Neighbourhood Council
   Other, specify

6. Did you belong to any group or organisation in the past to which you do not presently belong. If Yes, specify the organisation, its aims and frequency of participation.

Part II

7. In your opinion, what are the most important problems or issues that face the population of this neighbourhood, rated according to their importance?

8. Do you know what are the functions of local Government Council?

9. Are they performing those functions?

10. What are some of the decisions taken by local Government Councils in recent times that have affected you or a member of your household, personally?

11. Did you participate in elections for membership of the present session of Peoples Local Councils held in December 1977?

YES____
NO ____

If No, Why?

12. Did you participate in elections for membership of the first session of Peoples Local Councils held in 1972?

YES____
NO ____

If No, Why?

13. Did you participate in elections for membership of the second session of Peoples Local Councils held in 1973?

YES____
NO ____

If No, Why?

14. Do you intend to participate in the coming elections?

YES____
NO ____

If No, Why?

15. Did you participate in elections for the Peoples Assembly held in January 1978?

YES____
NO ____

If No, Why?

16. In your opinion, what was the difference between the two types of elections?

17. Rate the following organisations according to the services they perform in your neighbourhood:

    Womens Organisations
    Parents and Teachers Councils
    SSU Units
    Youth Organisations
    Cooperatives
    Neighbourhood Council
    Re-planning Committee
    Other specify

18. What role in your opinion was played by Local Government Councils in the recent consumer goods shortages?

19. How did you get your consumer goods during the shortage?

20. In your opinion, what have been the major changes that have affected your neighbourhood in the past years.

    a) Economically

    b) Politically

    c) Socially

21. What is your opinion of the recent changes aiming at increased decentralisation?

22. In your opinion, what would be the best way for improving the functioning of Peoples Local Government Councils?

<u>Date/ 26th Feb. 1979</u>