

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

CAPITAL ACCUMULATION, 'TRIBALISM', AND  
POLITICS IN A SUDANESE TOWN (HASSAHEISA),  
A CASE STUDY IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY  
OF URBANIZATION.

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of  
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by

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on

Capital Accumulation, 'Tribalism', and Politics in a Sudanese Town (Hassaheisa); A Case Study in the Political Economy of Urbanization.

This thesis is a case study in the political economy of urbanization and urban life in the Sudan. It is both a historical study and a "community study" of the town of Hassaheisa in the Gezira Province. The central themes derive from a concern with the nature and determinants of the 'underdevelopment' rather than the 'development' of urbanization. The study focuses on the process of commercial capital accumulation as a major and central aspect of the history of the town's growth and existence. Commercial capital accumulation is identified as a specific process which is dependent upon, and subordinate to, the wider processes of colonial and neo-colonial capitalist accumulation.

The study dwells on the major features of trade in Hassaheisa as it has developed since the establishment of the town by the British colonial administration. Among the most prominent and fundamental features of trade and commerce are the fact that the rate of commercial capital accumulation has always been low; the main reason for this is that accumulation has taken place under conditions constrained and restricted by government's policies formulated to allow 'development' to fit in with the demands and needs of the world market.

The social, economic, and political behaviours of the town's merchants (who constitute the dominant and central group in the community) are analysed primarily as "responses" to the above constraints and restrictions. The nature of various aspects of the town, and the ideological framework of daily life within it, are explained as functions of the need of merchants to maximize their commercial opportunities. The antagonistic contradictions between the interests of the merchants and those of the "ordinary residents" are thus central topics



of investigation and analysis in the study. It dwells in particular on:

- (a) The way in which 'tribalism' is created and manipulated by the dominant groups to blur and distort contradictions and differences of interests and,
- (b) on various aspects of local life that bear upon opportunities for maintaining control over the institutions of political dominance as vehicles for capital accumulation and instruments for the control and management of the resultant contradictions.

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The idea for the study was created within a wider project for the study of urbanization in the Sudan, organized and financed by the Economic and Social Research Council, NCR, Sudan, to which I wish to express my thanks. Also I wish to thank the University of Hull for the Award it granted to me for the period 1978-1981. I am also grateful to the University of Khartoum for releasing me for the past five years to carry out this study.

It would be impossible to list all of the individuals who helped me in Hassaheisa as informants, advicers or hosts, but special mention should be made to Ustaz Medani El-O'rdi and others whose names appear in the Introduction. The names of some key informants, however, have intentionally been altered.

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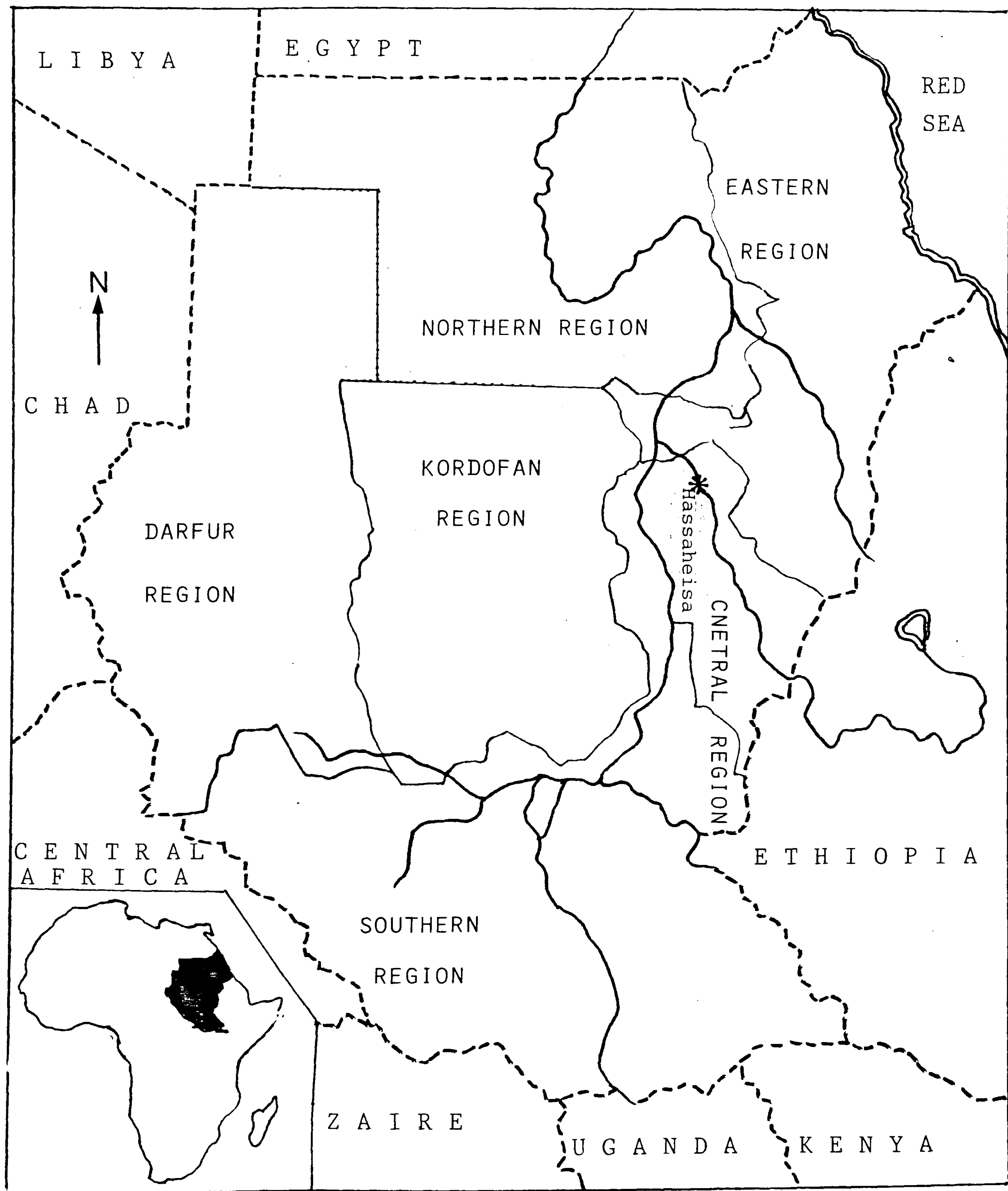
To Professor Valdo G. Pons I am most grateful and thankful for more than only patient, careful, enthusiastic, and inspiring guidance and supervision throughout the preparation of this study.

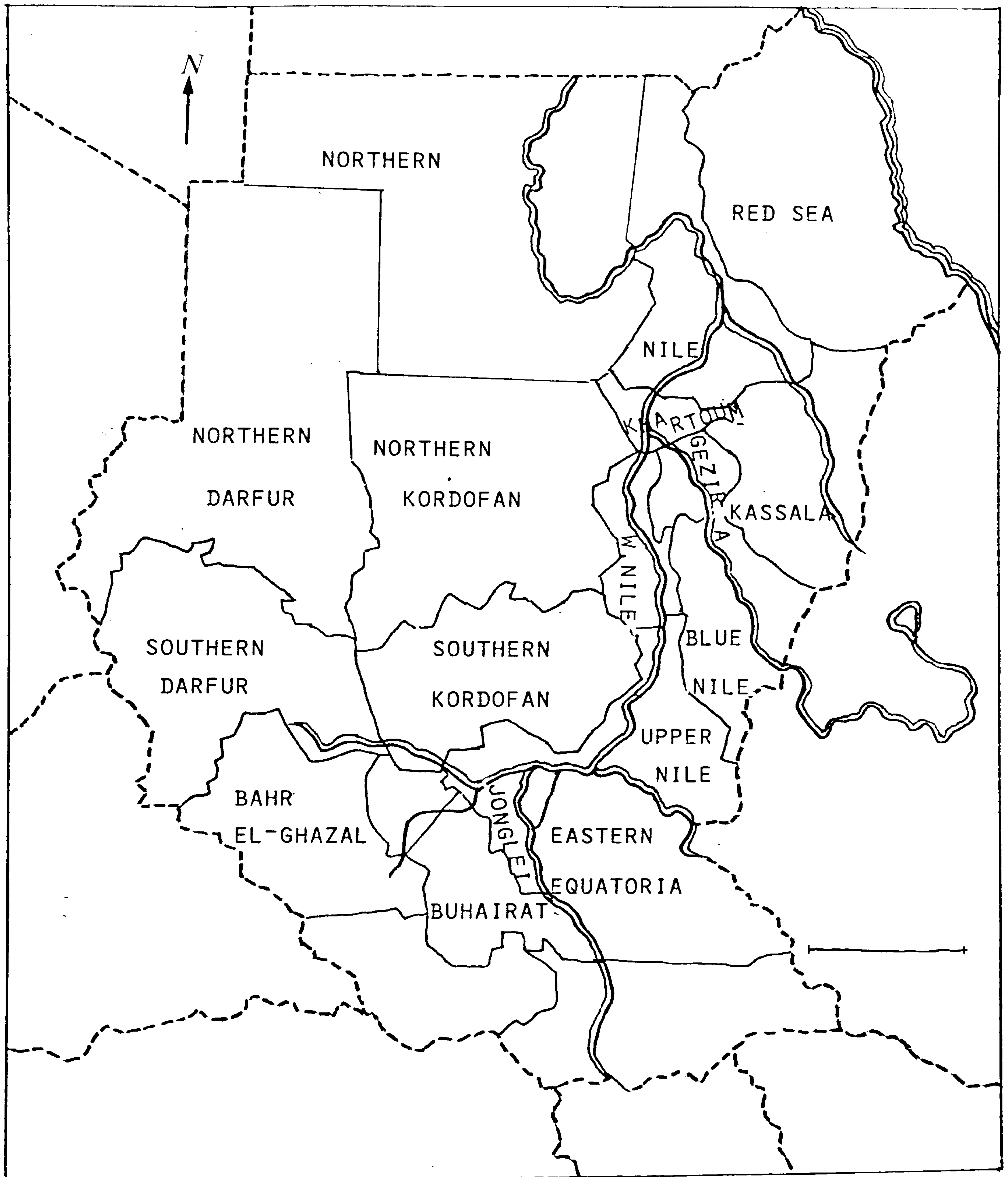


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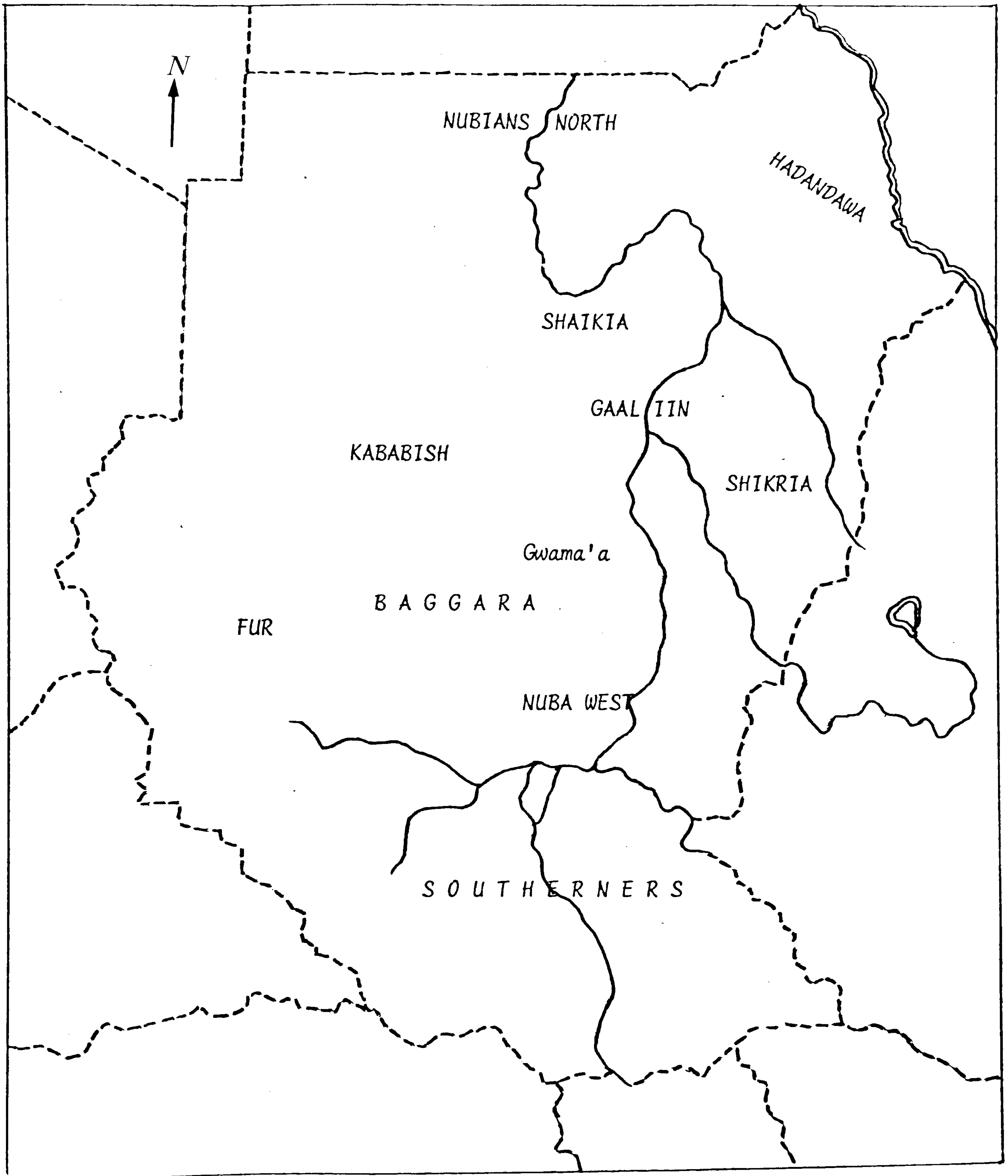
MAP I THE SUDAN: ITS REGIONS AND LOCATION OF HASSAHEISA





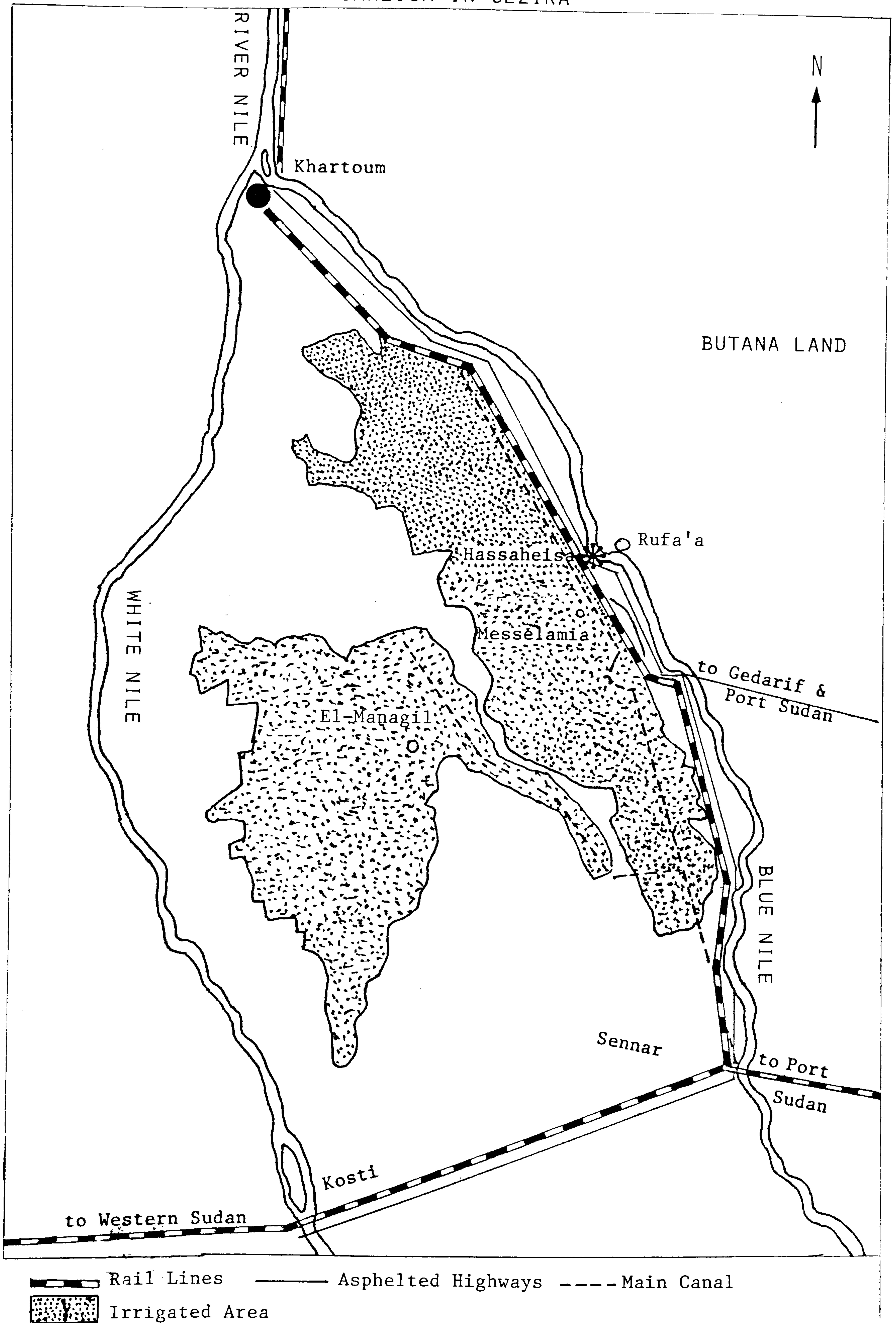


MAP III SOME 'TRIBES' OF THE SUDAN

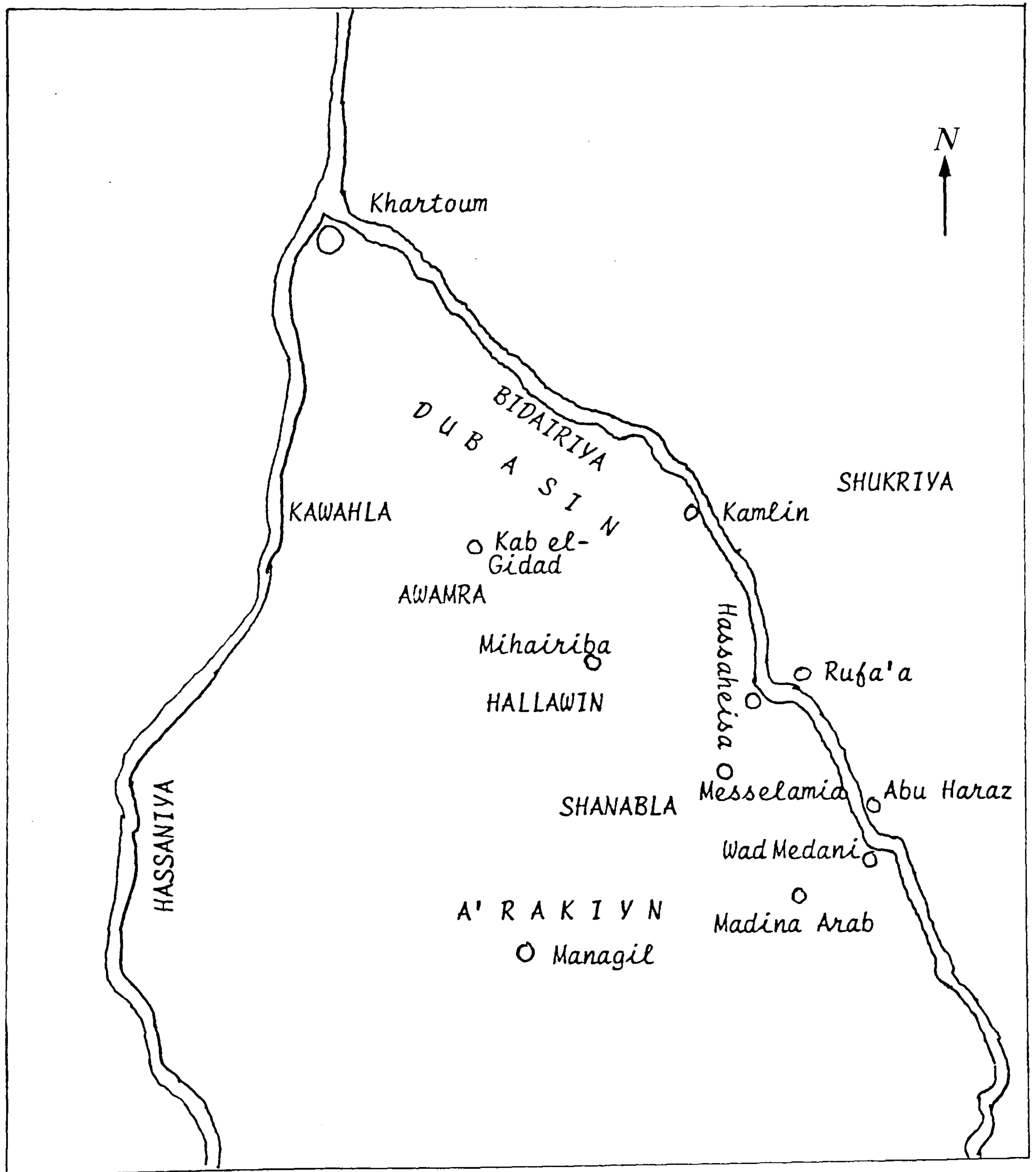


MAP IV

HASSAHEISA IN GEZIRA







## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION:

This thesis is in one sense a general historical and "community" study of the town of Hassaheisa in the Gezira Province of the Sudan; but, a little more specifically, it is a case study in the *political economy* of urbanization and urban life in the Sudan.

The particular conceptual and theoretical themes and problems tackled are first indicated in Section III of this chapter, and are then developed throughout the thesis. Before even beginning to elaborate on the theoretical thrust of the work, however, I devote sections I and II of this introduction to a brief account of the "*natural history*" of the study and my reasons, both practical and conceptual, for selecting Hassaheisa as the site for my investigations. Considerations of feasibility, accessibility, personal interest, and the like, can become crucial determinants of the form a study ultimately takes. The reader is not only entitled to know how a study developed; he or she *must* know if the analysis is to be properly assessed.

By the same token- and this rarely needs to be laboured- the reader needs to know the methods and procedures actually used in collecting and analysing the data. In sections IV and V, following my initial statement of the conceptual and theoretical problems of the thesis, I therefore give brief accounts of the choice and application of the methods used in the field and in the subsequent analysis and organization of the data.

## I. THE "NATURAL HISTORY" OF THE STUDY:

After graduating from the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Khartoum University in 1977, I was appointed to a teaching assistantship there. In keeping with the general

practice in Khartoum University I at once began to turn my mind to the choice of an appropriate field of research. Throughout my undergraduate course, I had been particularly interested, *inter alia*, in "urban studies". From the start I was thus inclined to consider taking some urban research. But I had reservations owing to two sets of difficulties which had hitherto inhibited the development of graduate research in this field. These difficulties were:

- (1) Inadequate academic resources at two levels: the scarcity and the generally poor quality of basic urban data in the Sudan, and uncertain availability of adequate academic supervision in this field.
- (2) The general inadequacy of financial resources for urban research in the Sudan, combined with the fact that the University's funds for graduate research in general are scarce. Urban research can be expensive, especially if it is thought necessary to conduct large-scale surveys in the field. Moreover, daily life in Sudanese towns is often difficult: apart from the expenses involved, which are far higher than in rural areas, one commonly has to risk the waste of "precious" time waiting in endless *queues* for basic necessities.

This combination of difficulties caused me to hesitate in choosing urban sociology and/or anthropology as my field.<sup>1</sup> Yet I was loath to launch into research in another academic field in which I did not have the same interest and which might therefore have involved some loss of motivation and inner intellectual resource. But at the very period I was pondering this dilemma, I received the following note from the Head of the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Khartoum University:



Subsequent to a request from the Director of the Economic and Social Research Council, (Sudan), Professor Valdo Pons of Hull University, who was in March and April 1977 Visiting Professor to the Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology, Khartoum University, has prepared long-term proposals for sociological research into urbanization and social change in the Sudan. In these proposals, Professor Pons has stressed the need for urban research in the country, outlined specific recommendations for immediate research plans, and suggested timetable of work. (...) The first phase of the proposals is to carry out census-type surveys in selected towns and urban areas in the Sudan in order to gather basic information on their socio-economic and demographic composition. Such basic data should allow for comprehensive analysis not only between different urban areas in the Sudan, but also between Sudanese and non-Sudanese towns. Finally these surveys should be seen as preparatory for a second phase of studies-i.e. intensive "community studies" of the selected towns. Four towns for the proposed census-type surveys will be selected from among the following: Greater Khartoum, Nayala, Gadarif, Dilling, Malakal, Port Sudan, Hassaheisa, Kost, Sennar, and Atbara.<sup>2</sup>

To this "note" was attached a memorandum from the Director of the Economic and Social Research Council in Khartoum to all post-graduates who might be interested in participating in the proposed studies, stating that the Council would offer material facilities including field work expenses for the programme.

These were fortunate and timely developments for me, and they were further enhanced by a firm undertaking from the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies to release me, if successful in my application, from all teaching duties in order to allow me to undertake my graduate training in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Hull. My application was successful and I was consequently involved in the overall project with three colleagues. Each of us chose to study one of the ten towns identified above, those selected being Nayala, Hassaheisa, Kost, and Sennar.

In the Summer of 1978, the Economic and Social Research Council financed a brief initial tour of several towns for three



of the research workers who were accompanied by Professor Pons. We visited Hassaheisa (3 days), Wad-Medani (2 days), Sennar (3 days), and Kosti (3 days). We set out to establish contacts in each town, to exchange views and opinions on a number of obvious or "surface" problems, and we discussed, as we observed, what we thought the practical problems of both survey and more intensive field work might be. This tour was useful in a number of ways. In addition to simply stimulating general discussion on various issues of the sociology of urbanization and urban life in towns of this type, it gave each of us a chance- to some extent the first ever- to see and set out to "know" a few Sudanese towns. In my own case, I had up till then only been to three of the ten towns selected as "targets" in the *proposals*: Khartoum (where I went to University), Hassaheisa (the town to my own home village), and Kosti (which I visited on a school trip in 1970). I deliberately include a few personal points of this kind in my account of the "natural history" of this thesis because they are, I believe, directly relevant to an appreciation of how research is conducted and the nature of questions asked in field studies.

Following on our return to Khartoum from the mini-tour, the participants in the proposed studies held a series of further discussions. Some of these meetings were attended by the Head of the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology who assumed the directorship of the project. Drawing on our first-hand impressions of the towns to be studied, and also on available questionnaires from past "*model*" studies, we drew up a general census-type socio-demographic questionnaire intended for use in all the separate studies.



In May 1978 I departed for Hassaheisa where I spent a month making accommodation arrangements, enquiring into the official facilities available for study, and evaluating the problems involved in planning the census-type survey, including the selection of an appropriate sample. I then returned to Khartoum for further consultations about the work, and I brought back the questionnaire forms for the survey in June 1978.

The following month was spent in recruiting and training a team of eight secondary school and university students as field assistants. After two weeks, we began to apply the questionnaire to a pilot sample for a week. The fourth week was spent evaluating the returns from the pilot sample and discussing problems arising from it with the Head Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology who visited me at that time in his capacity of director of the "project". The main survey was then conducted as described in Section IV over a period of seven weeks, and two additional weeks were spent in conducting another survey on a sample of Suk<sup>3</sup> merchants. The scope and design of this second survey were developed and formulated on the basis of my experience in the field and for particular research interests explained in Section IV. During these periods of survey I also began to keep notes on my general observations and on written materials I encountered on various aspects of the community of Hassaheisa.

At the end of September 1978 I left the Sudan to spend a period of nine months at Hull University. During this time I concentrated on the following:

1. Reading in the field of *urban studies*, especially studies that were not available in Khartoum.
2. Participating in the Department's weekly post-graduate

*workshop* from which I received general stimulation as well as clarification on research issues closely related to my own work; and attending selected formal courses, and primarily a course on *methodology* in social research.

3. Using the Computer to process some of my survey data, especially those on the Suk.
4. Discussing plans for work with my *supervisor* and other members of the staff at regular meetings.
5. Writing a preliminary analysis of the data then at my disposal, which I first used simply to "define" aspects of the Hassaheisa situation. Some of these data were later published<sup>4</sup>, but the greater parts are used in this thesis.
6. Discussing the main issues and problems (including research methods) which I progressively defined as central for my second and main period of field work.

I returned to Hassaheisa in July 1979 and stayed there up to November 1980. During this period I also made several trips to Khartoum University to use the Library's Sudan Collection, and to Wad Medani to work on the Gezira Archives at Barakat. In Hassaheisa itself I conducted intensive field work- through interviews with informants and "subjects" and through *participant and non-participant-observation* on various aspects of life in the town. In particular, as will be seen from the materials used, I tried to identify and to follow through in detail *examples* of certain aspects of political and economic processes in the town. I attempted, and I believe that I succeeded to some extent, to observe and capture selected features of what Pons calls the "texture of urban life"<sup>5</sup> in Hassaheisa, both past and present.



## II. WHY HASSAHEISA?

As is commonly the case in choosing a particular town or community for studies of this kind, my choice of Hassaheisa was made with a number of reasons in mind and these are in different ways all relevant to full understanding of the study and the way in which I conducted it. The inclusion of Hassaheisa in the list of towns suggested for study in the original proposals submitted to the Economic and Social Research Council played some part. But there were further more important reasons:

(1) Firstly, there are reasons and justifications related to the need to establish a sound and adequate conceptual framework and appropriate theoretical perspective for research into the process of urbanization in "modern" Sudan. These justifications can be summarized in the following:

- (a) Having been much influenced as an undergraduate by polemical discussions- deriving from the classical texts on '*urban sociology*' and '*urban anthropology*'- on the nature of urbanization, I was most concerned with the problematic of urbanization as both a cause and a consequence of wider socio-economic and political structural developments.<sup>6</sup> And being particularly 'familiar' with studies of African urbanization under colonial conditions, I was deeply interested in investigating a case which might shed light on the relationship between urbanization and colonisation in a situation *least affected or distorted* by conditions of earlier and different historical periods.<sup>7</sup> Hassaheisa is an urban area established and developed entirely during and since the British colonial period and thus provides a "*pure*" and *ideal case* for approaching



a central question about the nature of contemporary urbanization in the Sudan.

- (b) Closely related to the above, I was most interested in establishing a proper theoretical perception of a town which *exercises* dominant social, economic and political power over its surrounding countryside. I grew up in this area<sup>8</sup>, and ever since becoming aware of social life around me, I knew that "the people" of Hassaheisa were "*different*"; they are urbanized and/or civilized<sup>10</sup>, better housed, and better served than the people of my village in the countryside. They have electricity<sup>10</sup>, a cinema, secondary schools and, above all, they have the *Suk* where "there is everything" and "everything is there". When my father (a *tenant* in the Gezira Scheme) sold his crops (in the production of which I used to contribute *manually* since the age of seven years), he used to bring back from Hassaheisa the goods we always admired: clothes, shoes, and to my delight as a boy- various fresh fruits. It was from such immediate experiences of childhood and youth, that my image of Hassaheisa was formulated, and particularly that I came to regard its people as "special" and different.<sup>11</sup> All this was reinforced when I paid occasional visits to the *Suk*; "the people" sitting behind the benches inside their shops were apparently contented with life about them. Also, in contrast to "my people" in the village, they spoke about different things such as *Al-ballad* (home), *Al-ballah* (dates), and so on<sup>12</sup>, and, significantly, in a different accent. Yet they, or some of them, were the "ruling" Council which governed the

whole district, and they included the local government Officer whom we used to see in our village, surrounded by policemen, collecting *Gutta'an* (animal tax) and *A'tab* (house tax). This officer was "one of them", living in Hassaheisa with "them" and he behaved quite "cordially" with them in contrast to his "tough" behaviour in the village when collecting taxes. With this image in my mind, any study of Hassaheisa thus seemed to me to call for theoretical clarification of the nature of this town and of how it came to be superior to, and to dominate my "village".

(2) Secondly, there were reasons of a different *practical* order for my choice of Hassaheisa. In various ways, it seemed more feasible for me to study this rather than any other town in the Sudan:

- (a) Given the increasing difficulties of daily life in the urban areas of the Sudan, the location of Hassaheisa only 20 kilometres from my home village clearly held out the attraction that I could '*escape*' home to take refuge from difficulties in the town. For example, as I explain in Chapter 4, it is often the case that some of the basic consumer goods are found in nearby villages, albeit at a higher price, while there is an acute shortage of them in the town. Also, I was attracted by the possibility of not having to face problems of accommodation and the soaring rents in the town. As it subsequently turned out, my limited funds virtually compelled me not to live regularly in the town and to commute daily from my village home where I had "free" accommodation with my parents.



- (b) Over time, and especially in recent years, I had come to know, and had cultivated cordial relations with, a relatively large number of different people at various levels in the town: in the Suk as a *customer*, in the Council as a *subject citizen*, in the Ginneries as a *workmate*<sup>13</sup>, and in the residential neighbourhoods as a *friend*, a *colleague*, and even as a *relative*. I thus envisaged being able to use these *established* relations in the pursuit of my research. A "net-work" of aids is virtually indispensable for adequate fieldwork, especially in a country like the Sudan where a researcher's daily problems are not only to penetrate the complex and formidable barriers created through rigid official adherence to bureaucratic procedures (particularly when it comes to "research"), but also with "the people" themselves. Ordinary people usually tend to suspect the *motives* of research workers, to query their identities<sup>14</sup>, and either not to see or to pretend not to see, the relevance of the research to their "actual problems".
- (c) As an *ordinary* resident of the district, and of the town at different times and under different circumstances, I had previously acquired a good deal of knowledge about the area.<sup>15</sup> It therefore seemed sensible and useful for me to *exploit* the information I already had. I hoped that this would sometimes enable me- as in fact it often did- to *see*, understand, and explain various immediate events and occurrences with reference to dimensions (historical or situational) not immediately apparent in the situation, yet without recourse to time-consuming special investigations.



- (d) Finally, with a population estimated at the time of study at 30,000, Hassaheisa was conveniently small and "*manageable*" for a detailed study. I thought that intensive observations of the kind I wished to undertake would be easier to plan and carry out in a town of this size than in a larger one.

### III. THE FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH "PROBLEM":

More than ten years ago, Sondra and Gerry Hale complained about the state of urban studies in the Sudan in the following terms:

one of the primary problems in a country ... where so little research has been undertaken in urban areas, is that scholars do not resist the temptation to 'pick a town' and then proceed to handle as many of the above categories (demographic, economic, ecological, normative, interactional, historical, and political...-the author) as possible. The field is so pristine that 'mere description' and the history of towns are considered valuable contributions. Urban studies of the Sudan are, for the most part, just beginning to be problem-oriented, but there are not yet enough published data to contribute to the formation of important new paradigms, hypotheses, concepts, or theories".<sup>16</sup>

More recently, Pons has expressed the view that considerable progress has been made since the time of the Hale's complaint about the absence of "problem-oriented" studies and that we are now in a position to enter a new phase. And he clearly implies that in this phase, research could profitably be motivated from the "inside", rather than stimulated from "the outside":

Urban research will no doubt develop its own course as students select particular problems for study according to their own ideas of economic, cultural, political, and social relevance...(thus) I do not argue for formal programmes of research dictated by any one major consideration, and would not recommend research on one specific subject or topic rather than another.<sup>17</sup>

The two opinions cited clearly carry rather divergent signals for a research worker setting out to formulate a "problem" for fresh work. While agreeing with the Hales that much early Sudanese urban research was "mere description" which yielded little to urban *theory*, I share the optimistic and positive appreciation which Pons makes about the present and possible future course in this field. While the Hales in effect attempt to direct the attention of students to particular problem areas<sup>18</sup>, Pons argues for the full freedom of the research worker in the Sudan to select and develop problem areas in accordance with their own ideas of relevance. I may state openly that I prefer the latter approach, partly because it offers the kind of *freedom* I personally like, but also because it places the *responsibility* of problem selection, and by extension of the ultimate evaluation of the data gathered, squarely on the shoulders of the research worker himself or herself rather than on the "*institutions*" which plan and finance any research programme. The position advocated by Pons encourages the *exchange of ideas* and perspectives and thus gives legitimacy to different approaches and independent analyses; in effect, it invites research workers to bring differing sets of assumptions to the study of problems which are clearly academic, but also, inevitably, *political* as all sociology is. This is particularly important in a situation such as that of the present Sudan where traditions, the colonial heritage, and political considerations all combine to impose and legitimise a prevailing state of *singleness* in all social spheres.

Exercising my natural 'right' to select my own problem for research, I first considered questions such as: What kind of "urban problem"? Is it to be a problem situated in the urban area, or a general sociological problem studied in



the urban area? If the former, then another question follows: *Whose* problem? if we accept space as determining the problem, how do we approach the study from a *relative* perspective?-i.e. the relation of the problem to different groups in that space. On the other hand, if we wish to study a sociological problem in the urban area, what is the peculiar characteristic of the area which renders the theoretical problem more illuminating than elsewhere? Bearing in mind such broad general questions, I planned my research to respond to, or to satisfy, the following:

- (a) A concern to contribute to a clarification as to why the conceptual and theoretical bases of the dominant conventional literature on urban sociology and anthropology, particularly structuralist and functionalist versions, have led to so much disillusionment and frustration.
- (b) A concern to do more than to produce a study likely to become, at best, an adjunct to social engineering.<sup>19</sup> In my view, many urban research workers run the risk of being transformed into *tools* in the hands of the dominant ruling groups in the society, and in this way may lose their independence and credibility and fail to introduce any new perspectives to the debate on the so-called "urban problem".
- (c) As a member or 'citizen' of an *underdeveloped* society, "underdevelopment" is for me not only an observation but also *personal experience* which often proves bitter and frustrating. As a student in a country like the Sudan, it would be strange indeed if "underdevelopment" did not figure prominently in my preoccupations. Thus the gearing of research towards the study of some of the *determinants and forms* of underdevelopment helps me as a person to

formulate a proper image of the *conditions* of my own existence which I naturally aim to change.

I therefore formulated my research as dealing with a problem of "underdevelopment"; and approached urbanization as one process- among others- which must be perceived as playing a role in, and expressing, the underdevelopment of the Sudan. And since I do not only seek to understand, explain, but also, more crucially to *change and improve* my existential conditions, as normal human beings do, I discarded from the outset of the present work the way in which the question of underdevelopment is posed by the theorists of "modernity": *What forces, present in an underdeveloped society, were absent in Europe, or vice versa, and hence prevented the former's rapid advance towards development?*<sup>20</sup> Instead, I looked for a framework which would allow me to question the constituent components of the situation and their respective "roles" in the production and reproduction of underdevelopment. I thus attempted to see a way that would afford the maximum opportunity to "capture" the *mechanisms of underdevelopment* and their complex dynamics. This, of course, demands that underdevelopment be conceived as a dynamic process rather than a static condition, and this in turn calls for a careful and systematic delineation of the widest aspects of the socio-economic and political interests which have shaped and maintained the general situation underlying the process of underdevelopment in the Sudan. So the identification of *colonialism and neo-colonialism* as "instrumental" in capitalist expansion and penetration must be reviewed and assessed. That is to say that we must bear in mind, and constantly refer to, historical developments such as the imposition of the *commodity-form* of production, the creation of *surpluses*, the appropriation of such surpluses, the pol-



itico-ideological framework indispensable for the imposition and maintenance of these processes and, ultimately, the emergence and development of different socio-economic groups defined primarily in terms of their respective *places* in the structure of antagonistically conflicting *sets of interests*.

This overall approach means that I have to use a concept of *urbanization* that is totally free from the theoretical restrictions inherent in the use of notions such as disorganization, adaptation, integration, and marginalization.<sup>21</sup> This means that we have to reconsider urbanization and urbanism as processes developing in close association with interrelated aspects of colonial and neo-colonial capitalism as these interact in the urban situation. We have in particular to draw an analytical distinction between *external* or "alien" capitalism (i.e. that imposed from "outside"), and *internal* or "indigenous" sets of social, economic, and political relations. I stress that this is only an analytical distinction, because the two aspects are essentially integrated through the latter being *subjugated* in various forms to the former. I attempt in this thesis to bring these two aspects together into one conceptual framework and to examine their specific "interaction" in producing and reproducing "urban underdevelopment". I thus also attempt to explore and explain how different aspects of the urban situation are *articulated* in specific manner- not simply juxtaposed or co-existent- which give the urban situation its characteristic features. Stated in yet another way, I set out to identify and specify the way and manner of the creation and maintenance of the above articulation rather than devoting myself to what I see an absurd effort in measuring and depicting illusive indicators of integration and/

or adaptation to "modernism".<sup>22</sup> To pursue the aims I have thus set myself, it is necessary to emphasise the following:

- (a) The need to redefine the particular urban situation under consideration in terms of a social formation<sup>23</sup> which is cemented and being reproduced through the prevalence and dominance of a certain mode of production<sup>24</sup> in the Marxian sense.
- (b) The need to recognize that this social formation expresses the specific articulation of aspects of different modes of production especially the imposed capitalist mode of extraction and appropriation of surpluses introduced under and through colonialism, and the indigenous pre-colonial and pre-capitalist modes of production. In this way the process of urbanization will not figure simply as an expression of what Little refers to as a "great movement of people , stimulated by Western contact with Africa".<sup>25</sup>
- (c) The need to see various patterns of socio-economic and political relations in the urban area as aspects of such modes brought together (articulated) in ways which perpetuate and reproduce the whole "underdeveloped" social formation, and thus not to regard these relations as simple responses- structural, categorical, or personal- to the "disintegrative impact" of the urban situation.<sup>26</sup>

As maintained in Chapter 2 of this thesis, both the colonial administration and the subsequent neo-colonial state found it difficult and unrewarding to maintain capitalist relations of production and exploitation based on the separation of the *labour* from the *means of production* as it was the case in Western Europe.<sup>27</sup> Instead, the process of exploitation was initiated, and now continues, mainly by coercing the indigenous population



(through taxation, land expropriation, trade, and unequal exchange) to sell their labour power in the form of commodity (crops) which is being produced within indigenous systems of economic and social relations. Thus the extension of the new and 'modern' relations of surplus appropriation into previously non-capitalist Sudanese societies actually intensified, and still continues to intensify, the presence and reproduction of "backward" and traditional modes and forms of socio-economic and political relations within which the production of surpluses being achieved, and effectively prevents them from disappearing. We thus have a "paradoxical" situation in which the 'modern' capitalist processes of accumulation are maintained by the exploitation of labour organized entirely in archaic pre-capitalist modes. Each -it is assumed- necessitates and fosters radically different sets of values and attitudes, and different patterns of social and political organization, and the like. Yet, each is becoming progressively more dependent for survival on the other.

The urban situation, then, represents an arena where such an "articulation" takes place in its most intensified form and in the most visible and recognizable way. The study of this articulation and of interactions of its aspects in the urban area which result in the reproduction and perpetuation of what is in effect an "underdeveloped" urban situation, is clearly a legitimate and necessary empirical and theoretical undertaking. And it is an undertaking which by implication rejects the whole range of conceptualizations of towns and cities as a dualistic or pluralistic structures composed of different conflicting "systems" which coexist but do not interpenetrate.<sup>28</sup>

Following on the above statement of position, I now rest-

ate that the central problem of this thesis concerns urbanization as a socio-economic process which effectively expresses the, and contributes to the production and reproduction of, "backwardness" or "underdevelopment" in the country as a whole, and in urban areas in particular. Arising out of this problem, I attempt a comprehensive interpretation of the specific mechanisms by which certain "traditional", "archaic" and "backward" institutions, values, norms, and patterns of behaviour continue to have effective meaning in the new, structurally different, "modern" situation.<sup>29</sup> And, in particular, I identify two readily recognizable processes in urban life in the Sudan: (a) *tribalization* and the continuous reproduction of the institutions of tribalism; and (b) *capital accumulation*, its forms and specific mechanisms. And, on the whole, I am trying to show the patterns and mechanisms by which these two processes are articulated in one locality and also to show the ways through which accumulation operates to reproduce tribalism and how the latter gives accumulation most of its features, i.e. how they reproduce the basic *contradiction* of persistent 'tribalism' in conjunction with capitalistic "development".

#### IV. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION AND DATA COLLECTION:

The following is a brief account of the methods used to gather empirical data for the study:

##### 1. Surveys:

Quantitative data on Hassaheisa were gathered mainly through *formal surveys*. Questionnaires were first completed for a sample of the town's population (See Appendices 2 and 4). Drawing a sample posed difficult methodological problems. Using the 1978 estimate of the town's population (See Chapter 3), I atte-



mpted to complete the questionnaire on a 10% sample. In order to make this sample as *representative* as possible, and bearing in mind the kind of residential patterns which I knew were characterized by a general socio-economic homogeneity within each neighbourhood, I set out to work on a random basis within each area. For example, in the Omda neighbourhood I began by taking the first house in the first street; when there was no response or if the occupants were unwilling to cooperate, I took the next house, and so on. I then moved to the 10th house in the same street and proceeded in the same manner, later moving to the 20th, 30th, and 40th house and so on until I reached the last house in the last street of the neighbourhood. There are, of course, some shortcomings to this method of sampling:

- (a) The houses approached do not necessarily correspond to the number of households in the neighbourhood.<sup>30</sup> A house, or the buildings on one plot or at the "same address", may well contain more than one household, or they may be unoccupied. As I took, however, only one household from each address (where there was a response) the households eventually making up the sample might be fewer (or larger) than 10 percent. But as there was no adequate household sampling frame, I had to content myself with this method.
- (b) It is a matter of general knowledge that many single men-bachelors or married men without their families- in Sudanese towns and in Hassaheisa- live in Azaba colonies (male residences) composed of a number of houses close to each other in certain areas of the town. My method of sampling clearly did not allow for the fully proportional representation of this important segment of the population.

Despite these shortcomings, the main survey clearly did yield basic information of value on a series of the population's characteristics as may be seen in Chapter 7. The ultimate value of survey data of this kind also, of course, depends greatly on the quality of the information recorded. In this connection, I tried to guard against misinformation by the use of two techniques. First, the questionnaire was applied twice on the same informants: in 1978 (June-September) and a year later in 1979 (September-October).<sup>31</sup> Second, during the actual interviewing information given by the head of the household was, whenever possible, checked and supplemented through the responses of other members of the household who were always encouraged to participate in the interviews.

As I mention in Chapter 4, a separate survey was also conducted on the *Suk* merchants in 1978. 220 out of 1037 owners of commercial firms were involved in this survey, i.e. 20%. Each type of trade available in the *Suk* I tried to represent by the same percentage according to the estimates of its respective total number. But in the actual conduct of the survey, I tried to achieve this percentage randomly.

## 2. Planned Observations:

Following on my definition of the areas and processes of social life most crucial to the working of the "urban system" (i.e. capital accumulation and tribalization), I planned a whole programme of further *participant and non-participant observations* on events, incidents, and occurrences in the day-to-day life of the town. The scope of my observations was wide covering social, economic, political, and religious life in general. My initial aim was simply to immerse myself in daily life and record obser-



various which did not necessarily "make sense" at the time. Quite commonly, these were simply fragments of information which could only be put together meaningfully over time as the study developed. The planning and the use of these observations was controlled and supplemented at different stages by the continuous recalling of fragments of information accumulated in my earlier "participation" in the life of the town.

### 3. Interviews:

Apart from direct observations and surveys, I interviewed a wide range of *personalities* who play, or have in the past played, active roles in the history or present-day life of the Hassaheisa community. The accounts, and the perceptions and interpretations, of these personalities constitute much of the most important material in this study. In some cases, these accounts and interpretations illustrate, delineate, and explain aspects of developments in the community of which I was not previously aware, and at other times they dwell on topics of which I had abundant information but was simply interested in gathering further interpretation. I conducted lengthy interviews (and tape-recorded them) with the following:

- (a) The administrative *Officer* of the Town Council on various aspects of the functioning of the Council.
- (b) The *Chairman* of the Town Council (1977-81) Mr Al-Fatih Hamad Annil, on the history and present composition of the council and particularly on *factional politics* of the Council.
- (c) Mr. Ali Eisa Bishara, a leading merchant and a former chairman of the Town Council, on the development of the political and social alliance of the *Shammaliin* (Northerners) in Hass-

- aheisa, in addition to other local political issues;
- (d) Mr. Yousif Iheimir, a son of the former *Omda* of the town, on the history, composition, and contemporary situation of the *Dubasin* in Hassaheisa, and the Iheimir family in particular;
  - (e) Mr. Yousif Hassan, a prominent merchant and politician in the town and a former Chairman of the Council, on developments in trade and commerce in the town's *Suk*;
  - (f) Mr. Mohamed Eisa, a retired bureaucrat and presently a merchant, on the early general history of the town;
  - (g) Mr. Abdel-Karim Ali Musa, a leading merchant, on the early development of trade and on the history of involvement of the Turco-Egyptian immigrant group in the town's life;
  - (h) Mr. Mohamed Al-Jack Abu-Shama, the General Secretary of the Retail Traders' Union in Hassaheisa, on different issues concerning trading activities in the town.
  - (i) Mr Ismail Mohamed Fur, a prominent political leader and deputy Chairman of the Council (1977-81), on a number of issues concerning the history and participation in local life of the *Darfurians* in Hassaheisa; and,
  - (j) The late Mr. Al-Amin Mohamed Al-Amin, a prominent politician in the Gezira and a former President of the Gezira Scheme Tenants' Union, on various issues on the development of the town in relation to the *Hallawin* group and tenants in particular.

The above is not an exhaustive list, for I also interviewed a number of others such as managers of industrial firms (large and small-scale), leaders of social clubs, trade unionists, etc. The nature of the information gathered through such interviews



with people in leadership positions is, of course, usually partisan so that it calls for *interpretation* and discussion. I have attempted to make this clear whenever using such interviews.

#### 4. Documentation:

To develop my perception of the processes of urbanization and of daily urban life in Hassaheisa, I naturally drew on all available documentary evidence.<sup>32</sup> Documents are, of course, important in so far as they provide accounts about events or occasions pre-dating the field study (history) or about different but possibly similar situations (other localities). The main documentary sources used for this thesis were the following:

##### (a) Public and Official Archives:

These generally hold documents collected and presented by public and official institutions. In the British Library, I had access to the complete series of the *Sudan Gazette* from which I gathered information on the whole range of colonial legislation affecting urban areas and accounts of numerous important events. In the Sudan Archives at Durham University (School of Oriental Studies), I had an access to an invaluable set of official government *Reports* and correspondence. At Barakat (Wad Madani) I had access to the *Gezira Archives* which contain vast files on the Gezira Scheme. In Hassaheisa itself, I had access to many *documents* in the Offices of different governmental departments (e.g. the local government Council, the Police Headquarters, the Local Rates, the Taxes Offices, etc.). These sources included the formal minutes of meetings, and a wide variety of reports, correspondence, etc.

(b) Business and Merchant Sources:

Although I found few systematic business records in Hassaheisa, those that I did locate were helpful in various ways. For example, the private *Journal* of an ordinary merchant yielded valuable insights into the scale of his trading activities, and otherwise insignificant *invoices* gave me occasionally meaningful insights into the way in which the prices were registered, etc. On the whole, despite the secretive nature of many of the merchants (owing to the fact that they are constantly in commercial competition), some did make available to me many of their commercial records which enhanced my understanding of the way in which trade operates in the *Suk*.

(c) Statistics:

Despite the poor quality of census and other official statistics in the Sudan<sup>33</sup>, we have no option but to use them. Thus it will be seen that I have drawn heavily on data from the First National Census of 1955/56, The Household Survey of 1964/66, The Second National Census of 1973, and the Hassaheisa Town Census of 1980. One simply has to be cautious in using such data. They may not be of the quality one would wish, but the trends and overall profiles they reveal are so striking that they clearly do have considerable value as historical records for comparative purposes.

(d) Literature:

Other descriptive accounts, mainly by academics, on the Hassaheisa region, on the Gezira Scheme, and on the Sudan as a whole were extensively used, as may be seen from references given throughout this study. The accuracy and validity of these works probably varies a good deal; from highly sophisticated



academic works to very general impressionistic accounts. Whatever their limitations, a work such as mine would not be possible at all without reference to them.

Through the above methods and techniques of data collection, I have brought together the *first comprehensive collection* of information on the town of Hassaheisa. Only a part of all the materials gathered are presented in this thesis, other parts either not being of particular relevance to the issues under discussion (e.g. data on women and conjugal relations), or having been previously used by me and published. (Reference to previous publications are given whenever they are relevant). In the case of relevant data used in the thesis, I have attempted, to follow the advice given by Pons, to present them "in such a way that explanations alternative to those made by (me) can reasonably be attempted by the reader".<sup>34</sup>

## V. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

I have attempted to arrange the Chapters in this thesis so as to allow various central issues to develop serially. Following this introductory chapter in which I give an indication of a number of important points relating to the history, setting, sociological problems and methods of the study, I attempt in Chapter Two to place the study of urbanization in the Sudan in general in a more elaborate *political-economy perspective*. The Chapter deals with broad issues about the development of the colonial and neo-colonial socio-economic formation in the Sudan, and I argue that the identification and specification of this socio-economic formation as a distinct historical condition, gives the process of urbanization its essential characteristic features.



In Chapter Three I give a general descriptive analysis of various aspects of the town of Hassaheisa. I dwell on events and processes in the specific history of the *production, development, and reproduction* of the town. Chapter Three is thus intended to *characterize* the main features of the town's historical and contemporary urban structure.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six deal in some considerable detail with *capital accumulation* in Hassaheisa. The central theme in these three chapters is the commercial nature of the process of accumulation as an empirical manifestation of the "underdevelopment" of capitalist development in this particular situation. I pursue this theme by illustrating the relationship between commerce and the needs and crises of the world colonial capitalist economy. Thus in Chapter Four, *trade* is investigated as the main pattern through which the surpluses of the country were and are expatriated, while the remaining surpluses are accumulated by local merchants. The rate and magnitude of this local accumulation is presented as the main dynamic characteristic of urban life as far as it affects and is affected by other social, political, and economic processes in the community. Chapters Five and Six deal with related processes in land and manufacturing respectively. The two chapters are designed to illustrate, first, the limits of the process of accumulation which is essentially mercantilist despite the 'diversification' of its forms; and, secondly, to show and explain the social content and consequences of the intrusion of capital to the property and manufacturing spheres of accumulation.

In Chapter Seven, I trace the specific historical conditions under which the populations of Hassaheisa began to *tribal-*



*rise* themselves. The development of 'modern tribalism' is seen as an ideology arising out of an 'old' or 'traditional' tribalism which is constantly being recreated and transformed into 'new' forms compatible with the new realities of accumulation in the town. I argue that *both processes* (tribalization and accumulation) are continually distorted and refashioned to match and serve the specific 'underdeveloped' character of each other. Capital accumulation is *arrested* in its commercial mercantilist stage and bound by its *dependent* position, while tribalization is used and manifested not as a source for cultural and social diversification, but as a base for *false consciousness*. In Chapter Eight I analyse the way in which a certain kind of articulated development of these two processes of urban life takes place with the effect of perpetuating the 'backward' character of both (and, by extension, of the whole situation), while they themselves 'advance' and flourish. In particular, I try to show how the local *Town Council* is an arena for the politics and the performances which reflect, and *simultaneously* contribute to, the intensification of the processes of accumulation and tribalization. But since the process of accumulation intrinsically polarises the population into two antagonistic camps (i.e. those who accumulate, and those who not only fail to do so, but also 'suffer' as a result), the 'conflict' between the interests of the two camps cannot be ignored or overlooked. Because of the centrality of 'polarization' and the 'struggle', the development of 'tribal ideology' is in fact "necessary" in the sense that if 'tribalism' does not relegate and ultimately replace this 'struggle', it is 'needed' to obscure and distort the 'struggle'.



FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER I

1. I know of two colleagues who began research in different Sudanese towns in 1978, but who subsequently abandoned their investigations to seek employment in Saudi Arabia.
2. See also the Preface to Pons, V. (ed.), 1980.
3. *Suk* is a local word of Arabic origin used by Sudanese for trading area or a market place.
4. El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981.
5. Pons uses the term 'texture of urban life' to refer to "interpersonal relations in the family and other small groups; the norms, prescriptions, and codes of conduct which govern such relations; and the values and aspirations commonly articulated and expressed within relatively homogeneous and close-knit networks". Op. cit., 1980, Preface, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.
6. Is it the case, as Reissman argues, that "Urbanization is social change on a vast scale"? According to him urbanization:  
 "means deep and irrevocable changes that alter all sectors of society... Apparently the process is irreversible once begun. The impetus of urbanization upon society is such that society gives way to urban institutions, urban values, and urban demands". See Reissman, 1964, p. 15. Somewhat similarly, Hoselitz argues that:  
 "Students of urbanization are agreed that, to the extent to which the process of urbanization is mediated through urban centres... in general, the larger the city, the more important is its general mediating function in the process of social change and acculturation. To some extent, therefore, the rapidity with which a country modernizes, or at least with which psychological attitudes favourable to modernization are created, is dependent upon the growth of its cities especially large cities". See Hoselitz, B.E., 1974, p. 174.  
 Or is the opposite opinion more valid that which sees the growth of urbanization in the 'developing' countries as more an expression of "lack of national development than the result of it"? See Dwyer, 1974, p. 12. Even more forceful and challenging is Castells' view that urbanization in the Third World is  
 "an obstacle to development, in so far as it immobilizes resources in the form of non-productive investments, necessary to the creation and organization of services indispensable to great concentrations of population, whereas these concentrations do not justify themselves as centres of production". Castells, 1977, p. 41.



7. I have perceived Hassaheisa as a colonial town par excellence, as opposed to some other towns in the Sudan which were established in pre-colonial times. About half of all Sudanese towns to-day are of the same 'type' as Hassaheisa. See Born, M., 1980, pp. 147-83.
8. My home village is Sarasir, about twenty kilometres west of Hassaheisa, and my parents' family still lives there.
9. In Arabic the words *Mutamadin* (urbanized) and *Mutahadhir* (civilized) carry the same meaning and often used synonymously.
10. Electricity has only recently been extended to some of the villages around Hassaheisa- in 1979 in the case of my own family's village.
11. It is quite usual for the people in my village to "explain" various types of behaviour, and even some physical features, of the town's population simply by stating that they are "town people".
12. Such terms occur frequently in the oral traditions of people in Hassaheisa from the Northern Provinces.
13. Secondary school students in the Gezira work in any available job commonly during the 'Summer' vacation, mainly to earn money for school clothes. The lucky ones find temporary employment in the public sector. In the 'summer' of 1968 I had worked in the Ginneries as a Balance-Clerk.
14. Ibrahim explains how his position vis-a-vis the local population he studied in the Ingessana Hills District was made more difficult by the fact that "The Arabic term for 'researcher', *bahith*, can easily be mistaken for *Mabahith* (Secret Service?)", See, Ibrahim, S.S., 1980, p. 2.
15. In addition to this, I had in 1978, just prior to planning the present work, conducted some research in Sarasir, See, El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1979 (In Arabic).
16. Sondra Hale and Gerry Hale, 1971, p. 4.
17. Pons, V., 1980, pp. xxix-xL.
18. Sondra Hale designed her own research, reported in the volume of 1971, as "an attempt to suggest and to stimulate a type of urban study conspicuously lacking in Sudan". See Hale, 1971, p. 54.



19. Mariotti and Magubane, commenting on the nature of urban anthropology in Africa, argue that:  
 "The tie between urban anthropology and social engineering is not in doubt. When practical problems are encountered, urban anthropologists and sociologists often act as experts supplying elements of a decision. Anthropology, then, can function practically at two levels, either through the 'rationalization' of human behaviour or by supplying tactics for the 'manipulation' of behaviour. This can be achieved by identifying the myths or irrational convictions closely related to the practical experience of the masses". See Mariotti, A., and Magubane, B., 1978, p. 65.
20. Being concerned with such questions, many authors of studies of urbanization in Africa, for example, centred their problematic on the "persistence" and/or "continuity" of certain social institutions, values, traditions, etc., which they saw as empeding change to fuller "urban way of life". The whole matter was viewed first in an "evolutionary", then in a "functionalist", and later in a "functionalist-structuralist" perspective of which culminated in a range of "dualist" and "pluralist" approaches.
21. It is now well accepted that Wirth's propositions in his Urbanism as a Way of Life, and numerous elaborations and modifications of it in the Western literature, played a prominent role in providing theoretical concepts upon which this kind of perspective is based. See Wirth, L., 1969. What we may refer to as the Wirthian legacy has been influential in urban studies in Africa and elsewhere in the so-called Third World, and has often merged or partially coincided with other largely ahistorical and apolitical traditions. The task of "freeing" ourselves from its impact and implications is therefore very important.
22. For a systematic critique of the approach I reject, See, Magubane, B., 1971.
23. I use the concept of "social formation" to designate a determined historical situation specified by a particular articulation of its different economic, political, ideological, and theoretical levels of instances at a given moment in its historical existence. Cf. Paulantzas, N., 1982, p. 15.
24. Reference is to the dominance of the capitalist mode of production imposed through colonialism.
25. Little, K., 1971, pp. 85-102.
26. Mitchell, J.C., 1969, pp. 9-10.



27. The development of capitalism in Western Europe necessitated the creation of a situation where:  
 "the overwhelming majority of the people are put in a situation where they are forced to work to avoid starvation. The capitalist class creates and maintains this situation by compulsion by achieving total control over all the means of producing social wealth... It means the creation of a working class-- a class of people who can survive only by selling their capacity to work to the class that controls the means of production". See, Cleaver, H.. 1979, p. 75.
28. A dualistic perception was first developed by Boeke, J.H., 1953, in relation to Indonesia where he "saw" the co-existence of capitalist and pre-capitalist societies with conflicting needs and characteristics, and which led him to conclude that this threatened the disintegration of both societies. In Africa, however, there was a strong tendency to account for the coexistence of the "advanced" and "backward" cultures in terms of a supposed harmony of interests. The benefits of modernization were assumed to flow outwards from the "advanced" culture to revitalize the stagnating "traditional" and "backward" culture. This was perceived as a situation of harmony without contradictions, and of cooperation for the promotion of development of both. See, for example, Mitchell, J.C., 1969, Watson, W., 1959, and Kuper, H. (ed.), 1965.
29. Here I must stress the contradictory nature of this continuity in contrast to the "complementary" harmonious co-existence implied in works such as that of Watson, W., 1958, in the case of Mambwe, and that of Barclay, H.B., 1964, in the case of Mahas.
30. The working definition of a household which I employed was that; a household is the unit of people living at an address and sharing "one cooking pot" (one domestic budget).
31. It is for this reason some of the tables giving survey data carry the date 1978/1979.
32. I was guided to a large extent by Pitt, D.C., 1972, p. 14.
33. Reservations about government statistics in the Sudan have been expressed by, for example, El-Arifi, 1971, pp. 115-40, and myself, El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981, pp. 4-5.
34. Pons, V., 1980, p. xxxix.

## CHAPTER TWO

ISSUES IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF URBANIZATION IN THE SUDAN



## INTRODUCTION

The rise of urban settlements in the course of human history has been described as "pre-eminently a social process, an expression more of changes in man's interaction with his fellows than in his interaction with his environment".<sup>1</sup> This perspective adds considerable theoretical and analytical possibilities to definitions of urban settlements as geographical areas or places where the inhabitants engage primarily in non-agricultural economic activities<sup>2</sup>, for any definition of "urban" needs to be placed and explained in the context of specific historical developments. If we ignore the different specific historical conditions under which different urban settlements have arisen and existed we run the risk of trying to understand them as static and suprahistorical entities.<sup>3</sup> Any attempt to analyse urban settlements ahistorically leads by implication to conceptualizations derived on the basis of particular sets of concrete and specific urban features and thus to the unjustified use of universal "urban" abstracts. In addition, such approaches preclude any understanding of the specific *processes* which have led to the rise and development of different towns and cities-i.e. the particular processes of urbanization.

The present Chapter attempts to place the process of urbanization in the Sudan in an appropriate historical context, and it does this by pointing to the specific historical conditions under which this process developed in the past and operates today. The Chapter thus sets out to ensure that we avoid the damaging theoretical consequences of accepting any superficial similarities that may exist between urbanization processes in different situations at different historical epochs.<sup>4</sup> Thus, for example,

the fact that urbanization always involves the movement of people from agricultural to non-agricultural activities should not be allowed to lead us to ignore or to minimize the vastly different changes in social relations that may be involved in such movements in overall historical contexts that may otherwise bear little similarity to each other. Very specifically, we need to bear in mind that the processes of "urbanization" in the Sudan have a long history stretching from the period of the pre-historic Nubian kingdoms through those of the Christian States, the Funj Sultanate, The Turkish regime, the brief years of Mahdist State, and the period of Condominium colonial rule to the present neo-colonial era<sup>5</sup>, but that the specific nature of urban growth at various times during these periods has been quite essentially different. It is thus necessary to approach the whole question of Sudanese urbanization *historically*. Unless we do so, it is extremely difficult to realize what specific problems relating to the underlying dynamics of the social change involved that merit close attention. It is this view which has led me to embrace the method of political economy in the present study.

#### THE METHOD OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Political economy deals primarily with the social sphere that includes the production, exchange and distribution of commodities. According to Marx's *Preface* to his Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy<sup>6</sup>, the social sphere of political economy is identified with the "economic base" on which the legal and political superstructure of society arise. Within this economic base the mode of production is seen as the determining *instance* which is in turn determined by dialectical interaction between the material productive forces and the social relations of production. And the social relations into which people enter in



order to produce their material lives are simultaneously economic and political. In a capitalist society, for example, any move to impose laws and ordinances governing the length of a working day or the codes of industrial conduct is essentially a political as well as an economic movement; that is to say, it is a "movement of the class, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing a general social force of compulsion."<sup>7</sup> In other words, this political framework of laws, ordinances, and of the coercive apparatus of dominance in general is always necessary and indispensable for- it is not merely a reflection of- the more basic social action of imposing and maintaining corresponding economic relations of production, exchange, and circulation of social wealth.<sup>8</sup>

As explained in the previous chapter, the present study is limited in historical scope to Sudanese urbanization from the turn of the century, which marked the imposition of British colonial rule, onwards.<sup>9</sup> During this period capital accumulation in its various forms figures, according to the perspective and method I am using, as the most fundamental process underlying the structural development of Sudanese society. Thus a close examination of the nature of this process and the identification of its characteristic features is an essential prelude to the proper understanding and ultimate critique of urbanization and to any attempt to understand the so-called 'urban problem' <sup>10</sup> in the Sudan. This is because capital accumulation rests primarily on the extraction of surpluses which were in turn created in a definite mode of production based on certain social relations. And as urbanization is taken as a process of change in these social relations, the focus on the study of accumulation provides a proper instance to see

and criticize the whole production process and the social relations involved in their full complexity.

#### CAPITAL ACCUMULATION IN SUDAN

The "colonial character" of the process of capital accumulation in the Sudan since the beginnings of British rule must be stressed at the outset. I do this by first discussing the basic historical "causes" of the development of colonialism, the ways and methods through which colonialism sought to achieve its major purposes, and, second, by showing the main consequences of the process in the Sudan.<sup>11</sup>

The incorporation of the Sudan into the British Empire was in essence the penetration and expansion of British monopoly capital into the country. British capital was suffering in the wake of its expansion from the following series of needs and constraints:

- (1) As a consequence of the long-term decline in the labour reserve (due to the then rapid migration of labour power out of Western Europe to overseas territories), there was a slow but continuous increase in real wages in Britain and Western Europe, and this led to the growth of an active interest in the exploitation of cheap labour-power outside Western Europe.
- (2) There was at the same time a growing need for various raw materials. This was caused by appreciable differences in the levels of productivity in manufacturing industries (e.g. in the British textile industry) and agricultural production (e.g. cotton which had also been severely affected by the American Civil War).
- (3) The concentration of capital in the "West", where investment costs in spheres that had already been extensively industrialized were rising rapidly, led to considerable pressure for capital to be transferred into new areas or regions for investment.



(4) The reduction and near exhaustion of spheres of investment in the "West" had added to the problem posed there by the continuing tendency of the average rate of profit<sup>12</sup> to fall due to the significant increase in the organic composition of capital. This was because earlier capital used to be transferred from spheres of production with declining rates of profits to new and fresh ones. But, owing to "full" capitalist expansion in the West and the virtual exhaustion of economic spheres for investment there, the possibility of capital transference was eventually eliminated and the natural consequence was that expansion was now only possible, in significant measures, beyond the boundaries of Western Europe.

All these factors led, in Mandel's analysis, to the structural crisis of capitalism for which colonialism was in effect the only possible "solution". Colonization, the annexation of many non-Western territories by force and the subjugation of the people of these territories, opened the way for the transference of capital from the West to the newly controlled areas on a large scale and at a rapid rate. It is easy to appreciate that the logic underlying the process was the search for "surplus profits" leading to further capital accumulation and growth. Prominent among the means through which surpluses were achieved, were the following:

Firstly, much higher rates of profit were achieved by investing capital in areas where the average organic composition of capital<sup>13</sup> was significantly lower than in the West.

Secondly, the prices of the commodity of labour power (wages) in these areas were far below its historical value due to low standards of living. Both a limited range of necessities and the presence of surplus populations led labour to accept the lowest possible

"wages" and thus allowed the realization of higher than average surplus values.

Thirdly, since the capital transferred was, by and large, excess capital in the West (where it could not achieve the average profit), its investment in the annexed regions allowed a general increase in the average rate of profit to be realized.

A major consequence for the annexed regions to which this capital was sent was that any chances of indigenous replication of Western capitalist development were severely reduced, if not eliminated, as the resources that would have been necessary for internal accumulation were being systematically transferred back to the West in the form of surpluses.<sup>14</sup> And such portions of the surplus as remained locally were concentrated in the non-productive economic sectors of foreign trade, services, and commerce.<sup>15</sup> These processes were then perpetuated through the systematic incorporation of the economies of the annexed territories into the world market where a relation of "unequal exchange" has continued to operate and has thus ensured the continuing flow of surplus to the original centres of capital.

The entire Sudanese colonial experience developed along these lines. The specific conditions of the country made investments in agricultural production most profitable, and the general strategy followed by the colonial state was therefore to develop a peasant economy<sup>16</sup> bound to Western centres of capital through world trade. Peasants were retained as simple commodity producers and "encouraged" to remain on their own lands as cash croppers. The colonial state had little difficulty in establishing and imposing policies which led to a monopoly over the crop market and imperial capitalism was thus able to control the manner of the labour process in



crop production and to dictate the nature and magnitude of the crop produced.

Although the peasants continued to own the means of production (i.e. agricultural land and implements), they rapidly lost control over the organization of the production process through being forced to sell their crops to capital; a situation summarized by O'Brien in the following quotation:

...what originally appears as a relation of exchange binding the simple commodity producer to the 'market' tends to assume the character of a relation of production binding the producer to capital. The 'price' which the producer receives becomes a concealed wage.<sup>17</sup>

#### URBANIZATION AND THE DYNAMICS OF ACCUMULATION

Up to World War II the pattern of accumulation outlined above obviously depended upon the *stability* of the Sudanese peasant communities engaged in the production process as cash croppers. Various policies were developed to achieve this requirement. Thus legislation was introduced to ensure (a) that peasants did not leave their communities (e.g. legislation to stem landlessness) and (b) that there were adequate inducements to production for the market (e.g. legislation imposing taxes).<sup>18</sup>

Owing to particular reasons and circumstances, the colonial administration sought to concentrate and intensify crop production in certain region.<sup>19</sup> Thus the decision to promote cotton production in the Gezira had its own specific history. According to Frankel, cotton

was wanted at almost any price, and it is significant that the scheme was only seriously developed long after it had been planned and at a time when it was thought that Empire cotton supplies had to be safeguarded.<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the specific reasons and timing, the concentration of colonial economic activities and investment in this particular region of the Sudan created a vast demand for cheap labour indispensable for both construction works and crop production.<sup>21</sup>

The attraction of sufficient labour from peasant communities- whether from the Gezira itself or from other regions- proved to be very difficult as peasants in those early years were reluctant to sell their labour power.<sup>22</sup> One Governor-General's perception of the reasons for the problem of labour shortages, which were not confined to the Gezira, but which were first experienced in Khartoum itself and continued for many years, is interesting and worth quoting. After noting the failure of increased wages to attract the Sudanese for work, he gave his reasons for the failure of the laws of supply and demand to operate as follows:

The reason why the laws of supply and demand as regulating the wages of labour do not apply in the Sudan may be noted. In the first place the Sudani is as a rule naturally lazy and disinclined to manual labour or hard work of any sort; secondly, owing to the cheapness of durra- their staple food- a man can live on next to nothing. It is often not sufficiently realized that Sudanese, even in Khartoum, the most expensive town in the Sudan, can live on nine or ten piastres a month or even less when durra is cheap. The result is that a man needs only work for three or four days in a month to make his living. (...), it seems evident that the present purely artificial conditions can only be rectified by the application of some form of pressure, with a view to breaking up these rapidly increasing idle communities.<sup>23</sup>

The extent of these "idle communities'" reluctance to be involved in waged labour may be furthermore illustrated by the recourse of the colonial administration to policies of recruiting labour from beyond the borders of the Sudan. In a certain case the administration formally applied to the gaols in Egypt for



workers. Thus "in December 1913, 1080 convicts from Tura and Abu Zibil penitentiaries (in Egypt) were brought to the Sudan for employment upon the Gezira irrigation works at Sennar".<sup>24</sup> But, however, this policy of labour importation, whether for work in the Gezira, or on the railways or in Port Sudan docks, soon proved too expensive, and the administration had to launch a new policy with the sole aim of breaking up the Sudanese peasants' resistance and/or "idleness". This policy of "application of some form of pressure" was based on the following:

- (1) The selective imposition of taxes in certain regions; e.g. capitation or poll-tax was levied mainly in the Western Sudan, while date and sagia taxes were levied in Northern Sudan. Both were designed to generate greater cash needs over and above the need already created by other universal taxes levied in the Sudan as a whole (e.g. animal, land, and house taxes).
- (2) To minimize the opportunities of people meeting these new taxes from surplus cash from within their respective peasant economies, the colonial administration commonly adopted and imposed measures to disrupt, distort and partially destroy peasant activities.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the high agricultural taxes and other charges it imposed, and to the elaborate legislation aimed at ultimately decreasing agricultural productivity, the administration applied a policy of "slave"-emancipation, especially in Northern Sudan. Though this policy was masked by humanitarian and ethical veils, its essence was to undermine the partial reliance of Northern peasant communities on "slaves" as an important labour force. Emancipated "slaves" were thus superficially regarded as a "surplus" over and above other members of the community who eventually disengaged from agricultural pursuits when they ceased to

be viable after the departure of the "slaves".<sup>26</sup> As such this "surplus" labour force was expected by the colonial administration to move towards the regions of labour shortage, i.e. the Gezira.

Obviously, the overall policy of the administration towards the then existing peasant economies had serious contradictory elements in its underlying assumptions and practical consequences. Whereas the assumption was that a measured "application of some form of pressure" would result in "breaking up these rapidly increasing idle communities", the disruptions caused had a number of unintended consequences:

(1) Though the policies were "successful" in bringing substantial numbers of "peasants" to areas of new agricultural investment (e.g. the Gezira)- to the point that rural-rural migration was the salient feature of population movement in pre-World War II period-<sup>27</sup> this "success" undermined the very basis of the administration's economic strategy of stabilizing peasant communities. Moreover, in some regions it led to a considerable drop in agricultural production and this was a factor in the administration later reversing its earlier policy on slavery.<sup>28</sup>

(2) At the same time, however, increasing numbers of rural people, who had been induced to disengage, in one way or another, from peasant pursuits, found their way to the then limited number of urban settlements, notably to the capital of Khartoum.<sup>29</sup> Though the towns then held little promise of employment, and the urban wages were considerably lower than in rural areas of investment (e.g. the Gezira and Tokar)<sup>30</sup> many of these "surplus" people, mainly ex- and runaway "slaves", stayed in the towns, and it became necessary for the government to try to induce them to ret-



urn to their original homes (or to their "masters" in the case of "slaves"). The alternative for those who did not respond positively was facing punishment under the Vagabonds Ordinance of 1905 designed to deal with "idle" persons and vagabonds. "Idle" in the Ordinance referred to:

Any person who has no settled home and has no ostensible means of subsistence and cannot give a satisfactory account of himself.<sup>31</sup>

Here one may note that the above case is yet another "evidence" against the simplistic argument which accounts for urbanization in terms of the more simplistic postulate of "labour mobility".

Contradictory as it was, the colonial policy led, over time, first, to the far-reaching decomposition of rural peasant communities with marked variations in different regions of the Sudan, and, secondly, following on this decomposition, an extensive inter-regional movements of the populations began. Both these consequences were closely related- in spite of the contradictory nature of this relationship- to the specific dynamics of the colonial capitalist economy and its growing patterns of accumulation. Some of those who moved came to settle in newly established (or converted into) commercial and administrative centres all over the country. In these centres they entered into "new" social relations with each other, and engaged in "new" economic pursuits corresponding and compatible with dominant mode of colonial capitalistic accumulation. This was the essential beginning of the process of urbanization which has since continued in the Sudan throughout the colonial and neo-colonial periods, and its study is the main task in this thesis.

# THE CHARACTERISTICS OF URBANIZATION AND A CRITIQUE OF URBAN STUDIES IN THE SUDAN<sup>32</sup>

(1) The social character of urbanization as defined above exactly stems from the particular historical conditions under which it develops and to which I have referred. The decomposition of the peasant economy meant- and means- the effective dispossession of the "surplus population" from their means of production, i.e. land.<sup>33</sup> As such, this population was left with only one asset at its disposal, namely, the labour power which could be exchanged for the necessary cash needed for both taxes and subsistence. Thus the movement of this "surplus" section of the population between different regions (whether rural or urban) was, and is, by no means a simple *labour mobility*<sup>34</sup>; it was, and is, rather a process of *proletarianization*.<sup>35</sup> The process of 'modern' urbanization in the Sudan thus assumed its most fundamental and essential feature from being a historical process of the transformation of the social relations of the people, and of the differentiation of population into distinct social "classes" or categories. Empirically there has been an intimate relationship between the two aspects of the major process of socio-economic change based on the logic and dynamics of colonial capitalistic accumulation: proletarianization and urbanization.

The rate of urban growth and urbanization in the country was relatively low during the colonial period; after more than 50 years the level of urbanization was only 8.3% in 1955/56.<sup>36</sup> This is partially attributable to the policy of stabilization of the peasant communities attempted by the colonial government, and partially to the relatively low rate of capitalistic intensification of the country's economy. But the level has accelerated during the past 25 years, and is now 25.0%.<sup>37</sup> This level is contrary to the



expectations of an earlier generation of students who had based their projections on the pre-independence rate of urbanization.<sup>38</sup> The recent acceleration is an indicator of, and corresponding to, the growing intensity of the processes of rural decomposition and proletarianization since independence, themselves being intrinsically related to the recent capitalistic intensification under the neo-colonial situation.

It is clearly impossible to attribute this rapid recent increase in the rate of urbanization solely to the uneven spatial distribution of services and economic investments in the country.<sup>39</sup> To do so would be to assume that the would-be rural-urban migrant can "rationally" make an accurate cost-benefit analysis or learning of the degree of concentration of services in a certain locality, and that he then decides his future movements on the basis of these calculations.<sup>40</sup> Such an assumption would impute a degree of sophistication to the migrant which needs verification at the very least on two levels; the channels of communications he used to receive the information on the urban situation, and the way he comprehended the fact of unevenness. Moreover, we would also first need to establish every individual's fundamental identification of his existential situation and whether he is a free agent or not.

(2) At this juncture it is necessary to emphasize another important feature of the urbanization process in the Sudan; namely, that the process involves people who originate from widely separated and remote areas of the country (this is particularly true of the inhabitants of towns in the central regions of the country). This fact adds the following dimensions to any comprehensive urban

profile of the country:

(a) The towns are not only centres of administration (political domination) and trade (economic exploitation) where many services are concentrated: they are also heterogenous settlements which commonly stand as alien enclaves for the local people of their immediate hinterlands. This impedes and largely negates these centres' alleged potential role as bases for the diffusion of change and "modernity"<sup>41</sup>, while simultaneously accentuating antagonisms between the town and country.

(b) The diverse origins, and the often conflicting urban groups, do not necessarily result- as sometimes assumed- in a situation of diversified "cultural" alternatives for the individual urbanite. On the contrary, such evidence as we so far have, suggests an increasing adherence of members of various groups to their respective "cultural" systems. At best, members of one group ignore others; at worst, they show considerable hatred of, and prejudice towards, others.<sup>42</sup> To explain this, we need to refer to the concrete processes attendant on daily life in the urban context; processes that can be identified in the real lives of the urbanite peoples; economic, political and social processes and how they are being carried out in relation to the situation of inter-group "hostilities", rather than the confused and confusing use of mysterious notions about these groups' histories, natural ways of life, cultural heritage, and values.

(3) In this way we can approach the study of a further important feature of urban life in the Sudan: the persistence and continuous reproduction of so-called "rural" and "traditional" sets of values, attitudes, and institutions. The emergence and maintenance, and even often the further development of phenomena



such as "tribal" loyalties and ethnic identifications, close-knit social and kinship networks, and exclusive voluntary associations have commonly captured the attention of scholars as salient characteristics of urban society in the Sudan<sup>43</sup>, and, in fact, in other towns and cities in the Third World. This apparent "co-existence" of a "modern" capitalist social and economic formation in the urban milieu with "traditional" pre-capitalist systems of values and socio-political institutions has generally been perceived in one or the other of two divergent ways:

(a) The first offers an abstracted frame of analysis which assumes that immigrants in the urban areas are principally "free agents" in their choice of patterns of life that best suit their interests. Being faced with the disorganizing and disruptive impact of urban life, their "natural" response is to reconstruct and rebuilt substitutive social systems, largely borrowed from their rural traditional inventory, in order to achieve a degree of "adaptation" to the urban context as a first step towards ultimate "integration", "involvement", and "incorporation" into this newly found heaven of progress and advancement.<sup>44</sup> There is in this type of analysis a basic abstract assumption of "contrast" and "conflict" between rural and urban ways of life. The natural "evolution" of human life necessitates the elimination or transformation of the less 'advanced' and less equipped system to cope with needs and requirements of urban life which is developing according to the dynamics of "modern" and non-rural processes-i.e. the total "rejection" of the 'backward' rural way of life. When these rural ways of life persist or recur, they are usually conceived as being transient in time and local in space (situational)<sup>45</sup>. Thus this approach resulted in attention being focused on the study of var-



ious indicators of "acculturation" and "assimilation" where the process of adjustment and adaptation of immigrants was seen as the central problematic.

When the empirical data show a regressive- rather than progressive- pattern in the development of this evolutionary schema, which is often the case, the focus of the studies is simply switched to the investigation of immanent aspects of the culture, the system of values or social organization, and, at times, to "the nature" of the immigrants who are often seen as holding "unexpectedly" refractory and intransigent attitudes and values least conducive to change and modernization.<sup>46</sup> By "ignoring" the historical processes underlying the empirical data gathered at the small-scale level of investigation, such studies reveal their "irreducible ideological components". And since they can only function as ideological implements in the "rationalization" of human behaviour and/or supply bases for the development of manipulative tactics, these studies lend their conclusions to systematic use by administrators and other dominant groups for the domination and exploitation of ordinary urban populations and for legitimation of existing socio-economic and political orders in the urban world.<sup>47</sup>

(b) The second, and very different, way in which many forms of immigrant behaviour have been viewed as a "mechanical" consequence of the process of "structuring" and "constraining" of that behaviour by the colonial, or neo-colonial, capitalist socio-economic formation, suffers similar problems of assumptions and practical consequences. For, in this approach, the emphasis is firmly placed on the study of the impact of extraneous factors which are seen as shaping the, backward or modern, behaviour of immigrants in the urban context. In other words, the immigrants are here assumed



to be ultimately constrained and structured in their behaviour by the deterministic mechanisms of the colonial or neo-colonial capitalist formation.<sup>48</sup> The immigrants themselves in the urban situation are taken as a passive, disposable, and easily manipulated mass in relation to the dominant system to which they are connected by a relationship of "dependency" and "subjugation". In the most extreme versions of this type of interpretation, the immigrants are perceived as "victims" of a wider conspiracy, and in order to understand and explain the victims' behaviour, it is sufficient to interpret the interests of the conspirators.

My critique of this second approach is not based on its general assumptions and conclusions, with many of which I agree in a general way. And, indeed, I would stress that in my view we need far more studies than we yet have to help us to illuminate and clarify in detail the ways in which dominant capitalistic interests and structures create and maintain situations of compulsion that affect the immigrants' behaviour. But I am not satisfied with the way in which the empirical evidence on "structuring and constraining" has thus far been interpreted and posed to give a picture of a situation of contention consisting of a single active contender and a one-way pressure mounting. I contend that attempts to do so magnify out of all proportion the dynamics of colonial, and by extension, neo-colonial capitalism, and thus they portray the immigrant urban population as a mass of chanceless victims, and posit a scenario of a struggle-free processes.<sup>49</sup> Such an interpretation is highly ideological as can easily be grasped if we consider the practical implications which follow from it. These implications are:

- (a) Either that the ordinary and poor urban masses are powerless and quite impotent to offer any resistance to the economic dynamics of colonial and neo-colonial capitalism to struggle against its political dominance.
- (b) Or that the poor masses have the power but lack the necessary knowledge to comprehend the nature of their situation and use their power appropriately to free themselves from the imposed structure and its constraints.

In the case of (a) the further implication is that the door is open for a third group, which must- by definition- be neither the dominant capitalist nor the dominated poor, to emancipate the poor from the dominance of the powerful. This group can only be one "in between" or "above"- i.e. an *elite*. In the case of (b), the implication is that the poor masses are incapable of understanding the "mysterious" course of events of which they are victims, and that this needs to be explained to them by an "educated" and learned *elite*. The only course of action open for the poor masses would therefore be to join the "struggle" behind the "vanguard elite" and carry out the political tasks assigned to them by the "intellectual elite".

Whether we take version (a) or version (b), this kind of interpretation fails to emphasize the nature of the socio-economic and political struggle inherent in the behaviour of immigrant masses, or to draw attention to the specific ways in which they do resist and strive. Consequently, little or no attention is paid to the study of urban settlements as historical arenas for class antagonisms and struggles. And, whether consciously or not, this leads to a negation of a highly dynamic aspect of urban life and to the concealment or minimization of contradictions in the pre-



vailing structure of interests and in the way in which the poor and the "rich" actually struggle and strive.<sup>50</sup>

(4) One logical consequence of the negation referred to above, the negation of structural antagonisms immanent in the urban socio-economic and political formation, is the almost complete neglect of one of the most fundamental features of urbanization and urban life in the Sudan, namely the pervasive role assumed by commercial capital accumulation throughout the history of "modern" Sudanese towns. Without any significant exception, all urban studies "mention" trade and commerce (besides administration) as the main and most dynamic characteristic of urban development. Yet very few have attempted to explore the nature, history, mechanisms, and socio-economic and political consequences of trade and commerce in these towns. Among these few, we have one which makes an "attempt... to measure central business function tendencies of trade types in Omdurman..., and to quantify these tendencies towards centrality" from a geographical perspective<sup>51</sup>, and another which attempts to "describe the social characteristics of big merchants and businessmen in El-Obeid where the Majority of the Town's inhabitants earn their livelihood as traders of one sort or another".<sup>52</sup> Although both studies give fascinating insights into the geography and ethnography of commerce in the two towns to which they refer, both fail to examine the patterns of commercial development in any illuminating way. In particular, attention has never been focused on trade and commerce as economic activities generating a further- and perhaps more effectual- process of capital accumulation. Thus questions about the specific relationship between urban trade and the colonial capitalist penetration in the Sudan are still largely untouched. Likewise, the role



of local traders in the expansion of capital through the imposition of forms of commodity production, the social organization of trade, its personnel<sup>53</sup>, and the social processes of differentiation inherent in its accumulative character have either been assumed as "natural" or taken for granted.

Two recent studies have indeed attempted to investigate the process of capital accumulation, but they again either ignored the specific manifestations of antagonisms and of struggle within which the process of accumulation develops<sup>54</sup>, or simply concluded that when the accumulation of capital reaches a certain level it creates a "basis for a mass struggle against it"<sup>55</sup>-i.e. the process of accumulation itself emerges and develops free of contention. In this way, both studies failed to treat and examine the process of capital accumulation (mainly commercial) as an antagonistic socio-economic process which, from the outset, develops within that antagonism and according to its conditions; instead, they see it (or it so appears) primarily as a struggle-free process, and they thus end up at the same ideological starting point as earlier studies.

#### CONCLUSION:

A proper understanding of the processes of urbanization and of the nature of urban life can only be developed, as I see it, if we place our inquiries in a clearly defined and adequately characterized historical epoch. It seems necessary to stress that urbanization and urban life in the Sudan were, and still are, basically and essentially different in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It must surely be crucially important to identify the major characteristic features and the principal underlying socio-economic processes of any period in order to grasp the significance and to correctly perceive the problematic of urbanization and urban life in any historical period. The view taken in this thesis is that,



by completely neglecting, or by paying far too little attention to this conceptual and theoretical aspect, students of urbanization and urban life in the Sudan have thus far made a serious methodological error. This has important implications. It not only renders our efforts inadequate for academic purposes, but it is also serious because the ideological assumptions implicit in the omission affect the real lives of millions of people. For, by failing to dwell on the nature of the colonial and neo-colonial capitalist economy of the Sudan, the process of capital accumulation, the necessary relation of exploitation which this accumulation requires, and the inevitable antagonisms between the interests of the "classes" of the *accumulators* and the *exploited*, these studies effectively provide an important mystifying and distorting ideological component to the situation of struggle immanent in the society. They obscure and distort the real nature of "what is going on"; thus facilitating the task of maintaining and reproducing the *status quo*.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER II

1. Adams, R.M., 1960, p. 3.
2. Cf. Max Weber's definition of the "city" in Weber, M., 1958, p. 66.
3. Cf. Mariotti and Magubane's view: "the welter of competing definitions and special theories which fill the literature on cities reflects the attempt to treat the city as a static, suprahistorical entity- to elevate various concrete, historical features to abstract universal principles". See, Mariotti, A. and Magubane, B., 1978, p.47.
4. Ibid, p. 47.
5. For a general account of urbanization in the Sudan that stresses its similar features but fails to emphasize its underlying historical differences, see, El-Bushra, S., 1971. The same is largely true of Born's essay even though his emphasis is mainly on colonial times, see, Born, M. 1980.
6. Marx, K., 1970, the Preface, pp. 21-2.
7. Marx to Bolte, in Marx, K. and Engels, F., 1935, pp. 315-19.
8. For instance, colonial capitalism, as it penetrated into the Sudan, restructured the existing society in order to expropriate its surplus wealth. It was quite natural that this should have been met by considerable resistance and equally natural that the colonial power then enacted a range of legislation to compel the Sudanese people- or to force them when necessary- to accept and live within the parameters of this restructured society.
9. Precisely, from 1899 to the present.
10. In a world in which knowledge is utilized for manipulative and administrative ends, the very use of the term "urban problem" should always be qualified by the crucial and critical question: Whose problem?
11. In the discussion of colonialism which follows, I draw heavily on Mandel, E., 1975, as summarized by Slater, D., 1978, pp. 31-32. For the specific case of the Sudan analysed along the same analytical framework, See O'Brien, J. (with the assistance of Shazali, S.), 1979, See especially Parts II and III.
12. Average rate of profit is an analytical concept used in Marxian literature to denote a general 'tendency' according to which the distribution of 'capital' among various spheres is regulated. Because the transfer of capital from spheres of production with "low" rates of profit to others with "higher" ones creates a tendency toward the equalization of profit



rates in all spheres-i.e. a tendency towards the establishment of a general profit rate. Obviously this is never realized completely in an unorganized capitalist economy, since in such an economy complete equilibrium between various spheres does not exist. But this absence of equilibrium leads to the transfer of capital. This transfer 'tends' to equalize profit rates and to establish equilibrium. To establish such a situation, competition and possibility of capital transfer are necessary, thus capitals in different branches of production tend to have approximately equal rates of profit- i.e. capitalists who work in average, socially necessary conditions in these productive branches will gain the general average rate of profit; capitals of equal value invested in different spheres of production yield the same profit. See, Rubin, I.I., 1972, pp. 277-8.

14. See Baran, P., 1956; and Amin, S., 1974. These works, among others, provide interesting and illuminating accounts on the processes through which the systematic transference of surpluses from the "underdeveloped" to the "developed" areas in the world took, and takes, place.
15. For a detailed analysis of this in the Sudan, see, Mahmoud, F.B., 1978.
16. The concept of peasant economy and society, though it is widely controversial, it is here used along the lines of the definition which views peasants as "those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land, but who are involved, through rights and obligations, in a wider economic system which includes the participation of non-peasants". Saul, J, & Woods, R., 1971, p. 105.
17. O'Brien, J., 1979, p. 171.
18. See Chapter 4 of this thesis for fuller details.
19. A detailed, though ideological, account is given by Gaitskell, A., 1959; especially Parts 1 and 2.
20. This is how Frankel, S.H., 1938, p. 363, refers to the development of the Gezira Scheme in the Sudan.
21. Huddleston, then the Governor of the Blue Nile Province, emphasized the need for "reliance to be placed on some Sudan source of supply" of agricultural labour for the Gezira; i.e. source other than the local Gezira one. See, Huddleston's report in Central Record Office, Khartoum, (Blue Nile Province, 1-25-176, File 10). For the scale of labour required see Hassoun, I.A., 1952.
22. As Gaitskell (op.cit., p. 59) portrays the case during the period of the Gezira Scheme initiation, "the local inhabitants ... were quite averse to change. Not one local peasant would take a tenancy. (thus) it was necessary to get in Zeidabis (farmers from northern Sudan- author) as the first



tenants and to stimulate curiosity, envy, and finally imitation of their ways by locals in the Gezira".

23. Governor-General, Annual Report, 1908, p. 71.
24. Martin, P.F., 1970, p. 219.
25. See Chapter 4 in this thesis.
26. See the detailed Northern Provinces: Governors Reports on this aspect of colonial policy in El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981, pp. 68-70; and, also, Galal-el-Din, M.E., 1980, pp. 425-6.
27. Ibid., p. 427.
28. Thus "ex-slaves" who fled their "ex-masters" and reported to the Government were actively "induced to return to their masters who guaranteed that they will look after them in all respects as members of their families", see, Governor, Dongola Province, Annual Report, 1907, p. 23.
29. Galal-el-Din, M.E., 1980, p. 426.
30. Ibid., p. 428.
31. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, 1905, p. 375.
32. In addition to a limited number of unpublished theses directly focused on issues and topics of urban studies in the Sudan, a wide collection of articles and essays has been assembled in El-Bushra (ed.) 1972; Hale, S. and G. (eds.) 1971; and Pons (ed.) 1980.
33. Peasants were effectively dispossessed from their lands through various processes; legal (Land Acquisition; Settlement; and Demarcation Ordinances), and economical (the active appropriation of land produce by "powers" other than peasants such as the colonial government- taxes- and commercial companies and traders- unequal exchange and cash cropping), and social (fragmentation of inherited lands).
34. A study dealing solely and directly with population (labour force) movements between different geographical regions and industries in the Sudan from a neo-classical econometric approach is the one by El-Beshir, Z.A., and Ahmed, S.M., 1978.
35. For a good and thorough characterization of the development of capitalist agriculture in the Sudan and the formation of its labour force (proletariat) see O'Brien, J. 1983.
36. El-Arifi, 1980, p. 388.
37. The World Bank, 1981, p. 172.
38. See for example the projections made by Henin, R.A., 1961.



39. This is in effect what El-Arifi does in his essay on urbanization and distribution of economic development in the Sudan; El-Arifi, 1971.
40. For the poor in a country like the Sudan, superficially, general conditions of necessary services appear to be relatively much easier and relaxed in the rural than in the urban areas; services such as housing, transportation, and means of social security and welfare, through crude, the access to them in the rural areas is relatively simple and easy. Thus, unless we assume that the immigrants are "psychologically" masochists, we cannot explain their movements towards the towns on the bases of "irregular distribution of services" argument.
41. For an empirical study in the Sudan of the impact of such urban centres on a social category which is assumed to be most vulnerable to the "modernizing" effect of urbanism, see, Saeed, Y.H. and Saeed, O.H., 1971, p. 141 where they show that village shopkeepers, though influenced by urbanism and regarded as relatively urbanised, "are not to the extent of rejecting the norms of their society", and the rest of that society do not imitate them in their limited urbanism, but "rather they tend to be emulated".
42. Such an assertion is difficult to substantiate fully, but seems justified on the basis of observations made on indices of "cultural" identification within the "urban social texture". Cf. Chapter 7 on 'Tribalism'. I would stress that we surely need more thorough and systematic studies on these and related aspects of urban life, But, however, Hale's study on the ethnic identity of Nubians in Khartoum where she tries to "analyse modes of expressing ethnic distinctiveness and ways in which ethnic identity persists and changes" provides a good example, see Hale, S., 1979.
43. For example, El-Arifi has written as follows:  
 one can speak of the 'ruralization' of the urban areas as well as the reinforcement of traditional rural ideas and modes of behaviour through their persistence in the large urban areas. In fact, several sociocultural processes are noticeable in Sudanese urban development: Sudanization (the adopting of central Sudanese sociocultural patterns); modernization founded upon varying degrees of indigenous Sudanese sociocultural traditions; and, conversely, the simultaneous rejection of some of the new patterns and the preservation of the folkways. The presence of voluntary tribal alliances in the cities may greatly enhance the third process. These alliances—some of them, ironically, developed by the educated—may prolong the process of detribalization and, therefore, may help inject many of the rural sociocultural systems into urban life (original emphasis). See El-Arifi, 1971, p. 139.

Also Zahir Al-Sadaty observed that ethnic loyalties and backgrounds:

were not only used as a means of social interaction in a complex situation where different peoples of various



cultural backgrounds come together under one industrial urban system, but it was also successfully used to organize people politically against what the Cardboard (a residential area for Westerners in Khartoum North-author) dwellers categorized as the Northerners and Khartoum people (emphasis original). See Zahir Al-Sadat, 1972, pp. 70-71.

44. This conception of urbanization as a one-way process of change towards full "acculturation" and "detribalization" has been elaborated in a number of African Studies. See, for example, Wilson, M. and Wilson, G., 1945. It is also, in very broad terms, a basic postulate of most work on urbanization in Europe and America- of the Chicago School and many developments following from the Chicago School thinking.
45. The theoretical dissatisfaction with the one-way model of change, led to the invention of the "alternation" model, where the immigrant in the urban context is assumed to be "switching" back and forth between two distinct social fields or systems (rural and urban). See, for instance, Gluckman, M., 1960.  
To account for the "persistence" of "rural tribalism" in urban context, later modifications of the "alternation" model were developed to allow for this alternation to be seen as taking place between various sets of relationships within the same social field as a normal and not necessarily vanishing phenomenon. The migrant can thus be seen to "select" between "tribal" and "urban" behaviour according to the immediate requirements of the "situation". See, Epstein, 1958, Mitchell, 1960, and Mayer, 1962.
46. For example, in his attempt to explain the fact that "little change appears to have taken place in the traditional nomadic way of life over the past 1000 years" for the Beja living in Deim El-Arab in Port Sudan, and in particular in relation to their economic behaviour in that town, Lewis sees what he perceives as "improvident fatalism" of the Beja as "the natural result of the life they have lived for so many generations: to enjoy plenty when good rains fall, and to suffer hardship socially when they failed, has become part of their mentality, just as the sharing of both with their most distantly related kinsfolk is the natural way for them to behave" (emphases added). See, Lewis, B.A., 1980, pp. 588-9.
47. See Mariotti, A. and Magubane, B., 1978, p. 65.
48. In one sense, Kameir's study on Nuer Migrants in Khartoum gives such an impression by stressing that "that the uneven development of Sudan under British colonial rule- and the continuation of this process since Independence- are central features of the situation which surrounds the Nuer and leads them to behave as they do". This is because "their pattern of migration, circulation, and concentration results from very narrowly restricted alternatives which the social, economic, and political structure of the country offers



them". See, Kameir, E.M., 1980, pp. 476-7.

49. Since the process of proletarianization- whether under colonialism or neo-colonialism- has taken, and continues to take, the form of imposing the commodity-form of production and of class social relations under the dominance of "capital", this has always called for the systematic use of power - legal-political power at least- to drive peasants and "tribal" peoples from their lands, and to destroy their handicrafts and culture in order to create a new class of workers. This, as the historical evidence from the Sudan suggests, has been resisted vigorously. Thus in Cleaver's words: "it is important to see that this was indeed a matter of struggle and not a one-sided manipulation". Cleaver, H., 1979, p. 76.
50. Otherwise one must assume a situation of consensus and harmony. But if one assumes contradiction and antagonisms, it is imperative to reveal and explain their manifestations and forms in their full complexity.
51. Kuhn, M., 1971.
52. Al-Dawi, T.A., 1972.
53. One study, for instance, "explains" the relatively wide involvement in trade of "sedentary riverain people inhabiting the Nile from Khartoum to Dongola", (i.e. Northerners), by simply asserting that "these folk possessed a keen mercantile instinct". See, Ahmed, H.A., 1977, p.32.
54. See Omer's study on local traders and agricultural development in Northern Sudan. In particular, see Chapter Six where the author traces the forms of commercial accumulation in both rural and urban settlements in the area. Omer, E.A.B., 1979.
55. Mahmoud, F.B., 1978, p. 218.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL PROFILE OF HASSAHEISA



## INTRODUCTION

This chapter forms part of the introductory section of the thesis. It sets out to impart some basic information about Hassaheisa and mainly about aspects of it which will not be points of focus in the thesis, but which are essential knowledge for a full understanding and proper analysis of central issues in the thesis. In giving a systematic account of the development of the town, an attempt is made to show how Hassaheisa of the present day reflects the influence of the colonial regime under which it was first established and then developed. I thus attempt to provide an analysis of the historical processes through which the town was created or "produced", as well as a further analysis of its continuing "reproduction". My main concern is to describe the inter-related characteristics of the town and show how these operate to reproduce the specific urban situation which is the object of my analysis. In using this perspective, I attempt to provide far more than a nebulous "historical background" to the political economy of Hassaheisa; I attempt to analyse the processes through which the town has developed its present structures and thus to assess and unravel the dynamics of urban growth and change in their full complexity. Thus the history of the town is not treated simply as an aggregate of "facts" and "events" which help explain the present situation, but as an aggregate which itself calls for explanation. In particular, the chapter dwells upon the following:

- (1) the *story* of the town's establishment and growth.
- (2) The main socio-demographic characteristics of the town's various constituent groups, including the dynamics of growth of its population as a whole.

(3) The general features of the economic life which is articulated in this particular urban area.

(4) The town's ecological structure and the dynamics of the functioning and transformation of this structure.

Before turning to these, however, it may be helpful to locate the town and to indicate some of its main features of to-day. It is the second largest, and the second most important, town in the Gezira Province of the Sudan. It is situated on the left bank of the Blue Nile, which runs north for about 70 miles to meet the White Nile at the site of Khartoum (See Map IV). The land on which the town is situated rises gradually to the west from the Blue Nile which forms its eastern boundary. The Main Canal of the Gezira Scheme constitutes the western boundary. To the north, the town's official boundary runs along the irrigated fields of the Gezira Scheme, and privately owned rain-fed agricultural lands lie on the southern boundary. The land lying between the Blue Nile and the Main Canal is quite narrow and permits no further extension to the east or the west. Hence all recent extensions of the town were to the south and the north, and any future extensions will perforce be on agricultural lands in the same directions.

The following facts concerning Hassaheisa's locational relation to its immediate hinterlands may be noted:

Firstly, although the town is not at the heart of the region, it functions as the administrative and commercial centre of the whole district commonly referred to as *Northern Gezira*. This district, and its southern part in particular<sup>1</sup>, is the richest of the Gezira- and consequently of the whole rural Sudan. Though not at the centre of this district, Hassaheisa is easily accessible from all parts of the area to which it is linked by



Table 3:1 Internal Transport: Destination, Direction and Distance from Hassaheisa, Type, Number and Seat Capacity, and Frequency of Journeys of Vehicles Based in Hassaheisa Suk, 1980

Destination	Direction	Distance (K.ms.)	Pick-Up (12 seats)		Mini Bus (14 Seats)		Bus (45 Seats)	
			No.	Frequency	No.	Frequen.	No.	Freq.
Wad Shommu	S	18	1	2	-	-	-	-
Tannoub	S.W.	35	4	1	-	-	-	-
Um Tiraibat	W	20	1	1	-	-	-	-
Um Jirais	W	35	3	1	-	-	-	-
Fiteis	S.W.	35	6	1	1	1	-	-
Abu A'ddara	W	35	3	1	-	-	-	-
Tabat	W	25	69	2	5	2	3	1
el-Kahamir	S	17	2	2	-	-	-	-
Um Dwana	W	35	4	1	-	-	-	-
Shazali	S.W.	18	1	1	-	-	-	-
Wad el-Sayed	W	14	1	2	-	-	-	-
el-Firaijab	W	40	1	1	-	-	-	-
Meigna	W	35	2	1	-	-	-	-
Arbaji	E	6	21	8	4	8	2	5
Abbeid	E	7	3	8	1	8	-	-
Wad Sulfab	S.W.	10	6	2	-	-	-	-
Nile	S.W.	19	6	1	-	-	1	1
Wad Kirie	S	32	8	1	-	-	-	-
el-Fugara	S	11	3	2	-	-	-	-
Wad el-Fadni	S	18	1	2	-	-	-	-
Wad Hagga	S	19	1	1	-	-	-	-
Messellamia	S	24	2	2	17	2	-	-
el-Dwineib	S	20	1	1	-	-	-	-
Sharafat	N.W.	18	7	1	-	-	-	-
el-Timaïd	N.W.	17	2	2	-	-	-	-
Tyba	W	11	8	4	-	-	-	-
Hilaila/								
Dulga	N.W.	18	3	1	-	-	-	-
Mustafa/								
Ghorashi	N.W.	17	2	2	-	-	-	-
Mihairiba	N.W.	42	1	1	1	1	1	1
el-Walli	W	30	1	1	-	-	1	1
Safia	N.W.	28	1	1	-	-	-	-
el-Bashir	N.W.	20	2	1	-	-	-	-
Abu Usher	N	24	63	2	-	-	1	2
el-Guneid	N	18	17	4	-	-	-	-
A'mmara Taha	S	13	1	2	1	2	-	-
el-Managil	S.W.	70	-	-	-	-	24	1
Um O'ddam	W	25	-	-	-	-	3	1
el-Aikoura	S	15	-	-	-	-	1	1
Abu Gouta	N.W.	85	-	-	-	-	2	1
Nikhaira	N	55	-	-	-	-	2	1
Wad Medani	S	40	-	-	-	-	5	1
Khartoum	N	130	-	-	-	-	41	1
Total Vehicles			258		30		87	

Source: Chief of Hassaheisa Police; A Report to the Director of Traffic, Rescue, and Licence Dept., 23.9.1980 (File 39/K/3, N.Geзира Police H.Q)

a relatively good network of communication and transport. Since the mid-1960s, the town has increasingly functioned as the nodal point of an intensive transport system covering every corner of the district. A recent report on licensed motor-vehicles linking Hassaheisa and destinations in the district documents this fully (See summary in Table 3:1).

Secondly, as previously noted, Hassaheisa is located on the left bank of the Blue Nile, while the older and more "traditional" town of Rufa'a lies opposite on the right bank of the river. Rufa'a is the administrative and economic centre of the vast region of Butana- the homeland of the Shukria Arabs. There is good and frequent river transport between the two towns. Twenty kilometres northwards on the right bank of the river there is a large area of cane fields which supply the sugar refinery plant at Gun-eid.

Hassaheisa also lies on the main asphalted highway which links Khartoum, Wad-Medani, Port Sudan and Sennar-Kosti, and has a major rail station which handles the greater part of the Sudan's most important cash crop, namely cotton. At the same time, the Gezira Scheme receives most of the imported capital goods, which are essential for its agricultural operations, through Hassaheisa. These goods include fertilizers, machines, fuel, pesticides and seeds, all of which are received, stored and then distributed to various parts of the Gezira Scheme by the Gezira Light Railways. The significance of the geographical location of the town has increased steadily since its original selection by the British colonial administration as a military base for the strategic command of the surrounding region. A detailed account and assessment of that decision will be given later.



## ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH

In order to develop a full historical analysis of the growth of Hassaheisa we need to dwell on some of the features of the region in which the town is set, and to examine populations movements and pre-existing patterns of life in the area prior to the advent of British colonial rule. The account will, however, be limited to knowledge necessary for a working analysis of the creation and growth of the town. The purpose of my discussion of life in the Gezira prior to British colonial rule is two-fold: first, to enable us to assess the nature and extent of changes brought about by the colonial presence in whole area; second, to allow us to evaluate the processes of change and transformation during and since the colonial period which took place in direct correspondence to urban development.

The fundamental assumption made for analytical purposes is- following Godelier- that, whatever the causes of change and of the internal and external circumstances attendant on that change, the transformations in the mode of life of any people, and the consequent contradictions involved, "always have their basis in internal properties, immanent in the social structure, and (that) they realize unintentional necessities whose logic and laws must be uncovered".<sup>2</sup> This assumption is made because, as argued by Long, "the seizing of new opportunities is often facilitated by the use of existing sets of relationships and resources, and by the reinterpretation of traditional norms and values".<sup>3</sup> The following account of the establishment of Hassaheisa, seen as a process of change, is a case in point.

The Gezira region, where Hassaheisa is located, is an expanse of land lying between the Blue Nile and the White Nile. It

forms part of the vast area south of Khartoum where an elaborate system of irrigation allows cotton to be grown on a scale which has made this product the staple export of the Sudan. "The rainfall in the Gezira is erratic and varies from the north to the south. In the north it averages something under 250mm per year, rising in the extreme south to about 750 mm. concentrated in the period from late July to early November, this pattern of rainfall enabled the people to create an economy based on the cultivation of *durra* (sorghum vulgare) prior to the coming of irrigation".<sup>4</sup>

Generally speaking, the Gezira was the homeland of four main Arabic-speaking "tribal" groups as early as the fourteenth century.<sup>5</sup> (See Map V ). The Dubasin have throughout this period been located in the north-western part of the region, where Kab-Algidad was their capital village. Their neighbours to the south were the Hallawin, with Al-Mihayriba as their administrative centre and the seat of their leading "tribal" family. Immediately to the south of the Hallawin were the Shanabla spread around the urban, administrative, and commercial centre of El-Messelamia which dates back to long before the colonial period. Various sub-groups of the larger Arabic-speaking "tribal" people- the A'rakin, were settled between Wad-Medani in the east and Managil in the west, with Al-Madina-Arab and Abu-Haraz as their administrative and religious headquarters respectively. In addition, there were numerous pockets of smaller "tribal" groups scattered throughout the region. Typical of these were the Bedayria and Gaaliin who lived in scattered settlements along the banks of the Blue Nile. Other minority "tribal" groups lived on the western edge of the Gezira, e.g. the Kwahla and the Nifaydia, both of whom



depended more on the White Nile.

All these peoples were predominantly pastoralists but also engaged in limited subsistence agriculture. Within the geographical boundaries of the Gezira, they habitually moved in regular seasonal cycles. These moves were made primarily to meet the grazing and watering needs of their cattle and sheep. In particular, they normally spent the period of *Khariḥ* (the wet rainy season) in *Dhahara* (the relatively high lands of the Gezira plain some distance from the river bank, literally means the back). While using the local sources of water (mainly wells) and grass for their animals during this period, they engaged mainly in *durra* cultivation around their settlements in their respective *Dars* (homeland). In the *Darat* (harvest season) they used to collect the *durra* and store certain part of it for future use in *Matmouras* (underground grain stores). After that, and with the coming of the *Saiḥ* (hot, dry season), they usually moved down towards the river bank, where they again found sufficient fresh grazing and water for their animals. In this way they systematically exploited the ecological features of their region.

Each "tribal" group had well demarcated and traditionally recognized stretches of land along the river bank (*Mushra'*) proportionate to its power and influence. The area, type, and size of river lands commanded by each group were a function of its "power" relative to other groups in the region, which explains why the Dubasin had the smallest and poorest area, a fact which I later discuss.

Common to all these groups was their traditional mode of socio-economic life. Each group functioned as a unit whose members were closely inter-related by marriage and kinship, and who

were territorially grouped under the "leadership" of the most senior man among them. While combining agriculture with herding, they were semi-nomadic in the sense explained above. They were self-sufficient with each group normally producing virtually all its needs from the immediate environment. The limited trade that took place with the "outside" world of each was usually confined to goods of a secondary nature.<sup>6</sup>

The social mechanisms inherent in this self-sufficiency tended to militate against internal sudden change and equally to produce opposition to any attempts to impose change from the outside. In the event, it would appear that significant change was only possible after the existing structures had either been destroyed or systematical distorted. Historically, this took place through a careful articulation of "alien" colonial and certain "local" interests against the wider traditional interests, and my contention is that the eventual establishment of Hassaheisa is one good illustration of how such articulation took place and led to far-reaching change.

Prior to British colonial rule there was no permanent settlement of any kind at the present site of Hassaheisa, though the Dubasin made seasonal use of it. Nor was there any proper or significant settlement during the first decade of the colonial regime. The word "Hassaheisa" is a local term denotes "poor sandy land", and the fact the Dubasin used the site during the dry season period is itself a reflection of their relatively weak position vis-a-vis other groups of the Gezira. Hassaheisa area was the smallest, as compared to areas used by other groups, and it was also the least fertile. Moreover, the Dubasin had to cross the home areas of the Hallawin to reach their riverside lands; this



accentuated their weak position, and led to a long and complicated history of disputes over neighbouring lands between the two groups.<sup>7</sup>

In 1908, however, an important event took place in the Hallawin area. As this had a direct effect on the decision of the colonial administration to establish and develop Hassaheisa as their administrative headquarters, I give in Appendix 5 the full text of the event as reported in the Governor-General's Annual Report in 1908. But, in short, the event consisted of a rebellion on the part of the Hallawin led by Abdel Kadir Wad-Habouba against the British occupation of the country, and it was ruthlessly crushed by the government with active assistance from the Dubasin.

The view of the Governor-General, as expressed in a letter to the Consul-General in Cairo, was that the rebellion had to be crushed at all costs: "Severity is the kindest treatment in this country if we are to protect these stupid people against themselves".<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, there were many ruthless executions of suspects in the area, but the colonial administration remained dissatisfied. Thus, for example, the Province Governor's Report for 1908 contained the following comments:

the events of last May have shown that public security in this Province rests on less secure foundations than has been previously supposed. (...) I regret to say that the Hallawin District is still in an unsettled condition, disaffection having been more widely spread than was at first suspected, and I have in consequence asked for an increase of police next year. (...) Should funds be not forth-coming to provide for such an increase of Police, I recommend that a detachment of mounted Infantry should be stationed at the area.<sup>9</sup>

He was thus urging the transfer of the District Headquarters from Messalamia to Hassaheisa as a new station for the troops because, he wrote, "for various reasons Hassaheisa is obviously the most suitable site".<sup>10</sup>

A first problem was, however, to establish a population other than troops and administrators at the new site. The section of the Dubasin group which were accustomed to make seasonal use of the site provided an obvious choice for the following reasons: (1) The Dubasin had played an active part in capturing Abdel-Kadir. Though this may well have been a manifestation of their old latent hostility to the Hallawin, it provided a good reason and basis for a loose alliance with the British in order to check the Hallawin's traditional superiority over the Dubasin.

(2) As the Hallawin held the Dubasin responsible for the capture and execution of Abdel-Kadir, the Dubasin were now naturally subject to the hostility of the Hallawin, and opportunities for revenge were greatly enhanced by the Dubasin's seasonal crossing of Hallawin's territory to reach their river lands at Hassaheisa. By settling in Hassaheisa, the Dubasin would thus be protected from direct contact with the Hallawin, and their security would be effectively ensured by Government troops now to be stationed locally.

In fact, however, only leading families of this section of the Dubasin and poor families firmly dependent on them could hope to secure a regular living away from their traditional lands. The way in which these now abandoned their traditional life calls for explanation.

Firstly, the leading families were able to appropriate sufficient surpluses from their traditional economic activities to enable



them to establish themselves in the new settlement. These surpluses mainly took the form of livestock.

Secondly, it would appear that the position of the poorer Dubasin was so radically undermined by the difficulties which now prevented their former seasonal movements that they soon constituted a ready "reservoir of labour" for various construction works on the new site.

Thirdly, the colonial administration spared no effort to promote and maintain a permanent settlement of the Dubasin in Hassaheisa. It provided the newly permanent settlers with agricultural land for the cultivation of *durra* and with access to grazing on nearby lands confiscated from the Hallawin. In addition there were increasing opportunities for cash wages in temporary casual employment.

In this way, the Dubasin became a significant group in the new town, settling close to the government troops and other governmental personnel. With the extension of the railway line to Hassaheisa in 1910/1911, another group- skilled workers drawn mainly from the Northern Province- joined the Dubasin as the second wave of settlers.

As a result of the establishment of good transport facilities, trade and other commercial activities soon flourished, as is explained in Chapter 4, and this opened up opportunities for further settlers, mainly traders from districts other than the Gezira and especially from the North.

The 1920s and the 1930s were crucially important in the development of the Gezira region in general, and of Hassaheisa in particular. It was during this period that the Gezira Scheme was established. This development, which is discussed in some detail in Chapter 4, had two important direct effects: firstly, it larg-

ely stemmed the movement of population from the surrounding countryside towards the new urban settlement at Hassaheisa through their effective stabilization in their home areas within the newly formalized structures of the peasant economy of the Gezira scheme; and secondly, it simultaneously gave rise to the need for extra labour from outside the Gezira. This need was expressed in 1924 by the Governor of the Blue Nile Province:

For any large extension of the Gezira irrigated Scheme an assured supply of casual labour up to 50,000 men will be required. Local sources of supply will by then have been largely eliminated, and reliance will have to be placed on some Sudan source of supply, for example, the Nuba Mountains, or the greatly increased body of West African pilgrims.<sup>11</sup>

The scheme was based on the principle of gravity irrigation which entailed the construction of a sophisticated system of canals and stations spread over the whole region. In 1925 a major station was established on the Main Canal at the north-western sector of the settlement where a residential neighbourhood for employees of the Irrigation Department developed. Most of these employees came from the Northern Province. Another important development was the establishment of the Gezira Scheme Ginneries at Hassaheisa in 1926/27. Substantial numbers of people were recruited from various areas of the Sudan, (with the significant exception of the Gezira area itself), to provide the labour for the Ginneries. As explained in Chapter 6, this labour force was both skilled and unskilled.

Although very few of the new urban recruits were local, an awareness of cash value permeated the whole region with the increasing involvement of nearby populations in cash-cropping and the market economy. Consequently Hassaheisa began to flourish as a



commercial centre fostering a new taste for consumer goods as a direct result of the introduction of systematic cash cropping. This basic economic change, and the resultant change in the consumption patterns of the region's populations, led to the further intensification and diversification of commercial activities to the point that trade dominated all other types of economic activity in the new town, and this in turn attracted many more people to commercial pursuits (See Chapter 4).

All these inter-related developments led the Governor of the Province to elevate Hassaheisa to the status of a town in 1927. As the following Notice indicates, this move was intimately linked to the colonial administration's concerns to levy taxes:

In exercise of the powers conferred on him by Section 4 (2) of the Local Taxation Ordinance, 1919, the Governor of the Blue Nile hereby with the consent of the Governor-General in Council declares the following places to be TOWNS for the purpose of the aforesaid "Ordinance" (the notice included a number of places in addition to Hassaheisa the boundaries of which were fixed to include) all land situated within a kilometre radius of the Mosque.<sup>12</sup>

The new tax revenues now allowed expenditure on public services necessitated by the growth of the settlement.

#### THE TOWN'S DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE:

As I have explained elsewhere, the available data on the town's population changes and demographic composition do not allow much precision.<sup>13</sup> The main difficulties I encountered relate to the poor quality of official statistics and the practical problems involved in ordering them adequately to produce a complete and fully coherent analysis. Crude as the analysis is, however, it does help to indicate some important aspects of the changing urban context of life in Hassaheisa.

Since the 1955/56 Census was the first to be conducted in the Sudan, we shall never know with any accuracy what the population of the town or, for that matter, of the country as a whole, was at any earlier dates. We do, however, have opinions and fragmentary estimates of the population at various times in the past. Such data have at times been discounted as mere guesses by later commentators, but this does not entirely invalidate them for our purposes.

I propose to use an official estimate of the population in 1936,<sup>14</sup> the results of the first census of 1955/56<sup>15</sup>, the figures of the 1964/66 household survey<sup>16</sup>, the results of the second census of 1973<sup>17</sup>, and the estimates of the population made for rationing purposes by the Northern Gezira Statistics Office at Hassaheisa for the Town People's Council in 1980.<sup>18</sup> A crude assessment of the rate of population growth based on the above sources is given in Table 3:2.

Table 3:2 The Size and Growth Rate of Population in Hassaheisa

Date	Population Size	% Increase	Average Annual Percentage Rate of Growth Between the Dates Shown
1936	3,700	-	-
1955/56	6,933	87.4	4.4
1964/66	12,315	72.5	7.2
1973	18,747	55.4	7.9
1980	30,112	60.6	12.1

Before commenting on these figures, a number of reservations must be made:

(1) The population figures for different years are not strictly comparable as the boundaries adopted for enumerations and estimates were often quite arbitrary. The figures based on these boundaries must therefore be used cautiously.



(2) As a regional town, Hassaheisa is an arena for economic and political activities of a day-time population drawn from far beyond its own boundaries, and indeed from an area with a radius of 30 miles. Also, these activities are much more intensive during certain seasons than others.

(3) The estimates for 1936 and 1980 should be treated with particular caution because they were made at times of peculiar economic difficulties, such as the total absence or extreme scarcity of some basic commodities. The estimates were made partly for the purpose of rationing so that both the town's administration and people may be expected to have exaggerated their numbers in order to be given a larger share of the commodities being rationed by the central government.

Despite these reservations about the reliability of the figures, let us examine them to see what they appear to tell us.

The average annual rate of population growth for the entire period from 1936 to 1980 (about 8%) was very high compared with that of the Sudan as a whole (1.8%), and even compared with the rate for the region within which the town is set-i.e. Blue Nile Province which had a growth rate of 3.2%. At the same time, the rate of increase was fairly close to the average annual growth rate for the urban population of the Sudan as a whole (6.85%) and even closer to that for all urban areas in the Blue Nile Province (7.21%).

Although the overall level of urbanization (that is the urban population as a percentage of the total population) in the Sudan is below that of the rest of the world, with the possible exception of the average level in "low-income" countries, as shown in Table 3:3, the Blue Nile Province, where Hassaheisa is situated, is one of the most highly urbanized regions of the

Table 3:3      Level and Rate of Urbanization for Selected  
Types of Countries and the Sudan

	Urban Population as % of Total Population (Level of Urbanization)		Urban Population Average Annual Rate of Growth (%)	
	1960	1980	1960-70	1970-80
Sudan	10%	25%	6.9	6.8
Low-Income Countries	15%	17%	3.8	3.7
Mid-Income Countries	37%	50%	4.1	3.8
Ind. Market Economies	68%	77%	1.8	1.3
Oil Exporters	37%	69%	7.4	6.7
Non-Market Industrial	49%	64%	2.5	2.1

Source: World Bank, World Development Report, 1981, Oxford Univ. Press,  
pp. 172-3.

Table 3:4      The Population of Blue Nile Province and  
Hassaheisa, the Level of Urbanization in  
in the Province, and the Share of Hassa-  
heisa in the Urban Provincial Population  
(in percent), 1955/56-1964/66- 1973

	Blue Nile Province Urban Population	Level of Urban- ization	Hassaheisa Population	share of Hass- aheisa in the Urban Pop.(%)
1955/56	102,200	5.1%	6933	6.8%
1964/66	151,800	5.7%	12315	8.1%
1973	260,300	7.1%	18747	7.2%

Source: Compiled from statistical documents of the 1955/56 Cen-  
sus, the 1964/66 Household Survey, and the 1973 Census.



Sudan, with only Khartoum and Kassala Provinces having higher levels.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, as shown in Table 3:4, in spite of the rising level of urbanization in the Blue Nile Province as a whole, Hassaheisa's average share has remained stable.

Generally speaking the growth of urban populations is a result of three factors: natural increase, town-ward migration, and the extension of urban boundaries.<sup>20</sup> The rate of natural increase of the urban population in the Sudan (in the intercensal period 1955/56-1973) has been estimated at about 2.4% per year<sup>21</sup>, which is fairly near the rate estimated for Hassaheisa (2.36%).<sup>22</sup> This rate is obviously quite high in comparison with that in urban areas of Western Europe, though it is of the same order as that commonly recorded in other Third World countries. What Davis calls a combination of "pre-industrial fertility and post-industrial morality"<sup>23</sup> can partly account for the kind of result found in Hassaheisa and other Sudanese urban situations. There is overriding evidence, even if not as precise as one might wish, of falling death rates in the urban areas of the Sudan but of no appreciable fall in birth rates.<sup>24</sup>

Since the reclassification of "rural" areas close to Hassaheisa as "urban" took place mainly during the period after the second census of 1973, we are safe in assuming that an appreciable part of the increase in population of 12.1% between 1973 and 1980 can be accounted for by extensions of the town boundaries. But not all of this increase, and the growth in population for the "old" parts may be estimated at about 7%. There can be no doubt that the principal factor of growth has been, and continues to be, town-ward immigration. Accepting the figure of 2.36% as the average annual rate of natural increase, and assuming 7% as

the overall rate of growth, the rate of net migration can be estimated at about 5% per annum.

Another way of assessing the extent of immigration is to examine the places of birth of the present inhabitants of the town. In 1955/56 only 37.6% were born in Hassaheisa itself, with the balance claiming to have been born elsewhere.<sup>25</sup> My own survey of 1978/79 shows that only 32% of the 410 heads of households interviewed were born in the town.<sup>26</sup>

It also appears from the available data that migrants to Hassaheisa<sup>were</sup> disproportionately of young and middle-aged males as has been found in numerous studies both in the Sudan and more widely.<sup>27</sup> This naturally has a profound effect in producing an unbalanced population in regard to sex and age composition which in turn conditions the dynamics of demographic growth.

On the basis of the findings of the two national censuses of 1955/56 and 1973, we can make a very fair assessment of the main age and sex characteristics of the population as in Table 3:5.

Table 3:5 Population of Hassaheisa by Sex & Age, 1955/56 & 1973

Age Group	Both Sexes		Males		Females	
	1955/56	1973	1955/56	1973	1955/56	1973
Under 1 Yr	3.4	2.89	47.05	47.29	52.95	52.7
1-4 yrs	12.8	10.89	48.42	50.85	51.58	49.15
5 yrs to under puberty	24.2	36.97	57.00	55.09	42.99	44.91
Over Puberty	59.5	49.26	56.17	64.01	43.83	35.99
All Groups	100	100	55.1	56.3	44.9	43.7
Total Pop.	6933	18747	3818	11025	3115	7722

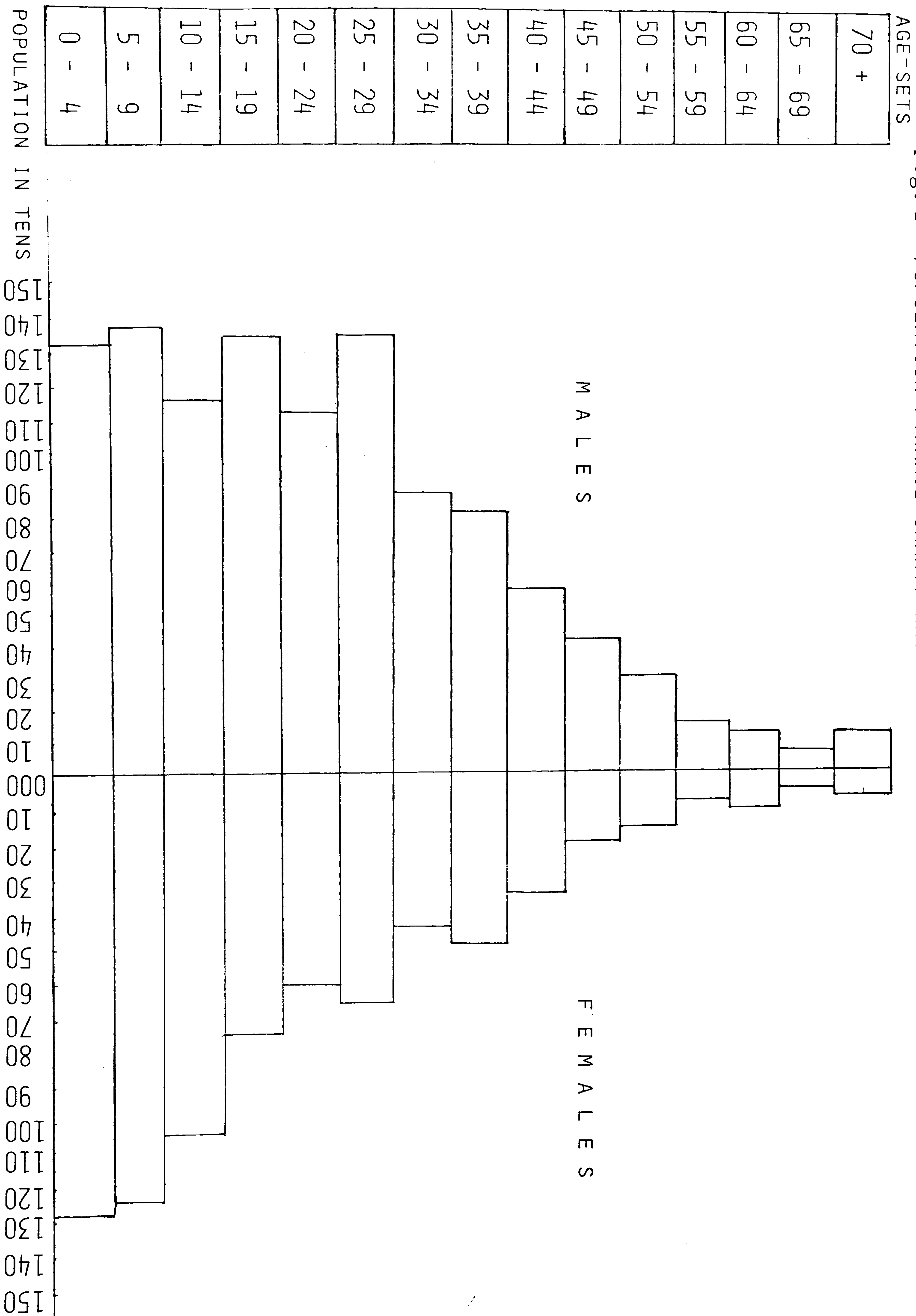


Table 3:6 Hassaheisa Population By Age &amp; Sex, 1973 &amp; 1978/79

Age Group	'78/79 Survey		1973 Population		Census			
	Both Sexes		Both Sexes		Males		Females	
	Size	%	Size	%	Size	%	Size	%
Under 1 yr.	268	9.4	537	2.9	254	47.3	283	52.7
1 - 4 yrs			2043	10.9	1039	50.9	1004	49.2
5 - 9	412	14.5	2622	14.0	1354	51.6	1268	48.4
10 - 14	388	13.6	2217	11.8	1144	51.6	1073	49.4
15 - 19	468	16.4	2093	11.2	1321	63.1	772	36.9
20 - 24	309	10.8	1765	9.4	1142	64.7	623	35.3
25 - 29	244	8.6	2011	10.7	1326	65.9	685	34.1
30 - 34	136	4.8	1323	7.1	857	64.8	466	35.2
35 - 39	171	6.0	1304	7.0	793	60.8	511	39.2
40 - 44	134	4.7	936	5.0	575	61.4	361	38.6
45 - 49	107	3.8	613	3.3	410	66.9	203	33.1
50 - 54	81	2.8	462	2.5	298	64.5	164	35.5
55 - 59	48	1.7	254	1.4	164	64.6	90	35.4
60 - 64	23	0.8	237	1.6	138	58.2	99	41.8
65 - 69	25	0.9	116	0.6	67	57.8	49	42.3
70 +	11	0.4	203	1.1	132	65.0	71	35.0
Not Sated	-	-	11	0.1	11	100.0	-	-
Total	2850	100.0	18747	100.0	11025	56.3	7722	43.7

Source: Second Population Census, 1973 and Fieldwork Survey 1978/1979.

Fig. 1 POPULATION PYRAMID CHART, HASSAHEISA TOWN, 1973





We see that the percentage of males in the total population exceeded that of females by 10.2% and 12.6% in 1955/56 and 1973 respectively. Both the initial excess and the apparent tendency for this to increase over time are in all likelihood due more to sex-selective migration rather than to any major natural imbalance in the sex ratio at birth. If anything, the ratio of the sexes at birth would appear to have inclined towards girls for the percentages of females in the "under 1 year" category were 52.95% in 1955/56, and 52.7% in 1973. But there is a marked change between the age groups of "5 years to under puberty". Here the situation approximates that of the sex composition of the whole population, with the males amounting to 57.00% and 55.09% for 1955/56 and 1973 respectively. It is thus clear that migration tends to involve the young male population to a disproportionate extent. This observation may be further illustrated by the "over puberty" age group of the population where the percentages of females drops considerably: 43.83% for 1955/56 and 35.99% for 1973. A detailed picture of sex and age imbalance structure is indicated in Table 3:6 which gives the detailed age-group sets for 1973 census and 1978/79 survey together with the Hassaheisa Population Pyramid for 1973.

The average number of persons per household according to the 1973 census, and confirmed by my own survey, is relatively high.<sup>28</sup> People living in household units composed of more than six persons make up 69.7% and 83.1% of the total population according to the 1973 census and my survey respectively. On the other hand, people living in household units composed of more than ten members amounted to 27.5% and 33.1% according to the same sources. Both enumerations, however, indicate an average household size

which is very high by Western standards, but similar to that found in rural areas of the Sudan.<sup>29</sup>

These findings indicate two important facts: firstly, the general persistence in towns of rural birth rate levels<sup>30</sup>, and, secondly, the continuance of the rural tradition of kinship-based residential arrangements which commonly include members of the extended family in the household.

The unbalanced structure of the town's population is reflected in, and in fact accentuated by, the marital status of the population. Here there is a disparity between the numbers of married males (3958) and married females (2756) according to the 1973 census (See Table 3:7).

Table 3:7 Population of Hassaheisa by Marital Status, Age-Group and Sex in 1973

Sex Age Group	Never Married		Married		Widowed		Divorced		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 15	5790	3618	1	8	-	1	-	1	3791	3628
15-19	1287	588	33	174	-	-	1	10	1321	772
20-24	923	154	215	440	-	2	4	26	1142	623
25-29	608	29	700	610	4	11	14	35	1326	685
30-34	189	15	650	407	4	14	14	30	857	466
35-39	77	4	701	450	8	28	7	29	793	511
40-44	24	5	533	293	5	37	13	26	575	361
45-49	7	5	391	143	6	35	6	20	410	203
50-54	10	4	276	104	3	44	9	12	298	164
55+	15	16	458	127	23	149	14	17	512	309
All Ages	6930	4438	3958	2756	53	321	82	206	11025	7722

Source: Sudan Government, (1977), Table 5; a, b and c.

This can only be explained by the common practice of migrant husbands leaving their wives elsewhere. (There is of course no polyandry; on the contrary my own survey revealed the presence of a number of polygamous men).



The "tribal" composition of the town's population is considered more fully in Chapter 7. Here I simply draw attention to the extremely heterogeneous nature of the population and, even more significantly in relation to my present concerns, to the fact that the aggregate of persons from groups residing in the immediate hinterland of the town represents a low proportion of the population. Migration to Hassaheisa has thus been mainly long-distance movement.<sup>31</sup> This is to some extent a consequence and reflection of the uneven pattern of socio-economic development and colonial capitalist penetration in various regions of the Sudan which was discussed in the previous Chapter.

#### SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE URBAN ECONOMY IN HASSAHEISA

The town's rapid population growth (about 7% annually) has taken place at a much quicker pace than European towns at a "comparable" period of their development when the "fastest urban population growth (mostly in the later half of the 19th century)" took place at an average rate of only 2.1 percent.<sup>32</sup> In Hassaheisa, as in many other "developing" towns of the present period, the rate of in-migration far outstrips the growth of employment opportunities as the local economy is largely unable to accommodate this "surplus" population in productive occupations.

In the Sudan as a whole, the available data on the human resources indicate that 53% of the population are in the working age group (15-64 years). Of these, 72% are in agriculture, 10% in industry, and 18% in the service complex in 1980, while there were 86%, 6% and 8% respectively in 1960.<sup>33</sup> Agriculture thus remains dominant (though declining), but the main rapid increase of opportunities is in the service sector. Agricultural production obviously developed in the countryside, whereas the service ind-

ustry grew up almost entirely in the towns. As explained in Chapter 4, recent developments in the agricultural production sector (e.g. mechanization and capital intensification) are causing further and continuous shrinkages in secure employment for those presently engaged in it, and there are clearly no new opportunities there. The industrial sector is expanding, but the dominant tendency is to use capital-intensive and labour-saving methods of production and this obviously militates against occupational expansion. Thus the service sector is the only one in which the "surplus" labour force- particularly from rural areas- can find refuge. And this sector is by virtue of its nature, largely urban or urban-based. It is growing in the towns for a number of reasons:

(1) As seats of commerce and trade, the towns are providing increasing employment in trade itself, banking, transport services and the like.

(2) As the residential locales of most members of the dominant social groups in the society (merchants, financiers, bureaucrats, etc.), the towns are also the places where most public services in education, health, and recreation are increasingly sited, as the dominant social groups are the only ones in a position to mount pressure on the state for the provision of such services. Failure on the part of the state to respond would clearly become politically embarrassing.<sup>34</sup>

(3) Finally, the concentration of the high incomes in the towns automatically leads to the development of opportunities for employment in personal services (e.g. domestic and other informal personal services such as car washing, shoe-shining, and even prostitution).



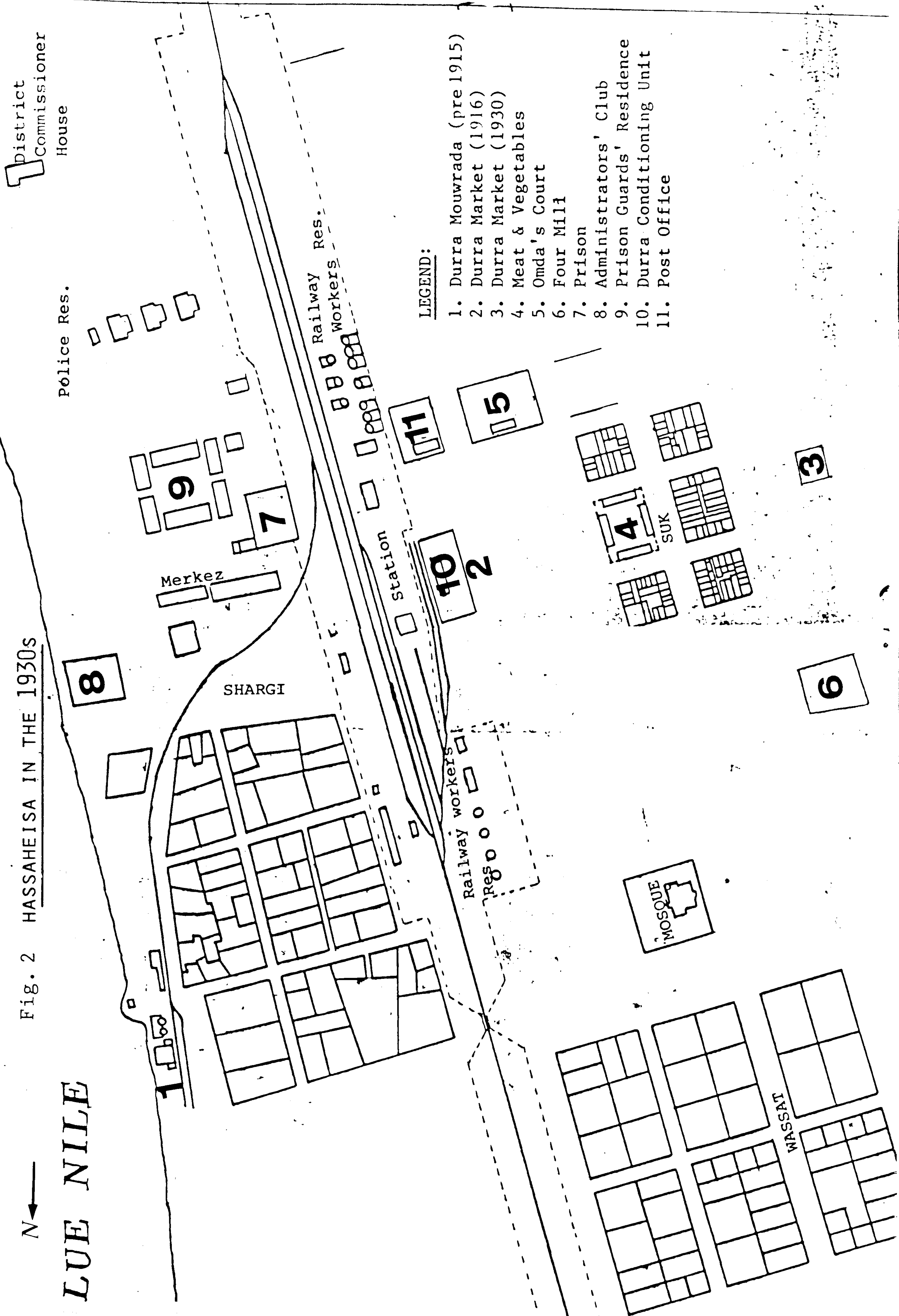
Hassaheisa's economy reflects and manifests the same pattern of dominance and of dynamism in the service sector as other Sudanese towns. According to the 1973 census, 10,998 or about 60% of the total population of the town (18747) were in the working age groups (15-64 years), and of these 10998 only 6555 or 59.6% were actually "employed". The pattern of their occupational distribution reveals the primacy of the service sector, the insignificant role of agriculture, and the modest employment opportunities in industry. Agriculture employed only 4.0%, manufacturing industry employed less than 22.0%, while the remainder were engaged in the service sector. My own survey of 1978/79 reveals similar findings. Out of 668 recorded as employed out of the whole sample of 2850, only 2% were in agricultural jobs, 24.5% were in manufacturing, and the rest in the service complex.

The most prominent and most dynamic of all services in Hassaheisa was that related to trade and commerce. Traders constituted 13.5% of my sample, but trading activities provided jobs for a further 34.7% of the labour force as sales workers, transporters, porters, etc. Thus trade and the concomitant process of commercial accumulation, dominated in the town's economic life as we shall see more fully in Chapter 4. Other economic activities, though expanding, are greatly influenced, and in some cases dictated to, by the dynamics of commercial accumulation.<sup>35</sup> The town has become, and continues to develop, primarily as a commercial centre.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF HASSAHEISA ECOLOGICAL FORM:

It follows from the above, and from the more detailed analysis in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 that trade is the primary determinant of any aspects of Hassaheisa's life and form. In this section,

Fig. 2 HASSAHEISA IN THE 1930s



## LEGEND:

1. Durra Mouvrada (pre 1915)
2. Durra Market (1916)
3. Durra Market (1930)
4. Meat & Vegetables
5. Omda's Court
6. Four Mill
7. Prison
8. Administrators' Club
9. Prison Guards' Residence
10. Durra Conditioning Unit
11. Post Office



I attempt to outline the relationship between the processes of accumulation, especially in their commercial form, and the physical configuration of the town. The ecological structure is of importance, as has been recognized in a wide range of urban studies especially in American and European countries, both as a manifestation of past history and as a powerful influence on the present and future of any town or city.<sup>36</sup>

The physical contours of Hassaheisa in the early 1930s were identified for me by local residents on an official map drawn in 1946 (See Fig. 2 ). Four important features of the ecology of that period are outstanding and call for special comment:

(1) The first concerns the prominence in the early settlement of transport facilities. As trade was to a large extent externally oriented (export and import), it is not surprising that the *railway station* emerged as the focal point of the whole settlement.

Close to the station was the *Suk*. This was the location of trading activities and it reflected in its physical layout the state-planned nature of that trade. It was designed by the colonial administration to facilitate its control in the interests of colonial expansion and of the exploitation of the resources at the disposal of the local populations of the countryside. The *Suk* was therefore sited so as to allow for the best supervision and to facilitate the administration of trade in general.

Humoudi has reported on this aspect of colonial policy in the *Suks* of the Gezira and the Nuba Mountains. All markets established in these two areas during the 1920s were designed by the government surveyors in a similar way:

...to surround a rectangular space with the butchery and vegetable stalls in the middle (and to) form the core of the settlements. Beyond the shops come the

bakeries and the flourmills, then the merchants' houses which form the oldest permanent buildings, together with the police station and the British Governors' administrative areas, if there were any... The indigenous houses and huts cluster around this core. (These markets)...serve the settlements in which they are located as well as the surrounding rural villages. Sometimes they also have registered animal and crop markets which would be held inside the inner space, or outside wherever the space permits.<sup>37</sup>

Comparing this description with Map 2 for Hassaheisa, it is clear that there is a striking similarity.

(2) The second important feature concerns the position of the premises where trades of certain goods were carried out in relation to the station which is the effective point of contact with outside world. For example, the locations of the *Durra market* reflect the importance of *durra* in the local economy during the first three decades of the settlement's existence and its significance in the process of commercial accumulation. From 1900 to 1916 the *durra* market and depot were at the *Mowrada* (river port) on the Blue Nile bank. This was before the construction of the railway line when it had been transported by boats to Omdurman. Even after the arrival of the railways it was deemed useful to build a side track to link the *Mowrada* with the main station. At the same time, trade in all other goods was conducted from temporary shops around the *durra mowrada*. But the erection of the Durra Conditioning Unit by a British commercial firm in 1916<sup>38</sup> drew *durra* transactions closer to the station where the Unit was working. At this period *durra* was an appreciable item in the export trade of the Sudan as a whole and the Gezira area in particular. Whereas it had earlier been grown mainly for consumption by the local population and to enable them to meet their tax obligations;



it was now a fully commercial and profit-generating business. But the introduction of the Gezira Scheme and the imposition of cotton cultivation, led to a sharp decline in the importance of the *durra*. By the 1930s it was once again limited mainly to meeting the consumption demands of the town's population. As a result, the *durra* was removed from the station area and relegated to a location behind the *Suk*.

(3) In general, it is clear that both the size of the town and its rate of growth were dictated by the dominant role of trade, and that the singular importance of commercial accumulation led to the almost total exclusion of other economic activities such as craft manufacturing and traditional household industries which might have competed with imported manufactured goods. This is in direct contrast to the situation of early urban growth in, for example, America at a comparable period.<sup>39</sup>

The limited range of occupations in Hassaheisa during the colonial period was obviously a function of the slow and weak rate of capital formation and accumulation in commerce. This in turn limited the extent of investment in other branches of the economy. Thus, during its first thirty years (up to 1940), Hassaheisa was almost stagnant in its physical size and it developed very few new occupations. With the exception of the distinctive group of migrant merchants from the Northern Province, virtually the entire "local" population lived together in the same neighbourhoods without exhibiting any clear socio-economic residential segregation. In differing contrasts to the earlier pre-colonial Sudanese urban settlements such as Shendi, Messallamia, and Senar where craftsmen existed and were widely distributed among various residential areas, and to the more recent pre-colonial Sudanese towns such as Wad Medani where artisans dominated a par-



ticular residential area like Hay Al-Dibagha (the Tanners' Neighbourhood), Hassaheisa remained virtually undifferentiated occupationally as well as residentially.

(4) In colonial times trade did not directly intervene in the production process of crops in the countryside. In effect, trade developed in large part as a result of the State's assistance to it in the form of maintaining a situation of "dear selling" and "cheap buying" by traders. The administration's coercive apparatus was crucial in this, and decisions taken over the location and physical laying out of the Suk, the railway station, and the residential areas of various groups such as the locals, merchants, police, administrators, etc., were integral parts of the overall processes whereby the coercion and oppression of the local population was physically symbolized. Such decisions manifested the colonial power structure and expressed in the spatial form the dominance -dependence relationship between the "colonialists" and the "locals".<sup>40</sup> The systematic separation and segregation of the residential areas of colonial personnel from those of the local populations is another glaring example of the ways in which the unchallengeable powers and authority of the colonial administration were used to engender respect and subservience from the mass of the local populations and to produce in them a state of mind which saw no option but to acquiesce in decisions relating to trading practices (e.g. pricing), town planning, and a host of other aspects in creation of the "colonial culture".

The physical layout and the use of space in the town five decades later has to be examined in the light of the early developments outlined above. A series of observations on the ecological map of Hassaheisa in 1981 acquire immediate significance as soon as we fully appreciate its history of "development" (or, in many



senses of "underdevelopment" or "distortion").

I have emphasized that trade has continued to occupy prime place in the town's economy, but changes in the composition and nature of the transactions, in the size and layout of the suk, and in the rate of commercial capital accumulation have been remarkable (See Chapter 4 for full details). A first consequence of this was that the population grew substantially as new migrants were attracted to the town by the "prospects" of its flourishing trade. At the same time, the employment opportunities provided by the ginneries (however limited and temporal these were), and the expanding demand for certain "services" stimulated by the logic of commercial accumulation, led to the growth of a series of new opportunities in the building sector, in public services, and in domestic household and personal services. Thus the occupational structure of the town began to change appreciably and especially to include builders and building workers, teachers, nurses, physicians, car mechanics and drivers, carpenters, domestic servants, etc. All of these new groups shared, but of course in markedly varying degrees, in the "wealth" siphoned from the countryside through various channels, but mainly through trade.

Before the recent intensification of commercial activities and the acceleration of the rhythm of capital accumulation, each household in Hassaheisa had its own house and a relatively good income.<sup>41</sup> Up to the late 1960s, most people continued to live in the residential areas around and near the Suk, and despite the changed occupational make-up of these areas, their internal social structure remained largely unchanged. Thus the family of a car mechanic or a building worker continued to live next door to that



of his brother who might be a merchant, and there was so little socio-cultural differences between occupational and socio-economic groups. One group, however, was a striking exception: the very poor, propertyless migrant labourers of Fellata origin (Nigerians) continued to live outside the town boundaries in the shanty areas (Kambo Haj Ali) where they had originally found some shelter. This group had been systematically denied the opportunity to participate in the social life of the town "proper".

But within this illusive appearance of stability and continuity, a number of spatial changes with far-reaching social consequences were under way. By following some of these transformations, we can unveil the logic of the changing ecological structure of the town in the recent past and the present.

#### (1) RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS AFTER THE 1930s:

The relative prosperity of the town during second half of the 1930s and the years of the Second World War (See Chapter 4), coupled with and partially resulting in a significant increase in population, led to a major housing problem in the previously established residential areas of Wassat and Shargi situated around the Suk. Thus, two new areas were established, namely the Karima neighbourhood (adjacent to Wassat and near to Suk) sold to the wealthier traders, and later the Jadida; a native lodging area where pieces of land were rented by the government. The latter lay beyond the then official boundaries of the town and was mainly for low-income families. The new residents of both these areas were mainly migrants from the Northern Province, who had hitherto lived as tenants in the Wassat area.

In the early 1950s, however, brisk trade and the growth of the public services sector again led to a further severe housing problem. This was resolved by the creation of another two residen-



tial areas. The first of these was the Omda neighbourhood, adjacent to Karima and the Suk, where many relatively affluent families came to live; most of the inhabitants were either Northern migrant merchants or people from nearby villages who were in the process of acquiring some wealth due to the flourishing cotton cultivation during the early 1950s. The second new area of the 1950s was Mygouma (the Southern Native Lodging Area), established by the government for its lower income employees beyond the town boundaries. Most of these came from the central neighbourhoods of Wassat and Karima, where they had formerly lived as tenants in poor marginal rooms within these neighbourhoods.

Since 1971 three more extensions have been established, Imtidad, Mazad and Arkweit. These were designed as cheap accommodation for low-income families from older established areas and are located in what is now the outer ring of the town. Some recent migrants have also settled there. During the same period, many of the wealthier families in the town have begun to buy and then rebuild houses near the town centre, especially in Karima, Wassat, and Omda areas.

The main general changes in the residential ecological patterns are thus that members of lower income groups have progressively been removed from the centre of the town and relocated in the outer "zones", while higher-income families have simultaneously taken up areas in the centre vacated through the relocation of the lower paid. To understand and appreciate this general change, we need to bear the following considerations in mind:

(i) The continuation of trade as the prime sphere for capital accumulation has led to land and houses near the Suk maintaining and even increasing- through time- their value.

(ii) The long history of uncertain and low rates of commercial capital accumulation (See details in Chapter 4), has inhibited the merchants and other wealthy members of the community from leaving homes adjacent to the *Suk* for other areas. By not moving, they save money and virtually evade daily transport costs. Thus I found that 27 out of 30 merchants when I interviewed about the possibility of their moving to the new houses and flats they had recently built in the Wad Kamil area (adjacent to the Northern Industrial Area) did not wish or plan to move. Instead, they regarded their new houses as investments to bring in rents.

(iii) With services such as electricity, water, telephones, health centres, schools, and above all proper policing and security arrangements well established in the "old" areas around the *Suk*, the geographical locale of the dominant process of commercial accumulation, and with the increasing difficulties encountered by the Council in trying to provide these services in new areas (See Chapter 8), the wealthier members of the community are aware of the relative advantages of remaining where they are, especially with the tendency for poorer inhabitants in these areas to move or be moved to peripheral areas of the town.

## (2) THE LOCATION OF INDUSTRIES:

In considering the nature and location of industrial establishments in Hassaheisa, it is helpful to distinguish between those which first appeared in the colonial period and those in the post-colonial period (See Chapter 6). The location of establishments of both periods can hardly be explained in terms of technical and spatial factors alone. I attempt to show that the patterns that have emerged are more readily comprehensible when we view them as being to a large extent functional to, and closely



affected by, the requirements of the underlying process of capital accumulation.

In the 1930s (i.e. during the colonial period), cotton ginning factories were established a mile beyond the official boundaries of the town. Until 1975, the Ginneries area remained administratively independent and politically isolated from the rest of the town. In the light of much Western experience, it is easy to appreciate why the company which established the Ginneries (Sudan Plantation Syndicate) did so on the outskirts of the town. Away from the central area of the town, such sites provided ideal environments for the company to control more effectively the process of factory production and to maximize the discipline of the labour force through the minimization of the workers' resistance. This is simply because the development of industrial capitalism in the "West" had shown that "the basis for industrial profits was best secured if and when homogeneous industrial proletariat could be most effectively segregated from the rest of society,"<sup>42</sup> and one must expect or assume a degree of awareness on the part of that "Western" company about the significance of the above. The whole process of labour discipline was achieved in several ways in Hassaheisa:

(i) Removed from the rest of the community, and thus from the areas where "traditional" and conservative pre-capitalist sets of norms prevailed and where "liberal" commercial sets of values were beginning to operate, workers at the Ginneries of different ethnic and regional origins were concentrated in residential camps (and in fact this area still retains the name of Kambo, derived from camp) where they were relatively insulated from the "traditional", relatively tolerant and undisciplined system of values pattern

which might allow them, not only to subscribe to the pattern of undisciplined behaviour, but also to assess the quality of their lives in comparison to the standard of living enjoyed by the rest of the community.

(ii) More directly and practically, too, the relative isolation of the community of the working people made it much easier for managers and owners to identify and control any agents of political agitation, especially under the conditions, and with the direct or indirect help, of an oppressive colonial system.

(iii) The relative isolation of the workers, especially prior to the development of any significant political consciousness, militated against a sense of "community" and against the articulation of resentment against the privileged "outsiders". In this way, the isolation of the workers from the town community contributed to the emergence and development of inter-group rivalries among them. Relatively small differences in income, housing, working conditions and the like tended under these conditions to be emphasized, while more basic "contradictions" with the "outside" were scarcely perceived and certainly not realized as issues of contention. The net result, sought and welcomed by the company and the colonial administration, was a weak, disunited, and mystified group of workers incapable of any serious resistance to the process of accumulation. Such accumulation was largely based on the exploitation of their own labour power, but under the conditions described they were largely unaware of it.

In the post-colonial era a number of manufacturing firms have been located in the *Northern Industrial Area* of Hassaheisa, and the same opportunities for, and attitudes towards, the making and maximizing of profits prevail. Now, however, there are some-



what different assumptions and arrangements underlying the system. The orthodox economic argument on patterns of industrial location as based on the principle of "agglomeration economies"<sup>43</sup> tends, in the view I take, to seriously distort the nature of the process. In brief, the argument claims that there are over-riding advantages for owners of industries to locate their factories near to each other. But, as Gordon points out, while the hypotheses of this argument "originally proposed as hypotheses about economies of scale, they can turn just as easily into hypotheses about analogous diseconomies of scale". For the location of too many industries in close proximity "can bid up the price of labour"<sup>44</sup> for example.

The situation that has developed in Hassaheisa would certainly seem to require the formulation of an alternative explanation for the location of factories well away from the centre of the town in the first place. In seeking an alternative we need to bear in mind several factors additional to that already considered, namely, the concern of factory owners over the discipline of the workforce and over reducing possible resistance, and these additional considerations are all related, in one form or another, to the prime concern of capital accumulation:

- (i) As will be fully shown in Chapter 6, nearly all the factories' owners in Hassaheisa are primarily merchants. As such, it is not surprising that they should resist the location of industries in the Suk area for this could only be done at the expense of trading activities. They have thus refrained from encouraging such planning on the part of the government (i.e. the Council) and they have actually not participated in any such moves themselves.
- (ii) Secondly, the factory owners are reluctant for the poor work-

ing conditions and the real extent of their exploitation of the work force to be exposed to open view in the centre of the community. If these conditions were more visible, they would attract more criticism leading to a loss of social prestige which is an important resource in the urban community's power struggle (See Chapter 8). The owners, who are also merchants and important political figures, thus have sound reasons to keep their factories where they are in order to stem "romantic and humanitarian" debate over the conditions of their workers.

(iii) Finally, the owners themselves usually work as merchants in the *Suk*, and live with their families in the adjacent residential neighbourhoods, hence any location or relocation of industries towards the *centre* would threaten their own environmental advantages. Not only would they themselves suffer from pollution<sup>45</sup> and the concomitant down grading of their neighbourhoods, but the financial costs of anti-pollution would indirectly be borne by them through the cuts that would inevitably follow in the already weak rate of commercial accumulation, as would the political costs through the difficulties that would arise over finance in the Town Council (See Chapter 8).

All the above considerations are relevant to the whole question of the location of factories when considered from the point of view of the town's dominant socio-economic and political groups. Moreover, they illuminate the socio-economic "logic" behind the seemingly "spatial necessities".

### (3) PUBLIC SERVICES: FOR WHOM AND WHERE?

The paramount concerns of the town planners during the colonial period were related to the centrality of trading space (the *Suk*), to the need to ensure its supervision, and to the general



question of peace and order in the town. We have seen how these concerns led to the central location of the *Suk* and the railway station, and also to the geometrical planning of shops and stores and the separation of the *Suk* from the residential areas by a clear open-space in which there were no buildings at all up to 1950.

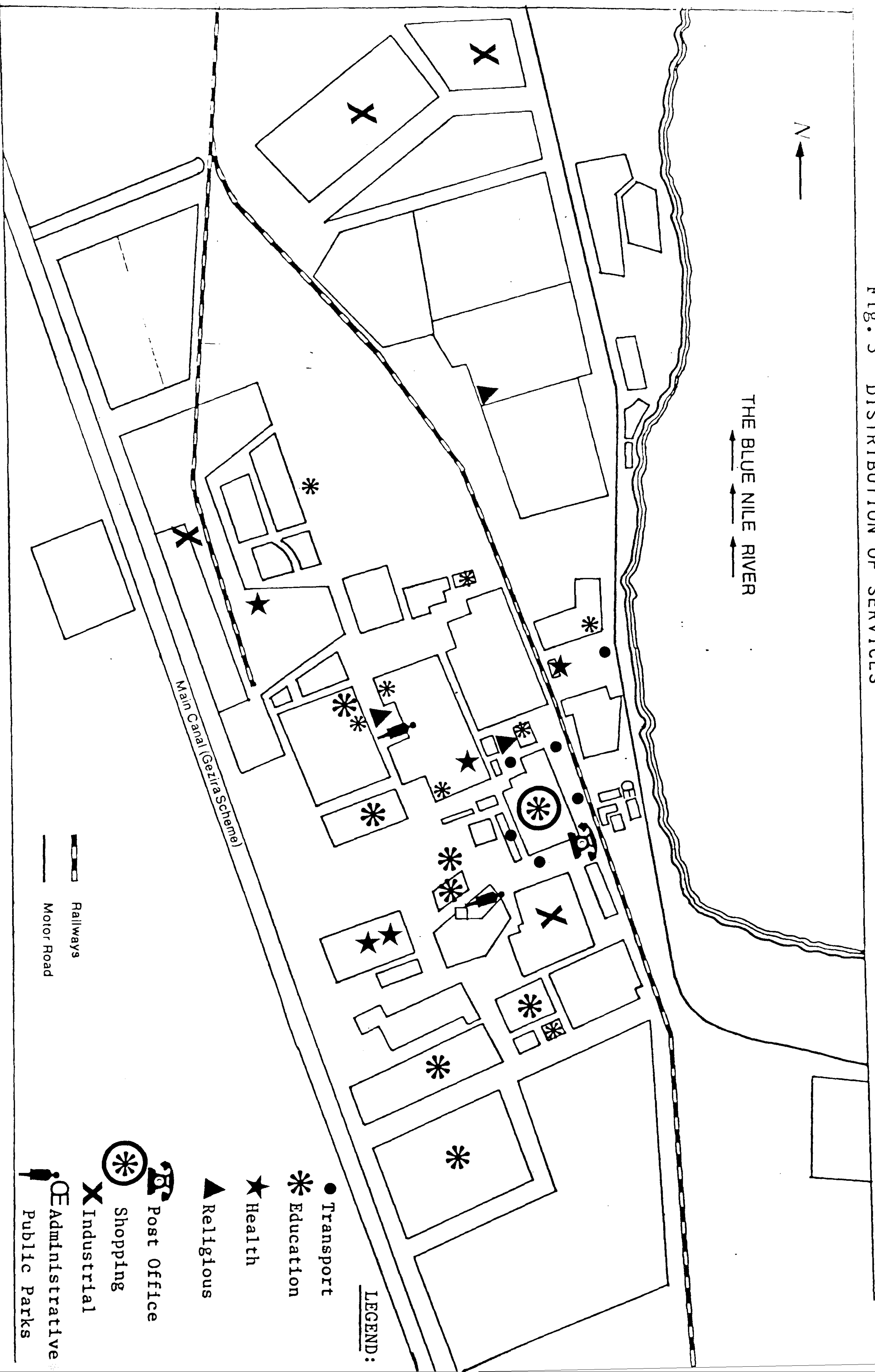
Nor did the colonial administration make any serious attempt to promote or develop public services for the local population including the merchants. Such services as the town had were entirely concentrated in and around the segregated neighbourhood of government houses occupied by officials (foreign and Sudanese).

With the drift towards independence and the establishment of the town's Local Government Council in 1951, there was the first thrust- both by the Government and by the "natives"- to establish public services and institutions in the fields of education, health, and recreation. The majority of buildings designed to accommodate these services between 1951 and 1971 were erected in the open space around the *Suk*. This was no accident; on the contrary, it reflects the growing influence throughout that period of the dominant members of the urban community, namely the merchants, and it is one manifestation of their success in bringing about a wider distribution and allocation of public resources in their own favour as opposed to that of other less powerful groups in the town. As such the whole process indicates and expresses a wider social antagonistic struggle.

With the commercial boom of the early 1950s resulting from the Korean War and the rise in cotton prices, and with the establishment in 1954 of the first national government, by whom the interests of the Sudanese urban merchants well catered for, Hass-



MAP OF HASSAHEISA TOWN  
Fig. 3 DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICES



LEGEND:

● Transport

\* Education

★ Health

▲ Religious

Post Office

Shopping

X Industrial

Administrative

Public Parks

Railways

Motor Road

Main Canal (Gezira Scheme)



ahheisa merchants gained some confidence in their economic status and became less "dependent" on direct state action to ensure their security and the protection (physical and economic) of the Suk than ever before. This coupled with the argument that the allocation of services and amenities, including their siting, were closely related to conflicts and balances of power between various groups in the community, and since the merchants were by far the most powerful and resourceful of these, and increasingly so, it is logical for the merchant to <sup>seek</sup> sought to locate services close to their own residential areas (in the open space) and they were largely successful:

(i) They were the first group in the town to express the need for public services, and they quickly acquired positions which enabled them to begin meeting these needs for themselves. Thus, for example, the town's Committee For Native Education, formed in 1953 in accordance with the Non-Government Education Ordinance of 1950, was composed mainly of members of this group:

Name	Occupation	Formal Position in C.N.E.
Widdaa Osman	Merchant	Chairman
Yousif Hassan Babiker	Merchant	Dep. Chairman
Ali Attal Mula	Engineer (Council)	Secretary
Hassan Abdel Latif	Merchant	Member
Abdel Kadir Waziri	Merchant	Member
Ahmed Alamin Iheimir	Omda	Member
Ahmed Sid Ahmed	Merchant	Member

Source: Interview with Mr. Yousif Hassan, Hassaheisa.

This was the committee which supervised the establishment of most schools in Hassaheisa up to the date of its dissolution in 1971.

(ii) Being dominant on the Town Council, they had no difficulty in securing that public services were located in places which suited their direct interests in enjoying these services at the minimum possible costs (e.g. transport costs, and, more significantly, in symbolizing and accentuating their influence and power in the local community.

#### (4) THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOCATION OF TWO PARTICULAR AREAS

To complete this review of the spatial pattern of the town and of its social importance, I briefly discuss two special areas: namely *Hay Al-Mowazafin* (the Government Officials Residential Area) and *Zugag Al-Sharamit* (the Prostitutes' Area), both of which play significant political and social roles in the town, and indeed, so are their locations.

##### (a) Hay Al-Mowazafin:

During the colonial period there was a clear-cut segregation on racial lines between various areas of residence for government administrators. The District Commissioner ( *Al-Mufatish* ) and other' > often senior British officials resided in the far south-eastern corner of the settlement of Hassaheisa, and this area was surrounded by a wide open space next to which were the offices of the police and administrative headquarters, (*Merkez*). Another open space separated the *Merkez* from the "native" quarter of Shargi, which was in turn separated by more space next from the houses of the "Sudanese" government officials who were then separated from other "native" areas either by the railway line or by more open space. In the remote southwestern corner of the town was the residence of the Assistant District Commissioner (the Egyptian *Mamour*) surrounded by an open space beyond which lay the police quarters (Sudanese), in turn well removed from other "native" areas. This pattern was unchanged by Independence- except, of



course, for the change in the racial identities of the District Commissioner and his Assistant.

The socio-political significance of these spatial arrangements- whether before or after Independence- was, and quite clear; the state, represented by high ranking bureaucrats in particular, has a very special status which its senior political personnel seek to impose its respected and even glorified image on the mentality of the rest of the community. The state must be both special and above the people; being special, it calls for special treatment as, for example, its buildings and the high concentration of services and amenities which surround its headquarters. It is also above the rest of the community in a way which gives it the power and the capability first to develop and then to maintain ideological distortions concerning its supposed neutrality in relation to internal conflicts and antagonisms within the community. Moreover, the state justifies its dominance over the community through the kind of ideology which it develops.

Viewed from this kind of perspective, the continuing spatial segregation of the state's representatives as an essential symbolic instrument in its own process of legitimation and in the maintenance of its capacity to dominate the community and its ordinary inhabitants through systematic ideological and political subjugation. Ecological patterns in this view are, therefore, very much more than "geographical" facts.

(b) Zugag Al-Sharamit:

According to local informants, the first colony of officially "licensed" prostitutes in Hassaheisa was established during the World War II. The prostitutes were mainly drawn from Sudanese "ex-slave" females and refugees from the Italian occupation of

Ethiopia. Their main residential areas were on the edges of Karima and Wassat, but their houses were not strictly separated physically from those of other residents. More recently ( in the early 1970s) another colony was established in the Mazad area to which many of those from Karima and Wassat moved. Though confined to a certain part of the Mazad neighbourhood, the prostitutes' area is again not physically separated from the rest. Given the dominance of the Islamic ideology which strictly prohibits prostitution, the "tolerance" shown by the community, especially the dominant socio-economic groups of it, to the residence of prostitutes adjacent to them appears astonishing. The "rationale" behind such behaviour rests on the following considerations:

(i) Although the prostitutes are regarded foreigners, "sinful", and marginal, they are accepted by the local community (usually led by its dominant groups) because they provide an important "safety-valve".<sup>46</sup> For example, during the 1930s and 1940s the majority of traders and other new comers were bachelors, while the main body of local women belonged to the relatively traditional and sexually conservative "tribal" group of the Dubasin. The local women were therefore largely secluded and thus the "foreign" prostitutes came to provide an inexpensive sexual outlays service as compared either to local marriage or travelling back to the remote areas of origin from which most the migrants came. The acceptance of the institution of prostitution was thus seen as being in the interests of both the migrants who used their "services" and the local Dubasin who escaped the "threat" to their women which the presence of bachelor migrants posed.

In more recent years, the institution of prostitution has continued to develop despite the increased degree of Islamism



among the dominant groups of the town.<sup>47</sup> This is because, one of the consequences of ever more intensive "capitalist" development has been to prolong the pre-marriage period for young men and women in the town community. Another consequence of that development is the mass town-ward migration of the rural youth. The "safety-valve" function of the prostitutes has thus continued to have significance as the dominant traditional ideology has continued to reaffirm the total sexual seclusion of females before marriage and to prohibit extra-marital sexual intercourse. Concerns among the dominant groups over the established role of the "family" and over this aspect of the traditional social fabric is deep. But the significant point to note in any analysis of the situation is that prostitution as an institution is clearly related to the issues of private ownership, the political dominance of the wealthier groups, and the social reproduction of the society which has become established in the town. This is because, on the one hand, prostitution is an important and *necessary* component of a community based on unequal accessibility to wealth and power, and on the other hand, it is geared to the benefit of certain "important" elements in it.

(ii) As most prostitutes are habitually homeless and lead lives characterized by considerable uncertainty, they contribute very substantially to the process of accumulation for landlords. They are among the best paying tenants in Hassaheisa and the houses they occupy usually yield up to four times as that of houses let to others. Their main landlords are drawn from the dominant social group in the community. It is thus justifiable to suppose that members of this group have a vested interest in maintaining prostitutes in certain areas of the town to the extent that this

does help the functioning of the wider social fabric.

In relation to this point, it is relevant to note that on 14.4.1975 the Town Council rejected a motion calling on it to close all houses of prostitutes in the Karima area. Instead, the Council accepted a plan proposed by the Administrative Officer of the Council to "reform" prostitution and control it in the town. In pursuance of this plan, more prostitutes from Karima and Wassat have in fact been moved to the Mazad area. This is another example of the general tendency for the removal of old established category of inhabitants in the town centre to the outer zones, while wealthier families move into the centre. For, the houses in Karima and Wassat formerly occupied by prostitutes were demolished and rebuilt and are being let to members of high-income groups, especially government professionals.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

On the basis of the foregoing account, we may now identify the salient points that are specifically related to the process of the "production" and "reproduction" of the town of Hassaheisa: (1) Hassaheisa is quintessentially a town of colonial origin. It grew up as a centre from which the regional "development" of certain natural resources could be administered and directed (i.e. the Gezira Scheme). It is fully in keeping with this origin that it was established on a site from which a vast area of primary production could be controlled.<sup>48</sup> Its location was clearly decided with due regard to the facility with which cotton could be assembled there, and also prepared for exportation. The same principle worked in reverse in regard to the import of manufactured consumer goods and capital goods for the scheme. Similar considerations affecting the establishment of colonial towns have



commonly been analysed by others.<sup>49</sup>

(2) The indigenous pre-colonial settlement on the site was very small and temporary. In this regard Hassaheisa is similar to many other Sudanese towns created during the early years of British colonial rule (e.g. Atbara, Kosti, and Port Sudan).<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, there were some pre-colonial urban centres in the Gezira region such as Kamlin and Messalamia which were ignored as unsuitable for the design of the administration and which either stagnated or declined in the early decades of the colonial rule.<sup>51</sup>

(3) Some elements of pre-colonial indigenous structures were not only active agents in the course of urban development, but also -at some critical points- the beneficiaries of such development. This allowed urbanization to proceed despite the fact that, in other respects, indigenous structures were eroded by the growth of the town. This is well illustrated by the active involvement and participation of some traditional dominant families in the initiation and acceleration of the process (e.g. the Iheimir family). Such families were able to recapture and reinforce their privileged traditional status through identifying with the administration and manipulating opportunities offered them in the new urban situation.

(4) Hassaheisa's population grew from natural increase as well as from rural-urban migration. The natural increase may be attributed to the combination of "traditional" high birth rates and the "modern" low death rates. The history of migration to the town has to be assessed with due regard to the "push" factors operating at the rural pole in some remote regions of the Sudan rather than in the town "attraction". These "push" factors were generated by the same processes which led to the "disorganization and disintegration" of rural structures in the same regions. In short, the

town's growth may be seen as resulting as much or more from a "decomposition of rural society than as an expression of the dynamism of urban society".<sup>52</sup> It is thus not surprising that the urbanization process in the case of a town like Hassaheisa has relatively little in common with the processes of urbanization in advanced capitalist societies: for example, the immigrants in Hassaheisa have continued to produce large families as in rural Sudanese communities.

(5) Since many people move into Hassaheisa and settle there, it would appear that the town's economy has considerable capacity to absorb them, and that there is some correlation between their immigration and some kind of economic development in the town. But, such appearances call for very careful scrutiny. I have shown that the town offers strictly limited opportunities of formal employment and that such opportunities are particularly scarce in the "productive" sectors of the town's economy. The vast majority of the economically-active population are engaged in service occupations. In short, one may argue that there is little evidence, if any, of economic *development*. It thus seems that Castells is quite right to conclude that the urbanization process in the Third World may be considered:

as an obstacle to development, in so far as it immobilizes resources in the form of non-productive investments, necessary to the creation and organization of services indispensable to great concentrations of population, whereas these concentrations do not justify themselves as centres of production.<sup>53</sup>

Or, as expressed by Urquidi, urbanization in many parts of the Third World is a process of growth, but not necessarily of development.<sup>54</sup>



(6) The politico-economic and administrative needs and considerations of the colonial system were obviously a major factor determining the ecological form and spatial structure of the town. The choice and planning of the site itself and the geographical locations of the railway station, the *Suk*, the ginning factories, the police headquarters, the "native" residential areas, etc., were designed to produce and reinforce certain ideological perceptions and political realities conducive to the "proper" functioning of the colonial system. The dynamics of the commercial capital accumulation, which are clearly of major importance in my analysis of the colonial and neo-colonial systems, have to be appreciated in order to assess the way in which the physical form of the town has developed and, equally, in order to appreciate how this form continues and contributes to the socio-economic reproduction of the now established community.

# FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER III

1. Reference is to the present Messallamia, Wad-Habouba, and Wad-Shair administrative Groups of the Gezira Scheme where crop production is relatively but consistently higher than in other Groups of the Scheme. For a detailed picture, see, Report on Crop Productivity in the Gezira, presented to the Conference on Problems of Production in the Gezira Scheme, Wad Medani, 14-16 June 1980 (Memo in Arabic).
2. Godelier, M., 1978, p. 109.
3. Long, N., 1977, p. 187.
4. Barnett, T., 1977, p. 3.
5. See MacMichael, H.A., 1967, Vol. I, Parts II and III.
6. See Meillassoux, C., 1978, where he portrays a similar picture for some other African communities.
7. For details of the history of hostilities between the Hallawin and the Dubasin during the period before British colonial rule, see, Tame, G.B., 1934, pp. 201-16.
8. This is contained in a letter from Wingate (the Governor-General) to Stack (the Consul-General in Cairo), dated 24.5.1908, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 284/13.
9. Governor-General, Annual Report, 1908, pp. 487 and 496.
10. Ibid, p. 490.
11. Central Record Office, Khartoum, Sudan, Blue Nile Province, 1-25-176, File 10.
12. Sudan Gazette, No. 490, 15th April 1927.
13. Most of the data I use in the demographic section of this Chapter, and the reasons for my inability to formulate more precise conclusions, have been previously published in my paper, El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981.
14. Northern Gezira District Commissioner, Annual Report, 1936, Hassaheisa Merkez.
15. See Sudan Government, 1960.
16. See Sudan Government, 1968.
17. See Sudan Government, 1977.
18. Council Papers, No. MSMH/53/A/1, 7th Feb. 1981, Hassaheisa.



19. See Galal-el-Din, M.E. and El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1979, p. 131; and also El-Arifi, 1980.
20. Davies, K., 1968.
21. Modawi, A.A., 1982, p. 27.
22. El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981, p. 9.
23. Davis, op. cit., p. 15.
24. See, for example, Bhate, D.H., 1974, p. 46.
25. Sudan Government, 1960, Table 9:15.
26. The returns of the survey classify the heads of households as follows (according to place of birth): 137 (33.65%) in Hassheisa; 55 (13.41%) in the Gezira Province; 12 (2.92%) in Khartoum; 108 (29.58%) in Northern Provinces; 3 (0.75%) in Eastern Provinces; 75 (18.29) in Western Provinces; 2 (0.47%) in Southern Provinces; and 17 (4.14%) in White and Blue Nile Provinces. 409 (100.0%) is the total sample.
27. See, for example, Rizgalla, M.K., 1980, especially pp. 419-421.
28. El-Mustafa, 1981, p. 17.
29. The average size of the tenant family in the Gezira Scheme is 8.5 according to Galal-el-Din, M.E.. 1974, p. 96. In a different Sudanese rural setting, Igaila in Northern Kordofan, where I was involved in a field survey, the average size was about 8 persons (unpublished).
30. Cf. Galal-el-Din, M.E., 1980.
31. It seems that the situation in Hassaheisa, in regard for the distance of migration, differs markedly from situations reported in other areas in Africa. For example, Little K. (1971, p. 17) pointed to the fact that about "75% of the population of Lagos are natives of the adjoining Western Region of Nigeria, and about three-quarters of the inhabitants of Accra were born either there or in Southern Ghana". Also Banton, M. (1957, pp. 60-61) found that the migrants into Freetown travel relatively short distances from within Sierra Leone. In another part of Africa, Pons, V. (1969, pp. 62-63) reports that the majority of migrants in Stanleyville "were largely recruited from within the Congo Basin". Also in Central Africa Mitchell, J.C. (1974, pp. 294-7) concludes from his findings that "the population from a certain defined area surrounding the Copperbelt tends to seek wage-employment on the Copperbelt rather than elsewhere, and that by the same token migrants from areas further afield tend to seek their fortunes elsewhere than on the Copperbelt".



32. Davis, K., 1968, p. 15.
33. World Bank, 1981, pp. 170-171.
34. For some details on the concentration of "services" in the Sudanese towns, see Al-Arifi, S.A., 1971, pp. 132-38.
35. For details see Chapters 5 and 6 in this thesis.
36. I do not attempt to review the vast literature on "urban ecology" which has developed in the wake of the Chicago School work in the 1920s and 1930s. This has frequently been criticized as consisting mainly of "mapping exercises" which pay little or no attention to the "historical processes which created the cities" that are being studied (Worsley, P., 1978, p. 380). But the fact that the physical form of the city is highly relevant to the processes of the 'production' and 'reproduction' of it was in effect fully recognized in one of the very earliest modern "urban studies", namely Engles' analysis of Manchester in the 1830s and 1840s. (Engles, 1974, pp. 51 ff).  
 A considerable amount of work on the geography of Sudanese towns has been done, but this pays all too little attention to the dynamics of urban form (See Pons, V., 1980, pp. xxv-xxvii). In the account which I here give of Hassaheisa, I have quite intentionally reversed towards the opposite extreme in paying less attention to the "mapping exercise" and as much as I can to the historical, political, ideological and social meanings of the ecological patterns I have observed.
37. See Humoudi, A.B., 1980, pp. 84-5.
38. See Chapter 4 of this thesis for details on this establishment and how it worked.
39. See, for example, Tryon, R.M., 1915, and Morris, R.B., 1961. These studies show how many artisans gathered in the American colonial towns to produce luxury goods for the merchants and colonial administrators.
40. For a thorough and systematic analysis of the corresponding processes in India, see King, A.D., 1976, Chapter Two in particular.
41. The comparison here is with the incomes and facilities available at that time in the rural areas.
42. See Gordon, D.M., 1978, p. 42.
43. I refer to the argument which permeates a series of influential studies, e.g. Weber, A., 1929; Smith, D.M., 1966; Losch, A., 1954; and Beckman, M. 1968.



44. Gordon, op. cit., p. 38.
45. The case of Abdel-Jalil's Bakery detailed in Chapter 8, where the Karima neighbourhood residents (mostly merchants) bitterly resisted the Council decision to place the Automatic Bakery in the area adjacent to Karima. Their resistance was mainly based on grounds of the pollution threat posed by the bakery.
46. Thus, for example, a conference organized by the Town Council in 1978 (attended by all the town's notables and civil servants in addition to the Province's Assistant Commissioner) recommended not to "abolish" prostitution in Hassaheisa as had earlier been attempted in Khartoum, and the main reason provided during the Conference was the "safety-valve" argument.
47. It appears as if there is a correlation between the amount of wealth a merchant in Hassaheisa has and his manifested adherence to Islamic ideology, for, in the recent years a number of wealthy merchants in Hassaheisa are increasingly becoming militant and less tolerant in their religious views. One of them (the richest according to my assessment) is even assuming the role of *Imam* (prayers' leader) in one of Hassaheisa mosques.
48. The direct role of the colonial administration in Hassaheisa in controlling and regulating the production process of cotton in the surrounding countryside on behalf of the Sudan Plantation Company can be illustrated by the administration's role in the strict application of the Cotton Regulations according to which it was a criminal offence by the tenant if he failed to execute the agricultural operations at the exact time and manner specified by the Company. The following extract from the District Commissioner's Report illustrates the point:  
"There were 23 convictions in June for failure to pull out (cotton-stalks after the season)..by the 10th, 14 in Kassala Cotton Company area, none in the Turabi Group and 9 in the Messallamia Group. Apart from these, punishments on idle tenants who remained tenants heavy fines-with imprisonment in default of payment- were inflicted on "deserters" who had also failed to pull out but who returned to draw their proforma payment in July and the subsequent months". See the Report, 1937, p. 4. Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3.
49. See, for example, Dwyer, D.J., 1968, pp. 353-64, and Harm, J. de Bly, 1963, Chapter One.
50. See, for example, Born, M., 1980, especially pp. 162ff.

51. In this respect, British colonialism in the Sudan resembles the Spanish rule in certain parts of South America where:  
"the native cities... were too few in number and too far from the coast to serve all the urban needs of Spanish policy. The conquerors therefore set out with remarkable speed to create what was for that time and under those frontier conditions a large number of new towns. In Mexico, as soon as Cortes landed on the coast he founded Vera Cruz (1519), and only a few years later all authorities engaged in a steady, unsystematic, and prolific campaign of urban creation. In Peru there was not at first such a wholesale policy of town-founding, yet in 1535 Lima was started near the coast as the seat of the Viceroy of a huge region, and Patosi and La Paz followed within ten years. In 1538, in what is now Colombia, Bogota was (laid out from scratch on a vacant site). Far to the south, in Chile where the indigenous people had no towns all, Valdivia founded Santiago, and on the other side of the continent Buenos Aires was started in 1570". See Davis, K., 1974, p. 35.
52. Castells, M., 1977, especially the Chapter on "Urbanization, Development and Dependence".
53. Ibid, p. 41.
54. Urquidi, V.L., 1975.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### CAPITAL ACCUMULATION: TRADE

## INTRODUCTION

In the present chapter I attempt to examine the role of Hassaheisa, a provincial regional town, as a siphon sucking in the surpluses created in its surrounding countryside. The town performs this role primarily as a regional marketing centre for different commodities and services. I shall argue that the town is based on a peculiar form of capital-formation and accumulation which has mercantilist characteristics in that the main economic activities involve a rapid turn-over of capital. Such capital is not necessarily, or even mostly, commercial in content, but we shall see that in the Hassaheisa situation it has generally behaved as if it were.

Hence, specifying concretely the nature of the process of accumulation of this capital and conceptualizing aspects of this process theoretically, will lead me a long way toward the specification of the character of the town itself which serves as a seat for that process. In this way I hope to acquire a better understanding of the whole process and rate of urbanization, and of its implications. Urbanization, seen as a process through which the countryside's surpluses of products and manpower are drawn off, is the central theme of my analysis of the process of capital accumulation in the town. But I will begin by giving a general picture of the trading community in the present Hassaheisa Suk.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HASSAHEISA SUK COMMUNITY:  
THE FINDINGS OF A SURVEY IN 1978.

During my first period of field work in Hassaheisa, I carried out a general survey of the business community. The survey was designed to yield information which might serve as a point of departure for the more intensive study planned for for my second



period of field work in 1979-80. I here present the main findings of this survey. The questionnaire used consisted of 16 open-ended questions. The questionnaire and a list of the variables used in processing the answers are given in Appendix(1) . The questionnaire was completed for 220 businessmen out of a total of approximately 1037. The method by which these 220 businessmen were selected is explained in Chapter 1. A survey of this kind is of course static in nature, but the responses are nonetheless useful in portraying the general character of the business community in Hassaheisa Suk.

### 1. SEX :

All the subjects were males, as women's participation in the Suk is largely confined to occasional buying and selling. Some elderly women (mainly widows) sell home-made items of a limited range (e.g. straw mats and bags, Semin- clarified butter, and ground spices) but they do not do so from permanent established firms. Thus, men dominate the Suk both as owners of business firms and as customers.

### 2. BIRTH PLACE:

After a careful preliminary examination of the survey questions, I decided to cross-tabulate<sup>1</sup> the remaining characteristics by BIRTH PLACE, so as it illustrates significant aspects of the growth of the Suk, The birth place categories used to classify my informants are as follows:

(a) Hassaheisa Town; which includes the sons of the early (original) settlers in the town (e.g. Dubasin), as well as second generation immigrants, mainly Northerners.

(b) Gezira Province; which includes the following sub-categories:

(i) Other towns in the Gezira: Any settlement classified as urban according to the Sudan Second Population Census of 1973

within the boundaries of the Gezira Province.

(ii) Hassaheisa Rural: All villages and settlements other than towns within the administrative boundaries of Hassaheisa Rural Council.

(iii) Hallawin Rural: All villages in the administrative unit of Hallawin Rural Council (Mihayriba).

(iv) Rural in Gezira: All villages and settlements other than those mentioned in (i), (ii) and (iii) in the Gezira Province.

(c) The Northern Region: Comprising the two provinces of the Nile and the Northern, and including the following sub-categories:

(i) Towns in North: Any settlement defined as urban in the Second Population Census and located in the Northern Region.

(ii) Rural in North: Any other settlement in the Northern Region.

(d) Other Towns in the Sudan: Being any urban area outside the Gezira Province and the Northern Region.

(e) Other Rural in the Sudan: Being any rural settlement in any part of the Sudan but outside the Gezira Province and the Northern Region.

(f) Other Places: Anywhere outside the Sudan.

In those tables to follow where the cell contains four figures (e.g. Table 4:3 below), the number in the upper left hand corner in each cell is the absolute frequency; the number in the upper right hand corner is the row percentage, and the number in the lower left hand corner is the column percentage while the number in the lower right corner is the total percent-



age. For convenience, however, all numbers are rounded. In the tables where a cell contains only two figures (cf. Table 4:1 below), on the other hand, the upper is the row absolute frequency and the lower is its percentage. Slight variations in the total numbers are due to 'missing observations'-i.e. where "No Answer" was recorded.

Table 4:1Birth Place

Birth Place	Hassaheisa	Other Town in Gezira	Hassaheisa Rural	Hallawin Rural	Rural Gezira
Number	52	18	45	16	14
Percentage	23.7	8.2	20.5	7.3	6.4

Table 4:1 cont.

Birth Place	Towns in	Rural in	Other Town	Other Rural	Other	Total
----	North	North	In Sudan	In Sudan	Place	
Number	10	39	20	4	1	219
Percentage	4.6	17.8	9.1	1.8	0.5	100

Various observations may be made on the birth places of the participants in the above table. Firstly, it is clear that two groups dominate the market numerically, viz., those born in the Gezira Province (42.4%) and those born in the Northern Region (22.4%), but as will be clear from the explanation of the market development which I will consider below, the vast majority of those counted as born in Hassaheisa town (23.7%) are in fact second-generation immigrants from the Northern Region. Secondly, the number of people coming from rural areas in the North is greater than that of immigrants from towns in the same region, 39 and 10 respectively. Thirdly, traders originating from other urban settlements, whether in Gezira, the North or the

Sudan as a whole, amount to 21.9% of the total sample. This observation raises a question as to the source of attraction of Hassaheisa which leads people to opt for trading there rather than in their towns of origin. This question will be dealt with in the following sections of this chapter.

### 3. AGE STRUCTURE

Table 4:2

Age Structure

Age Group	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	
Number	2	11	18	29	40	58	
Percentage	0.9	5.0	8.2	13.2	18.2	26.4	

Table 4:2 cont.

Age Group	50-59	60-69	70& over	Total
Number	28	26	8	220
Percentage	12.7	11.8	3.6	100

The figures in the above table reveal little more than the expected concentration of merchants in the middle-age groups (30-59), but the age composition becomes of greater interest when it is examined in conjunction with the birth places of the informants as shown in Table 4:3 in the following page. From the latter the following observations emerge:

(a) The traders with origins in the Gezira Province are markedly younger than those from origins in the North-i.e. the former are concentrated in the 15-49 years age-groups, with 73 out of 93 traders or 78.5% of all traders under 50 years of age. This observation, in a way, reflects the recent involvement of Gezira people in the market as will be discussed below.

(b) The traders from 'other places' in the Sudan are also young, 80% of those from towns and all those from rural areas



Table 4:3

Age by Birth Place

Place	Massaheisa	Other Town	Massaheisa	Hallawin	Other Rural	Town in	Rural in	Other Town	Other Rural	Other	Total
Age	Town	in Gezira	Rural	Rural	in Gezira	North	North	in Sudan	in Sudan	Places	
15-19 Years	-	-	-	-	1 50	-	-	1 50	-	-	2 100
20-24 Years	-	-	-	-	7 1	-	-	5 -	-	-	0.9
25-29 Years	1 9	-	6 54	-	1 9	-	-	1 9	1 9	1 9	11 100
30-34 Years	2 1	-	13 3	-	7 1	-	-	5 1	25 1	100 1	5.0
35-39 Years	4 22	1 6	4 22	1 6	2 11	1 6	2 11	3 17	-	-	18 100
40-49 Years	8 2	6 1	9 2	6 1	14 1	10 1	5 -	15 1	-	-	8.2
45-49 Years	6 21	3 10	5 17	4 14	3 10	1 3	2 7	4 14	1 3	-	29 100
50-59 Years	12 3	17 1	11 2	25 2	21 1	10 1	5 1	20 2	25 -	-	13.2
60-69 Years	11 28	3 8	8 20	2 5	4 10	2 5	6 15	4 10	-	-	40 100
70-79 Years	21 5	17 1	18 4	13 1	29 2	20 1	15 3	20 2	-	-	18.3
80-89 Years	14 25	6 11	13 23	5 9	1 2	1 2	12 21	3 5	2 3	-	57 100
90-99 Years	27 6	33 3	29 6	31 2	7 1	10 1	31 5	15 1	50 1	-	26.0
100+ Years	5 18	1 4	4 14	3 11	1 4	3 11	7 25	4 14	-	-	28 100
101-109 Years	10 2	6 1	9 2	19 1	7 1	30 1	18 3	20 2	-	-	12.8
110-119 Years	7 27	4 15	5 19	1 4	1 4	1 4	7 27	-	-	-	26 1
120-129 Years	14 22	22 2	11 2	6 1	7 1	10 1	18 3	-	-	-	11.9
130-139 Years	4 50	-	-	-	-	1 13	3 37	-	-	-	8 1
140-149 Years	8 2	-	-	-	-	10 1	8 1	-	-	-	3.7
150-159 Years	52 23.7	18 8.2	45 20.5	16 7.3	14 6.4	10 4.6	39 17.8	20 9.1	4 1.8	1 0.5	219 1
160-169 Years	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
170-179 Years	36 69.2	13 72.2	36 80.0	12 75.0	12 85.7	5 50.0	22 56.4	16 80.0	4 100	1 100	157 8
180+ Years	16 30.8	5 27.8	9 20.0	4 25.0	2 14.3	5 50.0	17 43.6	4 20.0	-	-	62 1



are under 50 years of age. This, again, reflects the growing attraction of Hassaheisa market as a trading centre in relation to 'other places' in the Sudan.

(c) By contrast, only 27 out of the 49 traders from the North (55.1%) are under 50 years of age. This suggests a longer history of involvement in the market as will be discussed later.

Furthermore, the foregoing observations acquire further significance when we consider with them the length of time for which the members of the different groups have been established as traders in the Hassaheisa market- a task to which we turn now.

#### 4. LENGTH OF TIME IN BUSINESS

The most striking observation revealed in Table 4:4 below is that the majority of traders began trading in Hassaheisa in the early 1960s. Nearly three-quarters of the sample joined the market less than 15 years ago; and almost half the sample has less than nine years of involvement. This observation suggests the acceleration of trade in the town during what I call the 'Third Period' in the development of the market and to which I will turn to discuss in detail later in the chapter.

Table 4:4                      Length of Time in Business

Period	Less than one year	1-3	4-8	9-15	16-22	23-29	30+	Total
Number	15	45	47	50	22	11	27	217
%	6.9	20.7	21.7	23.0	10.1	5.1	12.4	100

Again the observations gain further significance when the places of origin are examined in relation to the length of time spent in trading as is shown in Table 4:5 below. While the prop-



Table 4:5

## Length of Time in Business by Birth Place

Time Birth Place	Less Than One Year	1 - 3 Years	4 - 8 Years	9 - 15 Years	16 - 22 Years	23 - 29 Years	30 & + Years	Total
Hassakeisa	3 20.0	11 21.2	9 17.3	12 23.1	8 15.4	3 5.8	6 11.5	52 100
	5.8 1.4	11 5.1	9 4.1	12 5.5	8 3.7	3 1.8	6 2.8	24.0
Other Town	-	3 16.7	4 22.2	2 11.1	-	3 16.7	6 33.3	18 100
In Gezira	-	6.7 1.4	8.5 1.8	4.0 0.9	-	27.3 1.4	22.2 2.8	8.3
Hassakeisa	3 20.0	15 34.1	6 13.6	12 27.3	1 2.3	3 6.8	4 9.1	44 100
Rural	1.4	33.3 6.9	12.8 2.8	24.0 5.5	4.5 0.5	27. 1.4	14. 1.8	20.3
Hallawin	-	3 18.7	7 43.7	4 25.0	1 6.2	1 6.2	-	16 100
Rural	-	6.7 1.4	14.9 3.2	8.0 1.8	4.5 0.5	9.1 0.5	-	7.4
Other Rural	3 20.0	2 14.3	5 35.7	3 21.4	-	-	1 7.1	14 100
In Gezira	1.4	4.4 0.9	10.6 2.3	6.0 1.4	-	-	3.7 0.5	6.5
Town in	-	1 10.0	1 10.0	3 30.0	2 20.0	-	3 30.0	10 100
North	-	2.2 0.5	2.1 0.5	6.0 1.4	9.1 0.9	-	11.1 1.4	4.6
Rural in	2 5.3	6 15.8	9 23.7	7 18.4	7 18.4	1 2.6	6 15.8	38 100
North	13.3	13.3 2.8	19.1 4.1	14.0 3.2	31.8 3.2	9.1 0.5	22.2 2.8	17.5
Other Town	2 10.0	4 20.0	5 25.0	5 25.0	3 15.0	-	1 5.0	20 100
In Sudan	13.3	8.9 1.8	10.6 2.3	10.0 2.3	13.6 1.4	-	3.7 0.5	9.2
Other Rural	1 25.0	-	1 25.0	2 50.0	-	-	-	4 100
In Sudan	6.7	0.5	2.1 0.5	4.0 0.9	-	-	-	1.8
Other Places	1 100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100
	6.7 0.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5
Total	15 6.9	45 20.7	47 21.7	50 23.0	22 10.1	11 5.1	27 12.4	217 100
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



portion of those who began trading in Hassaheisa after 1960 to the total number of traders with common background is relatively low for those born in Hassaheisa (67.4%) as for those from other towns in the Gezira (50%), it is appreciably high for those from rural Gezira in general (81.8% for Hassaheisa Rural, 87.4% for Hallawin Rural and 92.8% for other Rural in Gezira). Likewise, while the proportion is low for those from towns in the North (50%) and rural in North (63.2%), it is 80% for those from other towns in Sudan and 100% for both other rural in Sudan and other places.

##### 5. PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF TRADERS

The following recorded occupational mobility is not simply an upward movement into the trading hierarchy. Indeed it represents, to some extent, movement between categorically different sectors of the economy-e.g. from agriculture into trade. In other words, movement into Hassaheisa often involves a movement out of a productive into a non-productive sector. This becomes clearer when we consider the previous occupations of the traders as shown in the following Table.

Table 4:6                      Previous Occupation

Previous Occupation	Govt. Salar.	Worker	Farmer	Crafts-man	Petty trader	Other	No	Total
Number	21	35	37	24	35	10	47	209
%	10.0	16.7	17.7	11.5	16.7	4.8	22.5	100

The above table shows that only 16.7% were traders on a smaller scale before establishing their present businesses. As many as 22.5% had no previous job and these are mainly second generation traders, while only 4.8 held some unspecified jobs



in the past (mainly in the services sector). Very significantly, however, is that 45.9% were directly involved in the productive sectors of the economy- agriculture accounted for 17.7%, wage-employment 16.7%, crafts 11.5%, while government bureaucrats are 10%. As shown in Table 4:8, those formerly 'productive' groups are drawn from rural areas in the main (53.6%). It is indeed clear from the latter table that there is a strong positive correlation between certain previous occupations and particular types of settlement. Thus 61.7% of those with no previous occupation came from towns (Hassaheisa, Towns in Gezira, the North and other parts of the Sudan). 83.7% of the traders who used to be farmers came from rural areas. In the case of former wage-workers, the North contributed 42.9% which corroborates a point to be made later in the chapter concerning the Northerner's pattern of involvement in trade in Hassaheisa.

#### 6. SOURCE OF TRADING CAPITAL

Table 4:7                                      Source of Capital

Source	Savings	Private Loan	Public Loan	Inher- itance	Gift	More than 1 of the previous	Other	Total
Number	146	15	1	13	3	5	15	198
%	73.7	7.6	0.5	6.6	1.5	2.5	7.6	100

The above table shows that the bulk of traders claim to have started their respective businesses mainly with capital accumulated in savings. As one might expect, however, there are some important variations between traders associated with their previous occupations. These variations are set out in Table 4:9.

Sources of capital other than "savings", which provided the basis of business for 139 traders (73.5%), however, call for some

Table 4:8 Previous Occupation By Birth Place

Occupation Birth Place	Government Salarial		worker		Farmer		Petty Trader		Crafts- man		Other Job		None		Total
Hassaheisa	6	12.2	5	10.2	4	8.2	12	24.5	6	12.2	6	12.2	10	20.4	49
	28.6	2.4	14.3	2.4	10.8	1.7	34.3	5.7	25.0	2.9	60.0	2.9	21.3	4.8	23.4
Other Town in Gezira	3	16.7	3	16.7	2	11.1	2	11.2	-	-	-	-	8	44.4	18
	14.3	1.4	8.6	1.4	5.4	1.0	5.7		-	-	-	-	17.0	3.8	8.6
Hassaheisa Rural	4	9.1	3	6.8	13	29.5	13	29.5	4	9.1	-	-	7	15.9	44
	19.0	1.9	8.6	1.4	35.1	6.2	37.1	6.2	16.7	1.9	-	-	14.9	3.3	21.1
Hal lawin Rural	2	12.5	2	12.5	4	25.0	2	12.5	4	25.0	-	-	2	21.5	16
	9.5	1.0	5.7	1.0	10.8	1.9	5.7	1.0	16.7	1.9	-	-	4.3	1.0	7.7
Other Rural in Gezira	-	-	2	15.4	4	30.8	1	7.7	2	15.4	2	15.4	2	15.4	13
	-	-	5.7	1.0	10.8	1.9	2.9	0.5	8.3	1.0	20.0	1.0	4.3	1.0	6.2
Town In North	-	-	5	55.6	-	-	2	22.2	-	-	-	-	2	22.2	9
	-	-	14.3	2.4	-	-	5.7	1.0	-	-	-	-	4.3	1.0	4.3
Rural In North	5	14.3	10	28.6	10	28.6	2	5.7	2	5.7	2	5.7	4	11.4	35
	23.8	2.4	28.6	4.8	27.0	4.8	5.7	1.0	8.3	1.0	20.0	1.0	8.5	1.9	16.7
Other Town in Sudan	1	5.0	4	20.0	-	-	1	5.0	5	25.0	-	-	9	45.0	20
	4.8	0.5	11.4	1.9	-	-	2.9	0.5	20.8	2.4	-	-	19.1	4.3	9.6
Other Rural in Sudan	-	-	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	1	25.0	-	-	2	50.0	4
	-	-	2.9	0.5	-	-	-	-	4.2	0.5	-	-	4.3	1.0	1.9
Other Place	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100.0	1
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.1	0.5	0.5
Total	21	10.0	35	16.7	37	17.7	35	16.7	24	11.5	10	4.8	47	22.5	209



Table 4:9

Source of Trading Capital by Previous Occupation

Source Occupation	Savings		Private Loan		Public Loan		Inherited		Gift		More than 1 Source		Other		Total
Government	9	60.0	2	13.3	1	6.7	3	20.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
Salariat	6.5	4.8	15.4	1.1	100.	0.5	23.1	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.9
Worker	25	78.1	3	9.4	-	-	2	6.2	-	-	-	-	2	6.2	32
	18.0	13.2	23.1	1.6	-	-	15.4	1.1	-	-	-	-	13.3	1.1	16.9
Farmer	27	75.0	2	5.6	-	-	1	2.8	1	2.8	1	2.8	4	11.1	36
	19.4	14.3	15.4	1.1	-	-	7.7	0.5	33.3	0.5	20.0	0.5	26.7	2.1	19.0
Petty	28	82.4	1	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	8.8	2	5.9	34
Trader	20.1	14.8	7.7	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	60.0	1.6	13.3	1.1	18.0
Craftsman	17	73.9	2	8.7	-	-	1	4.3	-	-	1	4.3	2	8.7	23
	12.2	9.0	15.4	1.1	-	-	7.7	0.5	-	-	20.0	0.5	13.3	1.1	12.2
Other	7	70.0	-	-	-	-	2	20.0	-	-	-	-	1	10.0	10
	5.0	3.7	-	-	-	-	15.4	1.1	-	-	-	-	6.7	0.5	5.3
None	26	66.7	3	7.7	-	-	4	10.3	2	5.1	-	-	4	10.3	39
	18.7	13.8	23.1	1.6	-	-	30.8	2.1	66.7	1.1	-	-	26.7	2.1	20.6
Total	139	73.5	13	6.4	1	0.5	13	6.4	3	1.6	5	2.6	15	7.9	189

comments. Private loans (usually from relatives) were available to a minority in the different categories without any particular statistical significance. A public loan (from a government source) was used by only one trader, a former government employee. Inherited capital was used mainly by former workers in the formal employment sector (i.e. Government employment), and those with no previous occupations who between them accounted for 69.3% of the 'inheritors'. Other groups had relied much less on inheritance to launch into trade. It is also noteworthy that 66.7% of those who had started with 'gifts' were men with no previous occupations - mainly cases of sons helped by their fathers who were themselves traders.

Table 4:10 sets out information on source of capital for the various regional groups. About 80% of those who claimed to have used capital from 'other sources' (which in effect denotes some speculative sources), are from the nearby rural areas (i.e. Hassaheisa Rural, 53.3% and Rural in Gezira, 26.7%). *Shail* and other forms of agricultural crop speculation were the main sources mentioned in this respect. 'Private loans' figured predominantly among traders coming from the North - an observation that indicates a degree of regional and/or ethnic cooperation as will be discussed later in the chapter. Of the traders who had used 'Private Loan', 20% were directly from the North and 26.7% were second generation Northerners, while 33.3% were from the Gezira people.



Table 4:10

Source of Capital by Birth Place

Source Birthplace	Savings	Private Loan	Public Loan	Inherited	Gift	More Than 1 Source	Other	Total
Hassakeisa	37 75.5 25.3 18.7	4 8.2 26.7 2.0	- - - -	6 12.2 46.2 3.0	- - - -	2 4.1 40.0 1.0	- - - -	49 24.7
Town in	10 83.3 6.8 5.1	1 8.3 6.7 0.5	- - - -	1 8.3 7.7 0.5	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	12 6.1
Gezira	30 71.4 20.5 15.2	2 4.8 13.3 1.0	- - - -	1 2.4 7.7 0.5	- - - -	1 2.4 20.0 0.5	8 19.0 53.3 4.0	42 21.1
Hassakeisa	14 100. 9.6 7.1	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	14 7.1
Rural in	5 35.7 3.4 2.5	2 14.3 13.3 1.0	- - - -	2 14.3 15.4 1.0	- - - -	1 7.1 20.0 0.5	4 28.6 26.7 2.0	14 7.1
Gezira	5 62.5 3.4 2.5	1 12.5 6.7 0.5	- - - -	1 12.5 7.7 0.5	1 12.5 33.3 0.5	- - - -	- - - -	8 4.0
Town in	29 85.3 19.9 14.6	2 5.9 13.3 1.0	- - - -	- - - -	1 2.9 33.3 0.5	1 2.9 20.0 0.5	1 2.9 6.7 0.5	34 17.2
Rural in	11 55.0 7.5 5.6	3 15.0 20.0 1.5	1 5.0 100. 0.5	2 10.0 15.4 1.0	1 5.0 33.3 0.5	- - - -	2 10.0 13.3 1.0	20 10.1
Sudan	4 100. 2.7 2.0	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	4 2.0
Rural in	1 100. 0.7 0.5	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	1 0.5
Other Place	146 73.7	15 7.6	1 0.5	13 6.6	3 1.5	5 2.5	15 7.6	198

7. AMOUNT OF WORKING CAPITAL

Table 4:11

Size of Working Capital

Capital (L.S.)	1-1000	Less than 2000	Less than 3000	Less than 4000	Less than 6000	
Number	97	33	10	5	10	
%	56.1	19.1	5.8	2.9	5.8	

Table 4:11 cont.

Capital (L.S.)	Less than 10000	Less than 20000	Less than 30000	Less than 50000	More than 50000	Total
Number	8	3	1	1	5	173
%	4.6	1.7	0.6	0.6	2.9	100

Two important points must be noted in the above Table:

(a) More than three-quarters of the traders who responded to this questionnaire (75.2%) were working with very low levels of capital (between L.S 1 and less than 200), a fact that illustrates the point that there is keen competition from traders ready to trade with minimum levels of turn-over as will be clarified further in another section of this chapter.

(b) There was a relatively high percentage of traders (21.4%) who were unwilling to disclose the amount of capital at their disposal. Of these, 10 were from Hassaheisa, 9 from other towns in the Gezira, 7 from Hassaheisa Rural, 8 from rural in North, 6 from other towns in the Sudan, 3 from other rural in the Sudan, and one from each of the remaining regional groups. A probable explanation is that the majority work with little or no capital - their main resource being their ability to secure 'permits' for access to certain commodities from official channels. Rather than trading in the commodities granted, however, these 'traders' seem to sell the 'permits' to those interested in obtaining the comm-



Table 4:12

## Amount of Capital by Birth Place

Capital (ES) Birth Place	Less than 1000		1000-1999		2000-2999		3000-3999		4000-5999		6000-9999		10000-19999		20000-29999		30000-49999		50000 & Over		Total	
Hassabheisa Town	18	43	8	19	6	14	1	2	4	10	2	5	1	2	1	2	1	2	-	-	42	100
	19	10	24	5	60	4	20	1	40	2	25	1	33	1	100	1	100	1	-	-	24.3	
Other Town	3	33	1	11	1	11	-	-	1	11	-	-	1	11	-	-	-	-	2	22	9	100
	3	2	3	1	10	1	-	-	10	1	-	-	33	1	-	-	-	-	22	40	5.2	
Rural in	25	66	6	16	-	-	1	3	3	8	3	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	100
	26	15	18	4	-	-	20	1	30	2	38	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22.0	
Hassabheisa	10	67	1	7	-	-	1	7	1	7	2	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	100
	10	6	3	1	-	-	20	1	10	1	25	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.7	
Other Rural	12	92	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	100
	12	7	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.5	
Town in North	4	44	2	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11	1	11	-	-	-	-	1	11	9	100
	4	2	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	1	33	1	-	-	-	-	20	1	5.2	
Rural in North	15	48	9	29	2	7	2	7	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	31	100
	16	9	27	5	20	1	40	1	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	1	17.9	
Other Town in	8	57	5	36	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	100
	8	5	15	3	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.1	
Sudan	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	
Other Rural	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	
in Sudan	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	
Other Places	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	
Total	97	56.1	33	19.1	10	5.8	5	2.9	10	5.8	8	4.6	3	1.7	1	0.6	1	0.6	5	2.9	173	
	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100	

odities and who have sufficient capital to purchase them from the official sources.

The distribution of the amounts of capital available to the members of the different groups is shown in Table 4:12 which suggests the following points:

(a) Those with longer histories of trade in Hassaheisa are "over-represented" in the category with the largest amounts of capital (i.e. more than L.S. 50000).

(b) The groups with the most recent involvement in the market have access to the lowest amounts of capital. These are mainly groups from Other Rural in Sudan, Other Rural in Gezira, Rural in Hallawin and Rural in Hassaheisa.

(c) The only exception to (a) and (b) is made up by those coming from other towns in Gezira. Thus despite their recent involvement in the market, they make up to 40% of the richest category, and only 3.1% of the poorest. This reflects the recent movement of "established businesses" from smaller towns in Gezira to the Hassaheisa market as will be discussed later.

#### 8. TYPES OF BUSINESS FIRM

Table 4:13

Type of Firm

Type	Retail	Wholesale &Retail	Workshop	Kushuk	Prof. Office	Other	Total
No.	80	12	89	31	6	1	219
%	36.5	5.5	40.6	14.2	2.7	0.5	100

The above table shows the following:

(a) A total of 92 traders in the sample (42%) are engaged solely in the exchange of commodities without adding any value to them (other than storage). They use *Dukans* (i.e. redbrick shops) for their businesses.



Table 4:14

Type of Firm by Birth Place

Type Birth Place	Retail		Retail & Wholesale		Workshop		Kiosk		Professional Office		Other		Total
Hassabheisa	23	44.2	5	9.6	20	38.5	4	7.7	-	-	-	-	52
	28.7	10.5	41.6	2.3	22.5	4.1	12.9	1.8	-	-	-	-	23.7
Other Gezira	1	5.6	2	11.1	11	61.1	2	11.1	1	5.6	1	5.6	18
Town	1.2	0.5	16.6	0.9	12.4	5.0	6.5	0.9	16.7	0.5	100.0	0.5	8.2
Hassabheisa	21	46.7	2	4.4	7	15.6	14	31.1	1	2.2	-	-	45
Rural	26.2	9.6	16.6	0.9	7.9	3.2	45.2	6.4	16.7	0.5	-	-	20.5
Hallawin	5	31.3	1	6.2	8	50.0	1	6.2	1	6.2	-	-	16
Rural	6.2	2.3	8.3	0.5	9.0	3.7	3.2	0.5	16.7	0.5	-	-	7.3
Gezira Rural	5	35.7	-	-	3	21.4	6	42.9	-	-	-	-	14
	6.2	2.3	-	-	3.4	1.4	19.4	2.7	-	-	-	-	6.4
Town in North	4	40.0	1	10.0	5	50.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
	5.0	1.8	8.3	0.5	5.6	2.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.6
Rural in North	15	38.5	1	2.6	18	46.2	2	5.1	3	7.7	-	-	39
	18.7	6.8	8.3	0.5	20.2	8.2	6.5	0.9	50.0	1.4	-	-	17.8
Town in Sudan	6	30.0	-	-	12	60.0	2	10.0	-	-	-	-	20
	7.5	2.7	-	-	13.5	5.5	6.5	0.9	-	-	-	-	9.1
Rural in Sudan	-	-	-	-	4	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
	-	-	-	-	4.5	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.8
Other Places	-	-	-	-	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	-	-	-	-	1.1	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5
Total	80	36.5	12	5.5	89	40.6	31	14.2	6	2.7	1	0.5	219

(b) Another 40.6% add some form of value ( mainly labour) to the goods they keep for sale or which they process on order. In this sense their *Dukans* are defined as 'workshops' rather than simply being ordinary shops.

(c) *Kushuks* (14.2%) include both kinds of business, pure exchange of goods and workshop-like firms but in kiosks rather than in any other kind of building.

(d) The professional offices (2.7%) are the business firms which mainly offer some kind of supporting professional services in the market-e.g. engineering consultation, legal advice or accounting and auditing services.

When these observations are related to the different regional groups (cf. Table 4:14), they reveal various concentrations (i.e. specializations allowing greater degrees of control over the market). Table 4:14 thus shows that 61.1% of those coming from 'other towns in Gezira' are concentrated in "workshops". Similarly, the 'Rural Hassaheisa' group is concentrated in in 'Retail' and kiosks, 46.7% and 31.1% respectively. The Hallawin Rural are concentrated in Retail (31.3%) and 'workshops' (50%) while those from Rural Gezira are concentrated in Retail (35.7%) and kiosks (42.9%). The patterns of concentration also indicate the development of specific types of business in response to particular emerging demand. As the different groups came to the market at different times, they tended to establish themselves in new fields rather than to involve themselves in fields already controlled by others. This is clearly confirmed by the strong correlation between certain groups and certain types of firm.

Table 4:15 shows the length of time for which the various types of firm have been established (compare with Table 4:5).



Table 4:15

Length of Time in Business by Type of Firm

Type of Firm Length of Time	Retail & Wholesale Trade		Workshop		Kiosk		Professional Office		Other		Total
Less than Year	2	13.3	7	46.7	6	40.0	-	-	-	-	15
	2.2	0.9	8.0	3.2	19.4	2.8	-	-	-	-	6.9
1-3 Years	20	44.4	14	31.1	8	17.8	3	6.7	-	-	45
	21.9	9.2	15.9	6.5	25.8	3.7	50.0	1.4	-	-	20.7
4-8 Years	18	38.3	18	38.3	10	21.3	1	2.1	-	-	47
	19.7	8.3	20.5	8.3	32.3	4.6	16.7	0.5	-	-	21.7
9-15 Years	24	48.0	20	40.0	6	12.0	-	-	-	-	50
	26.3	11.0	22.7	9.2	19.4	2.8	-	-	-	-	23.0
16-22 Years	9	40.1	11	50.0	1	4.5	1	4.5	-	-	22
	9.8	4.2	12.5	5.1	3.2	0.5	16.7	0.5	-	-	10.1
23-29 Years	4	36.4	7	63.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
	4.4	1.8	8.0	3.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.1
30 Years & Over	14	51.8	11	40.7	-	-	1	3.7	1	3.7	27
	15.4	6.5	12.5	5.1	-	-	16.7	0.5	-	0.5	12.4
	91	51.9	88	40.6	31	14.3	6	2.8	1	0.5	217

Table 4:16Main Items of Trade

Item	No. Shops	percentage
Meat	8	3.7
Building Material	14	6.4
Wood-work	7	3.2
Contracts	1	0.5
Chemicals & Medicine	4	1.8
Tailoring	8	3.7
Electrical Appliances	4	1.8
Books & Press	3	1.4
Snacks & Soft Drink	5	2.3
Ready Food	15	6.8
Household Utensils	1	0.5
Spare Parts	19	8.7
Hairdressing	3	1.4
Ready-made Clothes	17	7.8
Cloth & Fabrics	21	9.6
Mechanic Repairs	19	8.7
Photography	5	2.3
Footwear	3	1.4
Fruits & Vegetables	11	5.0
Liquor	1	0.5
General Provisions	15	6.8
Others	35	16.0
Total	219	100.0



Table 4:17 Main Items by Length of Time in Business

Item	Less Than One Year		1-3		4-8		9-15		16-22		23-29		30+		Total	% *
Meat	-	-	2	25	2	25	4	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	100
Building Material	2	14	3	21	1	7	3	21	2	14	1	7	2	14	14	64.2
Wood-Work	2	33	-	-	1	17	2	33	-	-	1	17	-	-	6	83.3
Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	1	-
Tailoring	1	12	1	13	4	50	1	12	-	-	-	-	1	13	8	82.5
Electrics.	-	-	2	50	-	-	1	25	1	25	-	-	-	-	4	75.0
Book & Press	-	-	-	-	1	33	1	33	1	34	-	-	-	-	3	66.6
Snack & Soft Drinks	1	20	2	40	1	20	-	-	1	20	-	-	-	-	5	80.0
Ready-Food	1	7	3	20	3	20	-	-	3	20	-	-	5	33	15	46.7
Household Utensils	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
Spare Parts	1	5	4	21	7	37	1	5	1	5	2	11	3	16	19	68.5
Hair Dressing	-	-	1	33	-	-	1	34	-	-	-	-	1	33	3	66.6
Ready-Made Clothes	4	24	7	41	4	23	2	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	100
Cloth & Fabrics	-	-	2	10	1	5	11	52	2	9	-	-	5	24	21	66.7
Mechanic Repair	1	5	2	11	4	21	4	21	2	10	3	16	3	16	19	58.0
Photog- raphy	-	-	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20	-	-	-	-	5	80.0
Footwear	-	-	2	67	1	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	100
Fruits & Vegetables	-	-	-	-	3	27	7	64	1	9	-	-	-	-	11	90.9
Liquor	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
General Provisions	2	13	1	7	2	13	3	20	2	13	-	-	5	33	15	53.3
Others	-	-	10	29	7	21	7	21	4	12	4	12	2	6	34	70.0
Chemicals & Medicine	-	-	1	25	3	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	100
Total	15	7	45	21	47	22	50	23	22	10	11	5	27	12	217	

\* Percentage of shops of same type established since 1962.

The new types of firm are associated with the recent in-coming groups. Workshops and kiosks have mainly been established during the last 15 years (66.1% and 96% respectively), which reflects the newly emerging demand in the district as the following analysis of the the distribution of 'items' in the market shows.

#### 9. ITEMS

The precentage of establishments distributing different kinds of goods and services is shown in Table 4:16. The figures confirm two important points to be made in the following section of this chapter. The first concerns the diversity of goods in the market; and the second relates to the relative increase in the demand for non-basic or luxury items. The years of the introduction of these items in the market may be gauged from Table 4:17. The data indicate the shift in the balance of effective demand towards new social groups in the area. It is clear that demand for most of the non-basic items only developed after 1962.

#### 10. OWNERSHIP OF PREMISES

Table 4:18

Ownership of Premises

Type	Owned	Rented	Other	Total
Number	39	151	27	217
Percentage	18.0	69.6	12.4	100

The pattern of distribution and building of sites in the market is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. Here we may simply note that the majority of traders do not own the sites of their stores. Again it is interesting to draw attention to variations between groups as shown in Table 4:19. It may be seen that those with rented sites tend to be those from the more distant areas of origin (i.e. Northern Region and other parts of the



Table 4:19

Type of Premise Occupancy by Birthplace

Type Birth Place	Owned		Rented		Other		Total
Hassaheisa	16	31.4	31	60.8	4	7.8	51
	41.0	7.4	20.5	14.3	14.8	1.8	23.5
Other Town in Gezira	2	11.1	9	50.0	7	38.9	18
	5.1	0.9	6.0	4.1	25.9	3.2	8.3
Rural in Hassaheisa	6	13.3	28	62.2	11	24.4	45
	15.4	2.8	18.5	12.9	40.7	5.1	20.7
Rural Hallawin	4	25.0	12	75.0	-	-	16
	10.3	1.8	7.9	5.5	-	-	7.4
Other Rural in Gezira	1	7.1	9	64.3	4	28.6	14
	2.6	0.5	6.0	4.1	14.8	1.8	6.5
Town in North	-	-	10	100	-	-	10
	-	-	6.6	4.6	-	-	4.6
Rural in North	6	15.4	32	82.1	1	2.6	39
	15.4	2.8	21.2	14.7	3.7	0.5	18.0
Other Town in Sudan	4	20.0	16	80.0	-	-	20
	10.3	1.8	10.6	7.4	-	-	9.2
Other Rural in Sudan	-	-	3	100	-	-	3
	-	-	2.0	1.4	-	-	1.4
Other Place	-	-	1	100	-	-	1
	-	-	0.7	0.5	-	-	0.5
Total	39	18.0	151	69.6	27	12.4	217

Sudan). This is so in spite of the fact that those from Gezira and nearby places have on the whole a more recent involvement in trade in Hassaheisa market. This situation calls for explanation since the Northerners are among the richest and best established traders in the town. The explanation will be provided in Chapter 5; and it suffices the point here to maintain that it relates to the specific historical pattern of land allotment in the market.

#### 11. RESIDENCE

The distribution of the informants in the various residential areas of Hassaheisa is shown in the following table:

Table 4:20

#### Residence

Residence	Omda	Karima	Mygouma	Shargi	Wassat	Mazad
Number	30	18	10	10	47	11
%	13.8	8.3	4.6	4.6	21.6	5.0

Table 4:20 cont.

Residence	Imtidad	Jadida	Kambo	Other	Near-by Town	Near-by Village	Total
Number	12	15	2	5	4	54	218
%	5.5	6.9	0.9	2.3	1.8	24.8	100

When we bear in mind the relative size of the population in each residential area (cf. Chapter 3), it is evident that there is a strongly disproportionate distribution of traders among the different areas. The areas in which they are over-represented are Omda (13.8%), Karima (8.3%) and Wassat (21.6%) where they constitute 5%, 4% and 14% of the total population respectively. On the other hand, there are areas in which they are 'under-represented' (e.g. Kambo, 0.9%, Jadida, 6.9% and Imtidad and Mazad, 10.5%). The table thus points to a degree of residential concentration on the basis of affluence.

Furthermore, and as Table 4:21 suggests, there is a pattern



Table 4:21

The Distribution of Merchants According to Residential Area and Birth Place

Res. Area Birth Place	Omda		Karima		Mygouma		Shargi		Wassat		Mazad		Imtidad		Jadida		Kambo		Other in Hassabeisa		Other Town in Gezira		Near-By Village		Total	
Hassabeisa Town	8	15	3	6	-	-	10	19	23	44	2	4	1	2	2	4	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	4	52	100
	27	4	17	1	-	-	100	5	48	111	8	1	8	1	13	1	-	-	20	1	-	-	4	1	23.9	
Other Town in	1	6	2	11	3	17	-	-	2	11	2	11	1	6	2	11	-	-	-	-	3	17	2	11	18	100
Gezira	3	1	11	1	30	1	-	-	4	118	1	8	1	1	13	1	-	-	-	-	75	1	4	1	8.3	
Rural in	4	9	3	7	3	7	-	-	5	11	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	62	45	100
Hassabeisa	13	2	17	1	30	1	-	-	11	2	-	-	-	-	13	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	51	13	20.6	
Rural in	1	6	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	81	16	100
Halla'in	3	1	-	-	10	1	-	-	-	-	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	6	7.3	
Other Rural	1	7	-	-	1	7	-	-	3	21	2	14	1	7	2	14	-	-	-	-	1	7	3	21	14	100
in Gezira	3	1	-	-	10	1	-	-	6	118	1	8	1	1	13	1	-	-	-	-	25	1	6	1	6.4	
Town in	5	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	20	-	-	2	20	1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	100
North	16	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	17	1	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.6	
Rural in	9	24	8	21	1	3	-	-	8	21	2	5	4	11	5	13	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	100
North	30	4	44	4	10	1	-	-	17	418	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.4	
Other Town	1	5	2	10	1	5	-	-	4	20	-	-	2	10	1	5	1	5	2	10	-	-	6	30	20	1
in Sudan	3	1	11	1	10	1	-	-	9	2	-	-	17	1	7	1	50	1	40	1	-	-	11	3	9.2	
Other Rural	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50	-	-	-	-	4	1
in Sudan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	1	-	-	-	-	1.8	
Other Places	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	30	13.8	18	8.3	10	4.6	10	4.6	47	21.6	11	5.0	12	5.5	15	6.9	2	0.9	5	2.3	4	1.8	54	24.8	218	
	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100	

of residential segregation based on regional affiliation. This is especially so among groups intensely involved in the local politics of the town (e.g. the Northerners and the Dubasin as will be discussed in Chapter 8). Those coming from the Hassaheisa and Hallawin Rural areas tend to continue living in their original near-by villages where they can both look after their 'secondary occupations' (as explained earlier) and reduce their living expenses.

In the following section I will trace the history of development of commercial activities upon which mechanisms the market community came to emerge and function. Many of the general characteristic features of the market find their justification to exist in the specific manner by which trade was developed and promoted as will be detailed below.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION  
IN HASSAHEISA

The development of trade as the central activity enhancing and furthering the process of capital accumulation may be viewed and understood in terms of three relatively distinct historical periods. This periodization will help us to trace the origins and development of the structures and dynamics of trade and the related activities. The time span covered stretches from the turn of the 20th Century to the present day. The three logically and chronologically related periods to which I refer are:

1. *THE PRE-GEZIRA SCHEME PERIOD*

Which ran, roughly speaking, from the date of Sudan's occupation by the Anglo-Egyptian troops (1899) to the establishment of the Gezira Scheme in the region around 1930.

2. *THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD*

Which extended from the establishment of the Scheme up to Independence in January 1956.

3. *THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD*

Under different national political regimes, from 1956 to the present.

This periodization helps us to bring to the fore the salient features characteristic of the process of capital accumulation as it had, and is currently being, carried out through trade in Hassaheisa, but I shall, where necessary, refer to the wider national and international levels. I start with three observations on the nature and the analytical value of the periodization.

(a) As I am dealing with one process (i.e. capital accumulation) taking place through and within one activity (trade), the periods inevitably overlap. There are some elements of each stage which remain prominent well after the initial period of their development has passed.

(b) The first observation does not, however, imply that there is no qualitative differences over time in the nature, dynamics and implications of trade and in the concomitant process of accumulation. On the contrary, there are several important differences to be examined in the discussion below.

(c) The nature of these differences is explored through the detailed study of trade in the town with special reference to its general configuration, its basic mechanisms and the resultant rate of profit.

THE PRE-GEZIRA SCHEME PERIOD, 1899-1930:

The process of capital formation and accumulation following the imposition of colonial rule can only be fully understood in relation to the wider process of colonial capitalistic accumulation. A central and characteristic feature of the latter is the need for ever-expanding markets. But as O'Brien puts it:

this need was not simply an undifferentiated need for additional markets of the same sort as those at home... It was not sufficient simply to maintain or augment the mass of the capitalist's profits; it was also necessary to find means of counteracting the continuing tendency of the general rate of profit to decline.<sup>2</sup>

Hence the establishment of a structure of 'unequal exchange' within which the profit rates could be protected and even furthered in the colonies.



The process of capitalistic accumulation in the Sudan was primarily instigated by the very system of colonization under which there were ample opportunities to recover more labour in exchange for less labour and thereby to obtain higher than average rates of profit.<sup>3</sup> Since money was the only recognized form in which capital could be realized more easily, the imposition of a money-market was crucial because of the need to find consumers able to buy the commodities manufactured in the colonizing country (Britain). Thus the market was used as a device through which profits could be derived primarily by the extraction of surpluses from the population of Sudan.

In order to create surpluses in 'cash form', however, it was necessary in the case of Sudan to transform the local economy from a predominantly self-sufficient orientation to one for surplus production. Yet during the early stages of capitalist penetration this presupposed an effective need for money in cash form. It was to this end that the colonial administration carried out two sets of coercive politico-economic measures: (a) The implementation, through elaborate legislation, of a wide ranging system of taxation. The main direct consequence of this was to drive the people to seek ways of getting money to meet the tax obligations. During the first decade of colonial rule in the Sudan, the administration issued a number of ordinances designed to create these obligations. Prominent among these ordinances with a direct impact on the Hassaheisa District were the following:

1. Herd Tax Regulations Ordinance, 1899. This tax was payable annually, within thirty days after assessment, at the following rates: 3% on camels, 3% on cattle, 8% on sheep, 8% on goats, or at such other rates as shall

from time to time be notified, for the whole or any part of the Sudan.<sup>4</sup>

This tax was imposed on Hassaheisa District (then the Messellamia District) as from the 1st of August, 1901.<sup>5</sup>

2. Land Tax Ordinance, 1899. According to this Ordinance, taxes were to be "levied on all cultivable land save land the crops grown on which are assessable to *Ushur*."<sup>6</sup> In accordance with this Ordinance, moreover, the Governor General ordered that "Land tax shall be levied in the District of Messellamia (i.e. Hassaheisa District), Gezira Mudiria, from the First of Jan. 1903".<sup>7</sup> For the purpose of tax assessment the land had been classified into six different categories each with its own rate and with the taxes per feddan ranging from P.T. 60 for the first rate to P.T. 10 for the 6th rate.

3. Ushur<sup>8</sup> Ordinance, 1899. According to this Ordinance,

all crops grown on rainlands were liable to a tax called Ushur which shall be such part, not being greater than three twentieths of the said crops.

A notice to the effect of the application of this tax on the Hassaheisa District was issued on the 1st of December 1902.<sup>9</sup>

Through these measures the taxation system covered nearly all the main areas of the region's economic activities which were almost entirely based on rain cultivation, animal husbandry and riverain agriculture. On the fringes of this economic formation, there were some nomadic groups and also a number of sedentary populations inhabiting settlements akin to large villages. To cover these, the colonial administration introduced The Levying of Tribute Ordinance, 1901 according to which the nomads had to pay an annual tribute based upon approximate assessments of their herds<sup>10</sup>, and a house tax was levied at the rate of one-



twelfth of the annual rental value of houses and buildings on the populations of towns and large villages through The House Tax Ordinance, 1899.<sup>11</sup>

The people were thus compelled to do their best to pay these taxes which were effective throughout the Sudan. This district was not an exception as the following table shows.

Table 4:22      Revenue from Taxes in Colonial Sudan  
1901-1909 (in Egyptian Pounds)

Fiscal year	LAND	USHUR	ANIMAL	HOUSE	TRIBUTE
1901	28287	6892	9431	372	5163
1902	33656	8790	12547	1118	7613
1903	37818	28102	19242	579	13396
1904	46246	31090	21892	1444	13908
1905	48970	30453	19381	2093	12494
1906	55554	50791	24205	2344	14113
1907	59510	49070	27228	3851	19073
1908*	15835	38391	13483	1191	5426
1909	63610	45800	29915	3000	18540

\* Receipts realized from the 1st. of Jan. to June 30th, 1908.

Source: Compiled from the detailed statements showing the receipts and expenditure of the Sudan Government for the relevant years in various numbers of Sudan Gazette.

(b) The second set of arrangements designed to encourage the people to acquire cash was entirely concerned with the structure of the then existing economy itself. Through the imposition of a number of legal and administrative measures affecting land, which was the sole object of productive activities, the colonial government set out to restrict opportunities for the creation of any considerable cash surpluses within the pre-existing economic structure. This was achieved in two ways:

1) Keeping productivity within these structures as low as possible and, in some cases, pushing it further down. There is much

evidence to suggest that the maintenance of a level of productivity scarcely above self-sufficiency was primarily a function of two socio-economic tactics. Firstly, there was the widely reported principle of communal ownership of land which assured a free, easy, and smooth accessibility to the group's land by the individual members of the particular group.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, there was the technique of shifting-cultivation which counteracted the tendency of yields to diminish on the over-used land.<sup>13</sup>

In order to undermine this seemingly coherent system of economy, the colonial administration introduced and implemented a number of carefully arranged ordinances. From the beginning Lord Kitchener proclaimed some justifications for these ordinances:

Whereas claims are being made to land in the Sudan which are in many cases conflicting, and whereas ordinances will shortly be issued providing for adjudication on such claims: It is hereby notified to all whom it may concern that, pending such adjudication, no intending vendor of land in the Sudan is in a position to give a good and valid title to such land.<sup>14</sup>

In keeping with this injunction the Title To Land Ordinance, 1899 was issued encouraging a pattern of private rather than communal ownership; and a Land Commission was set up in the Messalamia District (later, Hassaheisa District) to that effect in March 1901.<sup>15</sup> To reinforce this ordinance, a Demarcation And Survey Ordinance was issued in 1905, giving demarcation officers the authority to

order the owner or occupier of such land within a reasonable time to be fixed by such officer to demarcate his land and, for the purpose of such demarcation, to erect such stones, pillars, posts or other



boundary of landmarks as the said officer may direct.<sup>16</sup>

In order to undermine the basic principle of successful shifting-cultivation, on the other hand, the colonial administration also set about confiscating all unused lands on which shifting agriculture could be practised.<sup>17</sup> To achieve this, it introduced the Land Acquisition Ordinance, 1903 which provided for the acquisition of any lands for 'public purposes',<sup>18</sup> and a Land Settlement Ordinance, 1905 for "the settlement of rights over *waste*, forest, and *unoccupied* lands and to provide for the expropriation of such rights" (emphasis added).<sup>19</sup>

2) Undermining the traditional household industries, particularly the local textile industry in Hassaheisa District. In the words of an early Deputy Assistant Director of Agriculture and Forests Department<sup>20</sup>, the home crafts of "ginning and spinning and of weaving local cloth (*Damour*) of useful quality was in old days thinly but widely spread throughout the Arab Sudan". According to him, however, this craft "was suppressed by law to avoid the carrying over from year to year of seed which might be infected with diseases and pests". These were the main justifications offered by the administration for the suppression by law<sup>21</sup> of an industry which was well established and had for centuries been carried out to meet the requirements of the local population.<sup>22</sup>

It was against this background of cash needs being stimulated through taxation, the expropriation of fallow land, and the systematic undermining of traditional crafts that the process of money-market penetration developed. The local populations found themselves increasingly compelled either to work for wages or to sell animals or grain in order to acquire money.<sup>23</sup> For various reasons, however, opportunities for wage-employment were extrem-



ely limited. The first of these reasons is that the range of both government and private investment during the early stages of colonial rule in the Sudan were very limited. Secondly, such opportunities for work as did exist in the public sector were exclusively for skilled labourers who were to be imported from beyond the borders of the country<sup>24</sup>. Thirdly, unskilled jobs were further cut down through the use of semi-forced 'correctional' labour<sup>25</sup> carried out by prisoners and by both obligatory<sup>26</sup> and voluntary<sup>27</sup> labour.

The local populations were thus left with no choice but to involve themselves in the money-market through the commercialization of agricultural products- an involvement which, particularly during the early formative period, was based on two mechanisms, each of which was a form of direct exploitation of the surrounding countryside. These mechanisms were:

(a) Masked profits deriving primarily from the surpluses of peasant producers. The peasants sold their produce cheaply because they were desperate for cash. In these circumstances, what originally appeared as a relation of exchange binding the simple commodity producers to the market tended to assume the character of a relation of production binding the producer to capital. The price which the producer received became a concealed wage<sup>28</sup>. In this sense, all profits realized through this system can be conceptualized as surplus-value.

(b) This system required, among other things, the use of various forms of compulsion and force during the period of its formation and establishment. They were used to ensure the monopoly status of the commercial companies in the market.

The ultimate aim of the colonial government was, however,



to establish and maintain a stable system of production for export based on small producers who were in turn bound to the market through trade. The colonial administration therefore wasted no time in encouraging and regulating all trading activities. thus it issued The Trade Licensing Ordinance and The Auctioneers', Brokers' and Pedlars' Ordinance in 1905<sup>29</sup>, and The Trade Tax Ordinance in 1913. The Trade Tax Ordinance was designed to regulate all "wholesale and retail trade, shipping and forwarding agencies... etc."<sup>30</sup> As early as January 1903, the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Cromer, His Britain Majesty's Agent and Consul General in Egypt, had stressed- while speaking in<sup>A</sup> Khartoum Hotel to the Sudan Government officials<sup>31</sup>- how highly the administration's efforts "to introduce order and civilization into this country" were appreciated by H.M. government. He claimed that the introduction of order was bringing confidence, "with return of which, trade is beginning to flourish" and he singled out trade as being of a paramount importance to the whole fiscal and administrative system.

#### *THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HASSAHEISA AS A TRADING CENTRE*

In the context of these developments in the region and the Sudan as a whole, Hassaheisa had gradually been designed to function primarily as a centre of trade. But, besides being a seasonal location for the Dubasin group- as explained earlier- the site had also served, especially during the Mahdist period, as a port for boats carrying *Durra* of *Zakat* to Omdurman. Significantly, the personnel used by the Mahdist State for the collection and packing of the *Zakat* and the staffing of boats, were almost entirely Turks and Egyptians who had remained in the Sudan after the collapse of the Turco-Egyptian rule in 1885.<sup>32</sup> Making full use of

their knowledge of the place and the people around it, these Turks and Egyptians became the main *Durra* dealers following the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian colonial administration in the Sudan. Using their savings, they bought *Durra* from the local people who needed the cash in order to pay the taxes, and transported it to Omdurman for sale to the big merchants who either exported it or sold it in the local market. During the early period of this trade, the producers in the countryside were prepared to accept extremely low prices for their grain, leaving substantial margins to the middlemen. Table 4:23 shows the prices of grain in both Hassaheisa and Omdurman markets during the first five years of colonial rule.

Table 4:23      The Prices of Durra per Ardeb\* in Hassaheisa & Omdurman for Selected Dates (1900-1904)

Date	Omdurman Market**	Hassaheisa Market***	Margin
Nov. 1900	L.E. 0.340	L.E. 0.125	L.E. 0.215
Nov. 1901	L.E. 0.500	L.E. 0.130	L.E. 0.370
Feb. 1902	L.E. 0.470	L.E. 0.095	L.E. 0.375
Feb. 1903	L.E. 0.420	L.E. 0.120	L.E. 0.300
May 1904	L.E. 0.960	L.E. 0.200	L.E. 0.760

( \* Ardeb= 20 Keilas - local volumetric measure

\*\* Prices as given in Sudan Gazette, issues of the same dates.

\*\*\* Average prices according to the files of Mr. Ali Musa an early grain dealer in Hassaheisa- made available to me by his son, Abdel-Karim)

was the main item of local trade in Hassaheisa, though quantities of animals were also bought for transportation to Omdurman. Towards the end of the first decade of colonial rule, however, there were important developments with far-reach-



ing consequences for Hassaheisa and the nature of local trade. Two of these developments deserve special consideration: the Wad Habouba Rebellion and the introduction of rail-transport.

#### 1. *WAD HABOUBA REBELLION*

The Wad Habouba Rebellion of April 1908 took place in the Hallawin area adjacent to Hassaheisa.<sup>33</sup> The site had been used by the government as a bridge-head for its troops which eventually put down the rebellion. Following the defeat of the rebels, the colonial military command<sup>o</sup>r and his troops used the site of Hassaheisa as their base owing to its strategic location for the pacification of the whole surrounding countryside. One of the most important consequences of these events was that the headquarters of the district were moved from the town of Messellamia to Hassaheisa. The then Acting Governor of the Blue Nile Province reported on 29th October, 1908, that

Recent events have made it clear, apart from the fact that Messellamia itself is a most unhealthy place, that the headquarters of Messelamia District should be at a more central spot and on the river. For various reasons Hassaheisa is obviously the most suitable. It is central, on the river, an important grain depot, and in all probability it will be found necessary for the proposed Gezira Railway to make a station there. I strongly urge that the headquarters of Messelamia District should be transferred to Hassaheisa.<sup>34</sup>

This recommendation was appreciated by the Governor-General and was reported to the Consul General in Cairo on March 27th, 1909. The report maintained that "the move of the Messellamia District Headquarters is now being arranged and the site and building requirements carefully considered".<sup>35</sup> In April, 1913, the Governor of the Blue Nile Province declared that the "headquarters of the Messellamia District have now been moved to



Hassaheisa and all correspondence should be addressed to the latter place.<sup>36</sup> Another consequence was the settlement of the Dubasin in Hassaheisa as explained in Chapter 3. The latter group came to provide the labour required for the local public works.

## 2. *THE INTRODUCTION OF RAIL-TRANSPORT*

In 1909 the Hassaheisa Rail Station was established and it was officially opened in January 1910.<sup>37</sup> The railway effectively ended boat-service between Hassaheisa and Omdurman, but of course it facilitated the easy flow of goods from Khartoum and other places to Hassaheisa. This had indeed served the Greek merchants who by that time were "established in every considerable town".<sup>38</sup> The latter brought to Hassaheisa the Manchester cotton-piece goods and shoddy wares from Birmingham for the local people who had so little money that there was no call for anything more elaborate.<sup>39</sup> They also brought other goods such as tinned peas and beans, mainly for the colonial troops. A contemporary British official was later to write appreciating the services of the Greek traders and maintain that:

hard things have been said about them and the huge profits they are supposed to have made, but they were a gallant folk who risked their money and lives on many occasions. Without these Greek stores, found in so many of the distant out-stations, the life of a British official would have been infinitely more difficult.<sup>40</sup>

We may now recapitulate the significance of these developments. Three changes, as far as the dynamics of commercial accumulation are concerned are unmistakable:

a) The diversification of the functions of the settlement. Thus in addition to its original function as a port or a centre for the collection of grain and animals, the town began to serve as the seat of the district administration-i.e. as a centre for the political control over the surrounding countryside. Moreover, the



main entrepreneurial functions in the district were located here.

b) The establishment of the Hassaheisa market as the main trading centre in the district. The introduction by Greeks of manufactured imported goods, however limited in range, was an important step towards the stable development of a dynamic system of colonial commercial accumulation dependent on the extraction of surpluses from the peasants in the district through the imposed 'unequal exchange' of values. Under such a system the peasants sold their products at low prices, and bought imported commodities at high prices. The colonial administration was thus in a position (irrespective of whether or not it was aware of it) to achieve the aim of establishing a two-way trade to facilitate the expansion of industrial production in Britain and to maintain the average rate of profit through exchange for (and competition with) the the locally produced goods which embodied 'more labour' and thus had a higher 'value' than British products. Thus the British manufacturers could "recover more labour in exchange for less labour".<sup>41</sup>

c) The dynamics of the emerging process of commercial accumulation dictated, by and large, the composition of the settlement's population.<sup>42</sup> The economic functions of the town determined the groups of people who shared in its life: *merchants* of different origins, *labourers* in supporting jobs (e.g. loading and off-loading) and *government personnel* who provided the political machine necessary for the whole process. People of different backgrounds and occupations were thus juxtaposed in the small settlement with little obvious socio-economic residential segregation, apart from the government personnel who lived in their own separate residential

residential area as will be explained later in this chapter.

#### ACCUMULATION AND THE CONTROL OF MARKETS

As historical experience shows, "merchants do not make their profits by revolutionizing production but by controlling markets, and the greater the control they are able to exercise, the higher their rate of profit".<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, it is least surprising that the colonial government introduced a series of organizational measures designed to allow the systematic control of a clearly demarcated market-place by the merchants themselves under the supervision of the administration. The measures included, in addition to the Traders Tax Ordinance of 1913 at the national level, the following series of local arrangements in the Hassaheisa District:

1. The formal establishment of Hassaheisa *suk* in 1915. Trading outside this specified geographical locale was considered 'unofficial',<sup>44</sup> and was systematically discouraged. In Hassaheisa, sites for the erection of 64 shops were carefully chosen and put out to tender. By the end of 1915 most of these sites had been registered, many were built, though only 16 shops were effectively opened. Later I will discuss aspects of the ownership of sites and the composition of the owners.
2. The second arrangement was the strict specification of particular week days as market-days. These days (Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays) coincided with schedule for arrival and departure of trains.<sup>45</sup> Later, the market-days were arranged to be complementary to those specified for other minor *suks* in the district-i.e. Messellamia, Tabat, Méhayriba and Meya'lig.
3. The issuing of trading licences by the District Commissioner to a number of people during 1915. Those who were granted licen-



ces, and who were reported to be effectively trading on the site, were mainly Turkish and Egyptian immigrants, Greeks and Northerners. These numbered 8, 5 and 3 respectively.<sup>46</sup>

With the increasing involvement of the rural population in the cash-cropping of grain and sale of animals (both of which were stimulated by the need to meet tax obligations), and the concurrent development of a taste for imported manufactured commodities, the marketing of grain remained the prime activity of the market, and a Khartoum-based commercial firm (Contomichalos, Sons & Co.) established a mechanical *Durra* cleaning and packing unit in the Hassaheisa *suk* adjacent to the rail station in 1916. The unit was used for packing standard bags of 45 K.gs. for export by the merchants who paid P.T. 8 per ton (later the charge was increased to P.T. 12 per ton).<sup>47</sup> The steady increase of *Durra* exports, mainly to feed the neighbouring countries (Egypt and Eritrea in particular), and also to some European countries for poultry and cattle<sup>48</sup>, enhanced the *Durra* trade and furthered the merchants chances of profits. Throughout the First World War there was a strong demand for *Durra* on the world market in spite of the war-time conditions of sea-borne trade and exports reached record proportions from 1915 to 1918.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, the opportunities for trading were boosted through the Bill of Exchange Ordinance of 1917, which codified and regulated the issue of any "unconditional order in writing, addressed by one person to another, signed by the person giving it, requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay on demand, or at a fixed or determinable future time, a sum certain in money to, or to the order of, a specified person, or to bearer".<sup>50</sup>

On the basis of this ordinance a credit system was developed in order to facilitate the flow of commodities and capital within the ranks of the evolving system of trade. The system was strongly hierarchical with the large import/export commercial firms at the apex. These firms were foreign in capital and ownership.<sup>51</sup>

The multitude of small units of population, scattered over a vast area of a country with poor and inadequate transport and communication systems, had for long militated against the growth of a unified trading system in the Sudan. Subsequent to the colonial intrusion, however, a new trade structure started to emerge as follows:

- 1) The large import/export firms referred to earlier were at the top.
- 2) Large wholesale firms, also mainly in Khartoum.
- 3) The smaller wholesale and retail merchants in the markets of the various provincial and regional towns.
- 4) The smallest retail traders located in the villages as well as in the residential areas in towns and representing the bottom of the trading hierarchy.

In this highly regionalized trade structure, the Bills of Exchange Ordinance of 1917 served a double purpose:

- a) On the one hand, because of the scarcity, and in many cases the complete lack, of capital (especially at the lower levels of the trading community in Sudan), the ordinance facilitated the flow and distribution of imported goods, thus encouraging the foreign-owned commercial firms to expand their trading activities.
- b) On the other hand, it introduced an element of trust- essential for a trade based on credit- between the ethnically heterog-



eneous and geographically dispersed participants. This illustrates the role of the colonial state in protecting the interests of the export/import and wholesale firms (which were often the same) in enabling them to get 'their' money through formally legal means.

In spite of the rapidly developing trade in the country, however, the rate of commercial capital accumulation in Hassaheisa itself remained relatively low all through this period. This was due to the extremely vulnerable position of the town merchants and traders in the hierarchy of the trading system. Being at the third level of the system, the local merchants were subject to constant pressure both from the higher levels and from the state. This pressure greatly limited their profits and their opportunities to accumulate were, accordingly, a function of their ability and skill in establishing and exercising a measure of control over the market. But such a control was continuously constrained by two sets of factors:

Firstly, the increasing dependence of the town's merchants on the large-scale, foreign-owned commercial firms which were virtually unrestrained by the political pressures of the colonial state. The local merchants depended on these firms for supplies of imported commodities as well as for the ultimate export of the local products. Secondly, the interventionist policies of the colonial government which checked the opportunities of the local merchants to manipulate trade to their own advantage.

The second set of factors may be illustrated in the following:

1. The government kept exceptionally close control over prices, perhaps to convince the people of its just administration. This control was carried out through the rigorous application of the

Regulation of Prices Ordinance of 1914 which gave the district administration the power "to fix the maximum prices for any one or more of the foodstuffs or articles of prime necessity"<sup>52</sup> which were listed in a schedule. This ordinance was amended in 1919, 1920 and 1922 to include more and more commodities in the schedule.

2. In order to constrain the merchants' ability in manipulating supplies, moreover, the colonial administration issued The Stocks Declaration Proclamation of 1919<sup>53</sup> which was strictly applied.

3. When the British Consul-General in Cairo withdrew the Egyptian annual subvention<sup>54</sup> in 1912, the Sudan Government decided to raise some taxes. Accordingly, The Traders Tax Ordinance of 1913 required "every person, firm or company carrying on (whether on behalf of himself or any other person) a trade within the Sudan, to pay yearly to the Government a tax at the rate assessed in the manner hereinafter appearing". The tax-schedule was as follows<sup>56</sup>

<u>Assessed Annual Profit(L.E.)</u>	<u>Tax Payable (L.E.)</u>
24-36	0.50
37-66	1
67-100	2
101-150	3
151-200	5
201-300	8
301-400	12
401-500	16
501-600	20
Above 600 : (L.E. 4 for every completed L.E. 100 of profits).	

All through the 1920s, thus, the merchants were not only suffering from their *subordinate position* in relation to both the



government and the foreign firms- a situation which restricted their rate of accumulation- but were also trading under<sup>a</sup> particularly unfavourable set of circumstances prevailing in the region. These circumstances were:

1. The shrinkage of the *Durra* market

In preparation for the establishment of the Gezira Scheme, the colonial government issued the Gezira Land Ordinance, 1921 under which most of the land in the Gezira area was to be rented or purchased by the government.<sup>57</sup> The areas affected by this ordinance included the town's hinterland (Messelamia District) on 15th March 1924<sup>58</sup> and the Hassaheisa area itself on 29th December 1924.<sup>59</sup> This course of events deeply affected the area of rain-cultivation and, consequently, the production of grain.

Furthermore, in the period 1924-26 a large part of the Gezira was formally included in the irrigated area for cotton production.<sup>60</sup> With the incorporation of the local people as tenant-farmers in the newly-established scheme a major factor stimulating crop marketing was effectively removed as the cotton-growers were exempted from taxes.<sup>61</sup>

2. The absence of other spheres for investment

The monopoly which the government exercised over rail and river transport<sup>62</sup>, coupled with the inadequacy of road motor transport (the development of which was discouraged by the government)<sup>63</sup> deprived merchants of any real chances of profitable investment in the transport sector. The only other sphere for profit-making in the area was agricultural land, but even this sphere was curtailed in the Gezira as a whole, and Hassaheisa District in particular, through the notices issued by the Governor-General regulating (or, more accurately, prohibiting)



"the land sales by natives to foreigners in Merkez of Wad Medani, Messellamia, and Kamlin in the Blue Nile Province". Although the "transfer of rights or ownership to other natives of the same locality" was later permitted, "no disposition of land is to be made by natives without the written consent of the Governor".<sup>64</sup> Such was the official policy which was to be embodied later in the Gezira Land Ordinance of 1921.<sup>65</sup> Since the bulk of the town's merchants were either 'foreigners' (e.g. Greek) or 'immigrants' from within the Sudan (Northerners), and consequently considered not of "the same locality", the merchants stood virtually no chance of acquiring agricultural land in the district.

The foregoing difficult circumstances contributed to the prevalence of a low rate of capital accumulation and led, directly and indirectly, to a number of the town's merchants either moving to other areas (e.g. the Greeks moved to Khartoum), or to become bankrupt. In March 1925, for example, Hassan Ali Musa (once the 'chief-merchant' in the market) petitioned the Medani Civil Court to be adjudged bankrupt. A meeting of his creditors was held<sup>66</sup> and in October 1925 the court eventually appointed Hussein Alloub (another big merchant and a relative of Hassan) as official receiver to look after the business of Hassan and to arrange for the repayment of debts.<sup>67</sup>

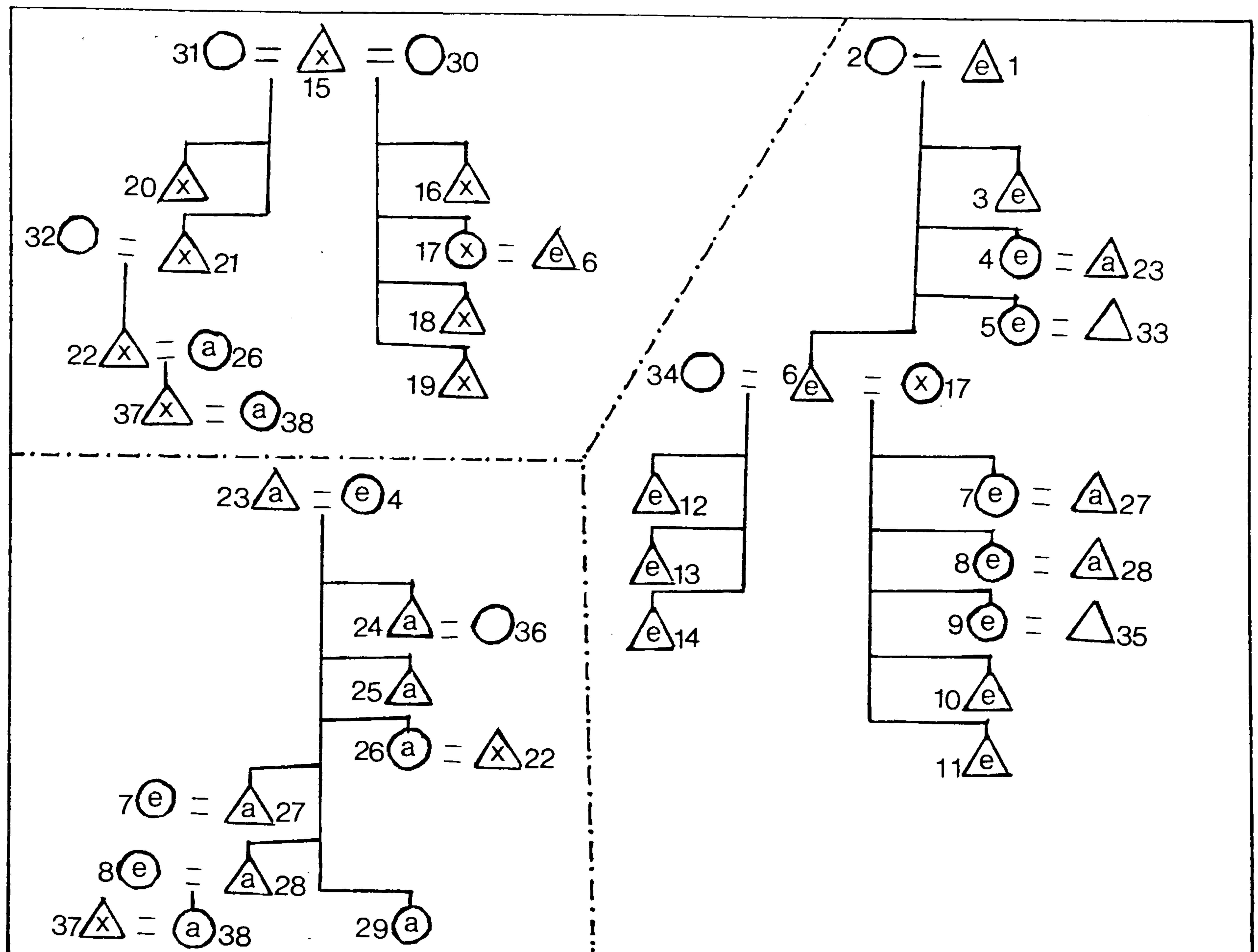
#### TRADERS RESPONSES:

The low rate of commercial capital accumulation was lowered further by the economic depression and the aggravated situation resulted in various responses by the merchants. The net results by the end of the 1920s were as follows:

1) *The Greeks*: Their endeavor to introduce, and create a market for, imported tinned food was largely frustrated by the slow development of a taste capable of creating an effective demand



Fig. 4 Genealogies Showing the Interrelations of Three Leading Merchant Families in Hassaheisa up to the 1940s



- |                            |                                    |                          |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Alloub Ali Fallah       | 2. Fatima el-Sikini                | 3. Ahmed Alloub          |
| 4. Zamzam Alloub           | 5. Beshria Alloub                  | 6. Hussein Alloub        |
| 7. Saffiya Hussein Alloub  | 8. Niema Hussien Alloub            | 9. Rahma Hussien Alloub  |
| 10. Mohamed Hussien Alloub | 11. El-Tayib Hussein Alloub        | 12. Ahmed Hussein Alloub |
| 13. El-Nur Hussein Alloub  | 14. Arabi Hussein Alloub           | 15. Ali Musa             |
| 16. Yousif Ali Musa        | 17. Hannana Ali Musa               | 18. Abdel Karim Ali Musa |
| 19. Abdel Kadir Ali Musa   | 20. Osman Ali Musa                 | 21. Hassan Ali Musa      |
| 22. A/Rahim Ali Musa       | 23. Waziri S. Alalfi               | 24. El-Tayeb Waziri      |
| 25. Hussein Waziri         | 26. Batoul Waziri                  | 27. Hassan Waziri        |
| 28. Abdel Kadir Waziri     | 29. Zainab Waziri                  | 30. Husna Haroun         |
| 31. Daughter of Ali Eid    | 32. Fatima Abashar                 | 33. Mohammed el-Sikini   |
| 34. Nafisa Eheimir         | 35. Abbas Bashir                   | 36. Saida Ibrahim Eid    |
| 37. Musa A/Rahim Ali Musa  | 38. Daughter of Abdel Kadir Waziri |                          |

Source: Interview with Mr. Abdel-Karim Ali Musa and historical accounts on these families in Hammadalla, O. (1960).

for such items in the region. Most of the Greek merchants thus had to leave and only two of them remained to confine themselves to the quasi-monopolized trade of liquor. One of the two later committed suicide when he was due to be tried for an alleged offence relating to the liquor-trade.<sup>68</sup>

2. *The Northerners*: Their rather late involvement in the (from 1917), combined with the smallness of their investments, placed them on the fringes of the *suk* trade. They engaged mainly in the *Tishasha* trade-i.e. they were peddlars who would "travel from place to place or market to market".<sup>69</sup> In this way they managed to escape taxation and licence fees altogether. As they moved around on their donkeys, they sold mainly products of the Northern Province-e.g. dates, beans, lupins, tick beans, lentils, fennels, cumin, caraway, and coriander. The Northerners, moreover, were virtually all bachelors with no fixed residence, and the cost and standard of their living were evidently very low. Thus they managed to cope with the prevailing difficulties in the commercial activities in Hassaheisa.

3. *The Turkish and Egyptian Immigrants*: Despite the hardship the members of this group encountered in the 1920s, they largely maintained their dominant position in the *suk*. The factors which allowed them to do so were the following:

- a) They had enjoyed earlier access to both the local *Durra* trade and trade in imported goods and consequently they had better chances of accumulation than the rival groups (e.g. the Greeks).
- b) They were also able to establish very good relations with the local District Commissioner through their general obedience to, and acceptance of, the latter's authority as well as through



their help to government officials.<sup>70</sup> This ensured good trading conditions for them and also helped them in obtaining the trust of the wholesale commercial firms in Khartoum. In this regard it is relevant to mention that the semi-official post of 'Chief merchant' in Hassaheisa market (an appointment made by the District Commissioner to help represent and reflect the views and interests of the merchants) was filled by a member of this group throughout the period 1915-1935.

c) To maintain their dominant position during the depression, moreover, the members of this group established effective co-operation, help and coordination among themselves. This was facilitated by the fact that the members had a distinctive identity among the groups in the market. They were in some cases partners and were also linked to each other as neighbours and not infrequently by marriage and kinship as well. The three leading immigrant families<sup>71</sup> (Ali Musa and Waziri who are Turkish in origin, and Alloub Ali, of Egyptian origin) illustrate the extent of marriage and kinship interrelations (See Fig. 4). ).

#### THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD, 1930-1955

Commercial accumulation in this period may be better analysed and understood with special reference to the following characteristic features:

1- The establishment of the colonial system of peasant cash crop production in the Hassaheisa' hinterland-i.e. the establishment of the Gezira Scheme. This achievement was crucial since the colonial pattern of accumulation mainly rested on the transformation of the population of the countryside into export-oriented producers from whom only the surplus was removed. Thus the peasants were in practice left with only enough of their own

produce to ensure their physical survival and reproduction.<sup>72</sup>

2. Since this population was no longer producing all its needs (because of the reorientation of the economy) but had surplus cash to obtain some of these needs, trade necessarily developed. Thus the available evidence show that throughout this period the role of the Hassaheisa market was enhanced compared to the previous period. The process of commercial accumulation in the town was consequently consolidated. By this time, moreover, the trading activities consisted more in selling goods than buying cashcrops.

3. The data for this period also reveal the growing ability of the merchants in controlling the market and manipulating it to their advantage. This, naturally, led to an acceleration in the rate of accumulation in the town; and there were soon to emerge far-reaching consequences for the ecological and social structure of the whole community.

4. It must be stressed, however, that the underlying structure of the colonial capitalist trade (dominated by foreign capital and involving the local merchants only in subordinate and dependent positions) remained largely unchanged. All efforts to change this situation by the local merchants failed. Indeed, these efforts only resulted in their continuing dependence rather than in any emancipation.

To discuss in some detail the schematic outline presented of this period, however, we need to engage in a historical reconstruction of the events in the region during this period in order to take note of their chronological significance, how they were effected and oriented, and how and why they yielded particular results.



With the construction of Senner Dam on the Blue Nile, the irrigated area of the Gezira Scheme was, between 1925 and 1930, to cover nearly all the area of the then Northern District of Gezira-i.e. nearly the whole of the region of which Hassaheisa was the headquarters. Table 4:24 below gives data on the irrigated Blocks of the Messellamia and Wad Shair groups. In the Table, however, I have excluded the Northern and North-Western groups because, though administratively attached to Hassaheisa, their trade was effectively oriented elsewhere.

To complete this outline of the emerging pattern of peasant economy in the district, the following points must be added:

- a. By this time, virtually all adult males had been allotted tenancies in the Scheme. In fact, the administration had to draw people from outside the region as well as from outside the country to fill the tenancies.<sup>73</sup>
- b. A further factor stabilizing the population and keeping it on land-a crucial condition for the peasant economy-was the "prospect of an assured, irrigated grain crop"<sup>74</sup>.
- c. The tenants of the Scheme were exempted from Land Tax and *Ushur*. Only the Hut and Animal taxes were levied. The Hut Tax was constant, but since the animal tax was decreasing over time (because of the decrease in the area of land available for grazing which by 1953/54 constituted only 19% of the irrigated area)<sup>75</sup> the direct tax burden became a minor concern for the tenants.
- d. Concern over the establishment of a stable peasantry led the colonial administration under the light of the accumulated experiences elsewhere, to adopt a system of partnership. Gaitskell explains, for example, why they

Table 4:24 Blocks under Irrigation, Date of Establishment  
Total Number of Tenancies, and Areas of Cotton  
and Durra in Feddans<sup>1</sup>

Name of Block	Date	No. of S.Ts. <sup>2</sup>	Cotton Area	Durra Area
Wad Shair Group		<u>4207</u>	<u>42070</u>	<u>21035</u>
El-Nueila	1929/30	846	8460	4230
Feteis	1929/30	824	8240	4120
El-Amara Kasir	1929/30	507	5070	2535
El-Keteir	1929/30	838	8380	4190
Turris	1936/37	666	6660	3330
El-Fowar	1936/37	526	5260	2630
Messellamia Gr.		<u>4578</u>	<u>45780</u>	<u>22890</u>
Abdel Galil	1925/26	290	2900	1450
Wad Saadalla	1925/26	310	3100	1550
Abdel Rahman	1925/26	323	3230	1615
Wad Hussein	1929/30	435	4350	2175
Nidiana	1925/26	616	6160	3080
Wad Sulfab	1925/26	327	3270	1635
Dolga	1925/26	503	5030	2515
Istrihna	1925/26	610	6100	3050
El-Rukun	1925/26	707	7070	3535
El-Tebub	1925/26	<u>457</u>	<u>4570</u>	<u>2285</u>
Grand Total		8785	87850	43925

(1) Feddan= 1.038 acres= 0.420 hectares

(2) Standard Tenancy (S.T.)= 10 Feddans cotton plus 5 each for Durra, Lubia and fallow (cf. Gaitskell, 1959: 152-3).

Source: Sudan Gezira Board Archives, Barakat, compiled from various files.



refused the rent-system in the following terms:

To get tenants at all, rents had to be low, for the idea of a fixed rent, regardless of the crop yields attained, was strange to the local cultivators, accustomed as they were to the considerable fluctuation in yield from natural hazards, locusts and variations in the river.<sup>76</sup>

According to the 'partnership' system that was adopted, the 'profits' from cotton were to be 'shared' among the partners in the scheme as follows<sup>77</sup>: 40% for Sudan Government as landlord, 40% for the tenants who provide labour and 20% for the concessionary companies (Sudan Plantation Syndicate and Kassala Cotton Company) as managers.

Following on these developments, the people of the region at this period were thus (a) assured of their grain supplies with relatively low tax burdens and (b) in receipt of regular cash payments for their cotton. The pattern of life which developed in the area as a whole greatly influenced the local process of urbanization and, equally, of commercial capital accumulation. That these processes were inevitable becomes clear if we consider the sums received by the people of the district from cotton production which was wholly oriented to the market. These sums met the increasing needs of the tenants' families for goods that were only available in the market-e.g. sugar, coffee, tea, cloth, shoes, cooking oil. Table 4:25 shows the income of tenants in the period 1930-1956.

The general conditions of the local people during this period have unquestionably been improved through the establishment of the Gezira Scheme. In fact, as early as the late 1920s, the Scheme was considered by the government to have kept "native trade solvent during the last few years of drought and misfort-



Table 4:25 Net Average Profits For Tenants in Messellamia and Wad Shair Groups, 1929/30-1955/56 (In £E)\*

Season	N.A.P. <sup>1</sup>	Messellamia <sup>2</sup>	Wad Shair <sup>3</sup>	Total <sup>4</sup>
1929/30	Nil	-	-	-
1930/31	Nil	-	-	-
1931/32	12	54936	42492	97428
1932/33	Nil	-	-	-
1933/34	5	22890	17705	40595
1934/35	17	77826	60197	138023
1935/36	16	73248	56656	129904
1936/37	24	109872	84984	194856
1937/38	11	50358	46277	96635
1938/39	11	50358	46277	96635
1939/40	17	77826	71519	149345
1940/41	21	96138	88347	184485
1941/42	23	105294	96761	202055
1942/43	33	151074	138831	289905
1943/44	28	128184	117796	245980
1944/45	54	247212	227178	474390
1945/46	49	224322	206143	430465
1946/47	96	439488	403872	843360
1947/48	204	933912	858228	1792140
1948/49	221	1011738	929747	1941485
1949/50	281	1286418	1182167	2468585
1950/51	800	3662400	3365600	7028000
1951/52	276	1263528	1161132	2424660
1952/53	205	938490	862435	1800925
1953/54	227	1039206	954989	1994195
1954/55	138	631764	580566	1212330
1955/56	229	1048362	963403	2011765

\* The Egyptian currency was used in Sudan up to April 8th, 1957.

(1) Net average Profit per standard tenancy (10 feddans). The data are taken from (a) Gaitskell, 1959, p.270 for 1929/30-1949/50 and Abdel Sallam, M.M., 1979, p. 371.

(2) The Messellamia Group consisted of 4578 Standard Tenancies.

(3) The Wad Shair group consisted of 3541 Standard Tenancies up to 1935/36 when increased to 4207.

(4) This total does not make up all the sums of money received by tenants as there were also cash advances to tenants in return for the execution of certain agricultural operations. The total thus represents the actual amounts received by tenants as tenants.



une by providing employment and putting money into the home market".<sup>78</sup> Gaitskell later commented on this period as follows:

The steady production of grain and forage from the irrigated area, in years when others were experiencing poor rains, continued to make the scheme immensely attractive locally. There were large numbers of applications for tenancies on each extension, and labour was drawn to it as to a magnet, from districts alongside it, from the White Nile and Blue Nile, from Berber and Dongola (particularly for positions requiring skill and ability to read and write), from the Western Sudan, from French Equatorial Africa, and from Nigerian pilgrims on their way to Mecca.<sup>79</sup>

The large volume and varied nature of migration to the Gezira was quite crucial for the future pattern and rate of urbanization and for the growth of trade in the region. For various reasons, each of the above mentioned categories of migrants developed different kinds of connections with the area. These could be summarized as follow:

a) The White Nile Arabs first practised a type of circulatory migration and only gradually settled in their home areas-especially in the Abdel-Magid Agricultural Scheme from 1937 to 1943 as part of the governmental Alternative Livelihood Schemes consequent to the establishment of Jebel Awlia Dam on the White Nile.<sup>80</sup> Under this same scheme many private pump-schemes were established in various areas of the White Nile in the late 1930s. But the development of the Managil Extension of the Gezira Scheme (from 1958) put an end to all migration from the White Nile to the Gezira.

b) A number of pump-schemes (Qundal, Muzeigila, Hurga, Abu Hashim, etc.) were established along the Blue Nile in the

1940s and many people from Sennar and south-wards settled there and consequently stopped all kinds of active migration to the Gezira Scheme.

c) The immigrants from Nigeria and French Africa and Westerners generally settled mainly in the Gezira as agricultural labourers. The government used various arrangements to accomodate them and keep them as a source of cheap labour in the area.<sup>81</sup>

d) The immigrants from the Northern Provinces of the Sudan, especially from the Berber and Dongola Districts, were primarily recruited as skilled labourers. They developed a very different pattern of settlement. An analysis of the way the members of this group had established themselves is important for the understanding of the development of Hassaheisa town as well as of the process of commercial accumulation in it.

The incorporation of the members of the latter group could be briefly pointed as follows. As they were mainly employed as skilled labour on the Gezira Scheme, the wages they received were both regular and relatively higher than the unskilled agricultural workers. Coupled with the fact that during the early years few of the Northerners had families with them and that their living expenses were low, they were able to make relatively substantial savings. Moreover, the Northerners were also favourably positioned and could have contacts with both the urban and the rural communities of the Gezira and as such enjoyed wider access to information about the region which they manipulated later in their trading activities. In this respect it should be pointed out that the jobs of the Northerners were related to both the headquarters of the various departments of the scheme administration (where most of the technical operations were carried out-



e.g. ginning), or at administrative stations throughout the Gezira, e.g. irrigation and canal regulating stations. They were thus in contact with both the urban and the rural communities of the Gezira, and they enjoyed wider access to informations which they were to manipulate skillfully in their later trading activities. Also the permanent nature, but seasonal character (June to January in the field for some, and January to June at headquarters for others) of their jobs, made them effectively free of work duties for almost six months per year respectively. This induced many of them to trade during that free time. In the course of time many became so absorbed in trade that they resigned from their jobs in the Scheme.

In contrast, members of other groups in the region, local tenants in particular, never accumulated sufficient capital (See Table 4:25) to trade effectively. Nor did they have the necessary urban contacts and information or the free time to allow for activities other than agriculture. Thus the Northerners eventually dominated the Suk and had a virtual monopoly of local trade. A break down of the list of licence-holders in Hassaheisa Suk in 1936 into regional or ethnic groups confirms this (See Table 4:26).

Another important point to note is that the Northerners had relatively early contact with, and integration into the market economy.<sup>82</sup>

It should, however, be noted that all Hassaheisa Suk traders developed their businesses during a period of instability and crisis rather than of steady and smooth development, and this had a profound impact on their trade and the involved accumulation. Three particular periods of change and instability must be borne in mind:

Table 4:26      The Main Groups of Licensed Traders  
In Hassaheisa Market, 1936

Group	Number
Turco-Egyptian Immigrants	8
Greeks	2
Yemeni	1
Dubasin of Hassaheisa	5
From Nearby villages (mainly Hallawin)	3
Immigrants from Northern Province	<u>83</u>
Total number of traders	102
Those from Northern Province started to trade in the market:	
1. Before the Gezira Scheme	11
2. After the Scheme (ex-employees in G.B.)	59
3. After the Scheme (with capital from elsewhere)	<u>13</u>
Total Number of Northern traders	83
Percentage of total market traders	81.4%

Source: The original list of traders' names is taken from a letter dated 24.6.1936, from the Suk's Sheikh to the Asst. District Commissioner. The letter is in a file titled 'Miscellaneous Correspondence, Hassaheisa Merkez' in the office of the A.D.C in Hassaheisa. The group affiliation of the traders in the list was established mainly through interviews with some of the survivors during the course of my fieldwork in September, 1980.



(a) The period of the World Depression during which the Gezira Scheme had the lowest yields (cf. Table 4:25). According to Gaitskell, "the tenants were getting hopelessly into debt". He considers that except for the continued finance by the Syndicate, the tenants could not have been expected to carry on and the scheme would have collapsed without them.<sup>83</sup> This period extended from 1929/1930 to 1933/34. The 1934/35 crop of cotton marked the beginning of recovery. The Annual Report of the Blue Nile Province for 1934 thus claimed that "the financial position of some tenants, particularly in the Northern, has improved".<sup>84</sup> In 1937, moreover, the District Commissioner of Northern Gezira (i.e. Hassaheisa District) was able to report on the general condition of what he called the 'merchant class' that

The large summes of money paid out (to the tenants) by way of profits, appreciations and rents brought brisk business in (the) train (of merchants)... Generally trade was a shade better in 1936 and the debt position is much better.<sup>85</sup>

- b) This slight boom, however, was short-lived. In 1939 World War II broke out and it immediately affected both the volume and composition of exports and imports which put considerable constraints on local trade. One of the main difficulties was the increased level of government intervention which was to affect the opportunities of profit-making and capital accumulation, especially at the level of retail trade.
- c) With the cessation of hostilities in 1945, there came a period of relatively stable development, but it was also short-lived. It was interrupted by the record yields of cotton in the Gezira Scheme which coincided with the Korean War (1950) when the prices of cotton, due to the war, reached a record level as well.

The resulting boom brought a number of difficulties for the government as the increased incomes led to a sharp rise in demand for imported goods. The government was anxious, trying to hold back the negative effects of inflation and therefore applied anti-inflationary measures which affected trade. It imposed some monetary and fiscal controls to restrict the purchasing power, exercised more direct price-control, and attempted to limit the volume of imports through increasing supplies from domestic production.<sup>86</sup> In the following section I attempt to outline the responses of the government, the foreign firms, and the traders at Hassaheisa level. The objective is to examine the attempts made by these parties to protect and secure their respective interests which, ultimately, influenced the process of capital accumulation in Hassaheisa town.

#### *The Government*

As already noted, the government had adopted a policy of monetary and fiscal controls to combat inflation at the national level. It was also concerned with the stable organization and controlled development of trade. During the troubled times, this concern involved, among other things, the careful planning of the distribution of goods to the public. Thus we find the following interventionist policies being carried out:

a) Restrictions and controls on sugar trade through the establishment of a State Monopoly. This monopoly was tightened during and after the depression to the point that, in the District Commissioner's words reporting his success in executing the government policy in Hassaheisa market in 1937:

No merchant now looks for a profit from this commodity, but the fact that he is a middleman brings people to his shop where they are induced to buy other goods on which a profit can be made.<sup>87</sup>



b) During the War, steps were taken to control the prices of various necessities in the local markets. In the case of Hassaheisa, the Assistant District Commissioner used the police to intensify daily inspection visits to the shops in order to ensure that the maximum retail price ceilings were being observed by traders. With the exception of one court case in Hassaheisa Criminal Court tried in July 1943, however, I was unable to find any other recorded evidence of enforcement, but the recollections by some merchants recorded during my interviews suggest that the government policy was strictly enforced by local administrators but also on occasions it was met with considerable defiance.

c) In order to control the effects of severe shortage of imported goods resulting from the disruption of shipping routes during the War, the government introduced a rationing system. The District Commissioner presided over a Traders Committee<sup>88</sup> which was given the direct responsibility of rationing commodities for members of the public or their representatives. This in fact weakened the traders' position but we shall see that it did not prevent the growth of a black market.

d) In order to counteract inflation, moreover, the government also continued to increase the Business Profit Tax as shown in Table 4:27

Table 4:27      Percentage of Business Profit Tax in the  
Sudan During the War Years

Year	1939	1943	1944	1945
Amount (L.E.)	%	%	%	%
On 1st L.E. 500	6	9	12	12
On Next 2000	6	9	15	15
=    =    5000	8	12	18	18
=    =    17000	10	15	22½	22½
=    =    25000	10	15	27½	27½
On Remainder	10	15	30	30



Source, Beshai, A.A. *Export Performance and Economic Development in Sudan 1900-1967*, Ithaca Press, London, 1976, p.302.

The government also increased the fees charged for trade licences by 50% (to L.E. 1.50 per annum for shop traders and L.E. 0.750 for peddlars). The multiplied effect of these measures was to depress the margin of profit available to the merchants and hence the reduction of the rate of capital accumulation.

#### *THE FOREIGN COMMERCIAL FIRMS*

At the national level, foreign firms continued to monopolize the export and import trade to the exclusion of local Sudanese firms. The foreign firms also developed a system of sole-agency for the import and/or export of the main goods which enabled them to secure even greater margins of profits. Companies such as Sudan Mercantile Co., Gellatly, Hankey & Co., and Mitchell Cotts & Co., were virtually monopolies. They were in their respective spheres the sole agents of British and other metropolitan firms and in this way they handled the main bulk of imports and exports.

Internally, the foreign firms developed a system of 'appointed agents' over the whole country. This was mainly a development of the 1940s in response, it is said, to the growth of 'nationalistic' attitudes among the urban merchants. Under this system the foreign-owned export/import firms appointed a number of local traders as distributors of their imports in their respective localities, but it was rare that a merchant was granted a sole-agency in any locality. As it was obviously in the interest of the foreign firms to see their agents succeeding, they were commonly lending and supplying goods as well as stock-keeping, monitoring and supervising performance. One result was that the Sudanese local traders became increasingly dependent and much



more vulnerable to the control of the foreign-firms- a result which was contrary to the original aims of the local merchants to secure what they regarded as the "national interest". The following are only some examples of the system of appointed-agents in Hassaheisa market by 1952: The New Industries Co. (Sudan) which produced Pepsi Cola under licence had 23 agents in Hassaheisa, Bata (Sudan) had 17, The Nile Import and Trading Co. (Petroleum) had 3, and Mitchell Cotts & Co. had 7 agents. In this way, the foreign firms secured during the times of instability a greater command and control over the market and, consequently, a larger margin of profit and wider chances for accumulation as well.

#### *THE HASSAHEISA SUK TRADERS*

As a result of the increasingly weak and dependent position of the traders in Hassaheisa, the margin of profit available to them continued to shrink. Their natural response was to try and move away from the least profitable fields of trade to the more profitable which meant moving into more capital-intensive participation.<sup>89</sup> To this end, the merchants followed all available avenues, legal and illegal, economic and extra-economic. Some of these methods, which were often accompanied by little success, were as follows:

##### 1. Specialization

One way of improving the chances of profits is, of course, to establish some kind of monopoly. In the Hassaheisa market it was common to find a concentration of one group of traders, with common tribal or village background, handling one particular commodity and being identified with it. In retrospect, it is difficult to state precisely the exact factor (or factors) which stimulated various operational specializations of this kind, but the

available evidence suggests that we can consider them as conscious responses to the circumstances of the time with the aim of enhancing capital accumulation. This makes more sense than the rather simple, yet widely held, interpretation of this phenomenon as a 'mysterious' inherent inclination for traders with common background to cling together out of some gregarious instinct. On the basis of accounts given by my informants, I would instead posit the following reconstruction and explanation:

- a) A newcomer usually resided with one of his kinsmen and would be recruited to help in the shop. After some time, he would acquire basic knowledge of the particular trade. Thus when the opportunity came for him to establish his own business, he would most likely trade in the commodity with which he was most familiar.
- b) In those cases where the newcomer brought with him some capital, he would most likely choose a trade which was the speciality of his kinsmen and/or fellow-villagers in the market. For various obvious reasons, the latter were also the people most willing and able to share their fund of 'experience' and trade 'secrets' with him. They would introduce the newcomer to the main supplier in Khartoum or elsewhere, and familiarize him with the main body of potential customers. During the period 1940-1960, thus, each of the tribal groups in Hassaheisa market was quite clearly associated with a certain speciality as shown in Table 4:28.



Table 4:28    The Places of Birth, Tribal Origin, Province  
& Specialization of some Prominent Hassaheisa  
Suk Traders

Place of Birth	Tribal Origin	Province	Specialization
Amentego	Nubian 'Mahas'	Northern	Cooked food & Bread
Ganetti	Bidairiya	Northern	Machines' spare-parts
Merowe	Shaigiya	Northern	General Provisions
Berber	Rubatab	Northern	Cloths & Textiles
Debba	Dongolawi	Northern	Wood
Tangasi	Shaigiya	Northern	Gold & Jewelry
Zeidab	Gaaliyn	Northern	Footwear
Kabushiya	Gaaliyn	Northern	Hides & skins
Abu Fru	Hallawin	Gezira	Red Bricks
Marru Island	Bidairiya	Northern	Building materials
Affat	Shaigiya	Northern	Car repairs
Hassaheisa	Dubasin	Gezira	Spices & Herbs
Arbaji	Gaaliyn	Gezira	Fruits & Vegetables

Source: Osman Hamadalla, Book of Kinship & Lineage in Rufa'a  
and Hassaheisa, Dar El-thagafa, Beirut, 1965 (in Arabic), different pages, in addition to my own interviews.

## 2. Skillful Crisis Management

As I mentioned earlier, the general economy of the Sudan was passing through a series of crises during this period. These crises were manifested in recurring commodity shortages, rationing and price fluctuations. With the passage of time, the traders of Hassaheisa in general, and the Northerners in particular, developed the skill and ability to manage these crises to their benefit. They did this mainly through the use of extra-economic resources which they commanded. The following are some examples:

During the War (1939-1945) the Northerners constituted the majority (5 out of 7) in the Merchants' Committee which was responsible for the distribution of the rationed commodities. By virtue of this the Northerners had access to an important source of information, particularly the precise knowledge of the quantities of commodities allocated and their destinations. Accordingly, they were in a position to persuade those who had been granted quotas to sell the goods to them in return for some appreciation. In some cases, people allotted quotas were either unwilling to receive the goods because they had no immediate need for them or were unable to pay the recommended prices in cash. In such cases the commodities usually ended in the merchants' stores and were subsequently sold on the black market to those who needed them and who had enough resources to pay higher prices. This was common knowledge in the market at that time. Even the District Commissioner, who presided the Merchants' Committee, reported his own anxiety about its spread and asked for advice on the "proper methods to stop it".<sup>90</sup>

Despite the anxiety of the District Commissioner and his determination to combat black-marketing, however, the traders



were often able to manipulate their regional and kinship connections with the District Police Force personnel to abort attempts to check illicit trading. According to police records, 93% of the police force in the town in 1949 were born in the Northern Province.<sup>91</sup> Many of my informants recalled this 'collaboration' with pride and expressed the view that it was indicative of the "good manners and character" of the policemen.

Furthermore, the traders during that period (1930-56) had similarly manipulated their special relationship with the Assistant District Commissioner (Mamour) with even greater success. This 'special' relationship was underpinned by two considerations: firstly, while the first Sudanese Assistant Commissioner in the town was not a Northerner, the three who succeeded him (from 1940 onwards) from Berber, Shendi and Damer (all in the Northern Province) and they had social links with the Northern traders. Secondly, the second half of the 1930s witnessed the emergence of the nationalist movement in the Sudan which was led by the Graduates Congress, of which the Mamours were members by definition. During the 1940s the Congress was very active seeking support from the public against the British and their collaborators (e.g. the Native Administrators). In the urban areas- and Hassaheisa was no exception- the graduates found resourceful allies in the merchants who had their own grievances against the colonial government which consistently denied them the opportunities it had offered to the foreign export and import firms. A political alliance thus developed between the merchants and the Mamours who had extensive powers. A detailed account of this alliance and its implications is given in Chapter 8. Here I will simply draw attention to the way in which Mamours sought opportunities to help



the merchants by making them aware of price-changes at the earliest possible time. The merchants were thus able to store or 'discharge-off' the goods. Continuous changes in the retail prices of basic consumption items made this help worthwhile. The following table shows some changes during this period.

Table 4:29                      Retail Prices of Some Consumer Goods  
In Selected Years (in Egyptian Pounds)

Item	Unit	1938	1949	1953	1954	1955	1956
Sesame Oil	Rottle	0.015	0.065	0.085	0.090	0.060	0.078
Coffee	Rottle	0.025	0.090	0.200	0.250	0.280	0.220
Sugar	Rottle	0.019	0.035	0.040	0.050	0.050	0.050
Wheat Flour	K.g.	0.012	0.056	0.053	0.048	0.046	0.060
Charcoal	Kantar	0.230	0.340	0.700	0.650	0.650	0.600
Kerosine	Gallon	0.045	0.086	0.123	0.100	0.100	0.105
Soap	Piece	0.005	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.020
Dragon tob	30 yards	0.440	1.950	1.800	1.800	1.800	1.800

Source: Ministry of Finance & Economy, Economic Survey, 1957. Khartoum p.19.

(N.B. Kantar=100 Rottle; Rottle=0.992 lb.=449.28 grammes).

### 3. Trade Networks (Zaboun System):

The region over which Hassaheisa town enjoyed, and continue to enjoy, effective administrative and commercial influence may be conceptualized as a semi-circle west of the Blue Nile. The diameter of this semi-circle stretches along the river for approximately sixty kilometers, with Hassaheisa town at the centre. The circumference closely follows the administrative boundaries of the town's area of influence with a radius of about thirty kilometers (See Map ). This area contains about 200 villages inhabited by tenants and agricultural labourers of the 16 Gezira Scheme Blocks to which I referred earlier. Since the Hassaheisa market functioned as the main trading centre for this region, the efficient distribution of commodities was of prime



importance for the smooth functioning of the trading system and, by implication, for capital accumulation. Efficient distribution of goods, however, was rendered more difficult by the establishment of the Gezira Scheme as the newly-established peasant economy meant that the production process necessitated an even greater degree of stability and continuous presence of tenants and labourers in the fields. Furthermore, the relative inefficiency of the transport system and the traders' interest in accelerating the turn-over of commodities combined to create a situation in which the establishment of trade networks was of paramount importance.

It was thus necessary for traders to develop a distribution system to serve certain particular interests and requirements. Firstly, because the initial capital costs involved were very low, the system needed to be such as to cover any value added costs. Secondly, although traders were urban-based and strangers to the rest of the area, they had to conduct themselves in such a way that they could engage the good will of rural customers towards them, particularly through a localized village-trader.

During the 1940s and 1950s, there was considerable competition between the different merchants in the market in establishing effective networks of clients in the villages (*Zabouns*). These networks were necessarily based on a credit system because the rural people rarely had the capital sums required to initiate trade. And even when individuals did command sufficient cash, the merchants were anxious to help their village agents so as to ensure their clientship.

The village-agents recruited by the merchants were drawn from three main categories. Firstly, there were the Sheikhs (headmen) of the villages as well as other local notables whose existing administrative duties involved frequent contact with government offices in the town. Secondly, there were those kinsmen and close friends of the merchants and who had originally worked in the field-jobs of the Gezira Scheme. Thirdly, there were those recruited from among the newcomers from the Northern Province. The recruitment of the latter, it is interesting to note, served the double purpose of relieving the merchants of the responsibility of providing accomodation and food for these new-comers, while also supplying fresh "trustworthy clients" with kinship or regional links to the merchants. The course of events later showed how important these latter clients were for the merchants when every single village in the area had at least one *Dukan Shaigi* (Shaiki's Shop).

Being well aware of the manner in which tenants received their cash payments in the Scheme (regular installments spread over the year), the village agents introduced another system of credit called *Garoura* (i.e. credit account). This involved the selling of groceries on credit to the tenants and others which was convenient to both the shopkeepers and the customers in the villages. Gulwick's study<sup>93</sup> conducted in the villages of the Gezira Scheme in 1953 shows clearly how widespread indebtedness was in the local village communities. Table 4:30 documents aspects of this indebtedness.



Table 4:30      The Incidence of Debt in Gezira Scheme Villages by Occupation, 1953

	Whole Sample N=2221	Tenants with ½ S.U.T*	Tenants With 1+ S.U.T	Traders	Agricultural Labourers	Skilled Occupations	Other Occupations	No Occupation
Informants	100%	18.9%	30.2%	4.7%	37.3%	2.9%	4.9%	0.7%
Average Debt (£S)	35	39	53	88	13	14	19	11
No Debt	21%	7%	17%	29%	26%	33%	29%	82%
£S 0-5	11%	1%	1%	3%	23%	18%	14%	6%
£S 6-10	10%	6%	4%	3%	20%	11%	9%	0.0%
£S 11-20	18%	21%	11%	14%	20%	27%	31%	12%
£S 21-50	27%	49%	39%	15%	10%	11%	14%	0.0%
£S 51-100	9%	13%	18%	11%	0.5%	0.0%	2%	0.0%
£S 101-150	2%	2%	5%	7%	0.5%	0.0%	1%	0.0%
£S 151-200	0.0%	0.0%	2%	8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
£S 200+	2%	1%	2%	10%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\* Standard Unit Tenancy

Source: Compiled from Table LIII, Culwick, op.cit.

Table 4:30 shows the total debt which includes in addition to the 'shop account' debts the I.O.U. debts (straight loans in cash which might be given for the purchase of stock in-trade). But the study also shows that "shop accounts made up about 80% of the total recorded in this enquiry, with a distribution pattern very similar to that of the total debt, except in the case of traders themselves. The latter recorded 60% of their total indebtedness in this form and 40% in the form of I.O.U.s.<sup>94</sup>

Table 4:31      The Percentage and Average Amounts of Debts  
For Those With Shop Accounts and I.O.U. Debts  
By Occupation in Gezira Villages (1953)

Occupation	<u>Shop Accounts</u>		<u>I.O.U.s</u>	
	% of ind- ebted	Average Amount(L.E.)	% of Indeb- ted	Average Amount, L.E.
$\frac{1}{2}$ S.U.T.Tenant	23%	34	23.7%	23
1+ S.U.T. Tenant	32%	49	36.8%	38
Shop-keepers	3.2%	60	9.3%	92
Agro-labour	34.5%	11	25.3%	15
Skilled Labour	2.6%	12	2.5%	6
Other Occup.	4.4%	15	2.2%	22
No Occup.	0.2%	11	-	-
All Occupations	100%	30	100%	31

Source: Compiled from Gulwick, op.cit., p. 201.

The above data confirm that the productive groups in the peasant economy (tenants and agricultural labourers) constituted the main subjects of the credit system at the village level (89% and 85% of those who were indebted through shop-accounts and I.O.U. respectively). Traders and shopkeepers were the main creditors; 77% of the shopkeepers were recorded as having "money owing to them in their shops".<sup>95</sup> These same shopkeepers were, however, themselves indebted to another group. The high average



amounts of their debts, together with the circumstantial evidence in Culwick's study point to the fact that this other group was based outside the villages, with bigger financial capabilities, and was undoubtedly composed of merchants in the urban market.

The system of trade networks developed in this manner, but not without difficulties and problems. The fluctuations in tenants' incomes (cf. Table 4:25), coupled with the steady growth in their demand for imported goods, increased considerably the burden of debts among them. The tenants commonly failed to pay back outstanding debts in their shop-accounts. Despite their failure to discharge the debts, however, the tenants were protected by the Gezira Land Ordinance of 1927 which stated the following in section 13:

Every transaction to which a cultivating tenant is a party whereby such tenant is or may become liable for the payment of any sum of money to be calculated by reference either expressed or implied to the value of any crops growing or intended to be grown on the land comprised within a cultivating tenancy shall, if entered into without the consent in writing of the Government, be absolutely void and of no effect.(...). No execution under the provisions of Order XV of Schedule 1 to the Civil Justice Ordinance shall be granted by seizure and sale of the crops of any cultivating tenancy.

Prominent among the implications of the ordinance was the tenant's 'immunity' which effectively meant that the village shopkeeper was to shoulder the responsibility of paying his debts to the town's merchants while he could not guarantee the discharge of debts by tenants. Owing to the weak position of the shopkeepers, and the low levels of their profits, they often failed to discharge their debts. Unlike the tenants, however, the shopkeepers were liable to prosecution in the civil courts, and the growth in the number of debt cases in that period reflects the uneasy relationship that developed between shopkeepers



and the merchants of Hassaheisa and indicates the growing tension within the trading networks (See Table 4:32).

Table 4:32      Debts and Other Cases In Hassaheisa Civil Court in 1942 and 1952.

Cases Tried	1942	1952	% of Increase
Debt Cases	189	639	238%
Other Cases	56	59	5.3%
Total	245	698	184.9%

Source: Computed from figures in Culwick, op.cit., p.193.

Of the above debt cases, those involving the recovery of cash loans increased by 392.6% (from 27 in 1942 to 133 cases in 1952), and cases of payment for goods increased by 205.3% (from 132 in 1942 to 403 cases in 1952).<sup>97</sup> The situation underlying these developments prompted the merchants to alter and re-organize the trade networks. They began once more to rely on 'trustworthy' clients (i.e. those with whom they had kinship or regional relationships), and thus to limit their networks to village shopkeepers with a clear Northern identity. In some extreme cases a number of brothers distributed themselves in the major villages of the district to ensure closer supervision and control over their common trade-network. The following examples illustrate the point.

Case 1, The Abdel-Latif sons: These were five brothers of Shaikia tribal origin (Kudongab), a Northern tribe, who first came to Hassaheisa during the early 1930s: Ahmed in 1930, Mohammed Ahmed and Alamin in 1933 and Hassan and Abdel-Gadir in 1934. By 1952, the brothers distributed themselves as follows: Mohammed Ahmed and Hassan remained in Hassaheisa market (though in 1962 Mohammed Ahmed moved to Wad Medani town), Ahmed moved to Messellamia mar-



ket, Alamin to Tabat market and Abdel-Gadir to Wad Raiya market. All of them are now doing very well in their respective localities,

Case 2, The Hajaj Sons: Originally from Kaboushiya in the Northern Region and of Jaalin tribal origin. The first member to come to Hassaheisa was Yousif, in 1917. The other members came in the 1930s (Mohammed el-Hassan, Mohammed and Abdel-Moneim). They traded together in Hassaheisa market up to the mid-1940s, and then they dispersed; Yousif stayed in Hassaheisa, Mohammed went to Tabat, Abdel Moneim moved to Azazi and Mohammed el-Hassan to Messellamia (but recently he returned back to Hassaheisa market).

Case 3, A Regional Group: Osman Hammadalla (a Jaali from Shendi District) was an agent in Hassaheisa for a Khartoum-based commercial firm (Abustoulu Bros.) dealing in hides and skins. Osman's clients in the different villages in the district were mainly from Shendi District in the North. The clients were Abdel Majed in Mihayriba, Mohammed Ahmed and Mohammed Nur in Hallawin, Dafa'allah in Messellamia, Mohammed el-Tayib in Nayal, El-Tayib in Rufa'a, Salim Haj el-Sidig in Tabat and Mohammed Ahmed in Mustafa-Gourashi.<sup>98</sup>

The above examples, taken in conjunction with further observations made during the course of my fieldwork and which will be discussed further below, illustrate clearly the development and use by the Hassaheisa merchants of the trade networks.

#### Early Pattern of Merchants' Urban Domestic Life

The pattern of life adopted by the majority of traders, particularly those from the Northern Region, during the early period of their involvement in the market was marked by extreme

austerity (of which they are still proud).<sup>99</sup> Their frugal pattern of consumption in the market must be stressed.

Firstly, in the early 1930s, nearly all of the merchants (and the Northerners in particular) were young men in their late teens or early twenties. The majority were unmarried and those married among them had left their wives at home. They usually organized themselves in "bachelors' bands" sharing one cooking-pot. The principle of grouping in these bands was a common locality of origin or affiliation to the same tribal sub-group. The sharing of cooking facilities and food made appreciable savings possible for them. This pattern of life stood in sharp contrast to that of other groups of traders who had been in the market since the pre-Gezira Scheme period. Those who had established themselves earlier were, however, a minority and a few of them survived as merchants into the third period.

Secondly, being single or without their wives with them, the Northern merchants in particular were able to take residence where convenient without having to worry about families. Thus they commonly lived on the front verandas of their rented shops. In the 1930s, the rent of a shop ranged from 10 to 20 piastres per month. In this respect it should be noted that all of the established 64 sites in the market were owned by members of groups other than the Northerners. The usual domestic possessions of the Northern trader then consisted simply of a bed, a cotton mattresses, sheets and a metal trunk for clothes. In addition to this, each man normally had the right to share in the utensils which were collectively owned by the band. This pattern of living was, however, disturbed in 1938 when the police introduced new security regulations to combat burglary and theft in the



market. The new regulations included the prohibition of the "presence of any person, without authority, in the *suk* area between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m." <sup>100</sup>, which compelled the Northern merchants to move out of the market and dwell in the nearby residential quarter of the town (Wassat) where tenants in the Scheme had houses to let. Again, however, the merchants commonly shared residence to cut the cost of living.

Thirdly, as relative new-comers to the town, the merchants shared little in common with the rest of the established community. They therefore had few social obligations to observe such as *Nugta* (cash contributions in wedding ceremonies), *Kashi* (cash contributions for funerals and mourning ceremonies) and *Khatta* (cash contributions on the occasion of disaster and crises). These voluntary and customary obligations were observed by a wide section of the Sudanese communities, especially in the central and riverain parts of the country. Being away from their own communities, however, the Northern merchants in Hassaheisa were not obliged to conform to these traditions in the new community because they were 'strangers', nor did they contributed to those in their home because they were 'away'.

#### THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD, 1956-

During the last twenty five years (i.e. since flag Independence in 1956) retail and wholesale commercial activities, especially those carried out by local Sudanese merchants, have come under increasing pressures and constraints mainly from the side of the national governments. The specific form taken by the Sudanese State at the different points of its post-colonial history was, and is, the outcome of intensive struggles and rivalries

between the different fractions of the dominant class in the Sudanese social formation-i.e. merchants, traditional leaders, and bureaucrats.<sup>101</sup> The relative gains achieved by any of these factions are on the whole expressions of the dominance it could command within and over the state apparatus.<sup>102</sup> The state apparatus has proved to be a coherent and highly effective instrument for the control of the national socio-economic and political scene as significant shifts have taken place in the attitudes and practical policies of the state towards the merchants and their trading activities. In the early years of Independence the State gave the merchants enthusiastic assistance and protection, and the merchants in turn helped to elect, and supported, the first national government of the Unionist Nationalist Party.<sup>103</sup> Some examples of direct assistance afforded to the merchants are:

a) In the first Sudanese Parliament (1953-1956), the government was called upon to establish and actively assist the national commercial companies for export and import as well as for internal trade-which it did.<sup>104</sup>

b). The government intervened in the competition between the 'Sudanese' and the 'foreign' commercial firms, and clearly helped the former by, for example, favouring them in the issuing of the import licences.<sup>105</sup> In 1959, 30% of all import licences were reserved for 'Sudanese' firms.<sup>106</sup>

c). In cooperation with the merchants, moreover, the government also established the Sudanese Commercial Bank in 1960 to help finance the import and/or export trade of 'Sudanese' merchants. There was also new legislation to control and regulate the establishment of commercial agencies for foreign manufacturers in order to secure them for 'Sudanese' rather than 'non-Sudanese'



agents.<sup>107</sup>

Later, however, there was a significant change in the balance between the 'traditional' group and the most powerful section of the State bureaucrats, namely, the military.<sup>108</sup> As a result the merchants began to lose State support, and even became subject to continuous harassment and unfavourable controls. The following developments were to affect the position of the merchants in significant ways:

1. The adoption of an open-door policy in foreign trade during the early 1960s.<sup>109</sup> This 'liberalization' of foreign trade had the direct effect of undermining the privileged position which was accorded to the 'Sudanese' merchants during the term of the first national government.
2. In spite of the limited concessions made to the merchants during the brief period of non-military rule (1965-1969), such as the Sudanization of trade in tea, coffee and salt in 1968, the second military government deprived them of most of their privileges.<sup>110</sup> This government has nationalized all the commercial banks, and most of the commercial firms engaged in foreign trade, and established state-controlled corporations to monopolize the foreign trade.<sup>111</sup> At the same time, this government resorted to systematic political coercion in order to establish its legitimacy.<sup>112</sup> The oppressive state apparatus accordingly expanded, and this led to more public expenditure. One consequence was that more revenues were needed to finance the rising expenditure.<sup>113</sup> One obvious source of such revenue, over and above the surpluses realized through the state monopoly over the larger part of foreign trade, was taxation. In addition to certain amendments to the Business Profit Tax designed to "increase this tax base"<sup>114</sup>,

(with the burden falling mainly on the commercial sector since the other sectors-e.g. industry- were either completely or partially exempted)<sup>115</sup>, and the Defence Tax at the rate of 2% of any income<sup>116</sup>, the government relied heavily on indirect taxes, which were levied mainly on imported goods.<sup>117</sup> With all its regressive impact (i.e. the rate of the tax increases as income falls), this tax tended to minimize the ability of merchants to enlarge their profit-margins since this only would produce a cut in effective demand. Also, in its desperate attempt to gain legitimacy, the government posed as the defender of public interests. Thus we find that in his report to the Sudanese Socialist Union national conference in January 1977, the President stressed the government's determination to look after the "people's" welfare through the strict and "rigorous application of the Foodstuffs and Necessaries Price Regulation Act which involves the set-up of Price Courts and a Central Prices Control Apparatus".<sup>118</sup> All these arrangements virtually reduced the merchants' capability to exercise effective control over the market.

The foregoing brief background on trade at the national level during the third period is intended to allow us better understand the various developments at the regional level which had a more immediate bearing on the conditions of trade in the town of Hassaheisa and on the concomitant process of local capital accumulation.

#### Capitalistic Intensification In Gezira

Since Independence the structural relationship between the Sudanese economy and the centres of the international capitalist monopolies was steadily consolidated; and it is this structural relationship that I call neo-colonialism. The main characterist-



ic feature of this neo-colonial situation is its reliance on economic structures determined by the interplay between a sector in which the producers are export-oriented (mainly in agriculture through primary export production) and a sector in which a minority of the population with high purchasing-power could create demand for luxurious imported goods.<sup>119</sup> The expansion of the two 'disarticulated' sectors was allowed and encouraged by the successive post-colonial governments, and this served the requirements of the neo-colonial situation in two main ways:

1. It ensured the in-flow of imported goods for the dominant groups<sup>120</sup>, which further stimulated their interest in extracting surpluses from the producers either through the intensification of production or by diversifying the spheres of production.
2. Simultaneously, moreover, it ensured the out-flow of surpluses to the centres of the capitalist economies as is shown by the steady rise over the years of imports despite the adoption of import-substitution policies, and the progressive deterioration both both balances of trade and payment.<sup>121</sup>

The dominant local groups in Hassaheisa region were the urban merchants and the tribal and religious leaders of the countryside. Like other dominant fractions in the country, these struggled to gain access to the resources that would give them power. This struggle was particularly true of the tribal and religious leaders who had very limited economic resources, and who consequently sought closer links with the state bureaucrats in the hope of transforming and overcoming the inherent constraints of the 'egalitarian' set-up of the colonial peasant economy in order to remould it into what best serves their interests.

Since the tribal and religious leaders of the countryside were, and still are, dominant in the main representative organizations of the peasants (namely the Tenants' Union), they easily accomplished their aims through deals made with the state bureaucracy. Two main areas of activity are of particular significance to both the peasant economy and the trade in the urban market. These are the mechanization of the agricultural operations in the Gezira Scheme and the diversification of crop production-both of which resulted in the intensification of the agricultural land use in the Scheme.

1.Mechanization: Since Independence production in the Gezira Scheme has been continuously affected by the injection of new imported implements such as tractors and combined-harvesters. During the past ten years machines were used for the undertaking of 50% of the operations concerning cotton, 40% of *Durra* , 100% of wheat, and 60% of groundnuts production.<sup>122</sup> The increasing mechanization was accompanied by another process with highly significant socio-economic implication: machinery-ownership has become concentrated in the hands of a few rich tenants, mainly the members of the dominant rural group and the Tenants' Union officials. Results of a survey<sup>123</sup> of agricultural machinery in the Gezira indicate that about 80.2% of tractor-owners and 63% of the combine harvestor-owners are 'trader-tenants' in the Gezira villages, most of whom are originally village head-men as indicated earlier in this Chapter. An important factor contributing to this concentration of ownership appears to be the credit policy adopted by the state-owned Agricultural Bank of Sudan which offers credit "only to those who satisfy the capitalist principle of credit



worthiness irrespective of whether they are tenants or not".<sup>124</sup>

The owners tended to hire out their machines to poor tenants at considerably high rates. Table 4:33 shows the extent of the monopoly enjoyed by these private owners in the different operations of the four main crops in the Gezira.

Table 4:33 Percentage of the Share of the Different Sectors in the Mechanized Operations in The Gezira Scheme, 1978.

Crop	Public Sector %	Tenants' Co-Op.%	Private Sector %	Total %
Cotton	12.4	-	14.3	26.7
Wheat	7.6	2.6	12.9	23.1
Groundnut	4.9	-	22.0	26.9
Durra	6.2	3.2	13.9	23.3
Total	31.1	5.8	63.1	100

Source: Compiled from Farah Hassan Adam, op.cit., p.40.

What can be drawn from the above table is that the private sector plays a major role in the mechanized agricultural operations. In fact, the 'Tenants cooperatives' had almost all disintegrated<sup>125</sup> as a result of competition from the private sector.<sup>126</sup> The virtual monopoly by the private sector has affected the peasant community in Gezira in two main ways:

Firstly, it has contributed substantially to the phenomenal increase in the costs of production. As table 4:34 shows, the costs of production form an increasing part of the total output. Given the extent of mechanized operations, and taking into account the large share of the private sector, one can well imagine the high level of capital accumulation which led to the emergence of an affluent and wealthy group in the Gezira countryside. I shall examine the impact of this emerging group on trade and capital accumulation in Hassaheisa in further detail below.

Table 4:34

The Average Gross Revenue, Average Cost, and Average Net Reward to Tenants per Feddan for the Main Four Main Crops  
In Gezira Scheme, 1970/71-1980 (in L.S.)

SEASON	WHEAT			GROUNDNUT			DURRA			COTTON*		
	G.Rev.	Cost	N.Reward	G.Rev.	Cost	N.Reward	G.Rev.	Cost	N.Reward	G.Rev.	Cost	N.Reward
1970/71	14	10 (71)**	4	10	14 (140)	-4	10	11 (110)	-1	76	42 (55)	11
1971/72	19	12 (63)	7	14	15 (107)	-1	9	12 (133)	-3	68	46 (67)	5
1972/73	20	12 (60)	8	66	13 (20)	53	29	11 (38)	18	84	46 (54)	14
1973/74	37	14 (37)	23	69	14 (20)	55	43	9 (21)	34	86	55 (64)	10
1974/75	25	18 (72)	7	88	18 (20)	70	71	13 (18)	58	82	63 (77)	2
1975/76	25	15 (60)	10	48	20 (41)	28	31	12 (38)	19	86	86 (100)	-7
1976/77	44	27 (61)	17	52	22 (42)	30	32	12 (38)	20	122	92 (75)	4
1977/78	49	29 (59)	20	87	24 (27)	63	30	13 (43)	17	173	102 (59)	23
1978/79	21	22 (104)	-1	52	26 (50)	26	29	15 (52)	14	159	97 (61)	17
1979/80	65	51 (78)	14	90	38 (42)	52	52	19 (36)	23	N.A	N.A. (N.A.)	N.A.

\* Costs of cotton production include both the collective and individual costs, while the Net Reward represents the income of tenants per feddan after deducting the shares of the other partners (Government & Gezira Board).

\*\* The figures in brackets below 'cost' represent the average cost as a percentage of gross revenue.

Source: Compiled from figures in Dept. of Development & Planning, Sudan Gezira Board, Production Costs of Cotton & Other Crops, (Mimo in Arabic), June 1980, pp.12-27.



Table 4:35                      Net Rewards for a Standard Tenant in the Gezira  
Scheme from the Main Crops, 1970/71-1979/80 (in £S)

Season	Wheat*	Groundnut*	Durra	Cotton	All Crops
1970/71	20	-10	-5	110	115
1971/72	35	-2.5	-15	50	67.5
1972/73	40	132.5	90	140	402.5
1973/74	115	275	170	100	660
1974/75	70	350	290	20	730
1975/76	100	140	95	-70	265
1976/77	170	150	100	40	460
1977/78	200	315	85	230	830
1978/79	-10	130	70	170	360
1979/80	140	260	115	(170)	685
Average	88	174	99.5	96	457.5

\* The standard areas for wheat and groundnut are 5 and 2.5 feddans respectively.  
Source: Computed from figures given in the previous table (Table 4:34).

Secondly, mechanization equally contributed to the progressive impoverishment of the masses in the countryside as evidenced, on the one hand, by the steady fall in the real incomes of poor tenants in the context of severe inflation nation-wide and, on the other, by the fairly rapid decline in opportunities for manual work in the Scheme. Table 4:35 shows the income of a tenant with a standard tenancy (i.e. 10 feddans of cotton, 10 of wheat, and 5 each for sorghum and groundnuts) over a number of years. This income level, it should be emphasized, is received by only a minority of tenants as over three-quarters the total number of tenants cultivate half-tenancies only.<sup>127</sup>

One significant conclusion thus is that the rich rural group managed to establish itself as a decisive socio-economic force in Gezira. It effectively controls the land, dictates the production process, and appropriates the major part of the surpluses through ownership of machinery.

## 2. Diversification and Intensification:

The fluctuations in cotton yields, coupled with the need for new avenues for capital accumulation, led to the adoption of a new policy in the Gezira Scheme. The main props of that policy were laid down in the Ten Year Plan of Economic and Social Development (1960/61-1970/71).<sup>128</sup> The plan was drawn by the Economic Planning Secretariat under the direct supervision of experts employed by the international capitalist-monopoly institutions - the World Bank and US AID.<sup>129</sup> Rather than achieving 'economic and social development', however, the plan effectively served to consolidate the neo-colonial situation in the country insofar as it emphasized the need to broaden the Sudanese economy and the need for an appreciable increase in exports and import-



substitution.<sup>130</sup>

Thus the Government launched on a programme of crop diversification in the Gezira with the introduction of wheat and groundnuts and the more intensive use of available land and water. The following Table illustrates these developments.

Table 4:36      The Development of Areas Under Different Crops in Gezira for Selected Years (in Feddans).

Season	Wheat	Groundnut	Durra	Cotton	All Crops
1961/62	6843	56623	233863	468259	765588
1964/65	75065	59960	254707	508229	897961
1967/68	114688	101610	279689	553388	1049375
1970/71	141252	148465	294172	588372	1172261
1973/74	247124	216285	300736	589517	1353662
1976/77	504603	250817	351810	499435	1606665
1979/80	362500	228545	327295	541048	1459388

Source: Compiled from figures supplied by Department of Planning and Development, Sudan Gezira Board, Barakat.

With the possible exception of cotton, which was up to 1980/81 produced under a partnership arrangement between the Government, the Board and tenants, all other crops have been, and are, grown by private tenants only. But given the deteriorating returns from them as a result of the rise in costs, tenants have been less and less able to finance their production. One outcome has been that tenants have increasingly resorted to methods of finance which in effect enhanced the chances of accumulation by the rich group and, by the same token, accentuated their own impoverishment. Two forms of finance were, and still are, widely recognized and reported by various observers:

(a) The *Shail* system; which is a kind of pledging -open or disguised- of crops. It usually takes the following form. A tenant in need of cash to finance his, usually, agricultural operations accepts money from a financier (usually a shopkeeper in the village) under the cond-



ition that the tenant will make a repayment in kind (usually the crop being financed) and also in cash. At harvest time, when the crop prices usually drop, the financier receives an amount of the crop far in excess of that which could have been bought by the money originally paid. Another form of *Shail* operates when a tenant invests all the cash at his disposal in the agricultural operations and finds himself in dire need for money to meet subsistence requirements. He would then buy grain, or any other commodity, from a shopkeeper at a higher price on credit. When he reaps his crop and the prices are lower, as is usual after the harvest, he sells a larger part of his produce to the shopkeeper in order to discharge his debt.<sup>131</sup> The reported average rate of interest gained by the financier in *Shail* by either method is about 300%.<sup>132</sup>

b) Land sub-letting and share-cropping: A large number of tenants (usually from among the less energetic and the elderly) pull out of production altogether and their incomes are then derived from 'rent' received from the settled landless and/or unemployed workers, or as a 'share' in a particular crop after deducting the costs. In either case the labourer who cultivates the land is again obliged to seek finance from a shopkeeper in addition to paying the increasing costs of hiring agricultural machinery (usually from the shopkeeper himself).<sup>133</sup>

This type of capitalistic intensification has affected commercial accumulation in the area in a number of ways. For our general analysis, we need to note two particularly significant effects on trade in Hassaheisa. Firstly, the incomes of the people in the surrounding countryside have dropped even below the stipulated minimum level of income of the unskilled wage-



labourers in the Sudan as a whole.<sup>134</sup> Coupled with the sharp increase in the cost of living index<sup>135</sup>, this has inevitably forced the bulk of the population to restrict their spending to the minimum and necessary possible levels. The effective purchasing-power has thus been cut back with the inevitable consequence of a large reduction in the level of effective demand at the market place.

Secondly, at the same time, the incomes of the rich rural group have increased sharply in a relatively short period of time, with the concomitant development of a luxurious pattern of consumption among the wealthy people which has led to the progressive emergence of demand for a wide range of imported ~~consumer~~<sup>5</sup>-goods.

The traders, who are anxious to exercise a degree of control over the market, have of course responded positively to all these developments. Their ultimate purpose is, understandably, to maximize their profits and to enhance their ability to accumulate. To this end they have promoted two major changes in the hitherto prevailing pattern of trade. The first of these changes relates to the nature and quantity of commodities handled in the market. Whereas during the early period (1900-1930) *Durra* and *animals* were dominant and were later supplemented by basic items of imported food such as sugar, coffee and tea, in the second period (1931-1956) trade was mainly dominated by these imported basic items with a marked decline in the volume of *Durra* and *animals* bought and sold. In the third period (since Independence), however, there has been a large increase in trade in new non-basic items and services such as spare-parts, building materials, electrical appliances, photographic items, watches, cosmetics and perfumes, ready-made clothes, wood and metal furniture, legal advice, iced water, etc. (cf. Table 4:38). The increase



in this kind of trade can only be conceived parimarily as a response to the growing effective demand by one group in the area, namely, the wealthy rural group. Another change which can be observed is the recent reintroduction of trade in *Durra* and animals. At present, however, these are not for export as was the case earlier, but to feed the growing urban population.

The second major change in the trading activities concerns the trading networks which, as explained earlier, developed during the second period. The change in the networks has been dramatic and far-reaching involving both the personnel and the functions of the networks. Earlier I showed how during the 1940s and the 1950s the merchants were quick in establishing networks of village clients financed through credit. These clients were mainly recruited from among two groups, the Sheikhs and traditional notables in the village communities on the one hand and, on the other, the merchants' kinsmen (mainly from the Northern Province). I have also explained the logic of the increasing reliance on kinship and regional affiliation in the functioning of these networks, and described the impact of the then prevalent inefficient system of transport on the development of the networks. During this third period, however, the process of capitalistic intensification in the region has affected the two groups engaged in the trading networks in different ways. When I discuss the effects on each group, the logic underlying the change in the trading networks becomes evident. Earlier I showed how risky it was for a shopkeeper to participate in *Shail* because forward selling of the irrigated crops was forbidden by the Gezira Land Ordinance and no repayment could be secured through courts. To benefit from the *Shail* system it was then necessary to enter



into special arrangements which were virtually possible only for sheikhs and notables. In other words, to overcome the legal constraints more reliance had to be placed on 'traditional authority' and kinship relationships with tenants. The shopkeepers from the North were clearly disadvantaged in these respects. So with the spread of the *Shail* system as a result of the programme of crop diversification in the Gezira, the traditional beneficiaries of trade commanded more and more opportunities for accumulation.

Furthermore, being a tenant himself, a shopkeeper from the local group of Sheikhs and notables could find legal avenues for the discharge of the accumulated crops (as the output of his own tenancy). That was so mainly because the government was the sole legal customer for these crops. A Northerner could not benefit in this respect because he was not a tenant, but solely in the village as an agent of the urban merchants. Likewise, a member of the 'local group' generally enhanced his opportunities in the *Shail* system through hiring his agricultural machinery on *Shail* basis. Originally he only had access to machinery by virtue of his tenant status which gave him the right to enjoy the credit facilities of the Agricultural Bank and the financial backing of the Tenants' Union.

Finding themselves in such an unfavourable situation, the Northern shop-keepers began to pull out from the Gezira villages, and very few were left by the mid 1960s. Most of them had moved to Hassaheisa or to other smaller urban centres in Gezira. In Hassaheisa many of them invested heavily in establishing canteens (small shops in the residential neighbourhoods of the town). As result of their movement out of the villages, one main pillar of the trading networks, that of kinship, virtually collapsed.

Earlier I have discussed how the poor state of transport in the region during the 1930s and 1940s indirectly served to promote the development of the trading networks. With the accelerated rate of accumulation during the third period, by the village traders in particular, investment in mechanical transport increased markedly, and from the mid 1960s Hassaheisa began to function as the centre of an intensive transport network covering the whole district as is maintained in Chapter 3. The following are some important concomitant developments:

1) Hassaheisa market is increasingly becoming the main 'shopping centre' of the whole district. The number of shops rose rapidly in the last three decades- by 292% between 1950 and 1980 as shown in Table 4:37.

Table 4:37                      Number of Shops in Hassaheisa Market  
Over the Period 1915-1980

Year	No. of Sites	Increase	Percentage	Remarks
1915	64	-	-	Establishment Date
1950	107	43	67	
1960	290	183	171	
1970	363	74	25	
1980	419	56	15	
1950-1980	-	312	292	

Source: Survey Office, Hassaheisa Merkaz, various files.

A further indication of the intensification of trade in Hassaheisa is the rapid growth in the number and functions of kiosks (shops built of cardboard, zinc sheets or even jute sheets and wood) which increased from only 55 in 1950 devoted solely to trade in herbs and spices to 553 in 1980 with a much wider range of functions as Table 4:38 shows.



2) The village shops began, in the meantime, to function increasingly as *finance houses* rather than shopping places. The main items with which they dealt, especially during the 1970s, were rationed commodities such as sugar, kerosine, cooking oil and other basic household supplies.

3) Many of the village tenant-traders moved into Hassaheisa market as well. A significant aspect of this movement is that they usually continued to reside in their respective villages (commuting to the market by car) while also maintaining many of their village-based business activities-e.g. shops, machinery, tenancies, etc. The case of Ibrahim is a good example to illustrate the case of these tenant-traders.

Ibrahim is 52 years old and from Hallawin tribal origin. Born in Gannib village (15 K.m. north of Hassaheisa), he and his father moved in 1952 to Mihairiba, the largest village in the Hallawin, where they established a shop. Both are tenants in Turis Block. Since 1966, they invested heavily in agricultural machinery and managed to own 4 combine harvestors and three tractors with their accessories. In 1977 the father died and in the following year Ibrahim moved into Hassaheisa. In a very short time he established himself as an importer, wholesaler and retailer of general provisions. He continues to live in Mihairiba, and is still a tenant and owner of 5 combines, 2 tractors and 2 lorries. His younger brother, Omer, runs the shop at Mihairiba.

#### TRADING PRACTICES IN HASSAHEISA SUK

It may be useful at this stage to recapitulate some basic features of trade in Hassaheisa market. The first of these is that the primary way in which capital can be accumulated is through trade, especially retail trade. The future level of capital acc-



umulation depends critically on the rate of accumulated achieved through trade. Secondly, this accumulation is essentially commercial in character-i.e. it depends on commercial profits which are a function of the traders' ability to buy cheaply and sell at higher prices and in so doing exercise a degree of control over the market. To achieve accumulation, thus, it is not necessary to intervene in the production process of the goods exchanged. But, thirdly, the ability to control markets has been severely limited throughout the history of Hassaheisa market by the dependent position of traders on other organizations and forces with deep interests in commercial profit. First and foremost, the state (both colonial and neo-colonial) has had its own general interest in controlling profits. This general interest has been, and is, a function of the interests of specific dominant social forces in the state apparatus, represented mainly by the bureaucrats who are always interested in state revenues (taxes and even state-controlled commercial activities). In addition, all bureaucrats are also interested in the strict imposition of price controls for other reasons- partly to defend their own household budgets since they are salary-earners and partly as a means of gaining credibility and preserving legitimacy among the masses. The provision of goods and commodities has largely remained out of the direct control of traders who are totally dependent on foreign manufacturing and commercial firms even though they are assumed to control the circulation of goods and to benefit from profits. The major changes effected by the intensification of the process of capitalist accumulation in Sudan, whether at the national level (the state monopoly over foreign trade and, to a lesser degree, over import-substitute industries) or at the regional



level (the emergence of a powerful social group with an increasing effective demand for luxurious goods) did not appreciably reduce the traders' dependent position. On the contrary, these changes had the net effect of consolidating that dependence and of maintaining the ~~small~~ <sup>small</sup> limited margins of profit attainable in the market.

Furthermore, the low margins of profits have been accentuated by the increasing intensive competition for a limited body of customers. The immediate reason for this is that there has been no mechanism to limit the number of licences, and <sup>man?</sup> my new traders (particularly from the Gezira region itself in recent years) have begun to trade in the market with extremely low capital to achieve the lowest possible profits. Very few of these newcomers could accumulate any substantial capital without recourse to non-economic means violating the rules of a strictly free market.

In addition to the practices that were widely developed during the second period of the market's history (austere domestic life, specialization of kinship groups, manipulation of contacts, and the development of the trading networks), the merchants have progressively resorted to the following stratagems to enlarge and maximize their profit margins during the third period.

#### MANIPULATION OF THE PRICING SYSTEM AND THE TRADING HIERARCHY

Firstly, according to the Prices' Control Act of 1914, the Governor (later, the Commissioner) of any Province in the Sudan may fix the maximum prices for any imported or locally produced commodity at the different stages of its distribution. The following are some examples:

1. An imported commodity, Rice: The price of a sack of 100

Table 4:38 Business Firms (Dukan or Kushuk)<sup>1</sup> in Hassaheisa, 1980

Type of Firm	Dukan	Kushuk	Total
Cooked Food	27	9	36
Tea & Coffee Shop	24	17	31
Soft Cold Drinks	5	37	42
Motor Spares	9	-	9
Pharmacy	4	-	4
Building Materials	12	-	12
Electrical Appliances & Repair	8	4	12
Stationary & Books	3	-	3
Spirits & Alcohol	4	-	4
Photography Studio	7	-	7
Goldsmith	13	-	13
Watch-maker & Retailer	1	38	39
Motor Repair <sup>2</sup>	79	68	147
Petrol Station & Service	4	3	7
Ready-made Clothes	13	64	77
Cosmetics & Perfumes	3	6	9
Shoe-maker & Retailer	6	39	45
Grocery	17	55	72
Cloth & Fabrics	27	18	45
General Goods Provision	56	-	56
Tailoring	4	75	79
Butcher	32	-	32
Fruit & Vegetables	1	49	50
Bank	2	-	2
Hairdressing	4	34	38
Durra	-	9	9
Carpentry & Wood-work	32	-	32
Domestic Utensils	21	5	26
Metal-work & Furniture <sup>2</sup>	39	22	61
Mattress-maker & Retailer	19	-	19
Advocate	5	-	5
Animal Sale	-	1	1
Hotel	3	-	3
Agricultural Machinery & Repair	1	-	1
Printing House	2	-	2
Ice-making & Retail	1	2	3
Hide & Skin	3	-	3
Bakery & Bread Retail	13	10	23
Total	504	533	1037

In addition to the firms listed there are in Hassaheisa the following firms which are not situated in the market area: Private Clinics 9  
Canteens (Grocery-shops), 110; Flour Mills, 21; Laundries, 17; Tailors, 7  
and Large Industrial Firms, 7

(1) Dukan is a redbrick store while a Kushuk is a shop built of cardboard, zinc sheets or jute sheets - the Kushuk could also be a stall.

(2) Mainly situated in the Light Industrial Area.



Kilogrammes were fixed by the Commissioner at the following levels:

From the importing firm to wholesaler L.S. 58.105

From wholesaler to the retailer L.S. 61.000

From retailer to consumer (@ P.T.70  
per kilo) L.S. 70.000

2. A locally manufactured commodity, Zahara (solid blue),  
the prices fixed by the commissioner for a box of 1792 pieces were  
as follows:

From manufacturer to wholesaler L.S. 26.535

From wholesaler to retailer L.S. 27.800

From retailer to consumer (@ 3.5 P.T.  
per 2 pieces) L.S. 31.360

In order to make the maximum legal profits from such commodities, the merchants therefore often sought to amalgamate different ranks in the hierarchy of trade. Thus one commonly encounters a merchant operating as both wholesaler and retailer of a certain commodity and, in other cases, the merchant figures as an importer (or manufacturer) as well.

My analysis of the licensed business firms in Hassaheisa market in 1980 revealed the situation set out in Table 4:38.

Out of 504 shops (kiosks excluded), 16 were not directly involved in commodity circulation (2 banks, 4 hairdressers, 5 advocates, 3 hotels and 2 printing firms). Of the others, 468 were retailers only, 16 combined retail and wholesale trade, while 4 operated as importers, wholesalers and retailers.<sup>136</sup> To appreciate the significance of these figures, however, it must be stressed that the 20 firms falling the last two categories are all general provisions stores-i.e. 20 out of 56 (cf. Table 4:38) and that these 20 firms dominate the town's trade. The smaller retailers who do not oper-

ate as either wholesalers or importers cannot-according to the law and following the system of quota distribution supervised and administered by the Ministry of Trade and Supplies- buy direct from the manufacturer, nor could they import goods. Their trading is thus squeezed between the big wholesalers (who have the right to import, and often manufacture, goods in addition to their access to the banks for finance) and the intense competition generated by the kiosk traders who are prepared to operate at the absolutely minimum possible profit-levels. Not surprisingly, this situation has led to tension in the market.<sup>137</sup> In the early 1970s this culminated in a major confrontation between the wholesalers and the licensed retailers which led to the formation of a retailers' union on 4th October 1972. The union pressed for direct quotas from the manufacturers and importers; and their pressure included a strike in which all retail shops were closed. A result of these events the retailers managed to secure direct quotas in a number of commodities (prominent among which were sugar, grey fabrics, and lentils). In this way they succeeded in altering their situation appreciably.

Secondly, since the general tendency has been for the prices of the main commodities in the market to rise by sudden leaps and bounds, often at the whim of the government, early or advance knowledge of any increase naturally affects trading decisions and can be crucial in making big gains and, more occasionally, in avoiding losses. For example, the government- in pursuance of particular budgetary policies- abruptly raised the price of a *rotlle* of sugar from 3.5 P.T. in 1951, to 4 in 1952, to 5 in 1954 to 6 in 1961, to 7 in 1965, to 8 in 1971, to 16 in 1975 and to 20 in 1981. Early or advance knowledge of the dates of



such changes can only be gained through the careful manipulation of contacts with state bureaucrats who may be of the same political party or share the same tribal or regional allegiances as some of the merchants. In the particular case of sugar, one can refer to the following well-recorded cases which, surprisingly, are openly confessed by the merchants involved.

Case 1: Yousif, a big merchant in Hassaheisa, used to be a prominent member of the then ruling National Unionist Party, and a main financier of the party's political activities in Hassaheisa constituency. In the second half of May 1965, he began to invest heavily in sugar, and bought and stocked some 30000 sacks (225 *rotbles* per sack). In late June of the same year, the Minister of Finance announced in his budget speech that the price of sugar was to rise immediately from 6 P.T. to 7 P.T. per *rotble*. Yousif thus made about L.S. 67500 within a few weeks.

Case 11: Abdel Rahim, another prominent merchant, was also involved in a case concerning sugar. It so happened that in 1975 a Gezira Province influential official was of Abdel Rahim's tribal origin and from neighbouring villages (about 10 miles apart). Sugar was then included in the list of rationed goods. Two weeks prior to the price increase of that year, Abdel Rahim began to buy large amounts and offering prices higher than those stipulated. He stock piled about 17000 sacks in his village-stores. When the President proclaimed the rise in price from 8 P.T. to 16 P.T., Abdel Rahim made L.S. 306000. His 'coup' was, however, marginally frustrated by the police raids on a number of his stores during which 6000 sacks were taken away and put for sale at the old price.

Table 4:39      Official Maximum Retail Prices of Some  
Consumer-goods and Actual Prices for 1981  
(In Sudanese Pounds)

Item	Unit	1957 <sup>1</sup>	1970 <sup>2</sup>	1979 <sup>3</sup>	1981 <sup>4</sup>	1981 (Actual)
Sesame Oil	rottle	0.080	0.093	0.500	0.700	0.850
Coffee	rottle	0.195	0.172	1.200	1.300	2.100
Sugar	rottle	0.050	0.070	0.160	0.260	0.600
Wheat Flour	Kilogramme	0.044	0.040	0.500	0.260	0.550
Charcoal	Kantar	0.600	0.400	3.500	6.000	7.000
Kerosine	Gallon	0.100	0.105	0.800	N.A.	N.A,
Soap (Industrial)	Pience	0.020	0.020	0.105	0.130	0.150
Dragon	30 Yards	1.800	1.750	11.00	9.310	16.293
Meat (Mutton)	Kilogramme	0.200	0.290	1.600	2.500	4.000
Meat (Beef)	Kilogramme	0.100	0.170	1.200	2.00	3.000

Sources: (1) Ministry of Finance & Economics (Sudan Government), Economic Survey, 1957, Khartoum, p. 19.

(2) and (3) The Sudanese Communist Party, Studies in the Sudanese Economy, No.6, April 1980, Khartoum, p. 26 (In Arabic).

(4) El-Sahafa (Daily)- government-controlled newspaper in Khartoum- 20th July, 1981.

(5) Personal correspondence with Mr. M. J. Abu Shamma, Secretary General of Hassaheisa Retail Traders Union, Dec. 1981.



The opportunities for such profiteering may be better appreciated if we consider the scale and frequency of many price changes as shown in Table 4:39, and also the large differences sometimes obtaining between the official and the actual market prices. The difference between these two last as in 1981 is shown in columns (4) and (5) in the Table.

#### NEW TRADING NETWORKS

In general, it is common to find that the town luxury items are abundant while the basic items are scarce, while the reverse is generally the case in the countryside. The merchants are of course the main suppliers of all goods to the region. But since they can only sell luxury goods in the urban market at relatively profitable prices, they commonly have the problem of selling the basic items profitably. This cannot be easily achieved in the town because of the heavy police presence. (The police may at times be bribed to keep quiet, but this costs money). One way out is therefore to sell the basic goods where the police presence is least-i.e. in the villages.<sup>138</sup> The urban merchants, however, do not normally run that venture themselves which is usually left to the village shopkeepers who benefit from bringing goods to the villages at inflated prices but only to sell them again at even higher prices. For the village shopkeeper, this is imperative if he is to keep his shop stocked. Many of the town merchants and village traders are thus bound together through mutual trading interests. The merchants provide the (often artificially) scarce goods, and the shopkeepers bring them to the 'people' on a highly speculative basis.

COMPLIMENTARY INVESTMENTS:

Since pure trade has a limited margin of profit, the merchants commonly attempt to expand their activities to spheres previously regarded as specialized areas of investment. For example, the transportation of goods from their places of manufacture or from ports of entry into the country was earlier performed mainly by truck-owner-drivers. But in the second half of the 1960s, some merchants, especially the wholesalers, began to invest in lorries (10 ton Bedfords and Austin Morris B.M.Cs. in particular). By 1980 the 707 diesel lorries registered in Hassaheisa were owned by the following categories: 97 were owned by 20 wholesale merchants, 404 by 468 retailers and only 202 were owned by non-traders (mainly drivers). Another example of change is a bakery owner who opened a restaurant in the market to sell bread directly to the consumers.

TAX EVASION:

Tax evasion usually develops through a few well defined stages. The first of these is when traders attempt, often with considerable success, to avoid taxes altogether. To do this they have to 'persuade' the taxation officer to classify them as not liable to taxation by having their profits assessed as less than L.S. 300 per annum- which is the exemption limit according to the Tax Ordinance amended in January 1970. Rates of tax above the L.S. 300 limit are as follows:

The First L.S.300	Not Taxed
The Next L.S.200	15%
The Next L.S.500	20%
The Next L.S. 3000	30%
The Next L.S. 6000	40%
The Next L.S. 20000	50%
More than L.S. 30000	60%



From the statements obtained from the Tax Office in Hassaheisa, it is evident that many merchants have avoided all taxes since the establishment of the office in 1973, and that this is so partly because of the virtual absence of any regular auditing system in the town. The whole responsibility of assessment is thus thrown on the Tax Officer, who is extremely susceptible to the merchants' pressure and persuasion for various reasons- not least because of the limited income of the officer.

The second stage in evasion is again to put some pressure on the tax officer to make him under-assess the real profits achieved and so the merchant could pay less than he would had his profits been accurately assessed. The third stage is to attempt open tax evasion through delaying tactics such as court appeal against assessment, or by using one's influence to obtain an exemption for possibly <sup>2</sup>extreme reasons. This is usually the result of pressure exercised at the central government levels. Table 4:40 shows the tax performance in Hassaheisa since the establishment of the office in 1973.

Table 4:40      Amounts of Assessed & Actually Paid Business Profit Taxes in Hassaheisa Town (1973-1981)

Fiscal Year	Assessment	Actually Paid	Difference	%
1973/74	102397.035	81284.885	21112.150	21
1974/75	111353.184	87761.732	23591.452	21
1975/76	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1976/77	125949.967	119938.462	6011.505	5
1977/78	161070.079	159024.952	2045.127	2
1978/79	193485.562	168976.983	24508.579	13
1979/80	189195.040	139999.729	49195.311	26
1980/81	264412.632	215187.363	49225.269	19
1981 (Jan.-Nov)	448645.348	215697.719	232947.629	52
Total	1596508.847	1187871.825	408637.022	25

Source: Compiled from various files in the Tax Office, Hassaheisa.



### 5. Other Commercial Investments:

To enhance their profit-making chances, traders also invested in new fields (urban property and manufacturing) but these aspects are the subject matter of the following two chapters.

#### CONCLUSION:

The two major characteristics of 'local' capital accumulation in Hassaheisa over the past seventy years or so have been:

- (1) Its almost total reliance on trade in the Suk, a feature which is not accidental or simply 'natural' in the sense that it derives from some 'instinctive' inclination of this particular group of local people (Northern merchants) to pursue commercial dealings. On the contrary, this feature arises out of a perfectly 'rational' assessment that in the course of Sudan's history as a dependent colonial economic entity, it is only through commerce that profits could be made.
- (2) The fact that, due partly to the dependent position of the local traders seeking to make profits, and partly to the systematic transfer of surpluses to the outside world, a *minimal share* of profits has accrued to local entrepreneurs. This in turn meant that the process of local accumulation and capital formation took place at a low rate and slowly.

This overall situation was, and continues to be, not simply maintained by 'market forces', but actually promoted and maintained by the interventionist measures of colonial and neo-colonial state. A main consequence has, thus, been the emergence of a merchant class which is basically and essentially *dependent* on foreign customers and/or supplies as well as on the state's political powers. Under such conditions, this merchant class has always relied on *extra-economic* relations (social, ideological, and political) to give a



limited degree of *security and certainty* to its economic pursuits.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER IV

1. Crosstabulation, or contingency tables, is a joint frequency distribution of cases according to two or more classifactory variables. By this method, having drawn the tables, the joint frequency distribution can be statistically analysed by making certain tests of significance to determine whether or not the variables are statistically independent. Also they could be summarized by a number of measures of association which describe the degree to which the values of one variable predict or vary with those of another, i.e. how strongly the two variables are related to each other.
2. O'Brien, J. (with assistance of Shazali, S.), 1979, p. 63.
3. David Slater argues that "By participating in world trade the peripheral societies suffer a further loss of surplus through the mechanism of unequal exchange. Put concisely, unequal exchange takes place because on the capitalist world market the product of an hour's labour contributed in a country with underdeveloped productive forces is sold, on the average, for an amount less than that paid for the product of an hour's labour contributed in a country with more developed productive forces". David Slater, 1978, p. 32.
4. Sudan Gazette, No. 7, 2.12.1899.
5. Sudan Gazette, No. 26, 1.8.1901.
6. Sudan Gazette, No. 2, 27.8.1899.
7. Sudan Gazette, No. 43, January 1903
8. *Ushur* is an Arabic word that means one-tenth, but it stands in the Sudan for a form of crop tax imposed on cultivators by various governments and it is based on Islamic system of taxation where a cultivator is obliged to submit one tenth of his crop to the central state.
9. Sudan Gazette, No. 30, December 1902.
10. Sudan Gazette, No. 26, 1st August 1901.
11. Sudan Gazette, No, 3, 31st September 1899
12. Bolton has clearly recognized this when he wrote that where land is cultivated at irregular intervals or is superabundant it is commonly recognized both by the people and the Government as held communally and it is administered by the authorities of the tribe, village or other communal unit, the only right of the individual being his right as a member of such unit to cultivate, cut wood, and so on in accordance with custom or as the authorities of the communal unit direct. p. 189 in Tothill (ed.), 1948.



13. As late as 1940s a Senior Inspector of Agriculture still saw the problem as follows:  
 "The normal agricultural procedure of rotation of crops, which is recognized as an essential adjunct to good farming in all areas of intensive cultivation, is almost entirely neglected in the Sudan rain areas. This is mainly owing to the cheapness and abundance of land. The same crop is grown year after year on the same piece of land until reduced yields or disease compel the farmer to move elsewhere". Burnett, J.R., 1948, p. 296.
14. This is extracted from a Notice signed by Lord Kitchener as a Governor-General of the Sudan in Sudan Gazette, No. 1, March 1899.
15. Sudan Gazette, No. 21, March 1901.
16. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, 1.8.1905, p. 381.
17. A vivid picture of the impact of such arrangements is conveyed by letter of Mr. E.N. Corbyn, Settlement Officer, Kamlin, to the Legal Secretary dated 28.2.1910, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 29012.
18. Sudan Gazette, No. 45, March 1903.
19. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, August 1905
20. Bacon, G.H., 1948, p. 336.
21. Two measures were directly relevant to this:  
 (a) The Cotton Ordinance of 1912, Sudan Gazette, No. 225, November 1912.  
 (b) The Cotton Piece Goods Ordinance, Sudan Gazette, No. 438, July 1924.
22. Cf. Bruce, J., 1805.
23. Jackson, H.C., 1954, p. 71.
24. See for example the memorandum by the Governor-General in Reports on the Finances, Administration, and Conditions of the Sudan, 1909, p. 72.
25. See Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1937, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3.
26. For example, the Demarcation Officer had been authorized by the Ordinance to order the owner or occupier of a land to (a) erect stones and pillars posts or other boundary, (b) to clear any boundary, (c) to provide or otherwise assist in the demarcation of his land. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, August 1905, p. 381.

27. Note, for example, The Agricultural Pests Prevention Ordinance, 1919, which required the mobilization of "young persons to assist in urgent operations against pests".
28. O'Brien, J., 1979, p. 171.
29. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, August 1905, pp. 306-7.
30. Sudan Gazette, No. 232, 20th March 1913.
31. Speech by Cromer published in Sudan Gazette, No. 44, Feb. 1903, pp. 14-18.
32. For further explanation of the way in which these Turco-Egyptian elements had survived during the Mahdist period. See Mahmoud, Fatima Babiker, 1978, pp. 176-4.
33. For full details on this event see the Governor-General, Annual Report, 1908, pp. 49-52.
34. Blue Nile Province, Annual Report, 1908, p. 490
35. Governor-General, Annual Report, 1908, p. 164
36. Sudan Gazette, No. 233, 8.4.1913.
37. Sudan Gazette, No. 169, January 1910, p. 212
38. Cromer's Speech, op.cit., p. 15.
39. Jackson, H.C., 1954, p. 38.
40. Ibid, p. 60.
41. This point is, of course, an issue subject to wide debate. See Marx, K., 1967, p. 238.
42. Cf. Gordon, D.M., 1978, pp. 25-63.
43. Kay, G., 1977, p. 95.
44. District Commissioner, Northern Gezira Province, Annual Report, 1916, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3.
45. Sudan Gazette, No. 164, Dec. 1909, p. 212.
46. Interview with Mr. Abdel Karim Ali Musa, Autumn 1979, Hassaheisa.
47. Sudan Gazette, No. 329, 29.1.1918.
48. Bacon, op.cit., pp. 315-16.
49. Beshai, A.A., 1976, p. 289.
50. Sudan Government, Laws of the Sudan, Vol. I, 1975, pp. 96-133.



51. Cf. Mahmoud, F.B., 1978, pp. 82-116.
52. Laws of the Sudan, op.cit., Vol.II, pp. 6-12.
53. Sudan Gazette, No. 344, 5.4.1919, p. 999-1002.
54. Warburg, G., 1970, p. 165.
55. Sudan Gazette, No. 232, 20.3.1913, pp. 776-83.
56. Ibid., p. 783.
57. Sudan Gazette, No. 382, 20.10.1921, pp. 1482-4.
58. Sudan Gazette, No. 431, 15.3.1924, pp. 1941-4.
59. Sudan Gazette, No. 449, 15.1.1925, p. 2190.
60. Gaitskell, A., 1959, pp. 126-137.
61. See the Gezira Land Ordinance, 1921, in Sudan Gazette, No. 382, op.cit.
62. Wilkins, C., 1976, p. 103.
63. Ibid., pp. 103-5.
64. The Native Disposition of Land Restriction Ordinance of 1918 was first published in Sudan Gazette, No. 334, 24.1.1918, pp. 889-92.
65. Sudan Gazette, No. 382, op.cit.
66. Sudan Gazette, No. 451, 15.3.1925, p. 2248.
67. Sudan Gazette, No. 463, 15.10.1925, p. 2433.
68. Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1937, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3, p. 12.
69. The Auctioneer's, Brokers' and Pedlars Ordinance, 1905, in Sudan Gazette, No. 79, op.cit., p. 306.
70. Cf. Mahmoud, F.B., op.cit., p. 175-6.
71. The information for this Diagram was collected mainly from two sources:
  - (1) An interview with Mr. Abdel Karim Ali Musa
  - (2) Information in Osman Hamadalla, 1965, pp. 44-46 and 136-7.
72. This argument is fully developed in O'Brien, 1979, p. 111.
73. Cf. Culwick, G.M., 1975, pp. 8-12.

74. Gaitskell, op. cit. p. 161. But the importance of the growing of durra crop and fodder in the irrigated area without charge or tax and as the sole property of the tenants had been emphasized as "the most attractive feature of a Gezira tenancy, providing as it does an assured minimum living standard whatever may be the results of cotton growing", as is put by the Financial Controller of the Scheme in The Gezira Scheme From Within, 1956.
75. Culwick, op. cit., pp. 119-23.
76. Gaitskell, op. cit., p. 68.
77. The Gezira Scheme From Within, op. cit., p. 41.
78. Governor-General, Annual Report, 1928, p. 51.
79. Gaitskell, op. cit., p. 134.
80. Abbas Ahmed Mohamed, 1980, pp. 115-28.
81. The manner in which these two categories had been integrated and settled in the Gezira is discussed in Al-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1979, pp. 55-100.
82. Cf. Omer, H.B.A., 1979, p. 163-6.
83. Gaitskell, op. cit., p. 147.
84. Governor-General, Annual Report, 1934, p. 94.
85. Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1937, p. 8, Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3.
86. Cf. Beshai, 1976, op. cit., pp/ 302-4.
87. Northern Gezira District, 1937, op.cit., p. 17.
88. File No. NGD/HT/3 Commerce and Supply, dated 17/3/1940, Hassaheisa Merkez.
89. Cf. Colin Leys, 1975, pp. 154-5.
90. Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1943, p. 15. Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3.
91. File No. NGD/HT/Personnel/4D, 6/1949, Hassaheisa Merkez.
92. *Mamour* was an administrative post during the colonial rule of the Sudan. "Below the inspector in the province hierarchy were the mamurs and sub-mamurs. At the beginning of the Condominium this class of officials was made up almost entirely of Egyptians seconded from the Egyptian army. They were, in fact, an intervening class between the British inspectors and the Sudanese population, with whom they shared a common language and religion. A mamour served as



local police official and revenue and executive officer and magistrate as well, but always under control of a British officer to every three or four Egyptians mamurs". See Daly, M.W., 1980, p. 44. But since Stack's time (1917-1924) they were increasingly being replaced by Sudanese.

93. Culwick, 1975. She conducted a survey in Gezira villages which covered 3.7% of the Scheme's tenants; 3.5%, 4.7%, 3.3%, 3.8%, and 3.5% of the total numbers of tenants in the South, Centre, Messallamia, Wad Shair, and North Groups respectively in 1953. The total sample had 2221 informants.
94. Culwick, *ibid.*, p. 201.
95. Culwick, *ibid.*, p. 202.
96. Sudan Gazette, No. 493, 15.7.1927, pp. 140-46.
97. Culwick, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
98. Cf. Osman Hammadalla, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.
99. An interview with Mr. Yousif Hassan Babiker in November 1980, Hassaheisa.
100. A Proclamation signed by the Assistant District Commissioner, Hassaheisa Merkez, dated 27/5/38.
101. Cf. Abdel Ghaffar Mohd. Ahmed, 1974; 1976. In both places the writer gives an account of the struggles between dominant groups and particularly of the struggle between the Nomadic leaders and the merchants.
102. O'Brien, 1979, argues convincingly that "Economic, political, and ideological elements of domination were dispersed in the colonial period among different social categories, no one of which could command an integrated position of dominance in all fields". He goes on to stress that "An important aspect of the process of class formation in the late colonial period and since independence has been bound up with the efforts of these various sorts of groups to secure a firm base in the economic, political and ideological fields and consolidate themselves as a nationally dominant class". pp. 197-8.
103. Cf. Warburg, 1978, pp. 67-89.
104. Parliament Proceedings; House of Representatives, Khartoum, 1954, p. 136 (in Arabic).
105. Awad, M.H., 1967, p. 42.
106. *Ibid*, p. 42.
107. *Ibid*, p. 42.



108. In his opening message to the Trade Conference, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan stated that "Our policies are liberal and our concessions are generous", in, Sudan Government, 1960, p. 3.
109. Ministry of Justice, 1965, p. 74.
110. On 25th May 1969 another group of military officers took power in the Sudan, and they have remained in control ever since.
111. Bank of Sudan, 1971, pp. 13-15.
112. Historically, and before the recent intensified effects of neo-colonial capitalist developments, political legitimacy had been largely based, within the Sudanese communities, on traditional ideological justifications; i.e. tribal and/or religious. That was largely due to the weak economic bases of all groups coupled by the effective monopoly of the state apparatus by the British. Thus the military had no sources of power and influence among the people at all.
113. The following figures illustrate the increase in government expenditure on what they call Defence which primarily includes "Security", compared with the expenditure on "Education" and "Health":

Central Government Expenditure Per Capita in 1972  
and 1975 for Selected Sectors (in percentage of total)

Year	Defence	Education	Health
1972	8	3	2
1979	10	4	1

Source: World Bank, 1982, p. 156.

114. Bank of Sudan, 1971, p. 117.
115. For the details of such exemptions and concessions and their increase through time see,  
 (1) Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Supply, The Approved Enterprises (Concessions) Act, 1956, 1956.  
 (2) Ministry of Industry and Mining, The Organization and Promotion of Industrial Investment Act, 1967, 1967.  
 (3) Ministry of Industry, The Development and Promotion of Industrial Investment Act, 1972, 1972.  
 (4) Ministry of Industry, The Development and Encouragement of Industrial Investment Act, 1974, 1974.
116. Bank of Sudan, 1971, p. 120.
117. Ali, M.A., 1976, p. 132.
118. The text of the report is published in Kishik, 1977, pp. 480.
119. Cf. O'Brien, J., 1979, pp. 199-200.



120. The rising tendency of imported consumer goods is above 50% of the total imports of the Sudan, See Ali Abdel Gadir, 1976, pp. 152-53.
121. Ibid, pp. 157-161.
122. Calculated from figures given in Abdel Hamid, A., et al., 1980, pp. 14-18.
123. See Adam, F.H., 1978, pp. 37-8.
124. Ibid, p. 37.
125. For details on the performance and collapse of these co-operatives; See Agricultural Bank, 1982, pp. 5-7.
126. "A very small minority (about 1% only of the tenant population) who own agricultural machinery", according to Abdel Salam, M.M., 1979, p. 246.
127. Ibid., p. 169 and p. 175.
128. Sudan Government, 1962.
129. Abdel Wahab, A., 1976, pp. 221-23.
130. Sudan Government, 1962, the Introduction.
131. For detailed cases on such arrangements, see; Barnett, T., 1977, p. 73; and Abdel Salam, M.M., 1979, pp. 247-8; and Department of Planning and Development, 1980.
132. Department of Planning and Development, 1980, p. 4.
133. For detailed cases on this issue see El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1979, 55-100.
134. The statutory minimum wage for unskilled workers in the public sector of the Sudan was £S 167.0 per annum in 1968, reviewed upwardly to £S 180.0 per annum in 1973, and again increased to the minimum of £S 336 per annum in 1978 (See the Presidential Ordinance No. 338 & the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform's Circular No. 4, dated 15/10/1978).
135. The cost of living index for the urban low-income households (£S 300- £S 500 per annum), which I assume as nearly comparable to that for the average Gezira tenant household, increased as follows from 1950 to 1975:

Year	Food	Housing	Clothing	Miscellaneous
1950 (base year)	100	100	100	100
1969	197	229	143	138
1970(new base)	100	100	100	100
1975	225	257	217	177

Source: Abdel Salam, M.M., 1979, p. 174.

136. The annual fees for licences in different categories are currently as follows (1981):

Retail Licence	£S 16.500
Wholesale Licence	£S 38.500
Import Licence	£S 100.000 (only for Wholesalers).

137. All information about the Retail Traders' Union in Hassaheisa was obtained from a recorded interview with Mr. Mohamed Al-Jack Abu Shama, Secretary General of the Union, 10th November 1980, at his shop, Hassaheisa.

138. The Town Council was forced to impose a formal prohibition of the movement of certain consumer goods out of Hassaheisa especially meat and bread, unless movement is to meet the requirements of a social occasion or event such as wedding, which should however be certified by a formal letter from the administrative officer of the town. See Council Papers, M.S.M.H/16/D, 2.9.1979, p. 3.



## CHAPTER FIVE

CAPITAL ACCUMULATION: LAND

## INTRODUCTION:

This chapter contains an analysis of the process of accumulation in the sphere of urban land-i.e. real estate. The analytical framework I adopt is based on a historical and politico-economic assessment of two fundamental processes:

- (a) The process of urban land *privatization* by which I mean the transfer of an increasing proportion of land from public to private ownership.
- (b) The process of land *commercialization* by which I mean the increasing abstraction of land into an object for commercial transaction and the way in which it has progressively assumed an exchange value rather than a mere use value.

My aim is to analyse these processes as integral aspects of the general process of capital accumulation particularly in its commercial form. The privatization and commercialization of land are clearly not independent of other forms of accumulation and their dynamics can only be understood in relation to local developments in trade and the general policies of the colonial administration.

Equally, of course, the changing nature of the value of land has developed upon, and to some extent reflected, the sheer growth of the town. Moreover, the "land question" reveals and expresses a contradictory feature of the process of urbanization in the colonial capitalist economy for this economy presupposes the stabilization of cash-crop producers in their rural community while also promoting urban land investments which then undermine the stability of the surrounding countryside by promoting immigration, etc. as a condition for the creation of urban land market at all.



## THE PROCESS OF LAND PRIVATIZATION

By the turn of this century most lands in the Sudan, and urban land in particular, were effectively Government or public property.<sup>1</sup> To appreciate how this situation had arisen we may briefly refer to the developments under Turkish and Mahdist Rule.

During the period of Turkish Rule (1821-1885), towns were few and small, and most of their residents were foreigners<sup>2</sup> who were later evicted following the Mahdist Revolution.<sup>3</sup> While during the brief Mahdist Rule (1885-1898) urban land was not registered in the name of any particular person or institution, many of the residents of the towns were there only on a transitory basis as warriors or prisoners".<sup>4</sup>

In the early years of British colonial administration, this general situation was made more formal by a series of legal enactments which had the net effect of consolidating Government ownership of existing urban land. New legislation also extended state ownership to newly demarcated urban areas (i.e. land specifically set aside to accommodate the new urban populations).

Over the course of the past eighty years, however, this situation has changed very appreciably. In the analysis to follow I attempt to account for the pattern of change in urban land use and ownership in Hassaheisa, in particular to pay attention to the dynamics of the changes which have taken place and to highlight the socio-economic implications of the whole process.

The initial policy of the colonial administration in regard to land in established Sudanese towns was developed on the principles set out in the Town Lands Ordinance of 1899 and its amendments of 1901. This ordinance was at the time of its issue intended primarily to deal with the towns of Khartoum, Berber, and Dongola which "had been reduced to ruins". The Ordinance specifically states that it:

was expedient that (these towns) should be laid out anew and re-built in such manner as to make proper provision for the health and convenience of the inhabitants.

With this aim in view, and to allow for full control over the re-building operation, the ordinance declared that

All lands and building sites, whether occupied or not, within the town are the property of the Sudan Government and have ever since the reoccupation of the country been so considered.

It was clearly stated, moreover, that the Governor-General retained the right to extend the ordinance to any town other than those specified in the ordinance.<sup>6</sup> According to an amendment to the ordinance issued in 1902<sup>7</sup>, such individuals as had been allotted pieces of land in these towns were required to build on them:

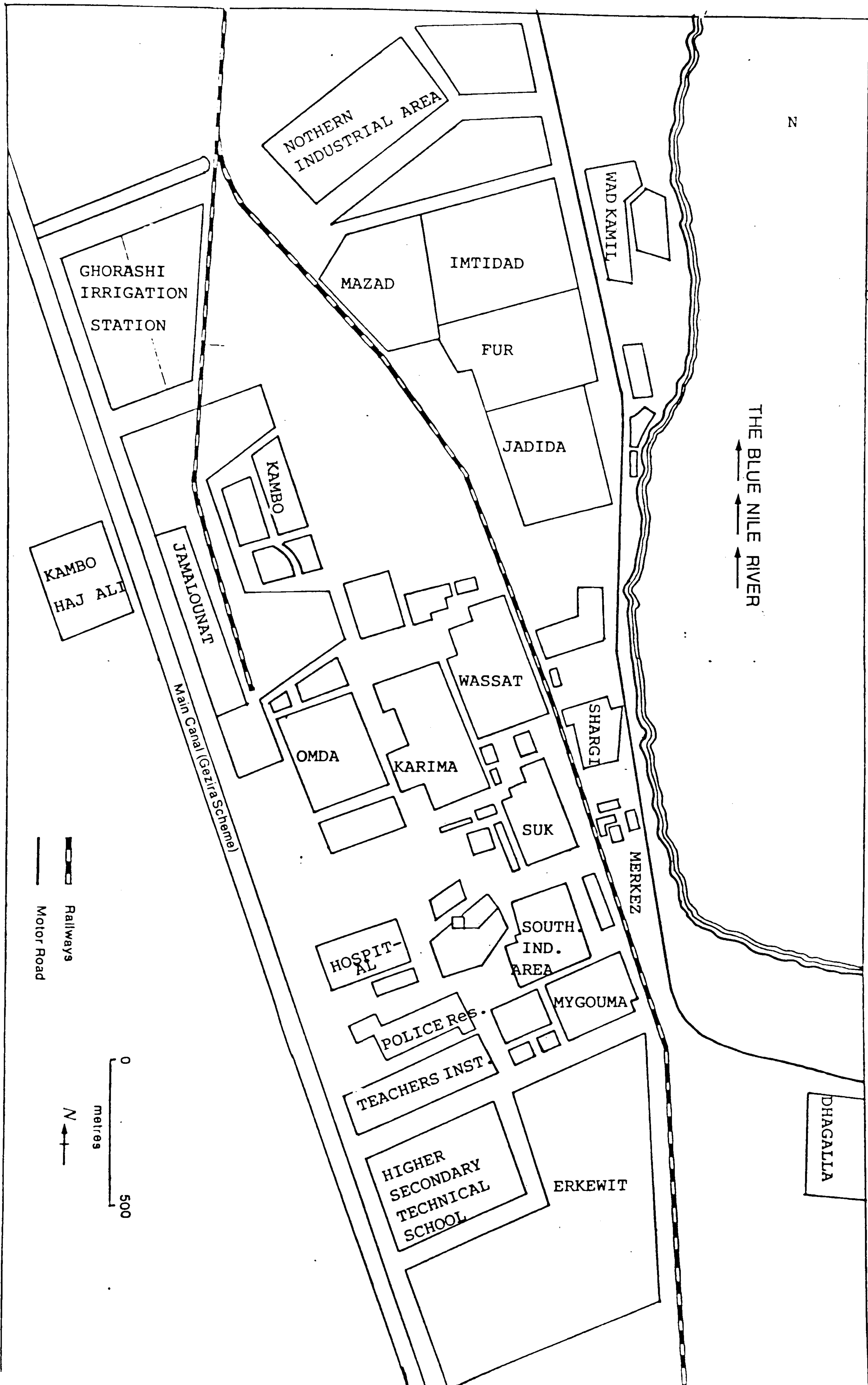
Every allotment shall impose upon the allottee the obligation to erect upon the land allotted within two years from the earliest date at which such allotments shall be made, or one year from the date of the particular allotment, whichever period shall be the longer, a building according to the TANZIM Regulations... all lands allotted but not built on in accordance with provisions of, and within the time specified by, this ordinance should become and be the absolute property of the Government.

In the case of Khartoum Town, however, the Governor-General declared<sup>8</sup> in November 1901 that:

Whereas there are a considerable number of allotments in the town which have not yet been built on in accordance with the ordinance of 1899.... all these lands shall become and be the absolute property of Government.



**MAP OF HASSAHEISA TOWN**  
 Fig. 5 LOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS



The Governor-General made a series of arrangements to allow for the forfeiture of such lands with the specific provision that such arrangements "shall not be suable for at law".

The terms of the 1899 Ordinance were particularly applicable to towns and settlements like Hassaheisa which were being newly-developed in lands that are the absolute property of the Government. Nevertheless, in both new and old towns, a policy effectively surrendering this "absolute Government's property" into the hands of private owners was promoted and adhered to since then. Various measures to this effect were, and indeed continue to be, applied with the net result of a continuous decrease in the public (government) property and a corresponding continuous increase in private landownership. The measures that were applied in the case of Hassaheisa were the grant of land policy, grant of land for houses for Government use, Government land purchase, lease and rent. Each of these measures will be reviewed briefly below.

#### 1. THE GRANT OF A PIECE OF LAND

In October 1915 (six years after the selection of the site of Hassaheisa as a military-administrative station) the Governor of the Blue Nile Province, on behalf of Sudan Government, and in consideration of proof produced to the satisfaction of the Land Settlement Officer that had formerly possessed land within the Hassaheisa Town Boundaries (as defined in the Sudan Gazette, no. 141 of 1st August 1908), granted to those people, their heirs and assigns certain pieces of land under certain clearly defined conditions. These conditions were such that any grantee is:



bound to build on the said piece of land within two years from the date of the issue suitable residential buildings with surrounding walls in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the inspector... in the event of non compliance with this condition, the Government may re-enter upon the said land without payment of compensation and all buildings then standing thereon shall become the property of the Government.<sup>9</sup>

In accordance with these conditions, 66 pieces of land of different sizes were granted to persons, mainly of the Dubasin group, who then began to build permanent abodes in the Shargi neighbourhood of the town to the east of Hassaheisa Rail Station. Members of the Iheimir and Feki el-Zwain families (who were headed by a tribal leader and a religious leader respectively) became the owners of most of these 66 pieces..The remaining members of the Dubasin population who had been persuaded to settle in the then being established town were mainly poor people and in many cases ex-slaves of the leading families. They were allotted pieces west of the rail-line in Wassat neighbourhood. Paradoxically, the relatively rich immigrant trading families of Turco-Egyptian origin were also granted some pieces in this neighbourhood (from 1915 to 1927, a total of 99 pieces of land averaging 550 sq. metres were granted here).

## 2. THE GRANT OF GOVERNMENT HOUSES:

Being aware of the practical need to stabilize certain sections of the town's newcomers and, in a sense, as a measure necessary in the process of reproducing them as a labour-force, the colonial administration launched a house-building project on government lands in the town for the exclusive accommodation of its own administrative personnel. In addition to houses for the senior



colonial administrators, the following houses were built between 1915 and 1935: 70 houses for the police-force in the south-west corner of the town, 12 houses for the prison guards adjacent to the Merkez, 19 houses for skilled and administrative employees of Sudan Railways around the station, and 21 larger and well furnished houses for the Merkaz staff north of the Shargi area. In addition to these, relatively large compounds were established for the residence of the Ghorashi Irrigation Station workers in 1925 and for the Ginneries administrators (Jamalounat) and workers (Kambo) in 1927, 1928 and 1929 respectively. In the course of time, government houses were also built in the town for senior government professionals such as teachers, physicians, water and electricity administrators and engineers and the like. Such housing was exclusively for the more privileged sections of the population who had permanent jobs and who were by virtue of their status granted the use for extended periods (sometimes for life) of houses built, owned and maintained by the government out of public expenses.

### 3. GOVERNMENT-LAND PURCHASE

The sale and purchase of Government land was governed by the Regulations For Applications For the Purchase or Lease of Government Lands<sup>10</sup> issued in 1905 which stipulated various procedures as follows:

The sale of town lands will be effected by public auction or tender. Public auctions of town lands will be held periodically, the date of sales being advertised as long before hand as possible. The auctioneer has the right to fix a reserve price. However, the highest bid shall, whether or not such bid exceeds the reserve price, be regarded as an offer to the Government by the bidder to buy the land at a price equal to the amount of such bid, which the Government shall be



entitled to accept or refuse as it thinks fit. Upon payment of the purchase price the purchaser shall be entitled to be let into possession or receipt of the rents and profits of the land executed by the Governor-General or some official authorized by him in that behalf.

Under the terms of these regulations, the District Commissioner sold 64 sites in the market area of Hassaheisa for the building of shops in 1915. Only a few local traders were at that time able or willing to buy any of these sites. In consequence, most sites went either to members of the dominant family of the Dubasin group or to headmen of nearby villages and tribal groups who were actively encouraged or persuaded by the administration to buy them. The main argument put to these prospective-purchasers was that the establishment of the market was a sign of the development of 'their' town and that the flourishing commercial future of the town would ensure good revenues from rents.<sup>11</sup> As trading activities in the market developed over time, further sites were sold in the same way: 43 sites in 1943/44, 183 in 1955, 77 in 1963 and 56 in 1979. The buyers were mainly local merchants who could by then afford to buy and develop sites out of their trading profits and the manipulation of their political powers in the Town's Council.

The relative commercial prosperity enjoyed by the market traders during the second half of the 1930s<sup>12</sup>, and the early years of the Second World War, also led them to persuade the local government administrators to hold auctions of new town lands for residential purposes. This particular pressure came mainly from the traders of Northern origins (*Shimmaliin*) who had, hitherto, lived as tenants in houses owned by members of the Dubasin group in the



Wassat neighbourhood. A series of auctions resulted in the sale of 136 plots in what has since been called Karima neighbourhood (named after a town in the Northern Province). During the same period, moreover, those Dubasin who benefited from rent revenues began to anticipate further opportunities as landlords, and were able to persuade the local administration through the influential Omda of the town, a Dubasin himself, to sell them most of the 161 plots auctioned in the Wassat neighbourhood, just north of the *suk*.

Following the boom caused by the increase in cotton prices in 1950/51, the rich merchants manipulated their contacts in the Town Council<sup>13</sup> to promote an auction of residential land in 1953. On this occasion, however, the plots were defined as Second Class (with all kinds of services) as opposed to the other neighbourhoods which had been defined as Third Class. A total of 124 plots were sold in what came to be the Omda neighbourhood- so named as the site was of agricultural land assigned for the Omda by the colonial administration. Most of the owners of plots were wealthy merchants and Dubasin tribal leaders, who moved out of their former neighbourhoods to congregate in the new Second Class area- and since residence in this neighbourhood was considered as symbol of relative wealth, status and power in the community.

In response to the generally worsening problem of housing, the Town Council decided to develop new areas as Third Class extensions in 1970/71. 314 plots were thus auctioned to form the Mazad neighbourhood (lit. "auction"); and all the plots went, as expected, to the wealthy residents of the town.

#### 4. GOVERNMENT LAND-LEASE

The Regulation For Application...Ordinance to which I referred earlier also stipulated various provisions concerning land-lease. These regulations are still operative and the Town



Council has used them quite extensively on behalf of the Government over the past 10 years. In brief, the regulations contain the following provisions for leasing Government lands:

- a) The Government may lease a piece of land for a specified term of time.
- b) The leasee must pay a yearly rent (at present 45 P.T. per sq. metre) in equal quarterly payments in advance of each quarter.
- c) The leasee must discharge all rates, taxes and impositions and perform any duties and liabilities to which the premises may be subject.
- d) The leasee must by a specified date, at present not more than one year from the lease date, erect a house, shop or warehouse in conformity with building, sanitary and other regulations and ordinances and in accordance with plans and specifications to be approved by the Government.
- e) The leasee has the right to transfer or transmit his interest under the lease, partially or completely. In this case he is required to give a notice in writing about transmission to the Government within six weeks of its occurrence.
- f) The lease is renewable but the lessee must give notice at least twelve months before the expiration of the granted term if he wishes to renew.
- g) The Government may require the premises for a public purpose at any time but must give six months notice of such requirement.

In leasing land within the terms of these regulations, the Town Council has used certain criteria of eligibility: length of residence of applicant in the town, type of present accommodation (if rented or not), and size and income of the applicant family. In practice, however, the decisive criterion is always

the amount of pressure an applicant can put on the Councillors as will be explained in Chapter 8. Land leased over the past ten years for dwelling houses has been mainly in two areas: 1) Imtidad, which is a residential extension in the northern part of the Town and has 258 plots first leased in 1972 as a Third Class area and, 2) Arkwit, another extension, in the southern part of the town which has 596 plots first leased in 1976/77 as a Second Class area.

Furthermore, as part of the Council's 'plan to encourage industrial development in the town', 56 plots (totalling 196500 sq. metres) are under distribution on lease for manufacturing purposes in the extreme northern part of the town since 1975. The criteria of eligibility for leasing were, and remain to be, exclusive in nature: they are based on considerations such as the financial ability of the applicant, on possession of a permit from the industrial authorities, and an approval by the Town Council's Committee for Development of Industry. Effectively, then, these criteria are satisfied by the wealthy merchants in the town to the exclusion of other categories and groups.

##### 5. GOVERNMENT-LAND RENT

On 11th November 1912, the Governor-General issued the Government Town Lands (Native Occupation) Ordinance, 1912.<sup>14</sup> The Ordinance was intended to regulate the occupation by 'natives' of government land in or close to towns where villages and *Deïms* had been allowed to develop. The ordinance stipulated the following conditions for the continuation of such occupation or for allowing new settlements to develop

- (a) Whenever it shall appear to the Governor desirable that natives frequenting a town should be allowed to occupy government land outside the town



for the purpose of establishing thereon a deim or village, the Governor may appropriate a suitable site on such land for such occupation and may allot to natives suitable plots within such area.

According to the Ordinance, such areas were to be known as *Native Lodging Areas*.

(b) An allottee was required to erect a shelter or a building in conformity with the regulations of health and order.

(c) An allottee might, with the consent of the Governor, *assign his rights to another native* of the Sudan; and upon his death, his heirs might succeed to the occupation of his plot.

(d) No person other than a native of the Sudan or of some part of Africa lying within the tropics may reside in or acquire any interest in a native lodging area, except by express permission of the Governor.

(e) Upon allotment of a plot the Governor may fix a rent payable to the Government by the occupier and recoverable in the same manner as rent from a tenant.

(f) But the occupation of government land in any native lodging area, for any length of time, whether with the express permission of a Governor or not, or whether expressly under the Ordinance or not, shall not entitle the occupier to any ownership in the land.

Under the terms of these conditions the town's authorities declared, surveyed, and allotted the following three Native Lodging Areas around the town of Hassaheisa starting in 1946. Prior to that, some of the inhabitants of these newly-designated areas lived there "illegally" (Fur", while others (Jadida and Mygouma) had been in the town centre. These areas are:

1. Al-Hilla Al-Jadida (the 'new village'), was established in 1946 mainly to accommodate persons coming from the Northern Province, and who were initially living in the town centre. With their jobs being in both the market area and the Ginneries of the Gezira sch-



eme, the new inhabitants constituted a relatively low-income group. A total of 308 plots, of 300 sq. meters each, were distributed and the annual rent was fixed at P.T.1 per meter. The rent system, however, was applied in the first year only and was subsequently abandoned when the town administration exempted the inhabitants from payments.

2. Hillat Fur (The village of Fur) was established in its present form and according to the ordinance in 1954, although it had been there since 1930s. It was distributed for persons from Western Sudan, but mainly of Fur tribal origin. These were primarily employed as unskilled workers in the Ginneries. A total of 214 plots were assigned, each of 300 sq. meters, and at the same rate of rent as in Al-Hilla Al-Jadida.

3. Mygouma: was established in 1951 with the original aim of providing plots for different low-income government employees-e.g. policemen, prison-guards and local government workers who could not be accommodated in government houses while their incomes did not allow for either buying or renting in the town centre. A total of 140 plots (300 sq. meters each) were distributed free of all rent charges, which measure was intended as a subsidy for government low-income employees.

The present patterns of the 'ownership' and use of land in Hassaheisa which came into existence through these five ways of transmission of public lands into private owners are a reflection of the prime process of privatization and commercialization throughout the town's history. The most dynamism of this process manifests itself in the continuous decline in the proportion of public property compared to the resultant continuous increase in the proportion and absolute size of private property. The changing pict-



Table 5:1     The Structure of Landuse in Hassaheisa, 1980

Functional use	Name of Area	Size (sq.m)	% (1)	% (2)
<u>Private Resid- ence</u>	Shargi	032368.75		
	Awssat	120731.25		
	Karima	086962.50		
	Omda (part)	085000.00		
	Mygouma	042000.00		
	Arkweit	238200.00		
	Jadida	099600.00		
	Imtidad	106800.00		
	Mazad	097012.50		
	Fur	085000.00		
	Wad el-Kamil	013125.00		
	R.Res. W./K.	161250.00		
	R.Res. Shargi	<u>018880.00</u>		
Total		1186930.00	16.49	30.77
<u>Public Resid- ence</u>	Police	033762.50		
	Omda (part)	006250.00		
	Merkaz	004758.75		
	Officials	041187.50		
	Kambo	240500.00		
	Gamalonat	161650.00		
	Others	<u>051674.25</u>		
Total		539783.00	7.5	13.99
<u>Manufacturing Industries &amp; Related</u>	N.Indust. Area	196500.00		
	Light Ind.Area	050500.00		
	Ginneries	<u>1020390.00</u>		
Total		1267390.00	17.61	32.86
<u>Trade &amp; Related</u>	Suk of Town	026462.50		
	Suk of Jadida	001250.00		
	Suk of Mazad	027600.00		
	Suk of Arkweit	017500.00		
	Wood Mourada	009906.25		
	Marisa Shops	009000.00		
	Petrol Depots	015750.00		
	Trad. Bakeries	004312.50		
	Auto. Bakeries	004600.00		
	Shargi Area	014600.00		
Total		095900.00		

Table Cont.

Table 5:1 Cont.

Functional Use	Name Of Area	Size	% (1)	% (2)
<u>Trade (cont.)</u>	Butcheries	001400.00		
	Hotels	002900.00		
	Durra Mourada	002587.50		
	Animal Pound	001575.00		
<u>Total</u>		114843.75	1.6	2.97
<u>Education</u>	Ahliya Int.Sch.	045500.00		
	Girls Int.& Sec.	011750.00		
	Girls Primary 1	006175.00		
	Boys Primary	002587.00		
	Girls Primary 2	002250.00		
	Shaabiya School	011250.00		
	Govt. Sec. Sch.	026406.25		
	Mygouma Primary	005775.00		
	Technical Sch.	218750.00		
	Erkeweit Sch.	023500.00		
	Imtidad Sch.	008000.00		
	Fur School	006400.00		
	Teachers Inst.	060500.00		
	Mahalig School	006175.00		
	Sec.Sch. Adm.	002400.00		
<u>Total</u>		437418.75	6.1	11.34
<u>Health Services</u>	Civil Hospital	044256.25		
	Erkeweit H.C.	010125.00		
	Child Centre	001500.00		
<u>Total</u>		055881.25	0.8	1.44
<u>Administrative &amp; Community Services</u>	Post Office	001200.00		
	Rates Office	002100.00		
	Local Govt.	003500.00		
	Merkez (Police)	005000.00		
	Rail Station	028125.00		
	Agriculture	005625.00		
	Labour & Service	002625.00		
	Water & Elec.Co.	002500.00		
	Mosques (4)	010500.00		
<u>Total</u>	Other Govt. Dept	001800.00		
		062975.00	0.9	1.63
<u>Recreation &amp; Sports</u>	Open Space	087190.50		
	Town Stadium	021750.00		
	Play Grounds	022500.00		
	Clubs	002000.00		
	Cinema	001925.00		
	Park	051687.00		
	Muolid Square	005400.00		
<u>Total</u>		191453.00	2.7	4.96
<u>Other Lands</u>	Reserve	124387.25		
	Roads, streets	3179038.00		
	Cemetery	035000.00		
<u>Total</u>		3338425.	46.4	

% (1), is total as percentage of total land area; % (2), total as a percentage of all land effectively used in town.

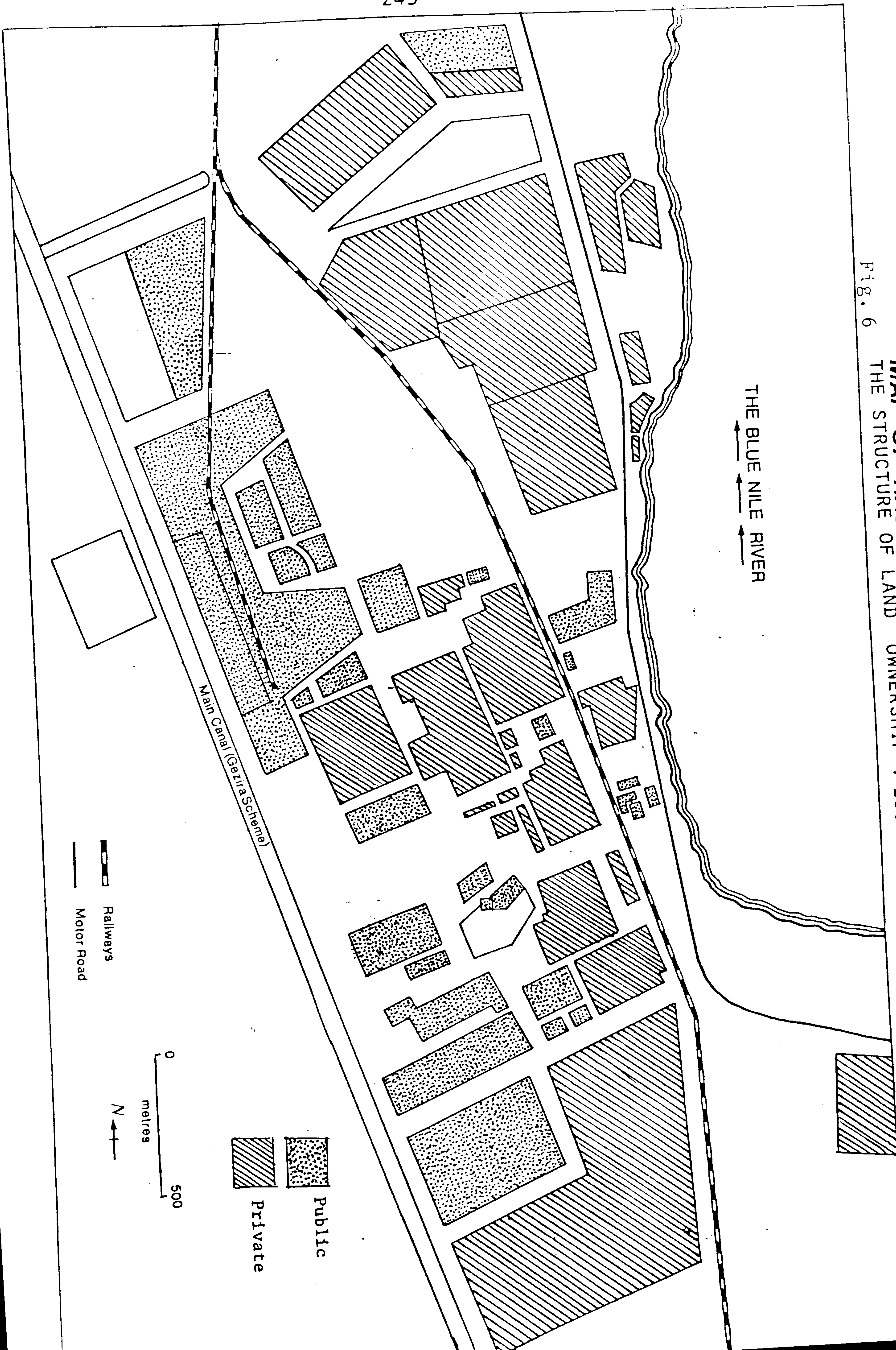
Total Town Area: 7195100 sq. meters; Area effectively used: 3856675 sq. metres= 53.6% of total land in town.

Source: Calculated from Map SSD Towns, T 3247, 2513; Hassaheisa.



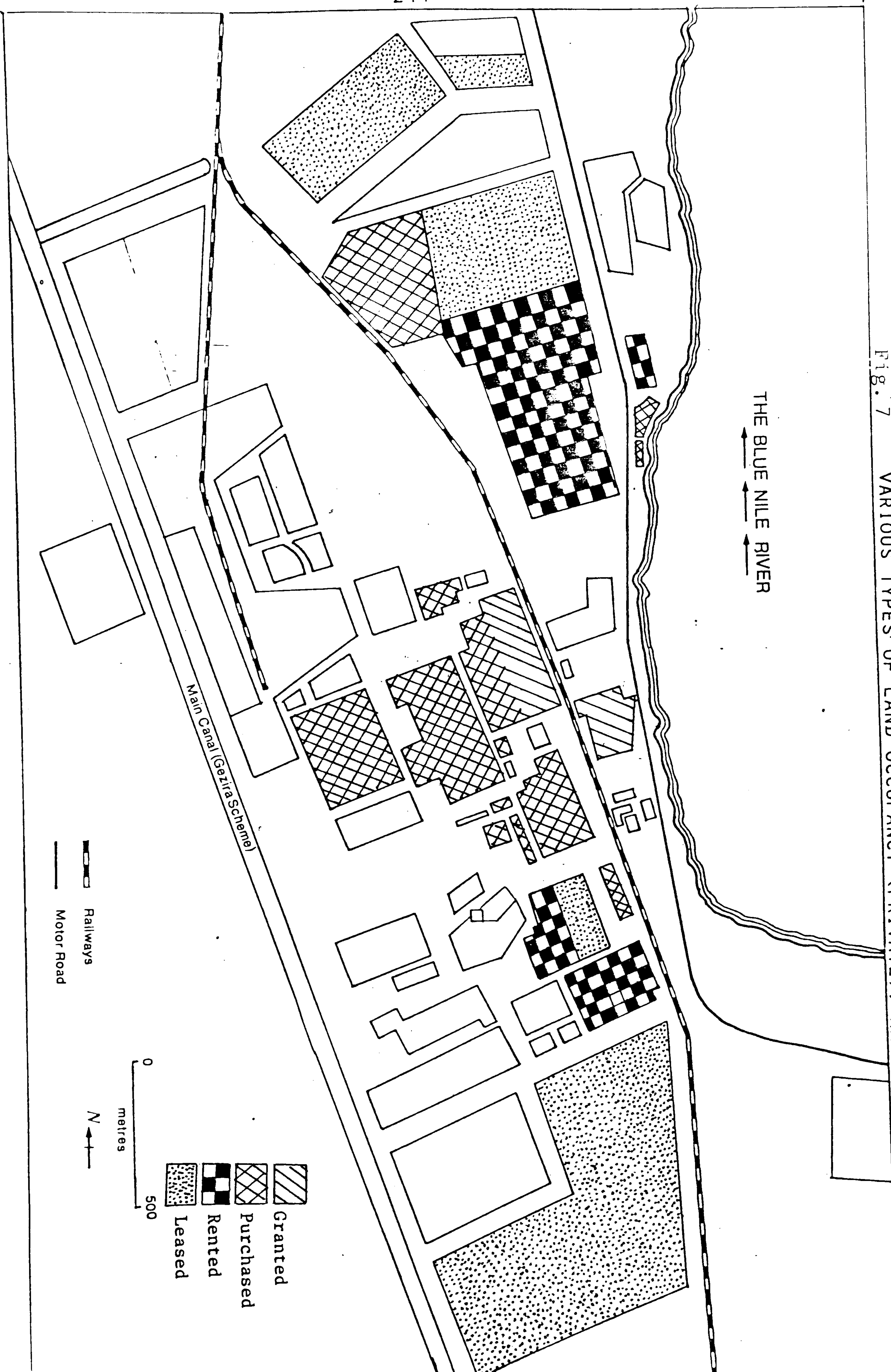
Fig. 6

**MAP OF HASSAHEISA, TOWN**  
THE STRUCTURE OF LAND OWNERSHIP', 1980





MAP OF HASSAHEISA TOWN  
Fig. 7 VARIOUS TYPES OF LAND OCCUPANCY (PRIVATE), HASSAHEISA, 1980





ure is striking. Table 5:1 summarizes the situation in 1980.

Privately-owned land has arisen from nil percent in 1900 to just over 40.0% in 1980, a rise which is probably typical of towns in the Sudan in general and those established by the colonial administration in particular. The following observations are of particular significance:

a) In the public sector (Government-owned land) which contains around 60.0% of total land, land use is largely confined to "social" services such as education, health, administration and subsidized housing (in Chapter 8 I shall argue that ultimately these services are serving the particular private interests of capital accumulation in various ways). Where manufacturing is concerned, we shall later (cf. Chapter 6) see that public ownership is in fact of help and support to private owners engaged in accumulation and that there is no case of public-owned property being used to generate surplus for the 'State'.

b) Apart from the personal accommodation of owner-occupiers, land in the private sector is used almost entirely in activities with a very high profit turn-over (mainly commerce, housing and manufacturing). In this way, privatization of the town's lands does not resolve the problems of housing as the original intention was, but intensifies this problem in the course of its surplus-generating use which conduced the development of the other process of commercialization to which we should turn now.

#### THE PROCESS OF LAND COMMERCIALIZATION

In order to appreciate the nature of the process of commercialization of land during the town's history, we must refer to the conditions which have allowed a high rate of turn-over in

land ownership in the private sector.<sup>15</sup> In the absence of these conditions, the commercial use of land would not have progressed as it has. The following conditions have been particularly important:

1. Although the legal status of most of the lands occupied by private individuals was never fully secured- because the Government reserved the right to repossess them, especially leased and rented land which constituted the greater proportion- in practice the occupiers have never been deprived of their titles.<sup>16</sup> This has been so inspite of the fact that in many cases the 'qualifications' of particular groups 'entitling' them to land have changed appreciably through time-e.g. when poor low-paid workers have effectively moved out of their former socio-economic category. Nor has any allottee's move to transfer his 'rights' over land occupied ever been challenged. Security of occupancy has thus contributed to a situation which allowed and promoted the use-value attached to land to be transformed into exchange-value. The main reason for the government unwillingness or impotence to enforce more strictly its own regulations and policies in regard to land allocation and occupation was simply that groups interested in maintaining the status quo had over time acquired too much political power to allow for such policies and regulations to be applied. The identification of these groups will emerge shortly in my analysis of the various aspects of the process of land commercialization.

2. The circumstances which gave a positive stimulus to commercialization were several and include:

- a) Compared to the difficulties and uncertainties surround-



ing capital accumulation in the main field of economic activity (i.e. trade), investment in urban land was very safe and constituted a secure way of safeguarding investors from the ravages of inflation which has been high throughout the main period of the town's growth.

b) Since the mid-1930s, real estate (urban land in particular) was the only form of property acceptable to the commercial banks as security for loans made to individuals, and the role of the banks in financing internal trade has assumed ever increasing importance.

c) From 1951 to 1964 in Hassaheisa (and even earlier in some other Sudanese towns), the right to participate in local government institutions was strictly restricted to rate-payers-i.e. to house-owners.<sup>17</sup> Thus the wealthy sections of the population (merchants in the case of Hassaheisa) were understandably anxious to purchase houses not only for themselves, but also for members of their families who were all potential voters. The importance of securing a hold on the local government council in the town for these wealthy sections is discussed in Chapter 8.

d) With a steadily increasing population containing many recent comers seeking houses while often still ineligible for land allocations, houses soon acquired the power to generate very substantial incomes through rent. And houses soon proved to be a highly secure and profitable form of investment. In this connection, it may be noted that most urban housing legislation has a strong bias in favour of the 'owners' at the expense of tenants, and this has a long history going back to the first legal document regulating the contractual relationship between 'owners' and ten-



ants prepared in 1910 by the Legal Secretary's Office, and approved by the Committee of the Sudan Chamber of Commerce.<sup>18</sup>

e) With a general increase in the severity of the housing problem, especially during the past twenty years, the wealthy inhabitants of the town have become highly conscious of both the real and potential value of urban land- whether or not developed. Speculative transactions in the land market have now reached unprecedented levels and there is, in consequence, increasing concentration of land in the hands of fewer and fewer wealthy persons.

THE PROCESS OF COMMERCIALIZATION: AN ILLUSTRATION

The various ways in which plots of land have been transferred within the private sector need to be illustrated in some detail if we are to appreciate how the process of commercialization has developed over the years. I will thus present a number of cases selected to illustrate, *inter alia*, (a) the close relationship between capital accumulation in trade and urban land, (b) the way in which the latter was derived from, and supported, the former and, (c) the manner in which kinship relations have, in situations of economic hardship for the poor, been manipulated to the benefit of those with the means to take advantage of the overall social and legal positions governing property by serving as a lubricant mitigating the whole process and its impact.

(1) Cases I and II are drawn from the Shargi and Wassat residential areas where granted lands were held on a system approximating that of free-hold property (*Milk Hur*). Most of the original occupiers were poor members of the Dubasin group subsequent to the out-movement of the wealthy elements as explained earlier. There were frequent property transactions among them to the benefit of non-resident wealthy relatives. Case I illustrate the way in which



a piece of land might find its way into the hands of a wealthy person as a "solution" for a family problem arising out of an inheritance dispute. Case II is an example of a not uncommon situation in which a "sale" advantageous to a wealthy person taken place to allow members of a poor family to move to, and build upon, a new plot of Government-leased land in a "cheaper" peripheral area of the town while vacating an older plot in a more "expensive" area nearer to the centre.

CASE I: Wad Hamid was granted Plot No. 7 in Section 12 of the Shargi area in October, 1915, according to land certificate registered under Title No. 74/1915. The area of the plot was 428 sq. meters. Wad Hamid died in the early 1950s and his plot was then divided between his heirs according to Islamic Sharria Law. According to the court verdict No. 33/1954, issued on 20th March, 1954, the plot was sub-divided and re-registered as follows: Amna (his wife), 53 sq. meters, Al-Tirifi (son) sold his share to his brother Hamid who also bought the share of his sister Fatima and thus acquired 233 sq. meters, Abdel Bagi (son) got 93 sq. meters while Al-Risala (daughter) inherited 47. The remaining 12 meters were reserved for marking out the limits between the different sub-divisions. Since Hamid could not afford to buy out all the shares of his siblings, and Al-Risala was married and moved to her husband's residence, a bitter dispute developed in the family (basically between Al-Risala and Abdel Bagi) about the use of their respective shares. Al-Tahir, a merchant and relative of the family, was then asked by the members of the family to buy the shares of all those who were in dispute as a way of eliminating the conflict. This eventually took place on 14th June, 1962 when the land causing the dispute was re-registered in the name of Al-Tahir.

CASE II: In 1915 Babiker was granted Plot No. 5 in Section 17 of the Wassat area. The plot was 830 sq. meters in area. Babiker re-registered 250 meters in the name of his eldest son when the latter married in 1943, keeping the rest of the family on 580 sq. meters. Babiker had six other sons and two daughters, and three of the former married and lived with their wives on their father's plot. When Babiker died in 1963, the siblings did not divide the plot among themselves. In 1970, however, they applied for four plots in Imtidat where land was being distributed on lease. Only



two plots of 400 sq. meters each were allocated to them- Plots 76 and 169- in the names of Hassan and Ali (the eldest sons). Following the allotment, however, they realized that their savings were insufficient to finance the buildings required. As they did not have access to formal credit, they sought informal help within their network of relatives. They approached a relative and 'close friend' of the family- Latif, a merchant- and struck a deal with him. He rejected any suggestion of financing them on formal credit terms, but agreed to buy the 580 sq. meters of the old plot plus 200 meters which made up half Plot No.76. Using Latif's money and building materials from the old demolished plot, the siblings erected a "reasonable and decent" dwelling on Plot 169 and the remaining half of No. 76, and were "grateful for Latif's generous help" as they put it.

(2) Cases III and IV below illustrate some of the ways in which the wealthier members of the community have been able to take advantage of the periodical public auctions of land in the market, parts of Wassat, Omda and Mazad areas, while the poor sections of the population were always fettered by their financial inability to make use here or even to participate.

CASE III: I mentioned earlier that 64 sites were auctioned in 1915 for shops in the market. At that time, the Omda of the settlement along with a few Sheikhs of the nearby villages and tribal groups were able to purchase the sites. The Omda and his family bought 21 sites, the traders 9, and the sheikhs 34. The buyers from these three groups were all at that period virtually the only people with access to the financial resources necessary for land acquisition. The Omda and the sheikhs were receiving a percentage of the taxes collected from their respective populations and the traders were able to utilize their profits.

CASE IV: More recently, in 1953, 124 plots were auctioned in Omda residential quarter. Much the same occurred as in 1915 although in this occasion the status of the buyers reflected the changing profile of wealth and power in the community. As seen in Chapter 4, and as will be discussed further in Chapter 8, the merchants had by then begun to thrust their way towards the apex



of the pyramid of wealth and power, while the traditionally wealthy and powerful native tribal administrators (in the town as well as in the countryside) had already lost considerable ground as a result of the establishment of local government administrative units on the one hand and, on the other, of the exemption of the population in the district from most taxes. The consequent changes in the status of those who were successful at the auctions are clearly reflected in the following table.

Table 5:2      Distribution of Purchased Plots in Omda Area  
Between the Various Groups As in 1953

Group of Buyer	No. of Plots	Percentage
Merchants with 1 plot each	39	31.5
Merchants with more than 1 plot	23	18.5
Near-by villages (traders mainly)	22	17.7
Members of the Omda's family	16	12.9
Others	24	19.4
Total	124	100.0

Source: Files in the Rates Office, Hassaheisa Town.

(3) Cases V and VI, moreover, are drawn from Mygouma, Jadida and Fur areas where rented lands had originally been allocated to the poorer sections of the population as Native Lodging Areas. Over the past twenty years, however, there have been intensive and speculative transactions here, partly as a result of the inclusion of these areas in the town boundaries in 1960. No steps had been taken to check the transfer of land into the hands of the wealthy speculators with the result that as land values rose in response to actual or artificial increases in populations, many transactions took place. In the immediate particular cases, these transactions served the interests of both the 'sellers' and 'buyers', but as part of a general process they contributed both to the accumulation of wealth in limited hands and to the growth and consolidation of a 'new' community in which land 'ownership' was acq-



uiring fresh significance. Both cases are illustrations of the kind of immediate concerns and interests which led the poorer members of the community to yield their plots to the wealthier.

CASE V: The 'sale' of a rented plot sometimes arises out of a poor family's need to meet an outstanding debt. When the family of a low-income worker has incurred a sizeable debt there will normally be no way in which this can ever be met without the disposal of the family's only valuable asset, namely land. This was the position in which Abdulla Hassan's family found itself. Abdulla first came to Hassaheisa from Argi village in the Northern Province in 1946. In 1949 he found a regular permanent job in the council as a worker in the Town Health Bureau. When the Government distributed the land of Mygouma in 1951, Abdulla was allotted a plot of 300 sq. meters on rent, where he built a small house of mud and sun-burnt bricks. Since then, his family has grown considerably and now consists of 8 members: himself and wife, one son and five daughters. Between 1972 and 1975 he was prevented by illness from working regularly and he received only half his basic salary. During this period, he began to borrow money for both medical treatment and family sustenance. In August 1975, however, he was eventually sacked from his job and received £S. 450 in gratuity. His 19 year-old son was by then working as teacher in an elementary school, but the family's debts were mounting and in June 1977 they 'sold' their house and the plot of land (No. 13, Section 2) to Al-Nour (a merchant and urban-property owner) for £S. 4000. They met their debts of about £S 2700 and the remaining sum of money was used by Abdulla to start trading in a kiosk. At the same time, the family moved to a smaller rented house in Imtidad where they pay £.S. 11 per month.

CASE VI: Abbakar Hussein came to Hassaheisa in 1950 and got a job with the Social Services Department of the Sudan Gezira Board. Initially he was living in a house owned by the Board, but in 1954 he was allotted Plot No. 65, Block 89, in the Fur area. He brought his family from Um-Kaddada in Western Sudan to join him in 1956. His two daughters and three sons (all born in Hassaheisa) attended different schools in the town. In 1978 Abbakar died; and



though his family received some money from the Board, they decided, or more accurately, were persuaded to sell their house to Mr. Latif, the merchant referred to earlier, for only fS 3000. The members of the family subsequently moved to Um-Kaddada in 1979 to live with their relatives.

Cases VII, VIII and IX, moreover, are examples drawn from areas where government land was leased from 1970 onwards. In general terms, the process of commercialization is seen to be operating in an even more intensive and articulated way than we have so far illustrated. It may well be that the rapid rate of transfer and of polarization in relation to leased lands is due to the fact that leasing was first undertaken with speculative interests. Though this is difficult to prove empirically, it is certainly true that the wealthier sections of the population have benefited most despite the fact that leasing was initially intended, at least according to the formal government statements, as a measure to provide housing areas for those with limited incomes. The way in which the wealthier persons have taken advantage of opportunities arising over leased lands is illustrated by the following cases.

CASE VII: Not uncommonly, a wealthy person applies for several plots through his relatives (sons, parents, brothers, etc.) who are not necessarily entitled to leases, but who benefit from the influential contacts in the Council by the wealthy person who is providing them. The following is a case in point. Ismail, Deputy Chairman of the Town Council and a merchant in the market, lives in Fur area in his 'own' house. In 1976, he applied for, and was awarded, a lease for a plot of land in Block 91 of Arkweit (the southern extension) area in the name of his son, Hassan, who was in Saudi Arabia since 1975. He then persuaded his cousin Mohammed Adam to apply for two plots, one in the latter's name, the other in the name of Mohammad's son. Both applications were successful.



The terms of the 'deal' were such that Ismail was helping Mohamed, who up to that time lived in a rented house, to acquire property on the condition that the latter would agree to sell the second plot, of Mohamed's son, to Ismail. Ismail thus acquired Plot No. 195 in the name of his son, Hassan, and Plot No. 252 through purchase from Mohamed's son, while Mohamed acquired Plot No. 169.

Case VIII: In other cases, leased land has been acquired through a process of gradual "purchase". This may happen when an original leaseholder is unable to finance building on his land from his own resources. In the absence of any formal system of building credit, leaseholder then has one option only which is to seek credit from informal sources, normally merchants, who are usually most willing to make advances because they know that chances of the leaseholder ever repaying his debt are uncertain. In due course, the leaseholder often finds himself under pressure to "sell" his land in order to make the repayment. The following is a factual case:

Ali Abdel Majid, a worker on Sudan Rail since 1957, had a family of seven living in a one-bed-roomed house, owned by Sudan Rail and adjacent to the Station. In 1971 he applied for, and was granted a plot in Imtidad area. He used up all his savings to buy a small fraction of the total amount of building materials necessary to build a small humble house and then began to seek credit for the rest. Mr Yousif, a merchant and a relative, readily made him a loan and began to build the house in 1972. With sharp rises both in the costs of materials and in the wages of builders, however, it was soon apparent that the initial loan would be quite insufficient. In 1973 he attained a further loan, again from Yousif, but in due course this again fell short of the total required especially for the roof of the house. In 1974, Ali again approached Yousif who, however, was either unable or unwilling to make further advance saying that he had already used all his available finances for an important commercial deal in Khartoum. Ali again approached Yousif on several further occasions, but was refused each time with different apologies. Meanwhile he continued to live in the house provided by Sudan Rail though this was most inadequate. In due course it became apparent to him that he would never complete his new house, especially in view of the high rate of inflation in the country as a whole. Thus when Yousif put it to Ali that he (Yousif) was prepared to help him (Ali) by buying the



house under construction, deducting the loan and paying out the balance, Ali accepted immediately. Consequently, Plot No. 82, Block 88, Imtidad area, is now leased to Yousif, rather than to Ali, the original leaseholder.

Case IX: Land speculators also acquire land through direct "purchase" from leaseholders who do not wish or not able to keep their plots for extraneous non-financial reasons. This is the case, for example, when a person who is not eligible for a plot is allocated one corruptly, and then naturally wishes to get rid of it. Or, in another situation, a person who is eligible to hold a plot may simply not wish to build there. He is therefore willing to "sell" that plot in order to have the price to "buy" elsewhere or for other purpose. This was the position with Abdul-Sallam- a petty trader and resident of Hassaheisa since 1951. He and his family of ten members lived in a rented house in Wassat area for many years. In 1975 he applied for a leased plot and was allocated Plot No. 46, Block 92, in Arkweit area. Since the rent for his accommodation was relatively low (only £S 12 per month) he had no intention of moving and he immediately sold the plot to Abdel-Rahim (a merchant) using the money to further his (Abdel-Sallam) own trading activities.

In addition to the cases listed above, it is not uncommon for persons to acquire land with the help, and at the instigation, of influential political patrons in the Council, and for the land to be subsequently sold to such patron. We shall encounter such cases in Chapter 8 on the local politics of the Town Council.

To depict the degree of concentration of land in fewer and fewer hands, I collected full information on the holdings of eight "well known" land owners in the town. It must be stated clearly that I collected the information about them on the bases of general knowledge of their property in the town community. My reasons for adopting this procedure were two. Firstly, there is systematic classified registry of urban land ownership in the names of the real owners because the big owners tend not to register all their lands in their own names. Instead, they use the names of wives, sons, daug-

Table 5:3      Number of Properties Held by 8 Families in Hassaheisa, 1980

Name of Owners	Suk	Onda	Shargi	Awsat	Karima	Mygouna	Jadida	Fur	Mazad	Imtidad	Arkewit	Total	Remarks
Rheimer Family	21	16	4	17	1	-	7	3	4	-	3	74	Tribal Leader
Hassan & Bros.	33	8	2	24	5	6	32	14	22	15	8	169	Contractor
Abdel Rahim	36	7	3	17	2	2	27	15	17	9	6	141	Merchant
Yousif	14	4	1	7	3	3	15	8	20	2	3	80	Merchant
Latif	19	9	2	27	5	3	11	19	37	8	7	147	Merchant
El-Tahir	31	2	6	5	-	-	8	7	14	2	1	76	Merchant
Al-Nur	17	-	-	2	-	23	2	-	3	3	6	56	Broker
Osman	36	2	3	15	12	3	5	10	41	10	5	142	Merchant
Total held by all 8 families	207	48	21	117	28	40	107	78	158	49	39	885	
Total Sites	320	124	66	260	136	140	308	214	314	258	596	2736	
Holdings of the 8 families as % of all sites in each area	64.7	38.7	31.8	45.0	20.6	28.6	34.7	35.5	50.3	19.0	6.5	32.3	

Source: Files of the Rates Office, Hassaheisa Town, Sudan.



hters, parents, etc. as a precaution against the possible confiscation of property by the courts in the event of bankruptcy (usually in commerce). Secondly, I often found it difficult, and even impossible, to obtain reliable data from owners through interviews. Almost all of them were unwilling to be questioned in detail and in some cases gave information which I knew to be misleading. I therefore abandoned my initial attempts to gather such data on a random sample basis. The information I give is therefore illustrative rather than strictly representative.

After selecting eight "well-known owners", I set about collecting the names of all their dependents and close relatives from key informants. This is a considerable task in a Sudanese community. Not only it is the practice to keep women's names confidential to families, but of course husbands and wives do not share the same surname. Despite these difficulties, I compiled lists which I have reasons to believe are accurate. The full lists of relatives and dependents of the eight owners were then checked against the files of registered town lands in the Rates Office. Table 5:3 gives the numbers of plots in different areas "owned" by each of the eight owners whether as "freehold", rented, or on lease.

The following observations may be made on this table together with Table 5:4 which is based on my own survey of 410 households in different areas of the town:

- (1) The rich of Hassaheisa town are not only free of the housing problems which the poor have to suffer but they effectively control the town's property market.
- (2) Land and property has increasingly geared to the generation of profits and to capital formation and accumulation.
- (3) The main form of profit, beside occasional speculation, comes from the widespread practice of renting. That is why, as shown in

Table 5:4      Housing Occupancy in Hassaheisa, 1980

Area	Owner-Occupier <sup>1</sup>		Tenants		Free Houses <sup>2</sup>		Average Rent per House <sup>3</sup>
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Omda	9	64.3	4	28.6	1	7.1	30
Karima	12	57.1	9	42.9	-	-	25
Mygouma	5	41.7	7	58.3	-	-	12
Shargi	13	68.4	5	26.3	1	5.3	10
Awssat	42	62.7	22	32.8	1	1.5	20
Mazad	20	64.5	11	35.5	-	-	15
Imtidad	23	63.9	13	36.1	-	-	12
Jadida	35	71.4	14	28.6	-	-	13
Fur	21	56.8	16	43.2	-	-	15
Kambo	-	-	-	-	86	100.0	-
Wad Kamil	15	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Other Areas	-	-	2	9.6	19	90.4	10
Total of Sample	195	48.2	103	25.4	107	26.4	

(1) Owner-occupier houses includes houses on free-hold as well as government-leased sites.

(2) Free housing is provided by Sudan Government- usually to senior government officials, but may also be for unskilled workers as in the case of Kambo area in Hassaheisa.

(3) The average rent (calculated for rented houses only) is for a calendar month (in Sudanese Pounds).



Table 5:4, only 48% of householders dwell in their own houses (freehold, leased, or rented from the government), while some 25% are rent payers. This is so despite all political pronouncement by the Town Council concerning the "eradication of the housing problem". As the Table shows, the situation is worst in the Suk area where small traders often pay relatively high rents in addition to initial payments to those who leave the site and which they succeed (Khilo-Rijil). As was shown in the previous Chapter, only 18.1% of traders own shops and 69.4% rent them, while 12.5% hold them under special arrangements with the Council.

#### CONCLUSION:

The "greed" for urban land, and the consequent "land problem", in Hassaheisa and, I believe, more generally in urban Sudan, originated through the specific mode of capital accumulation engendered by the imposition of the colonial and neo-colonial capitalist economy. Those who have some capital and are anxious to accumulate more (usually merchants), have had good opportunities to invest their capital in land as an *auxiliary* source of profit, and this has been facilitated by the urban land policies pursued by the colonial and neo-colonial states. Such merchants as were able to invest in urban land, saw this as a way of providing a *hedge* against the insecurities inherent in their main sphere of accumulation, namely commerce. In this way, the processes of *privatization* (the transfer of public land to private ownership), and of *commercialization* (the transformation of land use values into exchange values) have become essential aspects of the reproduction of the main process of commercial capital accumulation in trade. From the point of view of the individual merchant, the possibility of acquiring a stake in urban property was often seen as a helpful supplement to

main concern of pursuing capital accumulation through commerce.

Thus he is kept content and satisfied with his "minimum" share in trade profits.



FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER V

1. Cf. Awad, M.H., 1971, pp. 212-28; and Warburg, G., 1971, pp. 155-164; and Ahmed, A.M., 1982.
2. As it was the case in Suakin and Khartoum. The case of Khartoum is illustrated in Stevenson, R.C, 1966, pp. 1-35.
3. For example, Gover-General Gordon's evacuation of Khartoum as pointed by Mclean, W.H., 1911, pp. 577-8.
4. Cf. El-Bushra, E., 1971, pp. 14-17.
5. The Ordinance had been originally issued in Sudan Gazette, No. 2, 27th May 1899, and amended in Sudan Gazette, No. 26 1st August 1901.
6. The application of the Ordinance was later extended to other towns in Sudan, e.g. Kassala, Al-Gadarif, Eddueim, and Al-OBeid in 1904/
7. Sudan Gazette, No. 33, March 1902.
8. A Governor-General Proclamation, Sudan Gazette, No. 30, 1st December, 1901, pp. 70-2.
9. See Appendix No. 4 for a full text of a typical Land Certificate in Hassaheisa, obtained from Land Registration Office.
10. Sudan Gazette, No. 79, 1st August 1905, pp. 351-60.
11. A recorded interview with Mr. Yousif Al-Amin Iheimir on 5th November, 1980, Hassaheisa.
12. This situation was reported with apparent "pleasure" by the District Commissioner, Northern Gezira, Annual Report, 1937 Sudan Archives, Durham, Box 214/3, p. 8.
13. Since 1951, and as a result of the Local Government Ordinance of 1951, the local Town Council in Hassaheisa was recognized as "a corporate body of perpetual existence", with its own financial resources, and power to maintain its own staff, to provide important local services, to make and execute policies, and to pass laws of local application. Merchant was always dominant in the Council, see Chapter 8.
14. Sudan Gazette, No. 225, 23rd November 1912, pp. 700-3.
15. Throughout this chapter, I refer to the "ownership" of land to cover both legal ownership and secure occupation- tant-amount to ownership- through leasing and renting.
16. There was only one significant exception to this, that of the recent eviction of a Fellata resident group and of Merrisa (Local beer) shops from their respective areas with the use of the government's powers of eviction. A more detailed analysis of this case is provided in Chapter 8.

17. Mahmoud, F.B., 1978, p. 138.
18. The full text of this was "published for the information of all persons who may wish to use it", in Sudan Gazette, No. 76, June 1910, pp. 291-2.



## CHAPTER SIX

### CAPITAL ACCUMULATION: MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I focus on the analysis of those aspects of the town's economy where capital accumulation has taken place through the whole or partial manufacturing of particular commodities whether on a large or small scale. For the purpose of discussion I have classified firms as large or small according to the number of workers they employed- 20 or more and less than 20 respectively.

## HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY STRUCTURE

Contrary to the situation in many parts of the Sudan<sup>1</sup>, "modern manufacturing" industry (i.e. industry based on factory production) had begun early in this century in the case of Hassaheisa. The reason for this is that, prior to World War II British colonial policy was directed mainly to the creation of an export-oriented economy based solely on primary agricultural products and, as we have seen in Chapter 4, the Gezira Scheme was set up in 1925 specially to produce cotton for export; and although the intention clearly was that the Sudan should remain a large "agricultural farm", the intensive development of cotton production in the Gezira had important industrial side-effects in the region. Thus the establishment of cotton-ginning factories close to the area of cotton cultivation marked the first appearance of modern industry anywhere in the Sudan. During the years 1928-29 the concession company, Sudan Plantation Syndicate, established four ginning factories in Hassaheisa, each consisting of eighty gins. These factories were soon ginning about half of the cotton produced in the whole area of the Gezira Scheme.

Ginning simply consists of "the removal of cotton seed from its woolly outer covering of cotton fibre, so that it can be spun into yarn, and eventually woven into cloth".<sup>2</sup> As such, it



never developed beyond its primary nature of being essentially a preparatory processing operation necessary for easy freight and handling. At present, however, there are seven ginning factories in Hassaheisa, all of which nationalized in 1950 together with the whole Gezira Scheme. But these factories, whether operating under the Concession Company or, later, under the Sudan Gezira Board - which is a public corporation- have played a prominent role in the process of private capital accumulation through the contractor-worker arrangements by which labour for the factories was, and still is, hired and ultimately exploited. (These arrangements are discussed in the course of this chapter).

The outbreak of the World War II provided the first chance for the development of privately owned manufacturing industries in the Sudan. When certain manufactured goods could no longer be imported owing to the conditions of war, it was considered necessary to ensure a local supply. Thus the government's War Supply Department was in 1942 required to set up a

Local Industries Investigation Committee to advise on what industries should be established ... that could utilize local raw materials and so relieve the country of the need to rely on imports.<sup>3</sup>

In consequence, some very small industrial enterprises were established in the country; in Hassaheisa they included oil-pressers, mineral water-bottling and ice making plants, and wood workshops. When importation was resumed after the end of the War, however, these industries were unable to withstand the competition of imported goods. As a result, most of these establishments closed down between 1948 and 1950 and similar firms did not re-open for at least 20 years.



In the intervening period, especially after 1955, some repair work-shops were established in the Light Industrial Area of Hassaheisa<sup>4</sup>, which was in that year established and distributed by the town's administration to the south of the market. It was mainly an area of small workshops (blacksmiths, mechanics, carpenters, etc.) originally performing various repairs of metal items, motor cars, agricultural machinery, and wood furniture. During the past ten years, however, these firms began to produce commodities as well (e.g. the metal and wood workshops have begun to produce items such as chairs, tables, doors, windows, and beds for the market). I shall shortly analyse the pattern of accumulation in this area of manufacturing.

On the other hand it was only in the mid to late 1970s that large scale manufacturing industries began to operate in Hassaheisa as a sphere of capital accumulation and investment and of labour employment by private investors. While one large factory was established in public ownership- the Friendship Textile Factory erected in 1976 with Chinese aid to manufacture Gezir cotton and with a capacity of 16 million metres per year- eight privately owned factories were established in the Northern Industrial Area of the town for the manufacture of several commodities (mineral water and ice, vegetable oil, yeast, and bread). In addition, two large-scale workshops for the repair and service of agricultural machinery were opened with private capital.

#### PATTERNS OF ACCUMULATION INDUSTRY

In this section I briefly outline the different patterns of accumulation in each of the several industrial firms. The main purpose, in addition to the general aim of characterizing the nature of manufacturing industry in the town, is to identify the specific historical configuration of industry as a form of capi-



tal accumulation in a Sudanese urban setting. I dwell on industry in both public and private sectors.

*(1) The Public Sector*

(a) Hassaheisa Cotton Ginneries:

The ginneries had originally been established in 1927/28 by the British-owned Sudan Plantation Syndicate. The need for centralized processing of cotton prior to export was the main reason for this initiative. The machines were financed by company and imported from Britain. The senior supervisory and skilled jobs (i.e. administrators, engineers, cotton classifiers, accountants, etc.) were exclusively filled by foreigners<sup>5</sup>, and this continued even after nationalization in 1950. The labour force was, and still is, classified into the following different categories

(i) Labour employed by the Syndicate (later the Board) which includes labour employed directly in the ginning factories. This labour force is sub-divided into three categories<sup>6</sup>:

*Permanent*: those members of personnel whose work is of such a nature that they have to be employed continuously (e.g. engineers); they are all people with specialized skills and know how and in Hassaheisa in very recent years they have increasingly been of Northern Province origins, though they used to be foreigners.

*Semi-Permanent*: those whose work is of such a nature that they need to be laid off for periods of time in excess of their normal leave but whose services the management wishes to retain (e.g. factory carpenters, machine operators, and greasers).

*Seasonal*: those who are normally employed for 3-4 months during cotton movements at factories (e.g. cotton receivers, weighers, doorkeepers, yardkeepers, markers, and ghaffirs).

The total number of this labour force is currently 690 workers.



(iii) Labour Employed by Contractors:

This is all seasonal labour employed by ginning contractors for largely unskilled jobs both outside and inside the factories. Usually the management asks a contractor to provide labour to perform such work at the factory site. The contractor is paid according to an agreed rate per kantar of ginned cotton. The contractor's responsibility includes the recruitment, transport to the work site, as well as the supervision of such labour. His ultimate interests (to allow accumulation to take place) depends on his ability to depress the costs of the labour force (e.g. wages, transport, supervision costs) as much as possible and to achieve the highest possible productivity.

Outside the factories the factories, these workers are loaders and off-loaders, entry gang workers, hod porters, seed room porters, and bale weighing porters, (on average 267 workers per factory); inside the factories they work as gin feeders and do other miscellaneous jobs (on average 309 workers per factory). Thus the contractor controls (and in effect exploits) over 4000 workers at the seven factories situated in Hassaheisa. The majority of outside workers are normally recruited from the Sennar and Singa Districts (south of the Gezira Province), while others come from the Gedarif, Kostî, Um-Rwaba and El-Obeid Districts. Most of these workers are Fellata (Nigerians), Taisha and Baggara of Western Sudan. Initially they used to return to their respective districts after the ginning season at the expense of the contractor, but since 1940 certain groups have been persuaded to stay permanently in the residential camps established by the Syndicate, and have been given pieces of land in the irrigated area for durra cultivation.<sup>7</sup> This was prompted by two reasons; first



to save the contractor the transportation expenses and depressing the costs of labour, and second to use this labour- Fellata in particular- during the off-season in loading cotton seeds for exportation and other casual jobs. Most of the inside workers, where jobs expose them to the most health hazards, are given usually to Fellatta or migrants recruited annually from Eritrea.

To enhance the contractor's opportunities for accumulation, the Syndicate (and later the Board) have subsidized the costs of labour reproduction through the provision of free "housing" and free water supply and two meals (lunch and dinner) and morning and evening tea daily during the ginning season.<sup>8</sup> The contractor/labour relationship is a one of direct and open exploitation and extraction of surpluses necessary for further accumulation which is only possible by virtue of the existence of the ginneries. To substantiate this assertion, I dwell in some detail on arrangements for the season 1980/81, and then examine the finances of the contractor in the previous four seasons for comparison.

When the management called for tenders for the provision of labour for the ginning of the cotton crop of the season 1980/81, Mr. Abdel Azim Saeid and Abdel Khalig won the contract. They were both prominent merchants. Their considerable financial ability was clearly a major factor in gaining the contract. Their bid was for a contract valued at £S 0.680 per kantar and this was accepted. The crop of this season was particularly low<sup>9</sup>, and the total amount ginned was only 542273.14 kantars giving a return of £S 368,745.735 (i.e. 542,273.14 kantars multiplied by £S 0.680). The daily wages paid ranged from £S 0.900 to £S 1.250, with an average of £S 1.0 per day per worker. As the normal season lasts 3 to 4 months, we may calculate on the basis on 120 working days, giving a total wage bill of £S 48,384.000 (i.e. 120 days multiplied by 4032 workers multiplied by £S 1.000). The gross profit left to the contractors would thus have been £S 320361 from which they would have been expected to pay the stipulated Business Pro-



fit Tax (though this can usually be evaded either partially or wholly), the cost of labour transport (which has been drastically cut down during the past fifteen years as more workers have been accommodated in the Board's residential area), and the supervision costs which are usually kept low by using ordinary workers in supervising capacities, and also by asking them to do much of the recruiting in reward for relatively higher wages thus absorbing these costs in the differential structure of wages.

The following Table gives comparable data for the seasons 1976/77 to 1980/81. Column (1) gives the total amount of cotton actually ginned and processed each year in kantars; Column (2) shows the bid value per kantar agreed by the contractors to provide the labour; column (3) the approximate sums actually received by the contractors; and column (4) the average daily payment to each worker during the ginning season. The total wages paid may therefore be arrived at by multiplying the average daily wage by the normal length of period (up to 120 days) and by the total maximum number of workers (say, 4032) per season.

Table 6:1 Proceeds to Ginning Contractors, 1976-1981

Season	(1) Ginned Cotton in Kantars	(2) Bid Value per Kantar (£S)	(3) Proceeds to Contractor	(4) Average Daily wage per worker (£S)
1976/77	875,003.76	0.350	306,251.3	0.340
1977/78	1100,346.14	0.420	462,145.4	0.460
1978/79	825,264.76	0.520	429,137.7	0.680
1979/80	707,876.81	0.650	460,119.9	0.810
1980/81	542,273.14	0.680	368,745.7	1.000

Source: Various files for different years in Hassaheisa Ginning Factories Administrative Office (I am indebted to Mr Rashid Hamza Saeid, a clerk at this office, who identified and provided the files).

As the Table shows, the operation has consistently been profitable. Significantly, these contracts for ginning-labour used to be



exclusively awarded to foreign commercial business firms, especially during the period of the Syndicate administration. The most reputable of such firms were Alexandre Saphidly, Petro Steridons and William Ferwa. After Independence in 1956, however, some local businessmen began to win contracts (e.g. Abdel Rahim Ahmed, Ahmed Awad Sid, El-Jack Omran, Sadik al-Faki and Mohammed Salih Jirays). The names in both groups are mainly of urban merchants, and all treated the activity in a mercantilist fashion: they 'bought' the labour power of the migrant workers at the lowest possible price (wages) and 'sold' this labour to the Syndicate or the Board at a higher price (the contract value) whereby they realized a 'profit' (the surpluses appropriated) that enhanced the general process of capital accumulation.

*(b) The Friendship Textile Factory:*

Using a loan of LS 19 millions from the People's Republic of China, the Government of Sudan, through the Public Corporation for Industrial Production, imported, built and equipped a large factory in Hassaheisa in 1976. The factory benefited from Chinese technical help and was designed to spin and weave a substantial part of the Gezira cotton crop. The factory has a capacity to produce 16 million meters of treated fabrics, but so far it achieved only 60% of its maximum capacity. The factory employs 1500 permanent and 400 casual workers in the different sections and phases of its production process; and the labour force is organized into two working shifts (morning and evening) of eight hours each. A considerable section of the working force (some 500) was recruited from near-by villages. The factory owns a fleet of 10 buses and hires a further 12 to transport the workers daily and between shifts from their places of



of residence ( whether in the town or in near-by villages) to the factory site and back. It may also worth noting that about 300 of the workers are women..

As State-owned enterprise, the factory transfers systematically its surpluses to the central government whenever it realizes any. The factory's management has little or no knowledge of various aspects of local reinvestment, expansion and promotion.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless the process of private capital accumulation at the town level benefits in a number of ways. In addition to the general increase in the effective demand for various commodities and services resulting from incomes out of employment in the factory, transport contracts provided a considerable source for profiteering. This was, and continues to be, particularly true in the light of the fact that most of the factory's buses (6) are presently virtually defunct. Thus during my stay there in 1980 there were 18 private buses hired by the factory management at an average daily charge of LS 30.000. Another way of how this public venture boosts private capital accumulation is seen in the opportunities it provided to investors in the building and housing sectors. Most of the vacant lands of the near-by village of Al-Sadaga (Friendship) have been bought by some Hassaheisa merchants and houses were built on them to provide accommodation for tenants brought in by the factory. Chances of accumulation are also enhanced by the fact that this residential area, though only separated by a road from the town, is officially considered outside the boundaries of the town.(i.e. part of a village under the administration of Wad Habouba Rural Council) and thus building, letting and all incomes derived therefrom are legally immune from urban taxation and fees.



## 2. THE PRIVATE SECTOR

As explained in Chapter Four, private investments in industry are seen by those who enter into them as one way out of the stagnant, and even declining, rate of commercial capital accumulation in trade in Hassaheisa. The town has thus become a locale of a number of private industrial firms, both small and large scale.

### *(a) Small-Scale Industry*

This category includes a number of workshops producing various household items such as furniture and doors. There were at the time of the field study 62 workshops producing metal goods and 13 producing wood goods. They are normally organized to cater for both commodity production and for individual orders. Almost all the materials (e.g. metal and wood sheets, bolts, paints, welding electrodes, glue, and other finishing materials) are imported from foreign sources, as are nearly all the equipment and implements (e.g. planes, hammers, screw-drivers, saws, drills, paint brushes and other engineering accessories).

The average size of the labour force per workshop is five. Individual workers are usually recruited as apprentices, but are often relatives of the owners. Thus they receive very low wages; usually little more than is required to cover their barest living costs (*Shaghal-Bi-Batnu*). The whole production process is organized in such a manner as to allocate these workers crude manual tasks, and the owner of a workshop as a master (*Usta; Mu'alim*) is in effect also a kind of team leader and general manager. Owners of workshops usually perform all the technical work involved in production as well as all supervisory and organizational functions of the actual job. In principle, owners are generally expected to transmit their skills to the workers and to guide them into establishing their own independent workshops, but in practice this is seldom the

case and my data have led me to the following conclusions:

(a) In spite of the increasing demand for the products of these workshops, the rate of establishment of new ones has declined over the past twenty years.

(b) Thus, fewer and fewer workers have been able to benefit from their status as apprentices to establish their own independent businesses. This is in part due to the soaring prices of equipment and materials so that the initial capital sums have risen very appreciably.

(c) The periods of apprenticeship have therefore become longer and the worker have acquired greater skill. Yet, given the difficulties of extricating themselves from their positions, they are being assigned jobs with more technical content than in earlier times, while the owners increasingly devote themselves to purely managerial roles. There has thus developed a new pattern of relationship where the owner is decreasingly the Mualim, (the teacher) of the apprentice, and increasingly a capitalist-manager presiding over a waged labour force.

(d) Concomitantly, the workshop is losing its earlier character as a family enterprise and is being transformed into an essentially surplus-generating economic unit-i.e. a capitalist establishment in which the rate of realizable surplus depends increasingly on the expansion of profit-making base. All these changes are accompanied, as expected, by tendencies to import more equipment and labour saving machines, and by increasing and almost exclusive dependence on trained and highly skilled labour.

The following case-chosen from many similar cases- illustrates in some detail several of the points made above.



Mr El-Fatih was born in a near-by village in 1931 and educated at Messellamia elementary school. He first worked with his father who was a tenant in the Gezira Scheme and a village shop-keeper. His father owned some agricultural tractor in whose operation and maintenance El-Fatih showed considerable interest. In 1956, El-Fatih moved to Hassaheisa where his father established a shop trading in agricultural machinery spare-parts. El-Fatih's main work in the shop, beside general management, was to fit the spare-parts. In due course he acquired basic skills as a tuner and he thus began to adapt and even to manufacture simple spare-parts. At this point the shop began to be transformed gradually into a workshop. By 1965 El-Fatih was employing a younger brother and three more apprentices who all came from Messallamia. In 1971 El-Fatih was in a position to buy new equipment and to employ three more workers. At this point of time he began to adapt his workshop for the production of metal goods such as doors, windows and household furniture, though all production was still for order by individual customers. In 1973, however, and with the rising demand for such goods, he bought the neighbouring shop and more electric equipment after which the workshop began to produce goods in a systematic way for general sale rather than at individual order. His brother has now become the managing director of the firm, and the most senior skilled worker (Osman) has become effectively the acting *Mualim* (i.e. the technical supervisor of the workshop and the leader of the labour force during the production process). As El-Fatih abandoned his managerial and technical responsibilities in the firm, he became involved in the town's politics. In 1974 he was elected representative of the People's Local Council of the Southern Industrial Area, composed of business owners there, in the Town Council; and in 1977 he was elected to a key post in the Town Council. Over the last five years, moreover, he has invested in other fields of capital accumulation as well. He has speculated in urban land, became a major shareholder in an automated bakery, and is now preparing for the establishment of a factory producing welding electrodes.

*(b) Large-Scale Industry:*

In addition to the two large agricultural machinery workshops of Hassouna Engineering (established in 1972) and Savanah Products



Table 6:2

## Private Industries in Hassaheisa, 1981

Name of Firm	Date Est- ablished	C A P A C I T Y		Work Organisation	M A N P O W E R		Raw Material	Source of Raw Mat.	Initial Capital	Owner(s)
		Maximum	Actual		Permanent	Casual				
Furrat Cola	Feb. 79	2500 bottles per hour	2000 b/h	1½ shifts & Overtime	34	60	Sugar, Chemicals & bottles	Sudan E.E.C., Kenya	£S120000	Yousif- Merchant
Yeast Factory	Nov. 77	1.6 Tons per day	1 Ton p/day	3 shifts, 24 hours	60	25	Molasse Chemicals	Sudan Holland	£S 15 million	Merchants + Dutch Co
Friendship Oil Mills	Jan. 79	20 tons per day	10 tons per day	3 shifts 24 hours	23	40	Groundnut & Sesame	Sudan Sudan	N.A.	Mohd. Wall & Ali A.
El-Shazali Oil Mills	June 80	20 tons per day	10 tons per day	3 shifts, 24 hours	22	35	Groundnut & Sesame	Sudan Sudan	300,000 S. Pounds	El-Shazali Merchant
Faris Oil Mills	1974	40 tons per day	25 tons per day	3 shifts 24 hours	50	70	Groundnut & Sesame	Sudan Sudan	560,000 Pounds	Hassan & B Merchants
El-Hassaheisa Oil Mills	1978	30 tons per day	15 tons per day	3 shifts 24 hours	42	40	Groundnut & Sesame	Sudan Sudan	400,000 Pounds	Isam
El-Safa Auto- mated Bakery	April 80	150 sacks full per day	75 Sacks p/d	2 shifts 24 hours	21	18	Flour, Yeast Baking- Powder	Sudan Sudan Imported	200,000 Pounds	Abdel Jalil
El-Hassaheisa Automated Bakery	Sept. 81	210 sacks per day	100 Sacks p/d	2 shifts 24 hours	21	18	Flour Yeast B. Powder	Sudan Sudan Imported	150,000	El-Manas: Merchant Group

Source: Interviews with the managers of the firms.



Company (established 1980) both of which specialize in the provision, servicing, repair and maintenance of spare-parts, there are in the Northern Industrial Area of Hassaheisa 4 oil-seeds mills, one yeast factory, and one ice and mineral drink factory in addition to two large automated bakeries situated near the market-place. Table 6:2 gives basic data on these eight establishments. The following observations are relevant to the present analysis:

(1) These large-scale industries are primarily oriented to the production of highly demanded basic consumer-goods intended to substitute imports.

(2) Most of the firms were established quite recently and there is additional evidence that the pace of factory establishment is accelerating. For example, at a meeting of the Town Council Planning Committee held on 9th October 1979, the following applications for land for the purposes indicated were approved:

Table 6:3      Names of Applicants and Types of Planned Industries  
Approved by T.C.P.C. in its Meeting on 9/10/1979

Name of Applicant	Area Allotted (in sq. metres)	Type of Planned Industry
Adam Abdel Gadir	900	Metallic Furniture
Ali Abdel Mutalib	300	Metallic Beds
Awad el-Nwairi	1500	Ice
Ali Mohd. Ali el-Haj	1500	Ice
Ahmed Obeid A. Mutalib	1500	Ice
Hassan Osman	300	Furniture
Abdin Mustafa	1500	Turnery
Abdel Salam Salih	5000	Oil Mill
Habiballa Ahmed	300	Wood Furniture
M.A. Gadoura	1500	Mettalic Furniture
Siddig Arbab	500	Soap
Abdel Bagi Ibrahim	300	Furniture

Table 6:3 continued

Name of Applicant	Area Allotted	Type of Industry
Ahmed Abdel Rahim	500	Soap
Al-Mubarak	2850	Tahina Sweets (sesame)
Khidir Abdalla	500	Clothes
Abdel Rahman Bella	5200	Oil and Soap

Source: By kind permission of the President of the Council, I attended the meeting of 9th October 1979 the details of which proceedings are contained in File No. 16/G/2, dated 9/10/1979, Hassaheisa Town Council.

(3) Nearly all the firms listed in Table 6:2 are working well below their maximum capacity inspite of acute shortages in the local market of the commodities they produce. I will consider this issue in more detail below.

(4) The casual labour force employed is generally larger or at least of about the same size as the permanent labour force.

(5) In contrast to the small-scale industries in the town, the large-scale firms depend largely on local raw materials (e.g. groundnuts, wheat flour and sugar).

(6) Most investors in the industrial field are drawn from the merchant group, a fact which indicates some affinity between the trade and industrial sectors of the town's economy.

Against the background of the information so far given we may now turn to two crucial questions about the dynamics of industrial development in the case of Hassaheisa, viz.,

(a) What is the essential nature of accumulation in the industrial sector in terms of the origins, dynamics and orientations of capital?

(b) What is the specific nature of the relationship between the historical development of industrial capital accumulation on



the one hand and urbanization and urban growth on the other?

To answer the first question it is necessary to reiterate that commercial capital has served as the base for industrial investment and that a 'commercial mentality' underlies all investment in industry. As we saw in Chapter Four, merchants have made profits not by revolutionizing production but by controlling the market. This mercantilist character has revealed itself once more in the sphere of industrial investment in two ways, both of which reflected a deeper concern on the part of industrial investors to control the market. Firstly, we have seen that manufactures are limited to consumer-goods, which enables the merchants better to capture the rising demand for these goods especially under conditions of very limited supply due to import restrictions, to a severe shortage of foreign exchange, and to an "active" policy of import substitution in the country as a whole. Secondly, the quantity of goods manufactured is again strictly controlled and generally kept at low and manageable levels despite the fact that most factories usually work well below maximum capacity. This perpetuates the shortage of goods and allows the owners to behave as merchants-i.e. to ensure a high rate of commodity turn-over, and in turn to keep to a minimum (or even to eliminate) costs of storage, distribution and advertisement. It also leads, of course, to the rise of prices in the black market.

Furthermore, the nature of these commercial investments in industry, it appears, is such that they are incapable of developing into a self-perpetuating process of accumulation. This is so by virtue of the following:

(a) All industrial investments are highly dependent on foreign sources both for the provision and maintenance of machinery and for technological know-how. This dependency leads industrial inves-



tors to have no capability of expanding and developing their firms on the basis of more local perpetual capabilities.

(b) Even if these capabilities were provided, the industrial investors would scarcely be interested in such industrial expansion because of the relative smallness of the size of the market (which prevents other investors from establishing more industries of the same kind) and the high level of protection against imported foreign goods (which minimizes potential competition) and thus work to depress the impulse to expand or improve the technical basis of industrial production. Thus the interests of such industrial investors are generally defined by monopolistic and commercial considerations and their outlook and economic behaviour is mercantilist rather than industrialist in character.<sup>11</sup>

(c) More significantly, it has been empirically established in my study of Hassaheisa that substantial sums of surpluses achieved in these industrial firms are being directly channelled into the finance of trade and commercial dealings in the market. Future plans of industrial expansion are thus being limited to the possibility of furthering this aspect. Two of those investors revealed that more than two thirds of the profits made in industry were used in trade during 1980.<sup>12</sup>

Any attempt to answer the second question must depend on our ability to delineate with some accuracy various aspects of the inter-relationship between the specific configuration of industry in the town of Hassaheisa and particular features of the pattern of urbanization and urban growth developing there. In Chapters 2,3 and 4 I have argued that the process of urbanization and urban growth in Hassaheisa is intimately related to the dominant pattern of accum-



ulation (commercial capital accumulation) and in particular that the dynamics of the latter dictated in various ways the rate of urbanization, the selective nature of town-ward migration, and the orientation and impact of urban growth. The dominance of commercial activities and of capital accumulation through trade has meant that a limited range of occupations has developed in the town (cf. Chapter Three). The rate and pattern of migration has of course been affected by this and especially by the slow rate of change in the occupational structure. Moreover, the situation in Hassaheisa has naturally been affected by that in the Sudan as a whole in which colonial policies have led to a particular kind of commercially dominated economy dependent on a system of unequal exchange between the metropolitan centres of capitalism and colonial areas of primary production from which there was only very limited urban-ward migration. These were the essential features underlying the town's slow rate of growth during the first five decades of its history as indicated in Chapter Three.

The relative persistence of pre-colonial, pre-capitalist, "traditional" sets of social relations and the urban community's pre-capitalist social form is to a large degree explained by the continuing dynamics of commercial accumulation which has by its very nature done very little to disrupt the internal social structure. Put another way, commercial activity has scarcely intervened in the production process or in the social relations of production. But this does not mean that there are no contradictions and conflicts of interests between the various socio-economic groups in the town. On the contrary, there are basic conflicts of interest inherent in the process of commercial accumulation itself (between buyers and sellers, merchants and customers). But the town has nevertheless



retained the traditional transparencies of immediate, intimate, personal and integrated social relationships which characterize pre-capitalist social forms.

In the overall urban context, signs and symbols of unequal distribution of wealth (manifested mainly in the uneven levels of consumption in food, clothing, housing, domestic possessions, etc.) have been partially obscured and distorted by the socio-cultural differences between groups of people despite their close physical proximity.<sup>13</sup> This has made it extremely difficult for private investors to accumulate capital through industrial production because, as Gordon has argued in relation to the case of the West, the system of factory production depends quite centrally on two main factors:

First, problems of both cost-minimization and labour discipline required the continual homogenization of the labour process; craft jobs were compressed into semi skilled operative work and almost all factory workers were subject to the same discipline of factory control. Second, the system required the continual availability of a reserve army of the unemployed- jobless workers, available for immediate employment, whose presence could help discipline those inside the factory gates.<sup>14</sup>

In the case of Hassaheisa, however, both these factors were either non-existent or insufficiently developed. Two points need to be stressed here: (a) the minimal effect of commercial accumulation upon internal socio-cultural frames of relations meant that the residents of the town who were accustomed to earlier pre-industrial relations resented any attempt to impose the relentless, uncompromising, impersonal discipline of factory life. Moreover, in a situation where living standards were being defined with reference to the immediate socio-cultural and residential context, it was difficult to persuade people to accept a level of wages allowing



only for a standard inferior to that enjoyed by the oftenly neighbouring capitalist investor. This required a comprehensive decomposition of the prevailing social structure. (b) The virtual absence during these early times of a sufficient reserve army of unemployed people added to the difficulties of industrial investment. The town's slow rate of population growth was, as we have seen, itself a consequence of the somewhat negative dynamics of commercial accumulation. There was thus a vicious circle preventing the development and emergence of an industrial labour force.

The foregoing discussion of the historical experience of Hassaheisa, it should be noted, runs counter to the hypotheses put forward by orthodox economic historians who maintain that industrial development depends largely on the presence of the kind of factors stressed in the conventional theories of "locational" economics.<sup>15</sup> But, in the view I adopt, these hypotheses cannot by themselves explain the late development of industrial investments in Hassaheisa because many of the "favourable" factors- from a "locational" point of view- were in fact present well before the period when industrial investment finally took off. These 'favourable' factors, in addition to the unqualified presence of not employed body of population, were

- (1) Government encouragement and the availability of generous State concessions over many years since 1956.<sup>16</sup>
- (2) The secure, relatively efficient, and cheap transport network linking the town with the rest of the country and the world- e.g. railways since 1910<sup>17</sup> and asphalted roads since 1970.<sup>18</sup>
- (3) The ample supply of water (from the Blue Nile) and the presence of a good water-pipe system since 1936.
- (4) The availability of a cheap source of industrial energy (electricity) since 1958.<sup>19</sup>



(5) Ready access to cheap raw materials suitable for industrial manufacturing-e.g. cotton and cotton seeds since 1928<sup>20</sup>, groundnuts since 1960<sup>21</sup>, sugar and molasses since 1963<sup>22</sup>, etc.

(6) The ready availability of loans from the Industrial Bank since 1961<sup>23</sup>, and equally the fact that some merchants had already accumulated sufficient sums of capital which could be invested.

(7) The presence of relatively good provisions for feasibility studies and training opportunities for the technical labour force since 1962.<sup>24</sup>

(8) An ever expanding market of consumers in the local region and the presence of well-established marketing and storing institutions in the town's market since 1916.

It would thus seem that investors (of private capital in particular) were in effect waiting for something else; a qualitative as well as quantitative transformation in the labour force which had hitherto been missing. The whole process of factory production depends on the availability of a labour force which is mobile, controllable, amenable to discipline and, most crucially, abundant. Up until recent years, the town's "old" labour force was not only insufficient but also largely uncontrollable and disinclined to submit to industrial factory discipline. As established members of a community developed on the basis of rural agricultural and urban commercial pursuits, they had little incentives to follow fresh occupations.

The "new" labour force is, however, different and finds itself in a completely different situation. It has been drawn to the town as a direct result of the intensification of capitalist development in the Gezira Scheme (cf. Chapter 4), and indeed in other rural parts of the country, and it consists largely of people who



are mobile, responsive to new opportunities, and mostly 'strangers' in relation to the other members of the established community of the town in many respects. As such, these newcomers are ready subjects for the discipline required in industrial factory production. Firstly, they are not only 'strangers' and newcomers, but also poor and often desperate to find employment, any kind of employment, under virtually any working-conditions. They are thus 'willing' to submit themselves to the rigorous discipline of factory organization. Secondly, the relatively large number of newcomers means that the available labour force is only partially employed and that there is constantly an excess or surplus force available. The visible presence of this surplus labour outside the factory gates is a powerful deterrent against those "lucky enough" to be inside the gates and clearly reduces the ability and desirability of those with will to resist the demands made on them by employers. Thus it not surprising at all to find no trade union movement among the workers of the private sector in Hassaheisa in spite of the government's official encouragement and the existence of the necessary legislations however insufficient they are. Moreover, ever since its establishment in Hassaheisa, the industrial area witnessed almost no strike or protest at all in spite of the considerable deterioration in the incomes of workers in real terms.<sup>25</sup>

It is, however, equally true that this "new" labour force is for the most part inefficient and insufficiently skilled and sophisticated for many of the jobs required in the industry. And this largely explains why manufacturing industry has been capital-intensive and with imported advanced technology and machinery which characterizes factory production in Hassaheisa as well as in the Sudan as a whole. Reliance on labour-saving methods allows employers to



avoid many of the problems which they would otherwise have to face with this kind of labour force. The fact of the reliance on capital intensive methods in the Sudanese manufacturing industry can be illustrated by the following table which shows a comparison of capital intensity in a number of industries in Sudan with those in U.S.A. and Pakistan, indicating that they are several times higher in the Sudan than in the USA or Pakistan.

Table 6:4     Capital-Intensity (Capital/worker) in Sudan, USA, and Pakistan at Comparable periods (in US \$).

Type of Industry	USA (1955)	Pakistan (1962)	Sudan (1971)
Cotton Textile	475	2418	6455
Leather Goods	422	1164	6223
Rubber Goods	269	2764	2125
Chemicals	1100	4082	3352
Basic Metals	2558	1546	12562
Wood Products	367	652	2970

Source: Naseem, S.M.(1977), p.72.

Also we should mention the fact that the lack of experience and training of the 'new' labour force explains why most of the industrial workers are employed in non-skilled, casual, and supporting jobs, such as loading and off-loading, packing, mending, etc. It is only for these kinds of jobs that it is much cheaper to use the available "desperate" labour force than to import machinery, and by and large, it is (the labour force) is kept at the margins of the production process.

#### CONCLUSION:

The recent entry of commercial capital into manufacturing enterprises is not an expression or indication of any qualitative change in the mercantilist character of the capital involved or in the basic characteristics of the Sudanese economy. As we have seen, this entry



of commercial capital into 'industry' has, for various reasons, arisen from a deep concern on the part of the merchants to consolidate their *control over the trading market*. Thus the movement of capital may be seen more as an expression of crisis than of success in the development of commercial accumulation. And this is bound to be the case as long as local commercial pursuits (as opposed to world capitalism) remain dependent, yet intact and 'functioning'.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VI

1. In a general way, it is usually held that "modern manufacturing industry is of recent origin in the Sudan, dating back only to 1955/56, the year of political Independence". See Nimeiri, S.M., 1976, p. 77.
2. Algie, R.F., 1954, p. 16.
3. Nimeiri, S.M., op. cit., p. 77.
4. Plots of land in this area were distributed to craftsmen by the Executive Officer of the Local Government Council in June, 1955, in accordance with a decision taken earlier by the Council. See File No. 17/M.R.H./D3, dated 17.5.1955, Hasshaeisa Council Office.
5. Algie, R.F., op.cit., p. 17.
6. This account is based partly on my field data and partly on two sources: Abdalla, O.M., 1954, pp. 21-3, and Abu Sabah, M.A., 1977.
7. For more details see Hassoun, I.A., 1952, p. 90.
8. Lunch or dinner and morning or evening tea are only provided for workers actually present on morning or evening shifts.
9. The productivity was only 2.661 Knatar per Feddan in this particular season as compared to an average of 4.327 Kantar per Feddan for the period of the previous ten seasons (i.e. from 1969/70 to 1978/79).
10. This assertion follows the statements made to me by Mr. Farouk Al-Sheikh, the Managing Director of the factory, and I have every reason to accept his views.
11. Similar statement is put by O'Brien, J. & Shazali, S., 1979, 193.
12. Reference is to statements made to me by Mamoun Yousif Hassan, Manager of Furat Cola, and Abdel Salam M. Salih, Manager, Al-Shazali Oil Mills in Hassaheisa.
13. See, for example, Chapter 7 where the pattern of socio-economic residential arrangements is explained.
14. Gordon, D.M., 1978, p. 37.
15. The location factor is mainly defined as an advantage that a "locational unit" will gain by locating at a certain place rather than an other. "This advantage is expressed in terms of accomplishing the entire productive and distributive process of the given industrial product at the lowest cost". See for details, Suliaman, E.E.A., 1981.



16. After 'Indpendence', the State actively encouraged all kind privately owned industries, especially if they are to be established in the Sudanese rural areas, through the concessions and facilities contained in the 1956, 1967, 1972, 1974, and 1980 Acts of Industrial development.
17. The Gezira rail line connecting Hassaheisa to other parts of the Sudan as well as the only sea port of the country, was built in and officially opened in 1910.
18. The first all-season asphalted road running through Hassaheisa between Khartoum and Wad Medani was officially opened for public use in 1970.
19. Hassaheisa was connected to the national electricity supply generated from Sennar Dam in 1958.
20. An important by-product of the ginning process, established in Hassaheisa in 1928, is cotton seed which can be used for edible oil industries, soap manufacturing and animal cake.
21. As we saw in Chapter 4, the diversification of crop production in the Gezira Scheme in 1960 led to to the introduction on a rotation bases, of groundnuts.
22. The first sugar refinery factory in the Sudan was established in Guneid (15 miles North of Hassaheisa) in 1963.
23. The Industrial Bank of Sudan Act of 1961 provided for cash loans, at low rates of interests, of up to 2/3 of the total costs of any private industrial project assessed as economically sound. "By the end of 1971, the IBS had extended assistance to 128 projects", See, Kameir, 1980b, p. 52.
24. In 1962, with the help of the United Nations, the Government established the Sudan Industrial Research Institute to provide feasibility studies, and the Management and Productivity Centre for the training of technical personnel; the latter was in addition to various training centres for the improvement of the skills of the industrial labour force.
25. While the rate of inflation is currently reported to be over 50% (Al-Amin, R. 1983), the average rate of annual increase of wages in Sudan is only about 3.5%.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 'TRIBALISM' IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY



## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I attempt an analysis of "tribalism" in the town of Hassaheisa. I use the term 'tribalism' to refer to the various sets of relations obtaining between groups of people of different 'tribal' origins as they interact within the overall urban socio-economic formation which is Hassaheisa.

Two general points must be stressed at the outset. The first is that 'tribalism' is a salient and pervasive feature of virtually all Sudanese towns and indeed of many urban settlements of the so-called Third World. As such it has received a great deal of attention in a wide range of literature and has been examined from as many sociological perspectives as have been used in the analysis and interpretation of urbanization in the Third World in general.<sup>1</sup> Some of this literature is relevant and useful for us, but much of it is not -except for general factual comparison or to illustrate certain lines of interpretation which the approach I use explicitly or implicitly rejects.<sup>2</sup>

The second point is that the approach I use categorically denies the existence of "tribes" in any effective sense. The tribe as "a relatively undifferentiated society, practising a primitive subsistence economy and enjoying local autonomy"<sup>3</sup> no longer exists in Hassaheisa, the Sudan or even in Africa at large. This is so simply because such "societies"- to the extent that they previously existed- were altered out of all recognition by colonialism and the capitalist penetration which drew them into the world economy and the world market.<sup>4</sup> What is clear, however, is that in Hassaheisa as in other Sudanese towns there are groups of people who have "tribal ideologies" and that these groups are historically differentiated internally as well as effectively integrated extern-



ally. My general argument is that such tribal ideologies are in essence forms of false consciousness, and that this kind of consciousness effectively mystifies, distorts and obscures the real nature of socio-economic and political relations between groups of different origins and varying degrees of difference in ethnic identity and culture. It is, therefore, the main aim of this chapter to trace, illustrate and explain the specific manner in which the phenomenon of "tribal ideology" has developed in the particular case of Hassaheisa.

The need for a systematic analysis of the phenomenon stems from the obvious recurring significance of the "tribal factor" in various aspects of the political, economic and social life in the town discussed in other chapters. In one sense, the tribal factor would seem to explain all aspects of life in the town. It is this very centrality of the phenomenon which demands its careful investigation in order to explain it rather than to accept it as an explanatory variable.

To develop my analysis and explanation, I use two sets of data gathered during the course of my fieldwork. The first set is drawn from the census-type survey I conducted in 1978/79 in an attempt to gather as much general information as possible on the community and its people.<sup>5</sup> The data collected through the survey are necessarily exploratory and very general in character, but they supply an outline profile of the tribal composition of the urban community and the structure and composition of the various "tribal" groups in socio-economic terms. A full analysis of these survey findings is presented first.

The second set of data was for the most part gathered after



the completion of the survey and an initial analysis and appreciation of its findings. This second set is drawn from a series of in-depth case-studies of "tribal" groups in the town. I make use in some detail of material relating to three groups in particular: the Dubasin, the Shammaliin and the Fur, to illustrate and substantiate a range of statements and conclusions about "tribal" groups in general. It will be seen that the three groups for which I give detailed information were chosen because of the significant role they played, and continue to play, in the production and reproduction of the "tribal ideology" in the town. In addition they make the oldest groups in the town and this makes the information about them involve a more illuminating historical dimension.

#### RELEVANT FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The data presented in Tables 7:1 to 7:16 have been drawn up to illustrate three fundamentally important features of the "tribal" profile of the town and to allow us to begin assessing and interpreting these features. The first is that Hassaheisa contains a broad mix of populations claiming different 'tribal' origins and that this heterogeneity is, by and large, a characteristic feature of the town which sets it off from rural and other smaller "urban" settlements in the district. The second is that there is considerable variations between groups in socio-economic characteristics and in the access which they have- in average terms- to various collective services. This has in the past served, and continues to serve, as a base upon which inter-tribal competition has developed and often been politically manipulated. The third important feature, which is equally evident from the Tables, is that there are appreciable measures of differentiation within each particular group. Differences in socio-economic characteristics and in access to resources between various



members of the same group could conceivably lead to internal struggles and cleavages within the group. So far this has not happened to any significant extent, and we shall see that the growth of internal divisions have been suppressed and checked through the manipulation of dominant 'tribal ideologies' in a way which has concealed antagonisms and blurred objective differences.<sup>6</sup>

It may be seen that some of the data presented in the Tables to follow refer to households and heads of households, while others refer to all the members of the households in the survey sample. The total number of households in the sample is 409 and the total number of persons in these households is 2850. In all cases where the table does not add up to either 409 households/heads or 2850 persons, the discrepancy will be explained.

#### *THE TRIBAL COMPOSITION*

The overall profile of Hassaheisa's composition in 'tribal' terms has changed little during the past thirty years.<sup>7</sup> Some relatively minor changes have, however, been important in regard to particular developments relating to the overall process of urbanization in the area as is explained in Chapter Three and Four in the case of groups from the town's hinterland.

The 'tribal' distribution of the whole sample is shown in Table 7:1 which reveals three points of particular significance:

(1) The aggregate number and the proportion of people affiliated to tribal groups from the town's immediate hinterland (Shukria, Halawin and Arabs from the Centre) remained very low inspite of some increase in the recent past. These people constituted 11.2% of the town's population in 1955/56<sup>8</sup> and 14.6% according to my survey in 1979. Various groups in this category are originating in the Gezira and its adjacent areas (for the purposes of analysis in this chapter I am



Table 7:1 The Distribution of Sample According to Tribal Origin

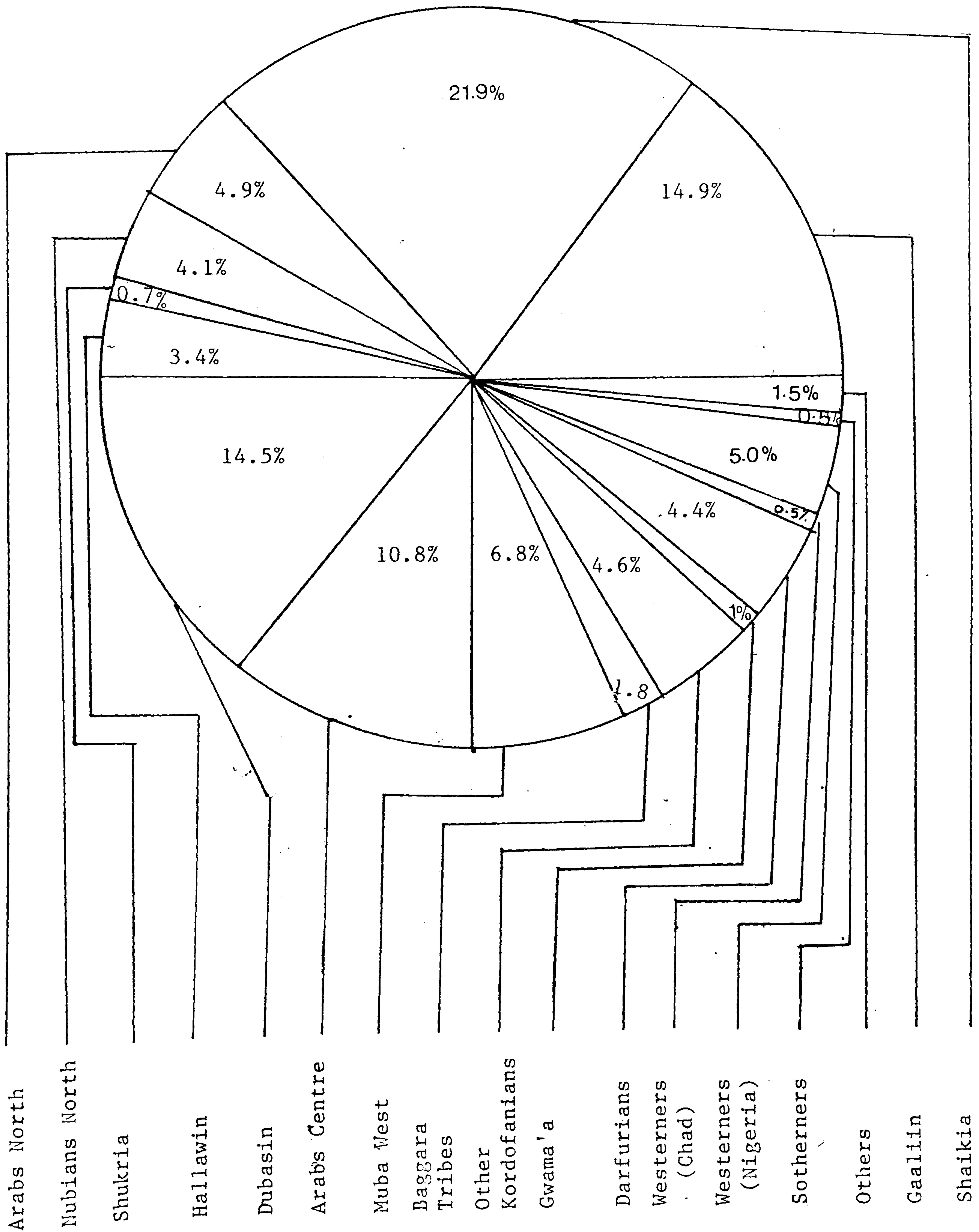
Tribal Origin	Number	Percentage
Gaaliin	423	14.9
Shaikia	620	21.9
Shukria	20	0.7
Halawin	97	3.4
Arabs from the North	138	4.9
Arabs from the Centre	305	10.8
Nubians (North)	117	4.1
Nuba (West)	192	6.8
Dubasin	411	14.5
Baggara	51	1.8
Others from Kordofan	129	4.6
Darfurian Tribes	125	4.4
Westerners (Foreigners)	155	5.5
Southerners	15	0.5
Gwamaa	27	1.0
Total	2834*	100.0

\* 16 failed to state their tribal origins.

keeping the Gezira-originated group of Dubasin separate from other Central Arab groups for reasons that shall emerge with the progress of the analysis). In many ways the relatively low representation in the town of peoples of the immediate hinterland was, and is, a reflection of the uneven development in the country at large. The development of rural Gezira on the lines of a colonial peasant economy has meant that local peoples did not have the same 'incentives' for migration to towns as did others from much farther afield. It also shows how "alien" the town's community is in relation to the surrounding district communities.

(2) Secondly, the community of the town contains some limited representation from a wide variety of 'tribal' groups throughout the Sudan, a country "with five hundred and seventy-two distinct tribes".<sup>9</sup> Thus

Fig. 8 'TRIBAL' COMPOSITION OF HASSAHEISA POPULATION,  
SAMPLE SURVEY, 1978/79





the town must be conceived as a social formation in which people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds and of widely heterogeneous "ethnic" origins interact in face-to-face situations in daily life in a way quite unknown to them in their respective home-areas. They meet in Hassaheisa in the wake of long-distance migrations from widely separated areas in the country (See the 'tribal' map of Sudan).

(3) Thirdly, these various groups are far from equally represented in numerical terms. As Table 7:1 and the accompanying diagram show, the proportional representation of various groups ranges from 0.5% in the case of Southerners (who are themselves drawn from several different 'tribes') to 21.9% in the case of the Shaikia. These numerical differences have served, and continue to serve, as the basis for a series of differential processes in the town, e.g. until recently the combined forces of the groups from the Northern Province of the country have enjoyed an unchallenged dominance in the formal politics of the town and, of course, access to many resources. This has affected the emergence and development of alliances among other smaller groups and influenced the formation and functioning of the Local Town Council as will be seen in detail in the following chapter.

#### *REGIONAL BACKGROUND*

Table 7:2 gives the distribution of members of the sample according to their respective provinces of birth and 'tribal' affiliation. The Table confirms the expected association between certain 'tribal' groups and various provinces. Excluding the Gezira Province where the majority of second-generation migrants of different groups were born, the Table shows that 71.6% of those born in Enneil Province (in the Northern Region) are Gaaliin, 64.0% of the immigrants from the Northern Province are Shaikia, 90.7% of those born in South Kordofan are Nuba, 45.4% of those born in North Kordofan are in fact



Table 7:2

The Distribution of All Persons According to Tribal Group and Province of Birth

Province Tribal Group	Khartoum	B. Nile	W. Nile	Gezira	Nile	Northern	Kassala	Red Sea	N. Kord- ofan	S. Kord- ofan	N. Dar- fur	S. Dar fur	South ern	Abroad	Total & %
Ga'alla	3 1	2 1	1 -	333 79	68 16	14 3	- -	2 1	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	423 10
	9 -	7 -	5 -	15 12	72 2	7 1	- -	40 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	14.8
Shaikea	11 2	3 1	5 1	443 72	15 2	135 22	3 1	1 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 -	3 1	620 10
	32 -	11 -	23 -	20 16	16 1	64 5	100 -	20 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	20 -	17 -	21.8
Arabs North	1 1	3 2	- -	89 65	9 7	33 24	- -	1 1	2 1	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	138 10
	3 -	11 -	- -	4 3	10 -	16 1	- -	20 -	2 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	4.8
Nubians North	5 4	- -	- -	94 80	2 2	14 12	- -	- -	- -	- -	2 2	- -	- -	- -	117 10
	15 -	- -	- -	4 3	2 -	7 1	- -	- -	- -	- -	7 -	- -	- -	- -	4.1
Nuba West	2 1	1 1	- -	109 57	- -	- -	- -	- -	39 20	39 20	1 1	- -	- -	- -	192 10
	6 -	4 -	- -	5 4	- -	- -	- -	- -	40 1	91 1	3 -	- -	- -	- -	6.7
Dubasin	2 1	- -	2 1	405 98	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 -	- -	1 -	- -	- -	- -	411 10
	6 -	- -	9 -	18 14	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 -	- -	3 -	- -	- -	- -	14.4
Kordofanians	- -	2 1	8 4	136 66	- -	3 1	- -	1 1	44 21	3 1	5 2	3 1	- -	1 1	207 10
	- -	7 -	36 -	6 -	- -	1 -	- -	20 -	45 -	7 -	16 -	30 -	- -	6 -	7.2
Darfurlans	2 2	1 1	5 4	85 68	- -	- -	- -	- -	8 6	- -	17 14	7 6	- -	- -	125 10
	6 -	4 -	23 -	4 3	- -	- -	- -	- -	8 -	- -	55 1	70 -	- -	- -	4.4
Westerners	- -	9 6	1 1	111 79	- -	- -	- -	- -	2 1	- -	4 3	- -	- -	14 10	141 10
	- -	33 -	5 -	5 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	2 -	- -	13 -	- -	- -	78 -	5.0
Southerners	- -	1 7	- -	11 73	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	3 20	- -	15 10
	- -	4 -	- -	1 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	60 -	- -	0.5
Arabs Centre	3 1	3 1	- -	401 95	1 -	10 2	- -	- -	1 -	- -	1 -	- -	- -	- -	422 10
	9 -	11 -	- -	18 -	1 -	5 -	- -	- -	1 -	- -	3 -	- -	- -	- -	14.8
Others	5 36	2 14	- -	4 29	- -	2 14	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 7	- -	14 10
	15 -	7 -	- -	- -	- -	1 -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	20 -	- -	0.5
Total *	34 1	27 1	22 1	2232 78	95 3	211 7	3 -	5 -	97 3	43 2	31 1	10 -	5 -	18 1	2850 10
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* 17 did not state their tribal groups: 6 did not state their province of birth and 11 from the Northern Province.



Table 7:3

The Distribution of Heads of Households According to Tribal Group and Province of Last Residence

Province Tribal Group	Hassa- heisa	Khart- oum	Blue Nile	White Nile	Gezira	Nile	Northern	Kassala	Red Sea	N. Kor- dofan	S. Kor- dofan	N. Dar- fur	S. Dar- fur	South- ern	Other Places	Total
Ga'aljin	16 27	1 2	1 2	- -	14 24	22 38	4 7	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	58 100
	12	10	8	-	19	71	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.2
Shaikia	26 29	2 2	2 2	2 2	8 9	6 7	42 47	- -	1 1	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	89 100
	19	20	17	22	11	19	70	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	21.8
Arabs North	- -	1 6	2 11	1 6	5 28	1 6	8 44	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	18 100
	- -	16	17	11	7	3	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.4
Arabs Centre	25 49	- -	1 2	- -	22 43	1 2	- -	1 2	- -	- -	1 2	- -	- -	- -	- -	51 100
	18	-	8	-	29	3	-	50	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	12.4
Nubians	7 29	2 8	- -	- -	7 29	- -	5 21	1 4	- -	- -	1 4	1 4	- -	- -	- -	24 100
North	5	20	-	-	9	-	8	50	-	-	4	7	-	-	-	5.9
Nuba West	- -	- -	2 7	1 3	3 11	- -	- -	- -	- -	3 11	17 63	- -	1 4	- -	- -	27 100
	-	-	17	11	4	-	-	-	-	15	71	-	14	-	-	6.6
Dubasin	46 81	1 2	- -	2 4	8 14	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	57 100
	33	10	-	22	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.9
Kordofanians	3 9	1 3	- -	1 3	3 9	- -	1 3	- -	- -	15 46	3 9	4 12	2 6	- -	- -	33 100
	2	10	-	11	4	-	2	-	-	75	13	27	29	-	-	8.1
Darfurians	2 10	1 5	1 5	1 5	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 5	2 10	8 38	4 19	1 5	- -	21 100
	1	10	8	11	-	-	-	-	-	5	8	53	57	50	-	5.1
Westerners	9 41	1 5	3 14	1 5	3 14	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 5	- -	2 9	- -	- -	2 9	22 100
	7	10	25	11	4	-	-	-	-	5	-	13	-	-	100	5.4
Others	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 50	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 50	- -	2 100
	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	0.5
Total *	139 34	10 2	12 3	9 2	75 18	31 8	60 15	2 1	1 -	20 5	24 6	15 4	7 2	2 1	2 1	409 100
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* 7 did not state their tribal group(s): 5 from Hassaheisa, and 2 from Gezira Province.

Kordofanian tribesmen, 70% of those from South Darfur are members of Darfurian tribes, 77.8% of those born abroad are Westerners, and 60% of those born in Southern Sudan are people of Southern tribal origins.

Furthermore, the figures indicate the degree of isolation from each other of the members of the different 'tribal' groups before coming to Hassaheisa. (One must stress here the vastness of the country- a million square miles- and the remoteness of different regions from each other). This point acquires further significance when we turn to Table 7:3 which classifies the place of last residence, by province, for the heads of all households in the survey. It can be seen that most members of each 'tribal' group had come to the town directly from their respective home areas, especially if we consider the second-generation immigrants who recorded Hassaheisa itself as their 'Previous Place of Residence'. The Table shows, for example, that 37.9% of Gaaliin came directly from Enneil Province; 47.2% of Shaikia from the Northern Province; 44.4% of Arabs (North) from Northern Province; 43.0% of Arabs (Centre) from Gezira Province while 63.0% of Nuba come from S.Kordofan Province, 80.7% of Dubasin come from Hassaheisa itself. 54.6% of Kordofanians came from the two Provinces of North and South Kordofan, 57.1% of Darfurians from South and North Darfur Provinces, and 50.0% of Southerners came to the town from the Southern Provinces.

A close study of Table 7:4, moreover, reveals the degree of residential segregation of tribal groups in the town's various residential areas. With the exception of Omda (a First Class Area where people from different tribal groups reside together as an expression and symbol of their high status) and Kambo (originally a workers' camp-hence the name- for people recruited in the Ginneries as exp-



Table 7:4

The Distribution of All Persons According to Tribal Group and Residential Area in Hassaheisa

Res. Area Group	Omda	Karima	Mygouma	Shargi	Wassat	Mazad	Imcidad	Jadida	Fur	Kambo	W. Kamil	Other	Total & %
Ga'allin	29 7 22 1	8 2 6 -	7 2 10 -	5 1 3 -	68 16 17 2	43 10 22 2	73 17 29 3	25 6 7 1	7 2 3 -	138 33 23 5	- - -	20 5 10 1	423 100 14.8
Shalkia	27 4 21 1	90 15 71 3	10 2 16 -	12 2 8 -	30 5 8 1	90 15 45 3	63 10 25 2	200 32 58 7	29 5 11 1	43 7 7 2	17 3 13 1	9 2 5 -	620 100 21.8
Shukria	- - -	- - -	4 20 6 -	- - -	1 5 1 -	- - -	- - -	2 10 1 -	13 65 5 1	- - -	- - -	- - -	20 100 0.7
Hallawin	- - -	- - -	- - -	11 11 7 -	17 18 4 1	14 14 7 1	1 1 1 -	- - -	- - -	25 26 4 1	6 6 5 -	23 24 12 1	97 100 3.4
Arabs North	6 4 5 -	9 7 7 -	9 7 14 -	9 6 6 -	- - -	18 13 9 1	9 7 4 -	49 36 14 2	- - -	9 6 2 -	- - -	20 15 10 1	138 100 4.8
Arabs Centre	- - -	7 2 6 -	19 6 30 1	8 3 6 -	78 26 20 3	1 - -	- - -	41 13 12 1	18 6 1 1	92 30 16 3	13 4 10 1	28 9 14 1	305 100 10.7
Nubians North	8 7 6 -	- - -	14 12 22 1	9 8 6 -	3 3 1 -	12 10 6 -	3 3 1 1	6 5 2 -	16 14 6 1	39 33 7 1	- - -	7 6 4 -	117 100 4.1
Nuba West	- - -	- - -	- - -	7 4 5 -	3 2 1 -	7 4 4 -	6 3 2 -	3 2 1 -	29 15 11 1	88 46 15 3	- - -	49 26 25 2	192 100 6.7
Dubasin	46 11 35 2	1 1 -	- - -	78 19 54 3	163 40 41 6	8 2 4 -	32 8 13 1	12 3 4 -	8 2 3 -	3 1 -	43 11 33 2	17 4 9 1	411 100 14.4
Baggara	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	4 8 1 -	- - -	19 37 8 1	- - -	15 29 6 1	9 18 2 -	- - -	4 2 2 -	51 100 1.8
Others from Kordofan	14 11 11 1	- - -	1 1 2 -	5 - 3 -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	20 16 8 1	89 69 15 3	- - -	- - -	129 100 4.5
Darfurians	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	5 4 1 -	6 5 3 -	14 11 5 1	8 6 2 -	75 60 23 3	17 14 3 1	- - -	- - -	125 100 4.4
Westerners	- - -	8 5 6 -	- - -	- - -	5 3 1 -	- - -	19 12 3 1	- - -	24 16 9 1	27 17 5 1	51 33 39 2	21 14 11 -	155 100 5.5
Southerners	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	10 67 4 -	5 33 1 1	- - -	- - -	15 10 0.5
Gwamaa & Gimi'	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	9 33 2 -	- - -	15 56 6 1	- - -	- - -	3 11 1 -	- - -	- - -	27 10 0.9
Total*	130 4.6	127 4.5	64 2.2	145 5.1	397 13.9	199 7.0	254 8.9	346 12.1	265 9.3	594 20.8	130 4.6	198 6.9	2850 1
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* 16 did not state their tribal group, 4 from Karima, 11 from Wassat, and 1 from Fur.



lained in Chapter 6), all the other residential areas of the town are to some extent 'tribal colonies'. Karima is dominated by Shaikia (70.9%), together with their traditional allies in the town- the Gaaliin (6.3%) and Arabs from the North (7.1%)- making up to 84.3% of the total population in that neighbourhood. These three allied groups similarly dominate Mazad (75.8%) and Jadida (79.2%) and constitute a majority in Imtidad (57.0%). Looked at in another way, 71.5% of all Shaikia, and 35.3% and 61.5% of Gaaliin and Northern Arabs respectively, live in only three neighbourhoods Mazad, Jadida and Imtidad.

Again, 58.7% of Dubasin group reside either in Shargi or Wassat where they constitute 53.8% and 41.1% of the total population of these tow areas respectively. In the case of the smaller groups, the figures in the Table also reveal 'tribal' residential concentration. Thus, for example, 60% of the Darfurian groups reside in the Fur area, 69.0% of Kordofanians in Kambo and two-thirds of all southerners in the Fur area.

The survey data thus amply confirm that the population of the town is made up of widely diverse 'tribal' groups; that it is drawn from many different regions in the country and that there is strong tendency for people to reside close to their fellow 'tribesmen'. This naturally contributes to the development of 'tribal' ideologies and to the maintenance of 'tribal' identities, and these concentrations also acquire further significance through the specific pattern of differential allocation of various resources in the town to the different residential areas as we shall see in the next chapter.

#### INTRA & INTER-GROUP VARIATIONS IN SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The data on age and sex also exhibit variation between the various 'tribal' groups. As may be expected, under the dominance of



Table 7:5      The Distribution of Persons According to  
Tribal Origin and Sex

Tribal Group	M A L E		F E M A L E		TOTAL	
Gaaliin	236	55.8	187	44.2	423	100
	15.5		14.2		14.8	
Shaikia	326	52.6	294	47.4	620	100
	21.4		22.3		21.8	
Arabs North	77	55.8	61	44.2	138	100
	5.0		4.6		4.8	
Nubians North	66	56.4	51	43.6	117	100
	4.3		3.9		4.1	
Nuba West	104	54.2	88	45.8	192	100
	6.8		6.7		6.7	
Dubasin	203	49.4	208	50.6	411	100
	13.3		15.8		14.4	
Kordofanians	113	54.6	94	45.4	207	100
	7.4		7.1		7.2	
Darfurians	73	58.4	52	41.6	125	100
	4.8		3.9		4.4	
Westerners (Foreingers)	78	55.3	63	44.7	141	100
	5.1		4.8		5.0	
Southerners	7	46.7	8	53.3	15	100
	0.5		0.6		0.5	
Others	7	50.0	7	50.0	14	100
	0.5		0.5		0.5	
Arabs Centre	224	53.1	198	46.9	442	100
	14.7		15.0		14.8	
Total	1526	53.5	1318	46.2	2850	100
Total (%)	100		100		100	

17 did not state their tribal group(s): 6 also did not state their their sexes, 7 males and 4 females.

the tribal ideology, these variations are commonly emphasized in daily life.

SEX:

Table 7:5 shows the distribution of the sample according to sex and tribal group. The disparity between males and females in the town (53.5% and 46.2% of the total population respectively) is, we know, a common feature of many Sudanese towns.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the average proportion for 111 settlements classified as urban according to the Second Population Census of the Sudan 53.1% are males and 46.9% females<sup>11</sup>, while in most rural communities this distortion is partly reversed, particularly in those areas suffering heavy out-migration (Northern Provinces the ratio is 46.2 males and 53.8% females while in Kordofan its 48.9:51.1; in Darfur 47.1: 52.9.<sup>12</sup> In Hassaheisa, with the principal exception of the Dubasin group which displays a relatively well-balanced proportion between the sexes, other tribal groups tend to show the same imbalance as the whole population and to share the socio-psychological consequences.<sup>13</sup>

AGE:

According to the Second Population Census of 1973, the age-group of under 15 years in the country as a whole constitutes about half the total population (47%). In Hassaheisa- which reveals a situation similar to that in other Sudanese towns- as shown in Table 7:6 the under 15 years make up only 37.5% of the sample. This is a general distortion accounted for largely by patterns of migration with younger adults coming towns without children or with few. But the degree of this 'distortion' varies between 'tribal' groups. For example, 13.4% of the Southerners were under 15, while others like the Gaaliin were above the town's average (39.1%). Similarly, the populations of the most productive age (15-49) was considerably above the average for the Sudan as a whole, and again varied from one 'tri-



Table 1.1b

The Distribution of All Persons According to Tribal Group and Age

Age Tribal Group	0 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	10 - 14 Years	15 - 19 Years	20 - 24 Years	25-29 Years	30-34 Years	35-39 Years	40-44 Years	45-49 Years	50-54 Years	55-59 Years	60-64 Years	65-69 Years	70 & + Years	Total & %
Ga'aliin	43 16	57 14	67 17	68 15	42 14	34 14	24 18	6 14	4 13	14 13	13 16	9 19	3 13	2 8	1 27	423 14.3
Shaikia	45 17	90 22	76 20	114 24	62 20	54 22	19 14	3 28	6 26	25 23	4 25	11 23	2 44	8 32	1 18	620 21.8
Arabs North	13 5	18 4	20 5	25 5	16 5	11 5	11 8	6 4	4 3	2 2	1 5	4 10	1 4	-	1 9	138 4.8
Arabs Centre	32 12	58 14	72 19	79 17	49 16	32 13	20 15	5 23	6 19	12 11	3 17	3 6	1 -	2 8	-	422 14.8
Nubians North	18 7	16 4	15 4	17 4	12 4	10 4	4 3	3 5	5 5	5 5	4 5	1 2	-	-	1 9	117 4.1
Nuba West	28 10	38 9	26 7	26 6	9 3	20 8	7 5	13 8	10 8	5 4	5 6	1 2	2 9	1 4	1 9	192 6.7
Dubasin	26 10	51 12	53 14	61 13	57 18	39 16	26 19	6 10	4 13	23 22	6 12	13 27	4 17	7 28	2 9	411 14.4
Kordofanians	26 10	33 8	26 7	31 7	19 6	16 7	10 7	20 12	6 5	8 8	3 4	3 6	1 4	3 12	1 9	207 7.2
Darfurians	14 5	11 3	16 4	25 5	13 4	17 7	7 5	6 4	7 5	2 2	5 6	-	1 4	-	1 9	125 4.4
Westerners	18 7	38 9	12 3	14 3	22 7	8 3	5 4	5 3	4 3	10 9	1 1	1 2	1 4	1 4	-	141 5.0
Southerners	1 -	1 -	-	2 -	4 1	2 1	2 2	1 1	-	-	-	1 2	-	1 4	-	15 0.5
Others	3 1	-	3 1	3 1	3 1	-	1 1	-	-	-	1 1	-	-	-	-	14 0.5
Total	268	412	388	468	309	244	136	171	134	107	81	48	23	125	11	2850
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

17 did not state their tribal groups: 6 did not give their age, 1 in 0-4 set; 1 in 5-9, 2 in 10-14, 3 in 15-19, 1 in 20-24, 1 in 25-29, 1 in 45-49, and 1 in 50-54 years age-group.



bal' group to another, correlating to some extent with the relative degree of socio-economic distortion and underdevelopment in the areas of origin of the different groups. Certain regions would appear to "push out" larger proportions of this age-group than others (e.g. Southerners, 73.3%; Darfurians, 61.6%; Gaaliin, 53.0%; Shaikia, 57.5% and Nubians, 52.9%).

FAMILY SIZE:

Table 7:7 shows the variations between the different 'tribal' groups in family size. It can be seen that the average size of family ranges from 8.3 in the case of Arabs from the Centre to only 4.9 for Nubians from the North. Certain tribal groupings, moreover, have markedly smaller families-i.e. those from the West (Kordofanians, 6.3 and Darfurians, 5.9 while the Westerners have a family size of 6.4). Looked at in another way, it is a striking fact that these particular groupings have higher than average proportions of small families with only one to four members.

The above data on the sex, age and family size show in various ways the variant profile reflected by each group which in turn influences the image about each held by the rest of the community. For instance, in a community largely influenced by traditional conservative attitudes towards the relation between the two sexes, it is generally held that male dominated group is a threat to society and should be treated with special caution. At another level of analysis the sex, age, and family size profile given by a certain group has a decisive impact on its chances of acquiring some of the most important resources in the town-e.g. housing land. As the way in which urban land distribution is undertaken is based on an eligibility criteria in which the applicant who is married (marital status), with longer time of presence in the town (age) and responsible of



Table 7.7

The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Group and family size

Family Size Group	1 - 2 members	3 - 4 members	5 - 6 members	7 - 8 members	9 - 10 members	11-12 members	13+ members	Total	Average Size	Small 1 - 4	Medium 5 - 10	Large 11+
Ga'alla	4 7	8 14	15 26	11 19	16 28	4 7	- -	58 100	7.3	12 20.7	42 75.4	4 6.9
	27	11	16	12	18	14	-	14.2				
Shakia	1 1	15 17	21 24	28 32	20 22	2 2	2 2	89 100	7.0	16 18.0	69 77.5	4 4.5
	7	21	22	31	23	7	13	21.8				
Arabs North	- -	3 17	2 11	1 6	5 28	5 28	2 2	18 100	7.7	3 16.7	8 44.4	7 38.9
	-	4	2	1	6	17	13	4.4				
Arabs Centre	2 4	11 22	11 22	9 18	11 22	2 4	5 10	51 100	8.3	13 25.5	31 60.8	7 13.7
	13	16	11	10	13	7	33	12.4				
Nubians North	1 4	4 17	7 29	7 29	4 17	1 4	- -	24 100	4.9	5 20.8	18 75.0	1 4.2
	7	6	7	8	5	3	-	5.9				
Nuba West	2 7	2 7	9 33	7 26	3 11	3 11	1 4	27 100	7.1	4 14.8	19 70.4	4 14.8
	13	3	9	8	3	10	7	6.6				
Dubasin	- -	10 18	15 26	6 11	15 26	8 14	3 5	57 100	7.2	10 17.5	36 63.2	11 19.3
	-	14	16	7	17	28	20	13.9				
Kordofanians	1 3	8 24	5 15	9 27	6 18	2 6	2 6	33 100	6.3	9 27.3	20 60.6	4 12.1
	7	11	4	10	7	7	13	8				
Darfurians	2 10	6 29	6 29	7 33	- -	- -	- -	21 100	5.9	8 38.1	13 61.9	- -
	13	9	6	8	-	-	-	5.1				
Westerners	2 9	3 14	4 18	5 23	6 27	2 9	- -	22 100	6.4	5 22.7	15 68.2	2 9.1
	13	4	4	6	7	7	-	5.4				
Southerners	- -	- -	1 50	- -	1 50	- -	- -	2 100	7.5	- -	2 100.0	- -
	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	0.5 100				
Total*	15 3.7	70 17.1	97 23.7	90 22.0	88 21.5	29 7.1	15 3.7	409 100	7.0			
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100				

\* 7 of the Heads did not give their tribal group(s): 5 also did not give the size of their households, 1 with 5-6 members, and 1 with 9-10 members.

many dependants (family size) is more favoured than one who is not, we can appreciate the role played by the differences in terms of sex, age and family size between the various groups in structuring a pattern of differential resource distribution of resources in the town among the different 'tribal' groups.

#### DIFFERENTIAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION

I will now turn to the data on the differential allocation of the resources in the town between the various "tribal" groups as well as within particular groups. A first assumption might be that the patterns of allocation and distribution revealed in the following tables should tend to unite across 'tribal' lines the large majority of those who are underprivileged and systematically deprived of resources. We shall see, however, that the evidence does not bear this out. On the contrary, the facts of deprivation are by and large manipulated by the dominant groups to mobilize the members of each group against all members of other groups as being the causes and sources of their deprivation.

#### JOB AND EMPLOYMENT:

Table 7:8 gives the numbers in each 'tribal' group of those who are actively employed as against those who are not (the unemployed plus most women and children) as well as the sector in which they are employed. It can be seen that the proportion of the unemployed ranges from 19.6% for Arabs from the North to 25.1% for the Dubasin; but the more significant fact is that there is much wider variation in the proportions for each group employed in the public and private sectors.

Some groups enjoy much higher chances of employment in the public sector, which is far more secure and rewarding. Thus it can be seen that members of some groups tend to be concentrated in the public sector in greater than random proportions. Whereas the aver-



Table 7:8

The Distribution of All Persons in Sample According

Tribal Group and Sector of Employment

Sector of Employment Tribal Group	Public Sector		Private Sector		Others* (Co- Op.)		Self-employed		total employed		total unemployed		Total %	
Gaaliin	70	68.0	11	10.7	1	1.0	21	20.4	103	24.3	320	75.7	423	100
	15.9		10.8		25.0		16.0		15.2		14.7		14.8	
Shaikia	94	68.1	14	10.1	1	0.7	29	21.0	138	22.3	482	77.7	620	100
	21.3		13.7		25.0		22.1		20.4		22.2		21.8	
Arabs North	23	85.2	2	7.4	-	-	2	7.4	27	19.6	111	80.0	138	100
	5.2		2.0				1.5		4.0		5.1		4.8	
Arabs Centre	72	68.6	10	9.5	1	1.0	22	21.0	105	24.9	317	75.1	422	100
	16.3		9.8		25.0		16.8		15.5		14.6		14.8	
Nubians North	23	79.3	3	10.3	-	-	3	10.3	29	24.8	88	75.2	117	100
	5.2		2.9				2.3		4.3		4.1		4.1	
Nuba West	36	85.7	6	14.3	-	-	-	-	42	21.9	150	78.1	192	100
	8.2		5.9				-		6.2		6.9		6.7	
Dubasin	66	64.1	13	12.6	1	1.0	23	22.3	103	25.1	308	74.9	411	100
	15.0		12.7		25.0		17.6		15.2		14.2		14.4	
Kordofanians	26	53.1	12	24.5	-	-	11	22.4	49	23.7	158	76.3	207	100
	5.9		11.8				8.4		7.4		7.3		7.2	
Darfurians	20	51.3	13	33.3	-	-	6	15.4	39	31.2	86	68.8	125	100
	4.0		12.7				4.6		5.8		4.0		4.4	
Westerners (Foreign.)	5	15.2	15	45.5	-	-	13	39.4	33	23.4	108	76.6	141	100
	1.1		14.7				9.9		4.9		5.0		5.0	
Southerners	3	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	20.0	12	80.0	15	100
	0.7		-		-		-		0.4		0.6		0.5	
Others	1	33.3	2	66.6	-	-	-	-	3	21.4	11	78.6	14	100
	0.2		2.0				-		0.4		0.5		0.5	
Total*	441	65.0	102	15.0	4	0.6	131	19.3	678	23.8	2172	76.2	2850	100
Total (%)	100		100		100		100		100		100		100	

\* 17 did not state their Tribal origins: 2 work in Public Sector, 1 in private sector, 1 self-employed, and 13 with no employment.



age percentage of all workers in the public sector is 65.0%, the corresponding figures for some major groups are rather high: Gaaliin 68.0%; Shaikia, 68.1%; Arabs from North, 85.7%; Dubasin, 64.1% and the Nuba of Western Sudan, 85.7%. It should be noted, however, that the Nuba group is concentrated in certain jobs not by virtue of any power, but, on the contrary, because these jobs are low paid and have low 'status'-e.g. jobs associated with sewage and rubbish collection. The groups with markedly lower proportions of workers in the public sector, on the other hand, are Kordofanians, 53.1%; Darfurians, 51.3% and Westerners, 15.2% while all the others groups have participation of 33.3%. Correspondingly, and in contrast, these latter groups are being represented in the private sector by a higher than the 15% average of employment in the town, and it is in the private sector that jobs are on the whole lower paid, less secure and less protected.

The data on the distribution of self-employed people reveal a less regular pattern, but in considering these figures it must be stressed that there is much variation in the quality of different self-employed jobs. While the majority of persons from the first category of "tribes" discussed above (Gaaliin, Shaikia, Arabs from North, Nubians and Dubasin) are self-employed as traders and craftsmen, those from the second category (Kordofanians, Darfurians and Westerners) are self-employed as unskilled manual workers (porters, car washers and shoe-shiners) as shown in Table 7:9 discussed below.

#### OCCUPATION:

From Table 7:9 it can be seen how members of the Nuba (West) group are concentrated in the categories of unskilled workers (50.0%) and to a smaller extent in that of skilled workers (23.7%) and in the regular forces and the Prison Department in particular- all of which are jobs in the public sector. The table shows, moreover, the



Table 7:9

The Distribution of All Persons According to Tribal Group and Occupation

Occupation Group	Senior Official	Junior Official	Big Merchant	Small Trader	Skilled Worker	Unskilled Worker	Craftsman	Farmer & F. Worker	Regular Forces	Others	Total with Occupation	Total without	All Pers.												
Gallatin	2	2.0	16	15.8	-	-	15	14.9	21	20.8	231	22.8	18	17.8	-	-	3	3.0	2	2.0	101	23.9	322	76.1	423
	6.2		16.2		-		16.9		20.4		14.0		14.3				10.3		18.2		15.1		14.8		14.8
Shafkja	7	5.1	23	16.9	2	1.5	18	13.2	21	15.4	25	18.4	27	19.9	-	-	10	7.4	3	2.2	136	21.9	484	78.1	620
	21.9		23.2		50.0		20.3		20.4		15.2		21.4		-		34.5		27.3		20.4		22.2		21.8
Arabs	5	18.5	4	14.8	-	-	2	7.4	8	29.6	3	11.1	2	7.4	-	-	3	11.1	-	-	27	19.6	111	80.4	138
North	15.6		4.0		-		2.2		7.8		1.8		1.6		-		10.3		-		4.0		5.1		4.8
Arabs	8	7.7	23	22.1	-	-	11	10.6	9	8.7	30	28.8	20	19.2	-	-	2	1.9	1	1.0	104	24.6	318	75.4	422
Centre	25.0		23.2		-		12.9		8.7		18.3		15.9				6.9		9.1		15.6		14.6		14.8
Nubians	1	3.4	6	20.7	-	-	2	6.9	6	20.7	6	20.7	7	24.1	-	-	1	3.4	-	-	29	24.8	86	75.2	117
North	3.1		6.1		-		2.2		5.8		3.7		5.6		-		3.4		-		4.3		4.0		4.1
Nuba West	-	-	1	2.6	-	-	1	2.6	9	23.7	19	50.0	3	7.9	-	-	5	13.2	-	-	38	19.8	154	80.2	192
	-		1.0		-		1.1		8.7		11.6		2.4		-		17.2		-		5.7		7.1		6.7
Dubasin	7	6.9	21	20.8	2	2.0	23	22.8	9	8.9	26	25.7	6	5.9	4	4.0	-	-	3	3.0	101	24.6	310	75.4	411
	21.9		21.2		50.0		27.1		8.7		15.9		4.8		30.8		-		27.3		15.1		14.2		14.
Kordofan-	1	2.0	4	8.0	-	-	4	8.0	14	28.0	12	24.0	11	22.0	-	-	2	4.0	2	4.0	50	24.2	157	75.8	207
ians	3.1		4.0		-		4.7		13.6		7.3		8.7		-		6.9		18.2		7.5		7.2		7.
Darfur-	1	2.7	-	-	-	-	2	5.4	3	8.1	10	27.0	17	45.9	2	5.4	2	5.4	-	-	37	29.6	88	70.4	125
ians	3.1		-		-		2.2		2.9		6.1		13.5		15.4		6.9		-		5.5		4.0		4.
Western-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	17.6	2	5.9	4	11.8	15	44.1	7	20.6	-	-	-	-	34	24.1	107	75.9	14
ers	-		-		-		7.1		1.9		2.4		11.9		53.8		-		-		5.1		4.9		5
South-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	100.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	20.0	12	80.0	1
erners	-		-		-		-		-		1.8		-		-	-	-		-		0.4		0.5		0
Others	-	-	1	33.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	66.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	21.4	11	78.6	1
	-		1.0		-		-		-		1.2		-		-		-		-		0.4		0.5		0
Total*	32	4.8	99	14.8	4	0.6	85	12.7	103	15.4	164	24.6	126	18.9	13	1.9	29	4.3	11	1.6	668	23.4	2182	76.6	28
Total (%)	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100



extent to which the other tribal groups are "over-represented" in the relatively well-paid jobs of the public sector (senior and junior professionals). Thus 17.8% of Gaaliin, 22.0% of Shaikia, 33.3% of Arabs from North, 29.8% of Arabs from Centre, 24.1% of Nubians of the North and 27.7% of the Dubasin are employed as senior and junior professionals as against only 2.6% of Nuba (West), 10.0% of Kordofanians, 2.7% of Darfurians, and none of the Westerners and Southerners. Similarly, the Table reveals how the Shaikia and Dubasin dominate trade with 20.3% and 27.1% of all small traders in the town respectively, and with 50.0% each of all big merchants in the whole sample. The Gaaliin constitute 16.9% of the small traders and the Arabs from the Centre constitute 12.9%, while the less privileged groups such as the Nuba (West), Kordofanians, Darfurians, Westerners and Southerners make up only 1.1%, 4.7%, 2.2% and 7.1% of this occupational category respectively. The Table also shows the extent to which agricultural work- small as it is- is in the hands of members of particular "tribal" groups. Thus the Dubasin account for 30.8% of the "Farmers and Farm Workers", a fact which is clearly related to the proximity of Hassaheisa to the fields of the Gezira Scheme where many of the town's Dubasin are tenants. The remaining agricultural workers are mainly Darfurians (15.4%) and Westerners (53.8%), and most of these are labourers rather than farmers. None of the other 'tribal' groups participate in agriculture. The percentages given in the column "Regular Forces", which includes the police, prison guards and the military, shows these areas of employment are filled mainly by Northerners: 10.3% Gaaliin; 34.5% Shaikia; and 10.3% Arabs from North- making up to 55.1%. As stressed in Chapter Four, Northerners predominate in the police force, while members of the Nuba of Western Sudan make up a large proportion of the prison guards.



Table 7:10

Distribution of All Persons According to Tribal Group and Level of Monthly Income

Level of Income Tribal Group	No Income At All	Less Than £5.25		£5.25-49		£5.50-74		£5.75-99		£5.100-149		£5.150-199		£5.200 £ More		Total of Earnings		Total %		
Ga'alla	321	75.9	10	9.9	40	39.6	35	34.6	6	5.9	9	8.9	1	1.0	-	-	101	24.1	423	100
	14.7		10.8		12.6		23.8		10.7		32.1		9.1		-		15.2		14.8	
Shajka	482	77.7	12	8.7	59	42.7	34	24.6	12	8.7	7	5.1	6	4.3	8	5.8	138	22.3	620	100
	22.1		12.9		18.6		23.1		21.4		25.0		54.0		50.0		20.7		21.8	
Arabs North	110	79.7	7	25.0	7	25.0	6	21.4	2	7.1	4	14.3	1	3.6	1	3.6	28	20.3	138	100
	5.0		7.5		2.2		4.1		3.6		14.3		9.1		6.2		4.2		4.8	
Arabs Centre	319	75.6	12	11.6	50	48.5	22	21.3	14	13.6	3	2.9	1	1.0	1	1.0	103	24.4	422	100
	14.7		13.0		15.7		14.7		25.0		10.7		9.1		6.2		15.5		14.8	
Nubians North	88	75.2	2	7.1	17	60.7	5	17.8	3	10.7	-	-	-	-	1	3.6	28	24.8	117	100
	4.0		2.2		5.3		3.4		5.4		-		-		6.2		4.2		4.1	
Nuba West	154	80.2	14	36.8	18	47.3	4	10.5	2	5.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	19.8	192	100
	7.1		15.1		5.7		2.7		3.6		-		-		-		5.7		6.7	
Dubasin	310	75.4	18	17.8	46	45.5	15	14.8	12	11.9	4	3.9	1	1.0	5	4.9	101	24.6	411	100
	14.2		19.4		14.5		10.2		21.4		14.3		9.1		31.3		15.2		14.4	
Kordofanians	154	74.4	6	12.0	27	54.0	13	26.0	3	6.0	-	-	1	2.0	-	-	50	25.6	207	100
	7.1		6.5		8.5		8.9		5.4		-		9.1		-		7.5		7.2	
Darfurians	87	69.6	4	10.5	25	65.8	8	21.1	-	-	1	2.6	-	-	-	-	38	30.4	125	100
	4.0		4.3		7.9		5.4		-		3.6		-		-		5.7		4.4	
Westerners	107	75.9	5	14.7	24	70.6	4	11.8	1	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	24.1	141	100
	4.9		5.4		7.5		2.7		1.8		-		-		-		5.1		5.0	
Southerners	12	80.0	-	-	3	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	20.0	15	100
	0.6		-		0.9		-		-		-		-		-		0.5		0.5	
Others	11	78.6	2	66.7	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	21.4	14	100
	0.5		2.2		-		-		1.8		-		-		-		0.5		0.5	
Total	2179	76.5	93	13.9	318	47.8	147	22.1	56	8.4	28	4.2	11	1.7	16	2.4	665	23.5	2850	100
Total (%)	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100	

17 did not state their tribal groups: 13 with no income, 1 with less than 25, 2 with less than 50, and 1 with less than 75 pounds.



Nubians, Arabs from the Centre, Kordofanians and Darfurians have very few of their members in this category; and the Dubasin, Southerners and Westerners have none at all.

INCOME:

The pattern of participation in the occupational structure of different tribal groups is naturally reflected in the pattern of income distribution. Table 7:10 gives the relevant data on the incomes of populations by 'tribal' group.<sup>14</sup> The first observation to be made relates to the marked variation in average income between the different tribal groups ranging from the lowest average of LS 9.1 per month in the case of the Nuba (West) to LS. 18.8 per month in the case of the Shaikia. It can be seen too that the Southerners, Westerners, the Darfurians and the Kordofanians can be classed with the Nuba (West) as being concentrated in the income-levels of less than LS 5.5 with 100%, 85.3%, 76.3%, 67.0% and 84.1% of their respective members earning less than that figure per month. Other groups such as the Gaaliin, the Shaikia, and the Arabs from North have markedly lower proportions of their members in this income category, only 49.5%, 51.4% and 50.0% respectively. The corresponding situation at the higher levels of income is that groups such as the Kordofanians, the Darfurians, the Westerners, the Southerners, and the Nuba (West) have no members with more than LS. 200 per month and very few with LS. 150-200. Other groups which are well represented in these higher income categories are the Shaikia and the Dubasin.

The uneven pattern of income and occupation examined so far is in turn related to uneven patterns of access to, and consumption of, various services and amenities in the town. I therefore turn now to a brief review of education and housing and of the various amenities relating to accommodation.



Table 7:11

The Distribution of All Persons in Sample According to Group and Level of Education

Tribal Group	Illiterate		Pre-Primary & Khalwa		Primary		Intermediate		Secondary		University & Equivalent		Other		Total & %	
Gallin	103	24.3	22	5.2	171	40.4	66	15.6	45	10.6	8	1.9	3	0.7	423	100
	12.7		13.9		16.2		17.0		13.4		13.3		20.0		14.8	
Shaikia	173	27.9	24	3.9	216	34.8	107	17.3	84	13.5	16	2.6	-	-	620	100
	21.3		15.2		20.5		27.5		25.1		26.1		-		21.8	
Arabs North	43	31.2	2	1.4	42	30.4	22	15.9	22	15.9	4	2.9	3	2.2	138	100
	5.3		1.3		4.0		5.7		6.6		6.7		20.0		4.8	
Arabs Centre	105	24.9	17	4.0	173	41.0	55	13.0	51	12.1	12	2.8	5	1.2	422	100
	12.9		10.8		16.4		14.1		15.2		20.0		33.3		14.8	
Nubians	38	32.5	2	1.7	45	38.5	17	14.5	14	12.0	1	0.9	-	-	117	100
	4.7		1.3		4.3		4.4		4.2		1.7		-		4.1	
North	112	58.3	9	4.7	59	30.7	8	4.2	2	1.0	-	-	2	1.0	192	100
	13.8		5.7		5.6		2.1		0.6		-		13.3		6.7	
Nuba West	112	58.3	9	4.7	59	30.7	8	4.2	2	1.0	-	-	2	1.0	192	100
	13.8		5.7		5.6		2.1		0.6		-		13.3		6.7	
Dubasin	91	22.1	7	1.7	167	40.6	63	15.3	70	17.0	12	2.9	1	0.2	411	100
	11.2		4.4		15.8		16.2		20.9		20.0		6.7		14.4	
Kordofanians	59	28.5	18	8.7	83	40.1	22	10.6	20	9.7	3	1.4	1	0.5	207	100
	7.2		11.4		7.9		5.7		6.0		5.0		6.7		7.2	
Darfurians	33	26.4	15	12.0	55	44.0	7	5.6	13	10.4	2	1.6	-	-	125	100
	4.1		9.5		5.2		1.8		3.9		3.3		-		4.4	
Westerners	48	34.0	42	29.8	32	22.7	11	7.8	8	5.7	-	-	-	-	141	100
(Foreigners)	5.9		26.6		3.0		2.8		2.4		-		-		5.0	
Southerners	4	26.7	-	-	4	26.7	1	6.7	4	26.7	2	13.3	-	-	15	100
	0.5		-		0.4		0.3		1.2		3.3		-		0.5	
Others	3	21.4	-	-	5	35.7	24	28.6	2	14.3	-	-	-	-	14	100
	0.4		-		0.5		1.0		0.6		-		-		0.5	
Total	814	28.6	158	5.5	1056	37.1	389	13.6	335	11.8	60	2.1	15	0.5	2850	100
Total (%)	100		100		100		100		100		100		100		100	100



EDUCATION :

Educational attainment is of relevance to the study of inter-tribal relations both because education is a channel of social mobility and because it is a sign of status and prestige. Education is a mainly publicly financed service and the pattern of educational attainment clearly reflects the differential accessibility of various groups to this public service. Table 7:11 shows, for example, that a total lack of formal education is most common among the Nuba West (58.3%) and least common among the Dubasin (22.1%), while higher education (university & equivalent) is concentrated with particular groups such as the Shaikia (26.1%), the Arabs from Centre (20.0%), the Dubasin (20.0%), the Gaaliin (13.3%) and the Arabs from North (6.7%). Other groups are clearly "under-represented" as far as higher education is concerned- e.g. Nuba (West) and the Westerners have no members at all in this category while the Darfurians and Southerners have 3.3% of their respective members in the category of highly educated. The Table equally shows a similar pattern of 'under-' and 'over-representation' in relation to primary, intermediate and secondary education.

HOUSING AND AMENITIES:

From Table 7:4 it is evident that there is an important measure of residential segregation along 'tribal' lines. This has to be considered in conjunction with the fact that various residential areas differ in regard to 'class' of land, size of plots, and access to services. Residential segregation thus also implies some measure of correlation between particular 'tribal' groups and particular kinds of neighbourhood and residential advantages. Thus, for example, from Table 7:12 it can be seen that 79.4% of all owner-occupier houses belong to members of four 'tribal groups'- Gaaliin, Shaikia, Arabs from Centre and Dubasin, who constitute, respectively, 13.8%, 29.2%



Table 7:12      The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Origin and Type of House Occupation

Tribal Origin	Owned House		Rented House		Other Type*		Total	
Gaaliin	27	46.5	10	17.2	21	36.2	58	100
	13.8		9.4		20.6		14.2	
Shaikia	57	64.1	25	28.1	7	7.9	89	100
	29.2		23.6		6.9		21.8	
Arabs North	7	38.9	7	38.9	4	22.2	18	100
	3.6		6.6		3.9		4.4	
Arabs Centre	23	45.1	14	27.5	14	27.4	51	100
	11.8		13.2		13.7		12.4	
Nubians North	7	29.2	8	33.3	9	37.5	24	100
	3.6		7.5		8.8		5.9	
Nuba West	1	3.7	9	33.3	17	63.0	27	100
	0.5		8.5		16.7		6.6	
Dubasin	48	84.2	6	10.5	2	3.5	57	100
	24.6		5.7		2.0		13.9	
Kordofanians	5	15.2	9	27.3	19	57.6	33	100
	2.6		8.5		18.6		8.1	
Darfurians	6	28.6	11	52.4	4	19.0	21	100
	3.1		10.4		3.9		5.1	
Westerners (Foreigners)	13	59.1	6	27.3	3	13.6	22	100
	6.7		5.7		2.9		5.4	
Southerners	1	50.0	0.0		1	50.0	2	100
	0.5				1.0		0.5	
Total**	195	47.7	106	25.9	102	25.9	409	100
Total (%)	100		100		100		100	100

\* Other house occupation refers mainly to Government's houses and Squater accommodation.

\*\* 7 did not state their Tribal Group(s); 5 did not state the type of their occupancy, 1 tenant and 1 other occupancy.

11.8% and 24.6% of all owner-occupiers in the sample. The other seven tribal groups make up the remainder in small proportions (from 0.5% for the Nuba of Western Sudan and Southerners to 6.7% for the Westerners). Conversely, the seven groups with low proportions of owner-occupiers tend to make up large proportions of tenants.

The column headed "Other" in Table 7:12 includes government houses and squatter shelters. It is thus not a homogeneous category: the relatively high proportions of Gaaliin (20.6%), Arabs from the Centre (13.7%), Nubians from the North (8.8%), Shaikia (6.9%) and Arabs from North (3.9%) in the column reflect their relatively easy access to government houses (as it is the case with all other public assets in the town), while the substantial percentages of Nuba (16.7%) and Kordofanians (18.6%) in the same column reflect their significant presence in squatter areas.

#### ROOMS:

Table 7:13 shows the number of rooms per household in the houses of members of the different 'tribal' groups- rooms having been defined as bed-rooms and living rooms only. Though these rooms naturally vary in size and quality from one residential area to another, and between different households, the Table serves to bring out some important differences between groups. The average number of rooms per household ranges from 1.8 per household for the Nuba of Western Sudan to 2.9 for the Dubasin. Another indicator of this variation is provided by the percentages for each group falling in the several column. In the "One Room" column, the percentages for groups such as Southerners, Nuba (West), Darfurians, Kordofanians and Westerners clearly exceed the corresponding percentages for other groups (50.0%, 40.7%, 33.3%, 27.3% and 22.7% respectively). The relevant figures for the



Table 7:13    The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Origin and Number of Rooms per House

Tribal Group	Single Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Four Rooms	Five or Rooms	Total
Gaaliin	5    8.6 6.8	36   62.1 19.1	14   24.1 16.9	2    3.4 4.3	1    1.7 9.1	58   100 14.2
Shaikia	11   12.4 15.1	44   29.4 23.4	18   20.2 21.7	11   12.4 23.4	4    4.5 36.4	89   100 21.8
Arabs North	4    22.2 5.5	9    50.0 4.8	2    11.1 2.4	3    16.7 6.4	-    -	18   100 4.4
Arabs Centre	10   19.6 13.7	25   49.0 13.3	11   21.6 10.6	5    9.8 10.6	-    -	51   100 12.4
Nubians N	6    25.0 8.2	11   45.8 5.9	6    25.0 7.2	1    4.2 2.1	-    -	24   100 5.9
Nuba West	11   40.7 15.1	12   44.4 6.4	3    11.1 3.6	1    3.7 2.1	-    -	27   100 6.6
Dubasin	3    5.3 4.1	23   40.4 12.2	15   26.3 18.1	11   19.3 23.4	5    8.8 45.5	57   100 13.9
Kordofan-ians	9    27.3 12.3	15   45.5 8.0	4    12.1 4.8	5    15.1 10.6	-    -	33   100 8.1
Darfur-ians	7    33.3 9.6	6    28.6 3.2	6    28.6 7.2	2    9.5 4.3	-    -	21   100 5.1
Westerners (Foreign)	5    22.7 6.8	6    27.3 3.2	3    13.6 3.6	6    27.3 12.8	1    9.1	22   100 5.4
Southerners	1    50.0 1.4	-    -	1    50.0 1.2	-    -	-    -	2    100 0.5
Total *	73   17.8	188   46.0	83   20.3	47   11.5	11    2.7	409   100
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* 7 did not state their Tribal Group(s): 5 also did not state the number of rooms in their houses, 1 with one room, and 1 with two rooms.

Gaaliin in the "One Room" category is 8.6%, for Shaikia, 12.4%, while for the Arabs from Centre and the Dubasin it is 19.6% and 5.3% respectively. Conversely, the Gaaliin, Shaikia, and Dubasin are clearly much better housed according to this indicator, and are with more rooms per household than all other groups except the Westerners who have very small rooms in their houses which have relatively poor amenities as may be seen from the tables to follow.

#### ELECTRICITY:

Although the town was connected to the national network in 1958, there is still a substantial minority of households in Hassaheisa with no electric supply. As shown in Table 7:14, there is again appreciable variations between 'tribal' groups in regard to this amenity, with the Gaaliin, Shaikia, Arabs from North and Nubians (North) and Dubasin being better served than the Nuba (West), Kordofanians, Darfurians and Westerners. The Table, however, does not show the considerable variations in the amounts being consumed by each group of electricity which indicates another kind of differential enjoyment of public energy in domestic life.

#### BATH ROOMS & LAVATORIES:

Bathrooms and lavatories may be taken as further indicators of good housing and, more generally, of a family's position on the scale of affluence to deprivation. From Table 7:15 it can be seen that the Shaikia and Dubasin whom we have already noted as having higher than average incomes, enjoy the best bathrooms, while the 'tribal' groups with lower incomes depend more largely on bowls (a simple and less hygienic type of bathroom).

Table 7:16 gives the distribution of households by 'tribal' group according to lavatory facilities. It can be seen that syphon lavatories, the best and most modern, are enjoyed by very few house-



Table 7:14 The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Origin and the Provision of Electricity

Tribal Group	With Electricity		Without Electricity		Total
Gaaliin	53	91.4	5	8.6	58 100
	15.0		9.8		14.2
Shaikia	86	96.6	3	3.4	89 100
	24.4		5.9		21.8
Arabs Centre	42	100.0	9	17.6	51 100
	11.9		17.6		12.4
Arabs North	18	82.4	-	-	18 100
	5.1		-		4.4
Nubians North	23	95.8	1	4.2	24 100
	6.5		2.0		5.9
Nuba West	22	81.5	5	18.5	27 100
	6.2		7.8		6.6
Dubasin	53	93.0	4	7.0	57 100
	15.0		7.8		13.9
Kordofanians	28	84.8	5	15.2	33 100
	7.9		9.8		8.1
Darfurians	13	61.9	8	38.1	21 100
	3.7		15.7		5.1
Westerners	11	50.0	11	50.0	22 100
	3.1		21.6		5.4
Southerners	2	100	-	-	2 100
	0.6				0.5
Total*	353	86.3	51	13.7	409 100
Total (%)	100		100		100

\* 7 did not state their Tribal Group(s): 5 of them did not state also the provision of electricity in their houses, and 2 with electricity in their houses.

Table 7:15      The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Origin and Type of Bathroom

Tribal Group	Shower		Modern Bath		Bowl		Total	
Gaaliin	51 16.1	87.9	-		7 9.2	12.1	58 14.2	100
Shaikia	76 24.0	85.4	4 50.0	4.5	7 9.2	7.9	89 21.8	100
Arabs North	16 5.0	88.9	-		2 2.6	11.1	18 4.4	100
Arabs Centre	37 11.7	72.5	-		14 18.4	27.5	51 12.4	100
Nubians North	22 6.9	91.7	-		2 2.6	8.3	24 5.9	100
Nuba West	21 6.6	77.8	-		6 7.9	22.2	27 6.6	100
Dubasin	49 15.5	86.0	4 50.0	7.0	4 5.3	7.0	57 13.9	100
Kordofanians	22 6.9	66.7	-		11 14.5	33.3	33 8.1	100
Darfurians	10 3.2	47.6	-		11 14.5	52.4	21 5.1	100
Westerners (Foreigners)	10 3.2	45.5	-		11 14.5	54.5	22 5.4	100
Southerners	1 0.3	50.0	-		1 1.0	50.0	2 0.5	100
Total*	317	77.5	8	2.0	76	18.6	409	100
Total	100		100		100		100	

\* 7 did not state their Tribal Group(s): 5 also did not state the type of bathrooms in their houses, and 2 with showers in their houses.



Table 7:16 The Distribution of Households According to Tribal Origin and Type of Lavatory

Tribal Group	Syphon		Bucket		Pit lat-rine		Communal		Other		Total %	
Gaaliin	-	-	34 12.9	58.6	20 23.8	34.5	-	-	4 11.1	6.9	58 14.2	100
Shaikia	4 44.4	4.4	57 21.6	64.0	23 27.4	25.8	-	-	5 13.9	5.6	89 21.8	100
Arabs North	-	-	14 5.3	77.8	3 3.6	16.7	-	-	1 2.8	5.6	18 4.4	100
Arabs Centre	-	-	42 15.9	82.4	1 1.2	2.0	1 9.1	2.0	7	13.7	51 12.4	100
Nubians N.	-	-	19 7.2	79.2	4 4.8	16.7	-	-	1 2.8	4.2	24 5.9	100
Nuba W.	-	-	14 5.3	51.9	5 6.0	18.5	4 36.4	14.8	4 11.1	14.8	27 6.6	100
Dubasin	5 55.6	8.8	43 16.3	75.4	6 7.1	10.5	-	-	3 8.3	5.3	57 13.9	100
Kordofan-ians	-	-	20 7.6	60.6	7 8.3	21.2	3 27.3	9.1	3 8.3	9.1	33 8.1	100
Darfur-ians	-	-	8 3.0	38.1	7 8.3	33.3	1 9.1	4.8	5 13.9	23.8	21 5.1	100
Westerners (Foreign)	-	-	9 3.4	40.9	8 9.5	36.4	2 18.2	9.1	3 8.3	13.6	22 5.4	100
Southerners	-	-	2 0.8	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 0.5	100
Total*	9	2.2	264	64.5	84	20.5	11	2.7	36	8.8	409*	100
Total (%)	100		100		100		100		100		100	100

\* 7 did not state their Tribal Groups: 5 also did not state the type of their lavatories, and 2 with Buckets.

holders and that these are either Shaikia or Dubasin. Bucket facilities, provided by the public Hygiene Department in return for an insignificant annual fee, again tend to be available to the groups with higher than average incomes and political power, while pit-latrines (with minimum hygiene specifications) and communal lavatory facilities tend to be most used by the tribal groups with lower than average incomes and least political influence.

The rough pattern of correspondence between the allocation of certain kinds of services and resources with particular 'tribal' groups served the development of "tribalism" as a social relation of conflict between the groups in two ways: firstly, those who are relatively enjoying bigger share in the town's resources 'tribalize' in order to defend and acquire more privileges and, secondly, those who are deprived also 'tribalize' themselves against the privileged who are conceived as the source of their sufferings.



## THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'TRIBALISM' AS AN IDEOLOGY

I have so far confined myself to describing and illustrating instances of inequality between 'tribal' groups as revealed by the survey data gathered at a particular point in time. The profile revealed by the data is inevitably static and calls for interpretation and evaluation in a historical perspective which can only be supplied by an assessment of the dynamic processes of political, economic, and ideological change in the urban community. This in turn calls for a critical analysis of the development - often rapid and extensive- of 'tribalism' in Sudanese society in general, and with particular reference to the changes stemming from the following:

- (1) The impact of Arab culture and Muslim ideology,
- (2) The development of the State in Sudanese society and the implications at local levels of this development and,
- (3) The impact of the particular mode of accumulation which we have reviewed in Hassaheisa, as being negatively or positively conducive for 'tribalism'.

My concern is primarily with 'tribalism' as manifested and expressed in a particular region of the Sudan, namely the Northern Sudan comprising the six northern provinces. The reasons for this is partly because I am studying a northern town, but mainly because the South for long 'enjoyed' a degree of political, cultural, and economic isolation from the North.<sup>15</sup> The processes of change in the South were therefore little affected by developments in the North.

We are thus in essence dealing with 'tribalism' among the 'Arabs' of Northern Sudan, taking the term Arab to refer generally to all Arabic-speaking groups in the Sudan whatever their

ethnic origins may have been.<sup>16</sup> The creation of culturally 'Arabized' peoples in the Sudan was of course a cumulative result of the gradual penetration of large numbers of Arabs. These had come to the area along various routes, by different means, and over a long period of time.<sup>17</sup> The genealogical traditions now current in the Northern Sudan are interesting evidence. We know from documentary evidence that they have been current for at least three centuries,<sup>18</sup> and they clearly indicate the high degree of Arabization in this region. The widespread use of Arabic for many generations is of course another indicator of the cultural process to which I refer.

Taken as a whole, the historical evidence suggest that during the seven centuries that preceded the fall of Soba (the capital town of the Christian kingdom of Allawa) in 1504, Arabs had drifted into the Sudan in numerous small scale parties, rather than in large scale migrations, and many of the small groups had different 'tribal' origins.<sup>19</sup> There was thus no single tribal or ethnic influence in the process of Arabization. According to the available historical accounts, the small groups of migrants were of two main types. The first type chose to live a *sedentary* life among the riverain groups with whom they intermarried and mixed freely, even adopting their languages.<sup>20</sup> The second type consisted of parties of Arabs who chose to continue the kind of *pastoral-nomadic* life to which they were accustomed before entering the northern areas of the Sudan.<sup>21</sup>

Over the course of time, the small parties who remained nomads began to crystallize into small groups interrelated by kinship and marriages as well as other socio-political relationships, and united by the common ownership of the animals and



and materials (e.g. tents) on which they depended for their existence. These groups developed stability and intimacy but their overall social organization remained highly amorphous and also flexible and changing.<sup>22</sup> As nomadic pastoralists, these groups constantly encountered other groups living similar lives and various kinds of alliances were established. Such alliances were usually temporary and transient. They usually depended on the nature of such mutual benefits as could be attained from sharing in the control and management of a particular *strategic resource* (usually a watering place). And the pattern of authority relations which arose in controlling and managing such strategic resources usually allowed for, and in fact virtually structured, a certain kind of *power centres* within alliances.<sup>23</sup> Over time, larger groupings of the constituent small kin-groups were eventually formed, and these larger groupings were mainly defined by the socio-cultural features of the groups nearest to, or at the "power centres" that have emerged. Finally, at certain points in their respective histories, these large groupings began to assume the status of 'tribes' and to function as such. Yet the designation of a group by the name of a certain tribe did not necessarily imply that all the members of the group belonged to that particular tribe; the fluidity and flexibility of the system of organization meant that each group was constantly liable to be affected by the formation of new alliances, by the adoption of different names and habits, and even, on occasions, by collapse and disintegration.<sup>24</sup>

The relatively peaceful nature of Arab penetration into the Sudan began to change towards the end of the fifteenth century, as did the early pattern of tribal structure. There was a re-emphasis of former tribal traditions and a new consolidat-



ion of them. Many factors appear to have affected this development. Firstly, there were the clashes which developed between the original inhabitants of Allawa kingdom and the 'invading' Arab groups. It is easy to conceive how and why conflicts occurred over the control of pastures in the rich riverain lands in particular.<sup>25</sup> And local clashes ultimately developed into *tribal warfare*. Secondly, encouraged by the weakness of the Christian kingdom and by their own numerical superiority, the Arab groups began to act decisively against the tyranny of the Anaj kings of Allawa. This tyranny, or *Zulum*, which provoked the Arabs had two aspects; there was the specific aspect of the kind of reaction that may be expected of any 'Muslim' group against being ruled by Christians, and there was a more general reaction against the demands of the rulers that the Arabs should pay 'taxes' and obey the laws of Allawa. Soon after defeating the Anaj in Allawa, the Arabs had to contend with a new and formidable enemy, namely the Funj who began to push northwards down the Blue Nile River.<sup>26</sup>

All these factors induced the Arabs to consolidate their socio-political organization and to formalize their institutions in order to be able to carry out the immediate and relatively specific tasks of ensuring their survival through 'tribal warfare'. When all hostilities ended through the final establishment of *Al-Saltana Al-Zarga* ('the Black Sultanate) in Sennar in 1504, which lasted up to 1820, the one small but well articulated kin-groups had already assumed the character of 'tribes', which were relatively stable in their allegiances and well settled in various regions. This situation was then reinforced and more firmly established through the particular relationships developed between the kings of Sennar and these 'tribes'. These relation-



ships took the following forms:

(a) There was full recognition of the authority of the Sheikhs of these tribes over their respective groups, especially in the case of the Abdallab.<sup>27</sup> Each Sheikh and his immediate kinsmen became the nucleus of their respective tribal groups. As such they were delegated the responsibility of collecting tribute, seeing to the orderly functioning of the land tenure system, and of the exploitation of agricultural resources in their areas. They performed these functions in the name of the Funj monarch and were thus involved in the administrative apparatus of the Funj state and, in consequence, the formerly fluid tribal organizations became relatively rigid.

(b) The state recognized, and even encouraged, the consolidation of tribal ideology through its inducement of the formal recording of the *Nisba* (genealogy) of each group, whether genuine or reconstructed on the basis of oral tradition. This process of recording genealogies and ideological codification had the immediate divisive effect of sorting out and classifying the 'Arabs', and in the long run it served as justification for the further consolidation of tribal groups.

The reasons for the Funj state to act in this way are not difficult to appreciate. The Arabs were its main rival contenders for authority and influence and they were its most immediate threat. The policy of fostering inter-group rivalries (tribalism) was an effective way to 'divide and rule'. It is relevant to recall that only 13 years following the establishment of the Funj kingdom, it was threatened by an invasion by Sultan Selim who had conquered Egypt in 1517. Omara Dunkas (the first Funj

monarch) thought it well to write to Selim to explain that the inhabitants of his kingdom were Arabs of exalted lineage. In this respect, MacMichael, quoting Naum Shukair, claims that:

With this letter he sent a book of the pedigrees of the Arab tribes in his kingdom compiled for him by el Imam el Samarkandi, one of the learned men of Sennar; and when this book reached the Sultan Selim its contents delighted him and he renounced the attack on Sudan.<sup>28</sup>

The above are some of the main ways in which the mainly Arab population of Northern Sudan was increasingly involved in the process of tribalization. In the end, this process undermined both the loose and amorphous nature of the original 'tribal' structures and Arab unity as one cultural group, and it led instead to the emergence of semi-closed tribal groupings.

In addition to the socio-economic and political factors already discussed, the process of tribalization was also facilitated by two other factors. The first was geographical: the vastness of the country, with extensive lands of pasture, give each group ample opportunity to develop a degree of independence and isolation from the others. The second factor was religious; in their attempt to revive and impose patriarchal ideology (according to which they could organize themselves along the lineage system dominant in their land of origin) in the place of the matriarchal ideology found in the Allawa kingdom, the Arabs were strongly stimulated by Islamic ideology. Patriarchy is, of course, fundamental to Islamic thought and lies at the base of a number of its socio-economic and political doctrines-e.g. inheritance, leadership, etc.

The advent of the Turco-Egyptian colonial rule in the Sudan (1821-1885) did not affect the basic factors through which



the process of tribalization had been formed and developed. After an initial period of resistance and displacement of the country's populations, the inauguration of Mahu Bey as Governor of Sudan in 1825 marked the resumption of the state's policy of reconciling tribal Sheikhs. Their powers over their subordinates were fully reinstated, as was their status as effective leaders within the general administrative system of the Turks.<sup>29</sup>

The Mahdist State (1885-1898) advocated a return to pure Islamic traditions (where sectarianism, however based, was irrelevant), but practical considerations and pragmatic administrative attitudes led it to adopt somewhat different policies. Thus the Mahdi set out to win the support of various political groups by trying to persuade their Sheikhs to join his movement.<sup>30</sup> Later, after the establishment of the 'Revolutionary State', the administrative structure was in fact built up with the cooperation and involvement of the Sheikhs, with an increase in their numbers, and with their appointment as *Emírs* (governors) of their respective groups.<sup>31</sup> In addition, it is relevant to note that considerations of political balance led the new State to rely more heavily on certain tribes rather than others- e.g. more on the Ta'aisha than the Kababish.<sup>32</sup> This led to jealousy and resentment among groups such as the Kababish so that rivalry and competition between the different groups was inevitably fostered.<sup>33</sup>

I have tried to sketch out the process of tribalization over a long period of history in order to stress some of its complexity. The facts of central interest to us are, however, that at the beginning of this century the 'tribal' situation was characterized by the following:

- (a) Various tribal groups, formed around 'power centres'



in the various regions were maintained as the central government maintained and supported the 'power-centres'. Indeed, the state actively encouraged the formation and perpetuation of new ones.

(b) In spite of the continuous growth and increasing stability of the socio-economic and ideological bases of these 'centres', the boundaries between different groups were often flexible and unstable. Both geographical limits and organizational structures were liable to change.

(c) Conflict, rivalry and competition over local (as opposed to national) issues were common, and these were salient features of 'tribalism' as described by many observers. Competition over local strategic resources was always marked- e.g. the Bat-ahin against the Shukria in the Butana (1802)<sup>34</sup>; the Hallawin against the Kwahla in Western Gezira (1790-1805)<sup>35</sup>; and Gaaliin against the Shaikia in the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

(d) Participation in conflict and warfare of this type and, to a lesser degree, the receipt of benefits deriving from these localized struggles, affected and involved most members of the groups concerned. This was so because internal mechanisms of socio-political structure and the whole process of reproduction of the group functioned according to relatively "egalitarian" traditions.<sup>37</sup> For example, the defence of territory or the acquisition of new land or of water sources affected all members in a group and were therefore a matter of concern to the group as a whole.

(e) In spite of the continuous presence of a strong central state, 'tribal' groupings remained relatively autonomous local units practising a poorly developed subsistence economy. This relative autonomy was in effect readily allowed by the state whose effective demand was limited to the collection of tribute



or taxes.<sup>38</sup> Also, in the absence of any nationally coordinated economic activity, the 'tribal' groups naturally tended to maintain a considerable degree of mutual economic independence.

Having noted the main features which characterized what I call '*old tribalism*', we may now devote our attention to '*modern tribalism*'.

With the introduction of British colonial rule in the Sudan in 1898 a completely different process of tribalization began to develop. The colonial policies which allowed and promoted this were all based on the clear recognition of the basic political and economic functions performed by the 'tribes', and the colonial government's first concern was to pacify and resettle the tribes while gaining their loyalty. As Abdel Ghaffar puts it:

It was part of the colonial policy in Sudan to stabilize the power centres as they found them and even to draw on historical tradition and cultural heritage in building new units. When this was done the colonial rule tried to set physical boundaries to these units through the utilization of the concept of Dar (home).<sup>39</sup>

The clear and persistent adherence by the colonial administration to this policy marks up a significant aspect of the systematic *external pressures* brought to bear on the people of the Sudan to consolidate tribalism and even, in some cases, to form tribes anew.<sup>40</sup> As part of these policies, concerted pressure was exerted on 'tribes' to stabilize and perpetuate their existing social, political and geographical boundaries. The significance of these policies can, however, only be fully appreciated if we note that they were part of a major *contradiction* in the development of the colonial capitalist economy. For, while 'tribal' groups were pacified, resettled and stabilized within

the clearly demarcated boundaries of their respective *Dars* (homes), the development of the new capitalist economy worked- through uneven penetration as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3- to undermine the very basis of the policy of tribal segregation and stabilization.

The emphasis on *primary export production*, coupled with intense efforts to boost production in particular regions, called for a pool of cheap labour in or around the regions in which this production was being promoted. In the case of the Gezira Scheme, an extensive range of developments was required to accompany the new plantation agriculture. Labour therefore had to be stimulated in various ways. The relatively sparsely populated region of the Gezira, began to receive an inflow of migrants drawn from remote regions, some of which were far located from others.<sup>41</sup> As these migrants found themselves in a completely new situation of *co-existence* with people from different 'tribal' groups, a basic aspect of colonial tribal policy (that of boundaries) was effectively transcended.

In the towns in particular, the people began to establish new kinds of boundaries in a manner which was directly influenced by the mechanisms of the colonial capitalist economy. The history of Hassaheisa under colonial administration, as outlined in Chapter 3, illustrates this point. By the mid 1940s the town had already emerged as a *multi-tribal* settlement. Its development, like that of all colonial urban centres, was closely inter-related to that of its rural surrounds. The Gezira Scheme was syphoning off a substantial number of peoples from various and different regions of the Sudan to provide for both skilled and unskilled labour needed in the Scheme, as well as in the towns. In the specific



case of Hassaheisa, the people came to provide labour for the irrigation station, the ginneries, workshops, and various transport facilities, in addition to those who joined the trading sector.

The urban community which developed thus was largely governed by the conditions and requirements imposed on it by the colonial capitalist economy. As seen in Chapter 2, the labour system which developed assumed that the subsistence of workers and their families for the off-work season should be provided by means other than wages received during the work season. These other means came primarily from the indigenous consumption-oriented systems, whether in the rural areas or in the towns (where they form a major section of what is now being called the *informal sector*). Thus the so-called 'traditional sector' was in effect made to bear the cost of maintaining the worker's family, of providing for its social services, of absorbing them when they were ill or unemployed. Under such a system, workers' wages could be paid *below the historical value of their labour power*. This value would, of course, have been very high if it had covered the costs of reproduction and satisfied workers' needs at a level corresponding to that attained by metropolitan workers in Europe. In fact, quite the contrary occurred, with workers finding themselves in an economic system which effectively severed the link between the capacity to produce and the capacity to consume. In this way, the workers were integrated into the colonial capitalist economy as producers but not to any corresponding extent as consumers.<sup>42</sup>

In consequence, the lack of security which inevitably developed in such a system gave birth to a distinct pattern of behaviour (i.e. the movement back and forth between the centres of



colonial capitalist economy (the modern export sector) and the 'native reserves' (the traditional sector). Similar situations have often been noted in other Third World cities such as Cairo (Abu-Lughod)<sup>43</sup>, East London (Mayer)<sup>44</sup>, Lagos (Marris)<sup>45</sup>, and Mexico City (Lewis)<sup>46</sup>. These and many other studies have suggested that '*urban villages*' exist in the hearts of cities and towns. In these 'villages', as Pahl has noted, there is a high level of social cohesion based on interwoven kinship networks and also a high level of primary contacts with strangers who rapidly become familiar faces. At first sight, it may seem difficult, as Pahl finds it, "to understand how the city can both be a melting pot and segregate people into distinct neighbourhoods at the same time".<sup>47</sup>

In the particular case of Hassaheisa, given the nature of the colonial economy, it is evident that people's engagement in this kind of double life was in fact a kind of response conditioned by the mechanisms of that very economic system. In a certain sense, the people were *compelled* (they never freely 'chose') to build and maintain *informal social networks* ('urban villages') through their strong adherence to sets of cultural values and social normative frameworks based on their rural 'tribal' norms. These were only forms for what they were essentially trying to do; strengthening the only reserves of socio-economic security available to them under the given conditions. And this, then, provided the bases for the cultivation of 'modern tribalism' in the urban context and its continuous reproduction.

To substantiate the above assertions, I will now examine in detail the emergence and development of social, economic, political and psycho-cultural reserves (the tribal units) of three specific groups in Hassaheisa: the Dubasin, the *Shammaliin* (North-



erners), and the Fur. Whatever definition of these groups we may adopt (geo-cultural or geo-ethnic units<sup>48</sup>, categories of social interaction<sup>49</sup>, ethnic groups<sup>50</sup>, or any other), the concomitant pattern of interaction between them is what I call 'tribalism'.

#### *THE DUBASIN*

The Dubasin make about 15% of the total population of Hassaheisa (See Table 7:4).<sup>51</sup> In Chapter 3 we noted the particular way by which the members of the Dubasin group came to settle in the town and the particular relation which they had with the site prior to the colonial period. These influenced to a great extent the manner through which they developed their 'tribal' unit, as well as the way in which they conceive their relationship with the place and the other groups which subsequently arrived there. The Dubasin believed, and continue to believe, that they were the 'original' inhabitants of the town. This gives them the 'right', as they see it, to claim 'ownership' of the place; in their own eyes they are the most 'patriotic' inhabitants as opposed to the other groups which are only 'invaders' whose loyalties lie elsewhere.<sup>52</sup>

The manner of the Dubasin's settlement also influenced the process of their constitution into a 'tribal' unit and thus the main features of this unit. In the course of making their permanent abode there, their cooperation and collaboration with the administration was largely, at the instigation of the colonial authorities, through one particular family rather than through the group as a whole.<sup>53</sup>

Generally speaking, the Dubasin group is subdivided into the following sub-sections<sup>54</sup>: (1) Saifab, (2) Hetaykab, (3) Gifaynab, (4) Ghadayfab, (5) Bilayab, (6) Gebelab and (7)

Raydab. All of these used to live in the region of Northern Gezira immediately to the south of Khartoum. Up to the early years of this century, they were for the most part nomadic, but they never wandered more than about seventy miles to the south of Khartoum. Their settlement in Hassaheisa was undertaken by a number of families, the Daghala of the Saifab subsection, the Iheimir of the Raydab, the Feki el-Zewayn family of the Hetaykab, ...etc. But the colonial administration singled out the Iheimir family and gave it the role of leaders. Although I was unable to establish the exact course of events which led to this particular decision, it would seem from the "care"<sup>55</sup> shown by the administration in establishing Hassaheisa and from the instructions laid down by Kitchener in his "Memorandum to Mudirs"<sup>56</sup>, which asked the District officers to be

thoroughly in touch with the *better class of native*, through whom we may hope gradually to influence the whole population ... to know personally all the principal men of their district, and shown them, *by friendly dealings* and the interest taken in their individual concerns, that *our object* is to increase *their prosperity*. (emphasis added).

- One would think of the following factors as being decisive:
- (a) The Iheimer family was the largest to settle in Hassaheisa.<sup>57</sup>
  - (b) The position of the family as a 'power centre' among the Dubasin was built up since Turkish rule and through the period of the Mahdia, when its head (Iheimir) served as *Magadam* in the Khalifa's army in the Eastern front<sup>58</sup>, even though he never challenged the status of Kheir el-Seid who held important position among the Dubasin.<sup>59</sup>
  - (c) The high degree of dependence of his family on the colonial



administration due to the family's alleged involvement in the capture of Abdel Kadir in 1908 through which they reinforced the enmity of the Hallawin.<sup>60</sup>

Whatever the precise historical development may have been, the available materials clearly show that the Iheimir family received direct and regular encouragement and assistance from the colonial administration in making their bid for recognition as the leading Dubasin family. We know, for example, that many of the Hallawin convicted for taking part in Abdel Kadir's Rebellion of 1908 had their lands confiscated<sup>61</sup> and many of these lands were then registered under the name of the Iheimir family as a reward for its potential collaboration (cf. Chapter 5).<sup>62</sup> We also know that, by appointing the leader of this family as a *Sheikh* and thus making him a 'Public Servant' associated with administration, the government was deliberately concerned

to raise the status of the Sheikh as far as possible in the eyes of his people by trying to impress on them (and on him) that he is the representative in his own village of the Government.<sup>64</sup>

After his appointment as Sheikh of Hassaheisa in 1913, El-Amin Iheimir was entitled to a remission of 5% on the taxes he collected according to the Taxation of Animals Ordinance<sup>65</sup> of 1903 and the instructions of the Civil Administration Order of the same year. He was then promoted to Omda and in 1918 he received a 3rd Class Robe of Honour from Sir L. Stack "in recognition of his good services to the Government".<sup>66</sup> Later he was to acquire very considerable administrative powers when the "policy of admitting the native to share in the management of affairs and helping him to fit himself for the increased responsibilities involved"<sup>67</sup> was finally declared in the Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance<sup>68</sup> of 1927.

These administrative powers were further enhanced by the establishment of a native court in Hassaheisa in 1930 with the town courts' powers<sup>69</sup>, and his concomitant appointment as a "magistrate of the Third Class under the Code of Criminal Procedure for the purpose of sitting on major and minor courts".<sup>70</sup> Five months later, on the occasion of H.M. King George V's Coronation Day, El-Amin Iheimir was awarded another Robe of Honour, this time of the 2nd. Class "in recognition of his good services to the Government".<sup>71</sup>

The above course of events led to an excessive concentration of administrative, legal and economic powers in the hands of the Iheimir family vis-a-vis other Dubasin families and others. By the early 1930s it had emerged as the undisputedly most powerful family in the town in general and among the Dubasin in particular.

Finally, the colonial administration spared no effort in furthering the interests of the Iheimir family through the provision of education and government employment in a way not available to others. In laying down the policy of education in Sudan at large, Cromer had in 1908 stressed the need to limit general education to small class of Sudanese, believing that this would weaken the development of a nationalist anti-colonial movement, as the natural consequence of education was considered to be the rise of a class of people who would demand the end of foreign rule.<sup>72</sup> To create a small group of educated Sudanese, senior administrators toured the country trying to persuade leading families to enrol their children in government educational institutions.<sup>73</sup> Education, it was stressed, would "enlarge their outlook, increase their efficiency and standard of comfort, and bring them into closer sympathy with government". Education, for the



colonial administration in particular, would "produce a new generation of *native chiefs* of higher integrity" (emphasis added); they would be "efficient, loyal, reliable, and contented- a race of self-respecting native gentlemen ".<sup>74</sup> These efforts of the colonial administration at the national level were intensified after the events of 1924 and the perception of a growing threat from the Sudanese who had been educated by the Egyptians before and during the Condominium period. Thus the colonial administration was instructed to "admit the children of native notables of good birth and position"<sup>75</sup> in its schools, because "native chiefs without education would not be able to stand up to the *effendi* (educated) class".<sup>76</sup>

Under these policies, the children of El-Amin Iheimir, the Omda of Hassaheisa, enjoyed ample educational opportunities, and they consequently enjoyed exceedingly good access to government employment later. This not only added to the family's social standing, but also diversified its sources of income. As evidence of these statements, I give below a list of the names of the sons of Omda El-Amin Iheimir with their level of education and their occupations. All had been educated between 1920 and 1938 mainly in Khartoum because the first Elementary school was not established in Hassaheisa until 1931, and the first Intermediate school not until 1950.

In the light of the above review of the assistance granted to the Iheimir family, it is not surprising that the family developed into a quite formidable political, economic and social institution. As would be expected, too, there was considerable resentment and uneasiness among other Dubasin families in the town who felt that they had been victims of discrimination. Yet such resent-

ment was relatively muted and eventually came to be rechannelled and used on behalf of the Dubasin against non-Dubasin threats to the supremacy of the Iheimir family and especially against the threat of the *Shammaliin* merchant power which, as explained in Chapters 3 and 4, began to emerge in the early 1930s.

A List of Omda Iheimir Sons, Level of Their  
Education and Occupations.

Name	Level of Education	Occupation
Ahmed	Intermediate	Omda of Hassaheisa
Taj el-Din	Intermediate	Omda of Hassaheisa
Mohammed	Gordon Memorial College	Financial Controller
Yousif	Gordon Memorial College	Section Manager (Sudan Railways)
Sheikh Idris	Elementary	Unknown
Abdel Kadir	Intermediate	Judge, Hassaheisa
Abdin	Unknown	Unknown
Hussein	Intermediate	Administrator (Gez- ira Board)
Mahmoud	Gordon Memorial College	Irrigation Inspect.
Mohammed Ahmed	Unknown	Unknown
Abdel Alla	Military College	Army Officer
Khalil	Gordon Memorial College	Engineer

Source: Interview with Sayed/ Yousif El-Amin Iheimir (currently Director, Rates Office, Hassaheisa), 5.11.1980.

#### *THE SHAMMALIIN*

Literally, the word *Shammaliin* means Northerners. But in Hassaheisa it has been, and still is, used to refer to all groups coming to the town from the entire Northern Region (i.e. both the Northern Province and the Nile Province). At the present time, the *Shammaliin* make up some 36% of the total population of the town, and are drawn from various tribal groups in the Northern Region. These groups include the Gaaliin with the whole range of sections



that they comprise (i.e. Zaidab, Aliab, Kitiab, Mukabrab, Shaadinab, Omerab, Hasaballab, Nafa'ab, Sa'adab, etc.) and the Bedayria, Skaikia, and some Nubians.<sup>77</sup>

As explained in Chapter 4, the inhabitants who came from the Northern Provinces are employed either in government departments and the Gezira Board or in trade. We also saw how they tend to monopolize the commercial activities in the *Suk*. It is in the commercial sphere that they have displayed the most dynamic aspect of their history and development in the town<sup>78</sup>, and it is in commerce that some of their families have established themselves as a new centre of power in the town. In particular, a few Bedayria families from Ganetti have over time succeeded in rising to important positions in political and social spheres as well as in economic life. Through the direct and active efforts of a few personalities (i.e. Yousif Hassan, Ali Eisa Bishara, and the sons of Sid Ahmed) the Bedayria emerged as the nucleus around which other *Shammaliin* agglomerated to form a group able to match, and even defeat, the previously dominant Dubasin.

From the 1930s onwards the history of political development in the town was increasingly characterized by rivalry between the Iheimir family and the Bedayria Muswab. The main competition has been over certain key positions of power and influence. I have explained the ascendancy of the Iheimir family over the Dubasin, and now need to account for the ascendancy of Bedayria Muswab families over the Northerners. Again, the available evidence suggests that a crucial role was played by the State :

(1) It is well known that the *Khatmiya Tariqa* (a religious sect) is firmly established in Northern Sudan since the early years of Turco-Egyptian rule.<sup>79</sup> With the imposition of the British colonial rule subsequent to the destruction of the Mahdist State, a vacuum

*Khatmiya attempted to exploit for their own*



benefit. The colonial government, on the other hand, was most anxious to gain political support among the population and despite its tendency to regard religious movements as superstitious fanatics, the Khatmiya "received special treatment from the authorities, including financial aid"<sup>80</sup> in return for support and collaboration. In Hassaheisa town it appears that two factors influenced the administration's selection of the Bedayria Muswab families to perform locally the kind of service provided by the khatmiya nationally. The service was to act as intermediaries with the Northerners and to help win their acceptance and cooperation without expecting in return any formal position in the administrative system.<sup>81</sup> The two factors which probably influenced the choice of the Muswab families at the local level were (a) the relatively large numbers of them among the Northerners in Hassaheisa, and (b) the firm loyalty of the family to the Khatmiya sect combined with the fact that in 1928 the head of this family had been appointed as Omda in their Northern home in Ganetti.<sup>82</sup>

Thus in recognition of this group's cooperation and stimulating future collaboration with the government, one of them who was the chief merchant of the Hassaheisa market received a 3rd Class Robe of Honour in 1937.<sup>83</sup>

(2) From about the time of the outbreak of World War II, the Muswab family began to assume a greater role in the town politics and administration at the expense of the traditional authority of the Iheimir family, and they increasingly controlled the main effective channels of contact between the local population and the colonial administration. This position was achieved and secured through the careful and skillful manipulation of their relationship with the government at two important levels. Firstly, as seen



in Chapter 4, they had a virtual monopoly over the *Merchants' Committee*, and this gave them the opportunity to develop direct contact with the British Inspector of the District. This helped them to lay their own interests and those of other Northern 'followers' before the government and, as a result, they acquired a good deal of preferential treatment in housing, jobs, health services and the like. The administration was thus better able to control the Northerners, while the Muswab family, who were effective agents in this, were able to use their position of virtual "contact monopoly" as a lever to gain further privileges and to consolidate their status as 'patrons' of their Northern 'clients'. Secondly, this special relationship acquired a further dimension by the development of a politico-tribal relationship between the members of the Muswab and local junior staff of the administration living in the town. The convergence of the political attitudes of this group (as Suk merchants) and of the junior administrators (Nationalist Graduates) is explained in Chapter 4. The regional and/or 'tribal' origins of the two groups being the same, their political alliance in the town was an important factor in their joint efforts to build popular support among the Northerners. This they did mainly through the systematic channelling of services, and the provision of certain public resources, to which the Muswab had easy access, to members of the wider group to which they belonged.

At the same time, the influence and powers of the Iheimir family were being eroded as a result of the adoption by the government of a policy of 'local government' rather than 'native administration'.<sup>84</sup> The leading Muswab thus found increasing opportunities to occupy wider intermediary position between the administration and the town's population at large. The relatively large



number of their supporters and the alliances they had established with leading rural families in the surrounding area<sup>85</sup>, had combined to enable them to take control of local government institutions from about 1941 (this is explained in Chapter 8).

(3) Another factor which helps to account for the ascendancy of the Bedayria Muswab families over other Northerners is their own high ability in manipulating different aspects of the 'tribal' ideology of the *Shammaliin*. While offering themselves as a group of patrons in relation to the wider Northern groups, they spared no effort to emphasize and demonstrate the *unity and togetherness of the whole Shammaliin*. As is illustrated below, they engaged in active 'propaganda' which stressed the factors of unity among the Northerners, and played down those which were divisive. The following are examples of how this was done.

(a) From the beginning the Muswab were actively opposed to the use of particular tribal names by and for groups such as the Bedayria, the Shaikia and the Gaaliin.<sup>86</sup> Instead, they used, and encouraged others to use, the term *Shammaliin* as a label of identification. They thus tried to avoid the fragmentation of the wider group into the 'real' tribal affiliations of various Northerners, and they equally strove to prevent any collapse of *Shammaliin* identity which might have taken place if they had tried to impose their own tribal identity of Bedayria on the whole group. In this connection, it is relevant to note that when I carried out my survey I interviewed 189 heads of households from these Northern groups, but only 47 gave me their original 'tribal' identification in response to a question on 'tribal origin'. Of these 47, 24 were Nubians who are only loosely connected to the wider group of the *Shammaliin*, and 23 were Gaaliin. The rest (142) all gave the word *Shammali* (Northerner) as their first response, and I had to press



my question before I could obtain any more specific answer. The vast majority of these turned out to be non-Gaaliin and non-Nubians. The use of the term 'Northerners' thus serves to blur the differences between various Northern 'tribal' groups and also obscures the genealogical and regional 'distinctions' between them.

(b) To bring the various elements of Gaaliin into the wider 'Northerners' group and to maintain the Gaaliin allegiance to the latter, the leading Bedayria group worked persistently to emphasize such common genealogical origins as they share (See the genealogy of the Bedayria). On the other hand, the genealogical affinity between the two groups was seldom brought to the attention of other Northerners; for doing so might only have undermined their relationship with other non-Gaaliin, though Northerner, groups.

(c) The Shaikia are one of the most important non-Gaaliin groups of Northerners, and for them the Bedayria employed a quite different mode of common identification. In this case, the Bedayria relied heavily on the concept of 'common locality', as the Bedayria of Hassaheisa came mainly from Ganetti which is located in the Shaikia region in the Northern Province (i.e. Merowe Rural Council). Thus they tried to secure the loyalty of the Shaikia by appealing to locality rather than to any real or supposed common ancestry. And because the Merowe area is generally known as a Shaikia home area, many of the Bedayria in Hassaheisa (especially those with low incomes) tended to give 'Shaiki' in response to my question on tribal identification (after having first given the response of Northerner). But I had in such case to use my prior knowledge of the informants and to press my inquiries to obtain the final response. Common locality or merely proximity of origin are used by the Bedayria in their attempts to identify with other Nubian groups in Hassaheisa, but they have had far less success

Fig.9 The Nisba (Pedigree) of Bedayria Muswab in Hassaheisa

Hashim	(the grandfather of Hashimite Arabs)
Abdel Muttalib	(Grandfather of Prophet Mohammed)
El-Abbas	(Uncle of Prophet Mohammed)
Abdulla	
El Fadl	(Ancestor of all Gaaliin in Sudan)
Saad	
Ibrahim el Gaali	
Mohammed el Yemeni	
Ahmed el Hegazi	
Masruk	
Harkan	
Budaa	
Abu el Dis	
Kerdam	
Serrar	(Ancestor of Gaaliin Proper)
Samra	
Bedayr	(Ancestor of all Bedayria in Sudan)
Dahmash	
Muhammed	
Salah	
Mohammed	
Musa the elder	(Ancestor of Bedayria Muswab)
Salah	
Nasrulla	
Mohammed	
Hammad	
El Malik Musa el-Sughayr	(the 'younger')
Abu el Kasim	(Ancestor of all Bedayria Musawab families in Hassaheisa, originally coming from Genatti in Northern Province and which include: a. Awlad ('sons') Sid Ahmed b. Awlad Abdul Rahim c. Awlad Babiker d. Awlad Bishara)

Source: related to me by Mr Ali Eisa Bishara, Hassaheisa, but cf. with the Nisba (pedigree) of Ahmed ibn Ismail el Azhari in Mac-Michael, op.cit., p. 80. (N.B. last generation at bottom of Nisba)



in this than with the Shaikia. Most of the Nubians are no more than fringe members of the Northerners group with whom they have very loose connection.

It should, however, not to be thought that the Bedayria engaged in any thing like conspiratorial socio-political activity. My observations are made simply to indicate the type of subtle manipulations which take place in everyday life, often in a quite spontaneous way. The juggling of identity claims promote the image of the Northerners group in contradistinction to that of other groups in the town. And Northerners identity is used to served the ends and interests of a particular group, namely the Bedayria Muswab. More generally, my observations serve to show how a particular interest group is commonly ready to invent, compromise, even sacrifice its own identity in order to secure wider support necessary for the service of its particular interests in both the short and the long terms.

#### *THE FUR*

My interest in the study of the process of tribalization of the Fur in Hassaheisa stems from two distinct concerns:

(i) The first is epistemological in nature. It relates to the general need to know more about, and try to explain, the way in which a form of dominant ideology- tribalism in this case- is propagated primarily to serve the particular interests of dominant groups in the community, and the ways in which this ideology penetrates the minds of the dominated groups.

(ii) The second is empirical and more specific. It derives from the need to domenstrate how certain members of the dominated groups can use the deprivation and disadvantages of the group first to agitate and to mobolize support from the group, and then to

use this support as a lever to elevate their own socio-economic status. And, clearly related to these interests, is our need to see how, in the overall ideological process, the real bases of antagonisms between different groups are minimized and distorted.

The process of tribalization of the Fur in Hassaheisa began with the arrival of a number of people, originally from Dar Fur, in the town towards the end of the 1920s. They had been drawn to the area in response to the rising needs for labour in the Gezira Scheme. As I explained in Chapter 6, the nature of the Gezira Scheme ginneries at Hassaheisa called only for partial and seasonal employment from a considerable section of the labour force. Those who came from Darfur constituted an important section of the new workers. In spite of their heavy involvement in seasonal agricultural operations in the Gezira cotton fields during the off-season in the ginneries, their position remained largely insecure and precarious. In addition to reasons which applied to many other workers, those from Dar Fur had the difficulties of distance from their homeland to contend with, including the high costs of journeys. It was therefore a matter of dire necessity for them to build some kind of 'native reserve' or 'urban village' or other informal social institutions to enable them to have some resources to fall back upon at all times, and particularly when faced with personal and/or family crises.

At first they lived near the Ginneries' area in temporary 'houses' of poor quality. But from 1940 onwards they began to build permanent houses in the present area of Hillat Fur, which was outside the town boundaries. In 1954, in accordance with the Government Town Lands (Native Occupation) Ordinance of 1912, the area was officially declared a legal residence and was replanned



and systematized.<sup>87</sup>

As a group of low socio-economic status in the urban community, the Darfurians were continually squeezed between the powers of the Dubasin in the administration and judiciary on the one hand, and the exploitation of the Northern traders on the other. Moreover, they were inevitably in competition with other better-paid and more able groups over the limited resources available in the town. Hence their community turned into a seed-bed for 'anti-social' and 'anti-order' practices and they came to be seen as serious threat to the 'public order' and to the community. As early as 1937, the Northern Gezira District Annual Report pointed out that:

Between the 1st and 26th of February there were no less than 16 affrays in which knives were used without fatal results. Most of these cases were tried by the native courts: the accused were all blacks.<sup>88</sup>

The Report refers specifically to the people who were living in the residential area of the Fur and to those from Western Darfur as the *Black settlers* (as opposed to other Arab groups) who -the blacks- "are a not unlikeable community of hooligans who work, drink and fight their way through life with commandable joy". The "decrease in the number of convictions for offences against property" in that year was conceived by the Report as "evidence of a greater respect shown for property by the black community".<sup>89</sup> Despite these optimistic and light hearted references to the Fur, it was not in dispute that they were regarded as being given to violence and theft.

It seems from this kind of reports, from stories about the Fur, from the attitudes attributed to them, and from accounts of the history of this "black community", that their general image

was one of rebelliousness and intransigence and that they themselves partly subscribed to it. Whatever the case, the administration perceived a need to try to facilitate their incorporation in the economy and society through their acceptance of the role and position as low-paid and unskilled. To this end, a particular family- that of Mohamed Fur- was selected for elevation and for social and economic promotion. Below I give a brief account of the way this was achieved.

Following 'disturbances' in Khartoum in 1924 involving Sudanese military unit against the British, the 11th battalion was disbanded, and all its elements were either tried or expelled from the Capital.<sup>90</sup> Mohammed Fur had been a soldier in this battalion. After serving a short prison sentence, he was sent to Hassaheisa to work in the newly established Ginneries.<sup>91</sup> In spite of his ability to read and write, he was given a seasonal semi-skilled job.<sup>92</sup> But, as the number of people coming from Western Darfur for work in the Gezira Scheme fields and ginneries increased, the need arose to control and discipline them primarily as a work force and to tame them as a social category. Thus Mohamed Fur was promoted to the status of *Sheikh Ommal* (chief-worker) to help in the organization of this control. From then on, Mohammed Fur and his family were continually promoted and assisted by the authorities in various ways until they achieved certain recognition as a power centre among Darfurians in the town.

To appreciate the significance of this series of promotions, we need to ask ourselves how and why the colonial authorities chose Mohamed Fur for favoured treatment rather than anyone else? The answer can be constructed in relation to the need of the colonial administration to find an *intermediary* between itself and Darfur-



ians so as to enable a measure of mitigation and control- economic as well as political- to be developed over them. Mohamed Fur was apparently one of the very few "candidates" considered suitable because

Firstly; Mohamed was one of the very few literate among the Darfurians in Hassaheisa, and he was also experienced in formal government employment; he spoke the Fur language and Arabic whereas the majority of the Darfurians in Hassaheisa in those early times were only able to understand the latter.<sup>93</sup> Secondly, Mohamed claimed to be a descendant of the Sultan Yahia and Sultan Ali Dinar of Darfur<sup>94</sup>, and this was of particular value in view of the heterogeneous tribal origins of Darfurians; by emphasizing Mohamed's "noble ancestry" it was possible to make a broad appeal for support from all who came from Darfur, and also, more crucially, to justify the favourable treatment for him by the administration.

Mohamed Fur's "career" can then be seen in the light of his selection as a leader and the impact of this on the formation of a "tribal" group among the Fur in Hassaheisa.

(1) By making him a chief-worker (*Sheikh Ommal*), the administration was in fact giving him the opportunity to earn higher wage than that of his average fellow men, and it was also in his capacity as a chief-worker that he became a key figure in the distribution and allocation of available jobs to Darfurians. In effect, he thus became a recruiting agent for the administration.

(2) In 1941 he was appointed as administrative *Sheikh*, under the Omdaship of Iheimir, of Hillat Fur<sup>95</sup> (i.e. Fur's village), a name which derived from his own rather than from the Sudanese "tribe" known as Fur. As a *Sheikh* he was fully incorporated in the administrative structure and was empowered with considerable authority

over his fellow residents and he served as an active consultant in all disputes involving members of Darfurian tribes in the town.<sup>96</sup>

(3) During both the periods of the establishment of Hillat Fur (i.e. the squatting of 1940 and the formal land planning and distribution of 1954) Mohamed Fur exercised considerable power in the allocation of land among the people around him. Through this power- which was apparently a result and consequent for his occupation of the position of contact with the administration- he was able first to form and subsequently to strengthen a base from which he could claim support and loyalty from his fellow men.

(4) Being better-off financially than most of his fellows, he was able to educate his sons and to prepare them to take over the family's privileged position in the 'black community'. Thus his son Ismael received primary education in addition to *Khalwa*, and is now a trader in the town, who has since 1970 been the "representative" of the Fur Residential Area on the People's Town Council; in the most recent council session of 1977-1981, he was elected as deputy leader (See the next Chapter for further details and analysis on this point).

(5) Finally, the powers of his family were, and are still being, consolidated by extra concessions from various contending factions in the town's politics (from the Dubasin and Shaikia in particular). In the next chapter, we shall see that in the absence of a clear majority for either of the two main political factions, the Fur representative has, together with other minority representatives, extracted significant political and economic concessions in the course of skillful politics on the Council.

From the foregoing account about the way Mohamed Fur's family developed into a power centre around which Darfurians in Hass-



aheisa allied, one can easily discover the possibility of its development into an "agitating agent" if it were not systematically incorporated and promoted since the colonial rule up to the present.

### PARTICULAR MANIFESTATIONS OF "TRIBALISTIC" BEHAVIOUR

Under the political and socio-economic conditions of the colonial economy and society, which had first given rise to, and then sustained, tribalism, leading families like those referred to above spared no effort in encouraging and rewarding responses from the followers which led to a sense of 'tribal' cohesion, to loyalty to the "tribal" group, and to a confirmation of tribal identity. I now give accounts to particular examples of this 'tribalism' in the Hassaheisa community.

#### 1. Clubs:

The establishment of clubs based on 'tribal' groupings, and the extent of participation in them, are important indicators of the nature and degree of 'tribalism' in the urban community. Though different sports (football in particular) are the main activities of many clubs, their social and political functions are also important. Most of the local clubs bear names such as the "Sports, Social, and Cultural Club of so and so", and all these types of activity are often referred to on their official certificates of registration. But as socio-political institutions, most of these clubs are established along tribal lines, though they were by no means exclusively tribal in membership. In 1951 the *Shammaliin* established El-Hilal (Crescent) Club which was initially composed of people of Bedayria 'origin' and of higher income groups. In reply the Dubasin established El-Ahli (the 'Native') Club in 1954. Two further clubs were established in 1956, one El-Mareikh (Mars) Club mainly for Turco-Egyptian immigrants, and the other Ghalb el

Gezira (Heart of Gezira) for persons from near-by villages in the Gezira. A year later in 1957 a group of Gaaliin in Mygouma residential area established El-Zahra (Venus) Club and in 1962 another group of Northerners (mainly Shaikia) established El-Shabiba (The Youth) Club. Then in 1964 the West Darfurians established El-Islah (The Reformation) Club.

All these clubs have been very important institutions of 'tribal' identification. While sport is the main activity of most of them, the membership is largely recruited from within the respective tribal groups and the office holders of each are predominantly members of the tribal group on which the club is based. Thus, given the poor facilities of public entertainment available in the town, the clubs functioned as the places where people come together and entertain. This worked in fact to strengthen the feeling of togetherness and, at the same time, maintain the distance between various groups. This is again being reinforced by the fanatic support each group gives to its club in the regular football matches competitions.

#### INTERMARRIAGE:

The extremely low level of inter-marriage between various tribal groups may be seen in Table 7:17. This is at once an indication of inter-group exclusiveness, and as such also an indicator of the strength of the factor working to enhance and further the process of tribalization in the community. The Table is compiled from the responses of the heads of households in the survey sample to a question about the tribal origins of themselves and those of their spouses. It is clear that there is a high level of 'tribal' endogamy with approximately 87.3% being endogamous in the sense described. But close scrutiny of different cases (particularly



Table 7:17 The Distribution of Heads of Households According to Their Tribal Groups &amp; Those of Their Spouses

Spouse H. of Household	Gaaliin	Shaikia	Shukria	Haljawin	Central Arabs	Northern Arabs	Nubians North	Nuba West	Dubasin	Kordofan- ians	Darfur- ians	West- erners	South- erners	Total
Gaaliin	51 87.9%	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	38
Shaikia	2	82 92.1%	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	29
Shukria	1	-	1 33.3%	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Haljawin	-	1	-	5 50.0%	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	10
Central Arabs	1	3	-	-	34 89.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
Northern Arabs	2	-	-	-	-	15 83.3%	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	38
Nubians North	1	2	-	-	-	-	18 75.0%	-	2	-	-	1	-	24
Nuba West	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 100.0%	-	-	-	-	-	27
Dubasin	2	2	-	2	1	-	1	1	47 82.5%	1	-	-	-	57
Kordofanians	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26 83.9%	3	1	-	33
Darfurians	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20 95.2%	1	-	21
Westerners (Foreigners)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21 95.5%	-	21
Southerners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 100.0%	2
Total	62	91	1	9	38	17	21	28	56	28	23	24	2	401

(N.B. in cases where the Head of Household has more than one spouse, only the first marriage is considered)

those of the Dubasin and Northerners), suggests that, taken in their known historical contexts, there are interesting changes taking place. It would seem from the available data that inter-marriage during the early times (before 1930s) between the Dubasin and newcomers to Hassaheisa was fairly general and had been taking place with most of the immigrant groups and particularly with those from Northern Sudan.<sup>97</sup> (e.g. Mohamed Ali Haddad came to Hassaheisa in 1918 from Awlad A'bid, Moura Island, Northern Province, and one year later married Mariam Oshari Al-Faki Al-Zewayn, a Dubasin woman from Hassaheisa; Sulayman Kharoumi came from Zaidab in Northern Province in 1916 and soon married Birra Bint Osman Salih, also a local Dubasin woman; during the same early period Mohamed Ismael Al-Mahasi came to Hassaheisa from Al-Nafa'ab, to the east of Kurti in Northern Province, and married another Dubasin woman; similarly Yousif Abu Saif and Ahmed Sulayman Thabit, both of Egyptian origin, married Dubasin women, the first to Zainab Bint Abdalla Al-A'eis, and the second to Batoul Bint Bakheit. The Omda El-Amin Iheimir whom we referred to as a singularly important character in the town's history, married Batoul Bint El-Sid, a woman of Egyptian origin and a relative of the above mentioned Thabit, in addition to his three Dubasin wives, while his daughter, Nafisa, was married to Hussein Aloub from Berber, Northern Province. Also, Mohamed Suleiman Al-Barbari, a Nubian from Artigi in the Argin area of Halfa, Northern Province, married Shamma Bint Al-Rughum, a Dubasin woman). And even shortly after the onset of "tribal" competition for local leadership in the 1930s, many Dubasin men married Northern women (e.g. Yousif Al-Amin Iheimir, Mubarak Hassan Osman, Ali A'tta Al-Mula, Mohamed Eisa, and Ya'akoub Al-Dubasi). But, while it could be difficult to prove conclusively from my data, it would seem that in more recent times the rate of inter-marriage has



sharply declined, which would, if further substantiated, serve to support my general proposition that intermarriage tends to decrease in response to the intensification of tribalization and of its concomitant hostilities in the one community.<sup>98</sup>

### 3. POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES:

Since tribalism in the town has, according to my analysis, developed mainly through competition and conflict over the distribution and allocation of resources in the town and over positions of power in the local political arena, it is reasonable to expect that it is in urban politics that tribalism may be most widely manipulated. This will be further analysed in the next Chapter, but the following general observations serve to illustrate the point I am making.

(i) The local patterns of affiliation and allegiances to national political parties clearly reflect a "tribal" factor and we therefore need to examine the considerations which underly these patterns. From the earliest emergence of national political parties, the Dubasin chose to support the *Umma* Party, while the *Shammaliin* strongly backed the other main competitor for supermacy, namely the Nationalist Unionist Party.<sup>99</sup> Through the four national elections held under the party political system (in 1953, 1957, 1965, and 1967) the polling results showed the extent of the split in the town along tribal and party lines.

(ii) Affiliation to various politico-religious sects in the town also reflects the contentions which divide different "tribal" groups. The Northerners are people from an area of origin where the influence of the Khatmiya religious order is strong and widespread, whereas the Dubasin have never had any marked interest or involvement in religious orders (*tariqas*). To the contrary, the Dubasin

history



history during the early years of colonial rule reflects some active hostility to *tariqas* and to the Mahdist *Ansar* order in particular.<sup>100</sup> After the 1930s, however, with national events and colonial policies leading to the rehabilitation of Sayed Abdel Rahman, son of Al-Mahdi<sup>101</sup>, as a measure to check the development of the anti-colonial nationalist movement, the Dubasin began to show guarded loyalty to the *Ansar* order and a continuous but increasing involvement in its organizations. And, during the same period, the Shammaliin began to revive and reorganize their Khatmiya loyalties which had seriously declined among them previously. Thus competition between these two leading tribal groups acquired a new dimension of a religious significance.

(iii) My observations of the present day would indicate that these differences have to some extent been transmitted to the new generations though under new guises. Thus my attempt in 1980 to assess the allegiances of the town's university and equivalent students who are members of the League of Hassaheisa Sons in Universities and Higher Institutions, led me to conclude, after eliminating those with no active political loyalties, that 8 out of 35 *Shammaliin* students were on the Right (mainly members of the Muslim Brotherhood) and 27 on the Left (mainly members of the Democratic Front in the Universities), while only 3 of 22 Dubasin students were "Leftists" and the remaining 19 were "Rightists".

(iv) Although national political parties have receded from the political arena since 1969, the basic orientation of the town's electorate has changed very little, if at all. The various elections held during the last decade suggest that the primacy and depth of "tribal" ideologies as reflected in political allegiances have persisted. The analysis of the most recent election-without political parties- confirms the above statements. In



Table 7:18 I present the detailed results of the May 1981 election for the representative of Hassaheisa Town, the areas covered by Hassaheisa Rural Council, Wad Habouba Rural Council, and Abu Ushar Town, to the newly established Regional Assembly of the Central Region at Wad Medani.<sup>102</sup> At the beginning of what promised to be a bitter campaign, the contending groups in Hassaheisa came together at a meeting of what they called "national reconciliation"<sup>103</sup> and agreed that the town's electorate should be given the opportunity to vote for one candidate, chosen by a select committee of the leaders of various "tribal" groups and recommended by this committee to members of all groups. He was to be, according to the agreement, the town's *only* candidate in competition with candidates from other areas. The committee was also to choose two other candidates for the two Hassaheisa Town constituencies (Hassaheisa East and Hassaheisa West) for the lower council of the regional government (i.e. the Northern Gezira District Council). According to the agreement, these two seats would not be contested. Thus El-Tahir Hassan Osman, a Dubasin businessman, became the agreed candidate for Hassaheisa East, and Ali Eisa Bishara, a *Shammali* Suk merchant, the candidate for the Western Constituency. Both seats being uncontested, these candidates were returned.<sup>104</sup>

After much argument the select committee chose Hassan Abdel Rahim Al-Jamal, a policeman of Northern origin, as the sole candidate from Hassaheisa to face candidates from other places, and he was deemed by the agreement to have the whole hearted support of the entire electorate of the town. But the choice of this candidate caused considerable resentment and dissatisfaction among the Dubasin. This is reflected in several ways in the voting figures given in Table 7:18.

Table 7:18    The Distribution of Votes Received by Each Candidate at Each Polling Station  
in Hassaheisa in the Elections for the Representative of Hassaheisa Constitu-  
ency to the Central Region Assembly, May 1981

Polling Station	Registered Voters -A-	Number Voted -B-	(B) as % of (A)	Gorashi Ibrahim -C-	Ahmed Babiker -D-	GaliMohd. Sha'aadin -E-	El-Agib Osman -F-	Abdel- Salam -G-	Damaged Votes	Hassan A/Rahim -H-	(H) as % of (B)
Karima	1018	393	38.6	3	3	4	12	1	11	359	91.3
Awsat	4075	701	17.2	22	3	15	219	3	36	403	56.7
Mazad & Imtidad	3037	771	25.4	11	6	7	105	4	44	594	76.9
Hospital	263	9	3.4	-	-	1	1	-	1	6	66.7
Police Quarter	529	265	50.1	7	-	-	5	-	8	245	92.5
Dhagalla	801	275	34.6	1	1	7	112	1	20	133	48.0
Mobile Police Force	31	27	90.3	-	-	-	-	-	1	26	92.9
Fur	1058	680	64.3	7	7	7	8	-	24	627	92.2
Kambo	2559	464	18.1	11	10	22	21	-	20	380	81.9
Gorrashi (Irr. St.)	439	138	31.4	7	2	2	3	-	4	121	87.7
Mygouma	485	188	38.8	3	-	2	13	-	3	165	87.8
Jamalounat	427	230	53.9	5	2	2	20	1	6	194	84.3
Wad Kamil	818	337	41.2	8	4	3	11	1	22	288	85.5
Omda	436	209	47.9	5	-	4	38	-	3	159	76.1
Jadida	5935	1918	32.4	24	13	22	68	-	56	1735	90.3
Shargi,Merkez & Officials	879	368	43.1	6	5	11	110	1	13	222	58.6
Northern Ind. Area	171	98	57.3	-	-	1	25	-	6	66	67.3
Haj Ali (Fellata)	614	110	17.9	4	1	39	23	-	6	37	33.6
Wad Kamil (Fellata)	785	57	7.3	2	-	2	1	-	1	51	89.5
Total	24350	7237	29.7	126	57	151	795	12	285	5811	80.3

Source: Compiled from figures given in a letter from the District Assistant Commissioner to the Gezira Province Commissioner, dated 21.5.1981. File Regional/1/81, Assistant Commissioner Office, Hassaheisa.



(a) Although the electoral turn-out was generally low (29.7%) - a fact attributable in part to the absence of competing candidates in the town, and in part to the general disillusionment about the elections and other "representative" institutions under the present regime in the Sudan- the Dubasin showed even greater indifference towards the election than average in spite of the candidate's need of their votes. In the Wassat area (which is predominantly Dubasin), for example, only 17.4% of the electorate turned out to vote.

(b) Of the Dubasin who did vote, a larger proportion than in the town as a whole supported candidates other than Hassan Abdel Rahim Al-Jamal, the *Shammaliin* candidate, who was supposed to receive support from the town as a whole. He received only 56.7%, 48.0% and 58.6% of the votes from areas dominated by the Dubasin: Wassat, Dhagalla and Shargi respectively. In contrast to this the *Shammaliin* areas he received much higher support (e.g. Karima, 91.3%; Mazad and Imtidat, 76.9%; Police Quarter, 92.5%; Mobile Police, 92.9%; Ghorraishi Irrigation Station, 87.7%; Mygouma, 87.8% and Jadida, 90.3% -cf. Table 7:4 showing the residential distribution of the different "tribal" groups in the town).

## CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis clearly reveals that tribalism in the urban situation as defined in this chapter, is a well established and deep-rooted phenomenon in Hassaheisa. It is my contention that the nature and the requirements of the colonial capitalist economy may be held to account for the emergence and growth of such tribalism, and that its persistence and solidification are a consequence of a continuing "distortion" of the economy and society in the post-colonial period. I contend that the growth and expansion



of the particular form of capitalistic commercial accumulation in post-colonial Hassaheisa have simply allowed the ideology of tribalism, institutionalized in the colonial period, to develop and to be consolidated. The economic system of the town- and of the Sudan as a whole- are too weak and dependent to allow any genuinely progressive socio-economic transformations. In my analysis, I have attempted to illustrate the sense in which the dominant ideology of major groupings in the town is tribal. I regard this ideology as one of the "modern" tribalism, and I contrast it to the earlier "traditional" tribalism of pre-colonial days. In its specific context, the modern tribalism encountered in Hassaheisa has the following salient features:

(i) It bears little or no resemblance to the pre-colonial systems of social relations between "tribes" or between members of one "tribe".<sup>105</sup> Prior to colonial rule there was no enmity between tribal groups now represented in Hassaheisa; indeed, there scarcely were any relations (whether hostile or friendly) between, say, the Dubasin of Gezira, the Shaikia of Northern Province, and the Fur of Western Darfur. What brought these various groups, or more precisely, peoples drawn from these "tribal" groups into direct contact and meaningful relations with each other, probably for the first time in their histories, was exactly their shared participation in the colonial capitalist economy which was imposed on them from outside and in a way over which they had no control and little opportunity to resist. Thus the foundations of "modern" tribalism in Hassaheisa were laid when the various tribal indigenous socio-economic formations were partly displaced and partly distorted by colonial capitalism to the extent that migration to town was set in motion. This migration and the relative poverty



and inequality of opportunities in town gave rise to forms of insecurity and to competition for, and conflict over the limited resources and opportunities in the fields of work, residential land and other services and amenities necessary for any attempt to accommodate to the new urban life which arose out of colonial policies.<sup>106</sup>

(ii) As a set of relations operating between different tribal groups, and based primarily on the perceptions held by peoples of various groups in relation to each other, tribalism figures as essentially an ideological phenomenon.<sup>107</sup> It arises out of one group of deprived people seeing other groups who are similarly deprived as the source of their insecurity, frustrations, and deprivation, and is developed and maintained out of the "failure" of all local groups to see the full nature of their common exploitation through forces and policies stemming from outside their immediate interests.<sup>108</sup>

(iii) In Hassaheisa this situation did not develop "spontaneously" by which I mean without the direction or articulation of State policies. The colonial administration played a crucial role in fostering tribalism and in using it, once established, as a means of socio-political control as well as economic exploitation. Thus it is well documented that various specific policies were consistently developed to make the "tribal authorities"- in the measure that they existed, and as they were progressively established-responsible for political and economic dealings between the State and ordinary members of various groups<sup>109</sup>, and also to assign to them the judicial and administrative roles which bore directly on individuals. The competition between contending leading families was developed about the opportunity to occupy these roles, and the



support of ordinary members was mobilized to serve this end. In addition, we know from various sources- and I have documented some specific examples from Hassaheisa, that the administration commonly discriminate in favour of one "tribal" group against another in different situations and at different points of history. (iv) In the post-colonial period, this kind of tribalism, if anything, has been intensified. Thus the leading families (i.e. tribal authorities) of Hassaheisa still habitually present themselves to "their" peoples as patrons capable of bringing maximum benefits to them at the expense of other people, calling for tribal unity "behind them" and thus emphasizing "tribal" identities, and condemning any attempt to examine or explain the real causes of deprivation and insecurity in all their forms as divisive.

In the following Chapter on the Hassaheisa Town Council and its politics, I set out to explain how wealthy leading families of various tribal groups seek the support of ordinary, and mainly poor, people in the constant competition between the wealthy for licences, contracts, commodities, land, and in fact over the total political power structure of the town. As part of the same system of political organization, the poor became 'clients' seeking the help and assistance of the wealthy 'patrons' in finding jobs, land, and other public services. The form of consciousness which embraces both these sets of interests, and which conceals the real conflict between them, expresses itself in tribal loyalties and identities which lead members of any one group to figure as having grievance against all others<sup>110</sup>. And, since the leading families are well aware that many of their own privileges depend on their continued domination and control of the politico-administrative apparatus of the Council, appeals to tribal unity serve the dual



purpose of enhancing their existing leadership positions and negating challenges based on other principles such as class antagonisms within a "tribal" group and class loyalties across tribal boundaries. The existing system of social and political control thus rests on ordinary people continuing to "believe" that tribal identities and loyalties are significant. Real conflicts and antagonisms between the poor masses and the relatively small number of merchants, businessmen, and landlords are thus largely obscured by tribal forms of consciousness. And the more acute the contradictions between the interests of poor and wealthy become, the more marked is tribal sentiments likely to be become.<sup>111</sup>

According to this analytical approach, "tribalism" can be explained as an ideology through which the contradictory interests of the poor and the rich in the town are partly expressed ( as between the poor and rich in different "tribal" groups), and partly concealed (within the same tribal group). This is a factor of prime importance in understanding why efforts to achieve " *national reconciliation and unity*" in the town have had so little success. The very socio-economic forces mobilized in efforts of this kind ensure the consolidation of an economic system in which "tribal" identity and kinship increasingly provide the ordinary individual with his only "hope" of economic opportunity, or even of survival, in the town.

# FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VII

1. For example, Epstein, 1958; Mayer, 1961; Gluckman, 1960; Mitchell, 1956; Cohen, 1969; and Barth, 1966.
2. My rejection of such approaches is mainly based on the ideological assumptions underlying the anthropological use of the notion 'tribe', and the conceptual and theoretical implications of our acceptance for such a notion. The theoretical adequacy of the concept of 'tribe' received a lot of critical appraisal; see Mafeje, 1971; and Asad, 1972.
3. This is the kind of abstract definition of 'tribe' put by Mafeje. See Mafeje, A., 1971, p. 258.
4. Ibid, p. 258.
5. See Chapter 1 for a statement on the way in which the census-type survey was conducted and Appendix (2) for details of the questionnaire used.
6. Colin Leys, 1975, views the development of 'tribalism' among the Kikuyu and Luo in Kenya as "initially develops out of, and feeds on, the real development of antagonistic classes". He also shows how "appeals to tribal solidarity" repelled challenges based on class antagonisms against the dominance of the bourgeoisie with the Kikuyu tribe. See, pp. 204-5.
7. See El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981, pp. 20-4.
8. See Department of Statistics, 1960, Table 9:13.
9. Bashir, M.O., 1978, p. 214.
10. For some general observations on regional variations on this general statement, see Modawi, A.A., 1982, p. 25.
11. For details, see Democratic Republic of the Sudan, 1977, Table 1-2, pp. 3-8.
12. These percentages are compiled from figures given in Galal-el-Din, M.E., n.d. (1978?), p. 125.
13. This partly illustrates the point I have made in Chapter 3 on the prostitutes.
14. Incomes are shown according to the wages and salaries prevalent in the Sudan before the upwards changes of 1978 took place, according to which the minimum wage for unskilled worker was increased from fS 180.0 to fS 336.0 per annum (Presidential Ordinance No. 338; and Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform Circular No. 4, 15 October 1978). As for the other categories of income earners in the town such as traders and self-employed workers, the figures represent their own estimates which could be more or less than their real incomes.



15. The earliest known attempt to link the South to the Sudanese State was made by Khedive Ismail in 1871. He employed two Englishmen- Samuel Baker and Charles Gordon- to annex the sources of the Nile. This initiative was hardly successful (for details, see, Shibeika, M., 1971, pp. 142-55). During the Mahdia, the South was not effectively a part of the central state (for more on this, see, Holt, P.M., 1961, pp. 102-3). During the period of Condominium colonial rule, the South remained strictly isolated from the North in accordance with the Civil Secretary's Memorandum on Southern Policy, which was drawn up after the final annexation and pacification of the South in 1930. (The text is published in Abd Al-Rahim, M., 1969, pp. 244-49).
16. The 1955/56 National Census classified the population of the Sudan as follows: 39% Arabs, 20% Central Nilotics, 9% Fur and other Darfurian Tribes, 6% Beja, and 6% Nubians, with eastern Nilo-Hamitics accounting for 5%. The rest was a mixture of Westerners; Fellata from Nigeria and others from former French colonies.
17. See MacMichael, H.A., 1967, Vol. II, pp. 10-11. Also see Hassan, Y.F., 1967, pp. 90-134.
18. The earliest recorded (and known to us) *Nisbas* (genealogical pedigrees) of Arabs in the Sudan are those written by Al-Samarkandi during the period of the Funj Sultanate, see MacMichael, *ibid*, pp. 6-7.
19. Cf. Hassan, Y.F., 1967, pp. 135-176.
20. *Ibid*, pp. 142-54 for details.
21. These are mostly of Juhayna tribal 'origins' according to their beliefs. Also, see MacMichael, 1967, Vol. I, pp. 237-323.
22. See Abdel Ghaffar, M.A., 1977, pp. 21-30.
23. *Ibid*, p. 27.
24. See O'Fahey and Spaulding, 1972, p. 318.
25. Hassan, Y.F., 1967, pp. 132-3.
26. *Ibid*, pp. 133-4.
27. Holt, 1961, p. 19.
28. MacMichael, 1967, vol. II, p. 7.
29. Holt, 1961, pp. 49-61.
30. During the early days of the Mahdist revolution against the Turks, the Mahdi sent letters asking the support of all leading tribal personalities in North Sudan. See, Ibrahim, A.A., 1968, (In Arabic).



31. See Holt, 1961, pp. 87-9.
32. Ibid, pp. 90-106.
33. Such processes developed simultaneously with attempts by the Mahdist State to weaken the power base of leading tribal families, especially towards the last years of its existence, through increased measures of centralization and security. This partially explains the cooperation of those leading families with the invading colonial armies as correspondence between them (e.g. Ibrahim M. Al-Nitaifa, Sheikh Ebboud Arabs, and Abu-Sin Habouba, Sheikh of Khartoum Arabs) and the Commander of these armies suggest (See documents in Box 101/21/5, Sudan Archives, Durham University).
34. MacMichael, 1967, vol. I, p. 377.
35. Tame, G.B., 1934, p. 208.
36. Buckhardt, J.L., 1819, p. 278.
37. I reluctantly use this proposition of "egalitarianism" due, firstly to the lack of concrete historical material to substantiate its functioning and, secondly, in the light of the theoretical critique Asad makes as to the theoretical viability of concepts of nomadic society (or mode of production) in which the mechanism of equality functions. See Asad, T., 1978.
38. Throughout the periods of Funj, Turkish, and Mahdist rule, the state limited its demands to revenues from tributes and taxes to meet its direct expenditure on its personnel and rulers; it did not establish direct relations of exploitation resting on the mechanisms of the production process.
39. Abdel Ghaffar, 1977, p. 27.
40. For example the Hamar tribe in Kordofan as one administrative and political unit was only created after the introduction of the colonial rule, see, MacMichael, H.A., 1967, pp. 319-23.
41. See O'Brien (with Shazali), 1979, pp. 166-8.
42. The above paragraph depends heavily on, *ibid*, pp. 189-93.
43. Abu-Lughod, J.L., 1969, pp. 198-212, and also by the same author, 1961, pp. 22-32.
44. Mayer, P. 1961.
45. Marris, P., 1972.
46. Lewis, O., 1965, pp. 491-503.
47. Pahl, R.E., 1978, p. 280.
48. Longton, J., 1955.



49. Mitchell, J.C., 1956.
50. Cohen, A., 1969.
51. Cf. El-Mustafa, M.Y.A., 1981, p. 22, where it is recorded that the percentage of the Dubasin in Hassaheisa was 16.4% according to the figures of the First National Census of 1955/56.
52. Tape-recorded interview with Mr. Yousif Al-Amin Iheimir, 5th November 1980, Rates Office, Hassaheisa, where he responded to my question about the observed declining role of the Dubasin in the town's public affairs by an answer trying to emphasize the temporary nature of other groups' dominance, I extract the following from his answer:  
 Our one fathers were the people who established this town from nothing; they who built it and developed its once wast-lands. We inherited it from them with all its present amenities, and we are determined to preserve our town and serve it more. Simply, we must do so, because we have no other place where we can go. Others are not full citizens of this town; they came from elsewhere, they send their money to elsewhere, and they are definitely going back elsewhere. This is why we are the true sons of this town; it is ours.
53. I refer here to the Iheimir Family.
54. These sub-sections of the Dubasin were supplied to me in my interview with Mr. Yousif Iheimir, but also see the account made by MacMichael, 1967, vol. I, p. 253.
55. Reference is to the Gover-General's Report to the Consul-General in Cairo dated 27th March 1909 which is quoted in Chapter 4. In this report stress is laid on the "careful" way in which the town of Hassaheisa was to be established and developed.
56. The full text of the Memorandum is published in Abd al-Rahim, M., 1969, pp. 237-40.
57. Interview with Yousif Iheimir.
58. See Hamadalla, O., 1965, p. 39.
59. Khar el-Sid Rahamtalla was a leading personality among the Dubasin of the Gezira; he was an *Emir* during the Mahdist rule, and a *Nazir* during the colonial period. His traditional headquarters was the small town of Kabel-Gidad.
60. See Tame, G.B., 1934, pp. 209-10, where he gives some details of a bloody dispute between the neighbouring 'tribes' of the Hallawin and the Dubasin over a piece of land during the Turkish rule.



61. A personal conversation with the late Al-Amin Mohamed Al-Amin, a Hallawin and a former President of the Gezira Tenants Union, whose grandfathers' lands in the area of Hassa-heisa were confiscated subsequent to the defeat of Abdel-Kadir's rebellion of 1908 (according to him). I have every reason to take his account.
62. Cf. Cudsi, A.S., 1969, where he provides a detailed account of the way the British colonial administrators rewarded the personalities who collaborated with them- in the form of lands in particular- at the expense of those who resisted the colonial rule.
63. For details on the administrative and political status of *Sheikhs* during the colonial period in the Sudan, see, the Sub-Mamur's Handbook, 1906, p. 710. Sudan Archives, Durham University.
64. Governor-General, Reports on the Finance, Administration, and Conditions of the Sudan, 1906, p. 710.
65. Originally this Ordinance was issued in 1901 (See Sudan Gazette, No. 26, 1.8.1901), but it was amended in 1903 in order to "enable the Governor-General to exempt Omdas and Sheikhs, a class who do much work for the Government without pay", as the Legal Advisor put it in Reports on the Finance, Administration, and Conditions of the Sudan, 1903, p. 80.
66. Sudan Gazette, No. 339, 26th October 1918, p. 945.
67. Reference is to the policy of 'Native Administration' which replaced the policy of Direct Rule in the 1920s.
68. Sudan Gazette, No. 494, 15th August 1927, pp. 164-7.
69. Sudan Gazette, No. 531, 20th May 1930.
70. Sudan Gazette, No. 534, 20th August 1930, p. 200.
71. Sudan Gazette, No. 541, 17th January 1931.
72. Such view is contained in a letter from Cromer to Sir E. Gorst, dated 12th November 1908, Public Records Office, London, Box 633, vol. 14.
73. See Beshir, M.O., 1969, p. 35.
74. Lugard, Sir F.D., Revision Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects Cheifly Political and Administrative, cited by, Beshir, M.O., 1969, p. 57.
75. Sudan Government Central Archives, Dakhliya/File 17/D/16, vol. I.
76. Ibid.



77. It is however not uncommon in urban situation comparable to that of Hassaheisa that "people from quite dissimilar ethnic groups were being labelled in terms of some wider more inclusive category" as is observed by Mitchell, J.C., 1974, p. 19.
78. It seems from the available evidence that the Northern *Jallaba* (traders) have generally established themselves in commercial activities in various Sudanese towns. A recent study on the richest Sudanese capitalists reveals that Northerners make the largest section. In Er-Rahad (N.Kordofan) 5 out of 6, in Um Ruwaba 6 out of 6; in El-Obeid 7 out of 8; in Gedarif 9 out of 12 of the merchants interviewed came from Northern origins. See Mahmoud, F.B., 1978, pp. 185-205.
79. For details on Khatimya order in the Sudan, see Voll, J.O., 1981, Two Parts. For its history during the period of Turco-Egyptian Rule in Sudan, see pp. 153-245.
80. Warburg, G., 1978, p. 21.
81. Cf. Voll, 1981, p. 565.
82. Mohamed Ahmed Hussein was the Omda of Ganetti, while Hussein Babiker (the brother of Yousif Hassan Babiker's father) was the Sheikh of Ganetti.
83. Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1937, Sudan Archives, Durham University, Box 214/3.
84. Bakheit, G.M.A., 1974, p. 30.
85. Up to 1971, the Council included representatives of the villages and settlements in Hassaheisa Rural Council, but this was changed with the establishment of the Town People's Council of Local Government.
86. This statement is made mainly on the basis of oral evidence by early inhabitants of the town from Shammaliin as well as non-Shammaliin groups.
87. Council Papers; File M.R.H./16/1/A, Hassaheisa Council Office.
88. Northern Gezira District, Annual Report, 1937, p. 13.
89. Ibid, pp. 9-10.
90. For details of the 1924 events see Daly, M.W., 1980, pp. 100-67.
91. It is relevant to note here that the colonial administration was quite strict in the application of the Vagabonds Ordinance of 1905, according to its rulings "any person who has no settled home and has no ostensible means of subsistence" was sent out of Khartoum. Both conditions applied in Mohamed Fur's case.



92. Interview with Mr. Ismaeil- the son of Mohamed Fur, Hassaheisa, 28th October, 1980.
93. Presently the members of various Darfurian groups in Hassaheisa are mostly bilingual-i.e. they speak Arabic as well as other Darfurian languages.
94. Cf. Hammadalla, op. cit., p. 124.
95. Interview with Mr Ismaeil Mohamed Fur, Hassaheisa, 28.10.80.
96. For a good evidence on his role as consultant and mediator see the summaries of cases tried in Hassaheisa Native Court during the period 1945-1951; he figured as the main adviser of juries and the main maker of *Suluh* (conciliation) in cases involving or between members of Darfurian groups. See Hassaheisa Merkez, Books Nos. 1945; 46; 47; 48; 49; 50; 51.
97. This is similar to the findings of Mahmoud in her study of the Jallaba (traders) in Southern and Western Sudan where she found that they are intermarrying and integrating with the local tribesmen, especially the well-to-do and influential groups. See Mahmoud, F.B., 1978, p. 188.
98. My survey data was not collected and processed in a way which could immediately confirm the trend which I suspect. It would be of interest in any further study to test this systematically.
99. Both Yousif Iheimir (of the Dubasin) and Ali Eisa Bishara (of the Shammaliin) agreed on this point when I interviewed them at length on the political parties situation in the town.
100. For fuller details, refer back to Chapter Three.
101. Ibrahim, H.A., 1980, gives a good historical account for the way in which the policies and deeds of the colonial administration were changed so as to effect a considerable political and economic elevation for Abdel Rahman Al-Mahdi in order to counter the growing anti-colonial nationalist movement.
102. According to the Regional Government Act of 1980, the Democratic Republic of the Sudan was divided into six semi-autonomous regions; Northern, Eastern, Central, Kordofan, and Southern each with a legislative regional assembly, a governor, and a regional council of ministers.
103. Interview with Al-Fatih Hamadel-Nil; President of Hassaheisa Town People's Council (1979-1981), on Monday 10/11/1980.
104. Council Papers, File No H.T.P.C./53/A/3.
105. This statement draws on a similar conclusion put by Leys, 1975, p. 199, in his study of tribalism in Kenya.



106. Ibid, p. 203.
107. Mafeje argues convincingly that "the fact that it works... is no proof that 'tribes' or 'tribalism' exist in any objective sense. If anything, it is a mark of false consciousness on the part of the supposed tribesmen, who subscribe to an ideology that is inconsistent with their material base and therefore unwittingly respond to the call for their own exploitation. On the part of the new African elite, it is a ploy or distortion they use to conceal their exploitative role" (original emphasis), see Mafeje, A., 1971, pp. 258-9.
108. See Leys, op. cit., p. 199.
109. For cases on the way these 'dealings' had been channelled by the State through the tribal authorities, see Asad, T., 1972, pp. 126-45; and Abdel Ghaffar, 1977, pp. 21-30.
110. Abstracting a similar situation encountered in the mid-1950s in a Nigerian town (Warri) Lloyd writes that:  
The cry is not so much 'workers unite' as 'tribesmen unite'. But, though this rallying call is so often effective in uniting people in purposive action, the fears engendered among the masses may be more imagined than real, related more to matters of prestige than to material conditions; these fears may, furthermore, be exploited by certain individuals whose interests are threatened to a much greater degree". Lloyd, P.C., 1974, p. 223.
111. Leys, C., op. cit., p. 206.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### POLITICS AND POWER IN THE TOWN



## INTRODUCTION

Political power relations in Hassaheisa constitute the focus of the present chapter, which includes a review of the origins of the present relations of dominance and representation in the community, their history of development, and their dynamics. My central interest is in the connection between local politics and the economy of the town as revealed in different areas of activity in different conjunctures. The basic information relate mainly to the history and operation of the People's Council of Hassaheisa Town. I also attempt to use the case of Hassaheisa to explain and criticise some essential feature of local government in the Sudan, with particular reference to urban areas.

The need for a view as broad as that which I attempt, arises from the fact that urban political attitudes and behaviour in the Sudan, (and also in Third World cities generally), have received far less attention than many other aspects of the "urban problem".<sup>1</sup> As Cornelius argues, this has led many social scientist concerned with Third World problems to generalize rather too freely from the experience of advanced Western nations in their attempt to deal with "the same" type of processes in non-Western Countries:

Many of the theses and propositions derived from Anglo-European experience have come to be accepted as the working truth, forming a part of the conceptual framework of numerous government officials, politicians and academics.<sup>2</sup>

The propositions often borrowed from the West concerning the political behaviour of urban dwellers tend to centre on two main questions: (a) Is the urban population radical or conservative? and, (b) Is political participation widening or not?<sup>3</sup>

Some have suggested that the 'new' urban populations of the Third World hold essentially radical views and have wide opportunities for participation in political activities. It has been held that because the migrants entering the 'new' urban centres experience a high degree of material deprivation and frustration, combined with personal and social disorganization, they become alienated from the existing socio-political order, undergo political radicalization, and consequently engage in various forms of disruptive activity and extremist behaviour.<sup>4</sup> At that time, however, it also sometimes argued that there is a positive association between degree of urbanization and degree of political participation, and that this due to an increase in political awareness resulting from large numbers of people coming into close contact with partisan political activities, wide ranges of educational and industrial employment opportunities, and various stimulating influences transmitted by communications and the mass media.<sup>5</sup>

Basing itself on Hassaheisa the present Chapter posits a quite different set of propositions. The analysis of my observations leads me to the conclusion that the dominant groups in the community have very successfully cultivated- and in some ways imposed- a conciliatory political ideology through their acceptance, stimulation, and manipulation of the *ideology of tribalism*. Here an important point must be made quite clear: I do not assert that this kind of manipulation necessarily implies a full awareness on the part of the dominant groups of what they and their "representatives" are doing. But I do stress that, in spite of its appearing "spontaneousness", the process can only be understood and explained by dwelling on the correlation between certain kinds of political behaviour and certain vested societal



interests. I do not attempt to interpret this as planned conspiratorial behaviour; I simply argue that the patterns of political behaviour and overt attitudes of the dominant groups in pursuit of their interests exhibit a high degree of what might be called "instinctual awareness", and obviously their political actions are not accidental.

The high level of acceptance of conciliatory political attitudes, and the persistent strength of the ideology of tribalism-in the mentality of the vast majority of the population- together constitute a vital component in the normative political framework of the community, and this conduces neither to *radicalism* nor to active *participation*. On the contrary, most of the inhabitants, and not least the poor, hold conservative political attitudes, and are quite strikingly quiescent in the face of fast-developing socio-economic and political processes (e.g. capital accumulation), which have had, and promise to have, the most far-reaching consequences for them and their children. They are also "submissive" to the dominant group's efforts to establish and maintain their political ascendancy and to use it in its own interests. The evidence indicates that, contrary to common assertions of wider participation, large sections of the urban population are being systematically "marginalized" in and through the local political process. The dominant groups have successfully *monopolized* the active and organized aspects of the political process, while the poor have been relegated to the side lines of the political arena. The poor have increasingly withdrawn and are probably more *passive* than at any stage in the history of the town. Their limited participation in periodical elections has served only to legitimate the process, but little else.



The chapter begins with a brief account of the history and development of the system and structure of the local government in the town. It then proceeds to the examination of the most general and salient features of this system at present and to deal in some detail with the relationship between the politics of the town's formal organ of local government (i.e. the Council) and the process of accumulation. Here the chapter attempts to detail the main ways in which the powers of the Council have been used and manipulated to serve the interests of capital accumulation. This provides both an empirical exploration of the nature of the relationship between "politics" and the economy, and an analysis of how the "rich" dominant groups justify their efforts to secure and perpetuate their hold on local government through the Council.

#### THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN HASSAHEISA:

In order to understand and appreciate the nature of local government in the Sudan, we need to refer back to the earliest British administration's colonial policies designed to establish and develop a "cheap and efficient" system of administration that would be in keeping with its wider and more general aims for its vast newly-acquired colonial possession.<sup>6</sup> I stress this because the history of local government in the Sudan is partly a reflection of the evolution and change over time of broad colonial aims and purposes, and partly a constituent element of the overall system of political and administrative control which was intentionally influenced both by general attitudes towards the local population, and by the need for pragmatic adaptation to local developments. In my attempt to review the dynamics of the relevant British policies, I have used, and elaborated upon, the works of Salih and Bakheit.<sup>7</sup> Both draw important distinctions between the initial period of *direct rule* (1899-1921) when the paternal



role of the colonial administrators was emphasized, and the period of *indirect rule* (1922-1936) when reliance was placed either on pre-existing forms of "native tribal" authorities or on ones recently constructed as administrative expedients. In this period the policy was "to enhance or strengthen the tribal chiefs authority so as to be strong administrative and executive heads of their tribe or district".<sup>8</sup> The final policy of *self-rule* (1937-1955) was a direct response to developments in Sudanese national anti-colonial politics.

Since the formal declaration of Independence in January 1956, the administrative structures of local government have undergone two general changes. *First*, there were the modifications that followed the Provincial Administration Act of 1960<sup>9</sup> which introduced a system based, by and large, on the *decentralization* of powers and the devolution of administrative authorities down to the provincial level, thus superseding the system based on The Local Government Ordinance of 1951.<sup>10</sup> The *second* major change was introduced with the enactment of the People's Local Government Act of 1971<sup>11</sup>, through which further powers and authority were "decentralized" at all levels of local government system. I shall now follow these developments occurring at the national level, with special reference to their impact on Hassaheisa and its local government institutions.

In the previous chapter I explained how in the early days of British rule the local administration in Hassaheisa sought cooperation with, and fostered the collaboration of, the leading family (that of the Iheimirs) in their dealings with the Dubasin. In 1913 Al-Amin Iheimir was formally recognized by the administration as *Sheikh* of the Dubasin people in the town.<sup>12</sup> As such he



was assigned a limited, yet important and decisive role in the development of the political process and held a range of responsibilities and powers. These powers were primarily *consultative* and were designed partly to construct and partly to remould Iheimir's traditional influence for the immediate purpose of administering the settlement. With the gradual growth of the settlement's population, his status was elevated to that of *Omda*<sup>13</sup> in 1918. With this provision, his sphere of influence was enlarged, but his role remained consultative as it had been during the period of his *Sheikhship*. He functioned simultaneously as the settlement *representative* to the colonial administration, and as the *authoritative agent* of the government among the people. He was at once the mouth-piece and tax-collector of the community. By virtue of the seemingly integrated, but not necessarily harmonized, interests of both people and the administration, Iheimir and his family could monopolize the "linking position" between these two sections.

Iheimir's powers were enhanced and further formalized through the Village Courts Ordinance of 1925.<sup>14</sup> This extended the "judicial" powers, which had earlier been given only to Sheikhs of nomads by the Nomads Sheikhs Ordinance of 1922, to the Sheikhs of sedentary rural areas as well. (Hassaheisa was then considered as a village according to the Administration).<sup>15</sup> Iheimir then received further "administrative" powers through the Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance of 1927<sup>16</sup>, which was an amendment of the similarly named ordinance of 1922- but with significant omission of the word "Nomads". In April 1930 the government established a court in Hassaheisa<sup>17</sup> with the powers of an urban court as defined in the Rules of Civil Justice Ordinance of 1930. In August of the same year Al-Amin Iheimir was appointed



"magistrate of the third class under the Code of Criminal Procedure for the purpose of sitting on major and minor courts".<sup>18</sup> This was later formalized, regulated, and consolidated by the considerable judicial-administrative powers conferred on Iheimir through the Chiefs' Courts Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance of 1931 and 1932 respectively. By this time, the system of Native Administration was firmly grounded and had become an important integral part of the administrative and political structure developed in accordance with the policy of Indirect Rule. Iheimir thus now enjoyed considerable authority over his Dubasin people in Hassaheisa as well as over any others who happened to settle there.

By the end of the 1930s, however, the system of Native Administration had, in the country at large, begun to prove too rigid and "conservative" for the kind of developments which the colonial government wished to accomplish. Hence the government launched on a policy of adapting the then existing Native Administration structures for local government which was to be "an administration no longer according to the TRIBE a man belonged to, but according to the PLACE he lived in"<sup>19</sup> or, according to the Governor-General, there should be:

Local government, geared to keep public security and order, to provide social services, to train Sudanese in the art of government, to absorb nationalist sentiment and to divert enthusiastic patriotism into the service of concrete constructive ends.<sup>20</sup>

Thus a series of Local Government Ordinances of 1937 for Rural Areas, Townships, and Municipalities and the attendant 1938 Regulations, were designed to produce a more "representative" and "democratic" set of institutions of local government with greater powers and authority<sup>21</sup> towards the establishment of Self-Rule.



As explained elsewhere, there were significant socio-economic and demographic changes in Hassaheisa during the 1930s. The town thus "qualified" for many of the changes in administrative arrangements provided for by the national legislation, and a major specific development in Hassaheisa was the establishment of the Local Town Council in 1938.<sup>22</sup> With some members elected by the citizens (defined as rate-payers only) and others appointed, the Council's composition reflected the emergence of new socio-economic groups in the town and their increasing political weight (e.g. the Northern merchants). Thus the Chairman of the first council was a prominent Northern merchant (Mr. Wida'a Osman), as were a majority of the members. This marked the beginning of the collapse of the "absolute domination" of the traditional Omda of the town on the town's administration. Though he kept his judicial powers, most of the Omda's administrative and financial authority was now transferred to the Town Council.

The following twenty years or so (the 1940s and the 1950s) saw the slow but continuous erosion of the political powers of the Iheimir Family in favour of the powerful emerging group of Northern merchants. Two historical conjunctures were of particular significance:

- (1) The establishment of the *Merchants Committee* during the World War II (to which I referred in Chapters 4 and 7). This was exclusively composed of merchants, as the name might indicate. The distribution and rationing of goods and commodities was a matter of major concern to the administration during the War years. Regular *contact, consultation, and cooperation* with merchants was therefore essential and this took place through the Merchants Committee. The merchants, especially those on the Committee, took advantage of the situation to increase their general share in the administration of daily life in the town and to increase the amount of contact between themselves, as the new representatives of the town population, and the administration. They, thus, moved as close to



the centre of the political process as was possible under colonial conditions.

- (2) In 1951 the Local Government Ordinance was passed. The principle of "democratic" election of all representatives was a basic addition in this ordinance which repealed and superseded earlier ordinances, though the principle that only resident rate-payers were entitled to vote remained. This limited franchise ensured a comfortable majority for the Northern merchants who manipulated their links with all *Shammaliin* (Northerners) to ensure adequate support. The newly elected council, then, functioned in conjunction with Hassaheisa Rural Council which included, in addition to the town's representatives, a number of rural village representatives. Most of the latter were village headmen and "alliance" naturally arose between them and the town merchants; the two groups had mutual commercial interests, as is explained in Chapter 4- i.e. trading networks. The consolidation of the merchant councillors' hold over the town's affairs was thus ensured. One main consequence was that the traditional Omda was virtually stripped of his powers except for those attaching to judicial position in the Local Native Court. Even these were, however, reduced in range by the "modern" Civil and Criminal Courts which was made permanent as from 1954.

With the introduction of military rule in November 1958, and the consequent relegation of all democratic political activities and institutions in the country, the new government once more relied mainly on the existing, but less popular, relics of the traditional institutions of Native Administration.<sup>23</sup> Co-operation and close contact between the District Inspector and the Executive Officer of the town on the one hand, and Omda Iheimer on the other, was thus revived to the benefit of the latter; politically as well as financially. But it was short lived. In October 1964 the national political system of the military regime collapsed as a result of an act of mass civil disobedience (a general political strike from 24th to 30th October), and of the most prominent and popular slogans of the time the one demanded the abolition of all the powers exercised by the institutions of the *Al-Idara Al-Ahliya* (the Native Administration).<sup>24</sup> The



then current balance of powers led to a compromise, according to which the tribal chiefs of the Native Administration were to concede their administrative powers (especially in the urban areas) to bodies of democratically elected local representatives.<sup>25</sup> The tribal chiefs were also to share their judicial powers in the Native Courts with persons appointed for this purpose from amongst the prominent and notable citizens of each settlement.

These developments were reflected in Hassaheisa in the establishment of a new elected Council which was again effectively dominated by merchants- mostly of Northern origins as Table 8:1 shows. Elections for this new Council were held by secret ballot system in April 1965 and were contested by candidates at the neighbourhood Level resulting in the success of the names in Table 8:1 :

Table 8:1                      Membership of the Town Council Elected  
in April, 1965

Name	Occupation	Tribal Group
1. Al-Ais Al-Tuhami	Merchant	Dubasi
2. Awadalla Al-Sheikh	Merchant	Shammali
3. Hassan Ahmed	Merchant	Shaiki*
4. Al-Haj Ali Jalli	Property Owner	Rufa'i
5. Yousif Waziri	Merchant	Egyptian
6. Mohd. Ahmed Mustafa	Merchant	Dubasi
7. Ali Mohamed Ali	Worker (T.U.)**	Shammali
8. Ahmed Abdel-Majid	Merchant	Shammali
9. Mirghani Mohd. Osman	Merchant	Shammali
10. Awad Bashir	Worker (T.U.)	Shammali
11. Ahmed Ibrahim	Merchant	Shammali
12. Ali Eisa Bishara	Merchant	Shammali
13. Yousif Hassan Babiker	Merchant	Shammali
14. Al-Amin Hagi	Merchant	Hallawi
15. Al-Tahir Hassan	Merchant	Dubasi



Source: Hassaheisa Town Coucil Office, File Dated 8/4/1965 for the names; the occupations and origins were acquired mainly through interviews.

\* though as Shaiki he was a 'natural ally' of the Shammaliin, his political allegiances were with Umma Party which put him in opposition to other Shammaliin.

\*\* T.U. is an abbreviation for trade union leader in Hassaheisa.

At the same time, the Native Court was replaced by a *Council of Judges* with a newly appointed membership. The Council consisted of ten persons acting on rotation basis as Presidents, and with seven additional permanent ordinary members. The occupations and "tribal groups" of the appointees are shown in Table 8:2, from which the extent of the influence of merchants and Northerners is clearly evident.

Table 8:2      Membership of the Council of Judges, Hassaheisa 1966

Name	Occupation	Tribal Group
1. Tajel-Din Iheimir	Omda	Dubasi
2. Abdel-Kadir Iheimir	Deputy Omda	Dubasi
3. Abdel-Kadir Waziri	Merchant	Egyptian
4. Abdel-Salam Aid	Merchant	Shammali
5. Hassabel-Rasoul A/Rahman	Merchant	Shammali
6. El-Faki Ahmed Bashir	Merchant	Shammali
7. Mustafa Haddad	Merchant	Shammali
8. Al-Wad Rahama	Property Owner	Hallawin
9. Babiker M. Taha	Merchant	Shammali
10. Babiker Haj Yousif	Merchant	Manasir
11. Adam Kuku	Butcher	Dubasi
12. Hassan Alnour	Lorry Owner	Araki
13. Abdel Kadir Ali Musa	Merchant	Turco-Egyptian
14. Mohamoud Sid Ahmed	Merchant	Shammali
15. Osman Fadl-el-Sid	Merchant	Shammali
16. Mohd. El-Said Suleiman	Merchant	Hadari
17. Mohd. Ahmed Al-Hassan	Merchant	Shammali

Source: Resident Judge's Office, Hassaheisa Merkez, for the list of names. Other information was acquired through interviews. (N.B. From 1 to 10 are the names of the rotating presidents of the court, and from 11 to 17 are the names of the permanent members).

After May 1969, the government and politics again underwent far-reaching changes, and one of the most important developments in this period was the imposition of the People's Local Government Act of 1971. Recognizing the previous local government system as being corrupt, undemocratic, and inefficient, the new system based on the 1971 Act was supposedly designed to achieve the following:

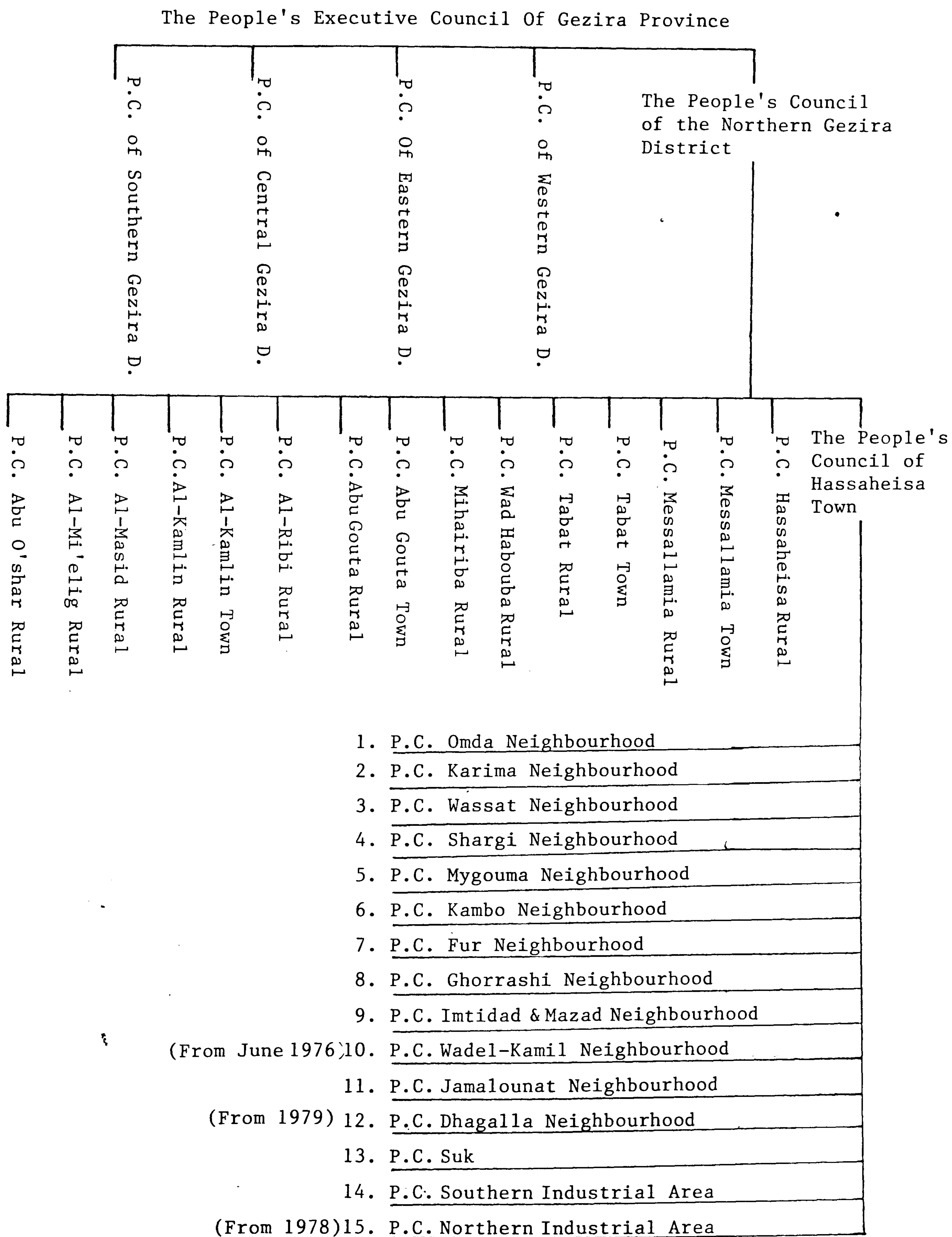
(1) To abolish or remove the strong established influence of traditionally powerful local families and sectarian political parties by bringing "the people" closer to the administration and by undermining traditional loyalties.

(2) To reform and recognize the institutions of local government so as to allow for local popular participation and encourage the emerging grass-roots political aspirations for political democracy and socio-economic development.

In the case of Hassaheisa, the Act facilitated the capture of seats on the local council by members of the group of Northern merchants and it enhanced the opportunities for this group to reduce the influence of its former competitors, namely the "Dubasin". The way in which the "Northerners" achieved ascendancy under the Act calls for comment. In fact, the Act aimed not only to undermine the old elements of Native Administration but also, specifically, neutralize the influence of all elements of the society "identified with the less reputable aspects of previous party politics".<sup>26</sup> The Northern merchants in Hassaheisa- or at least the leading elements among them- clearly fell into this latter category. But in the application of the Act, it proved extremely difficult to identify the extent of involvement of members of a group such as the Northerners in "the less reput-



Fig. 10 THE FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF VARIOUS TIERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN GEZIRA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HASSAHEISA TOWN, 1971



able aspects of previous party politics", whereas it was relatively easy to "locate" the holders of traditional influence (i.e. the Omda and his deputies). As it turned out in practice, the Northern merchants and their supporters proved almost immune to any measure of "political seclusion", and, thus, they easily won a majority on the first People's Council of Hassaheisa Town formed in December, 1971.

This Council was intended to run for three years, but it was dissolved before it had completed its full term following, firstly, the establishment of the Basic Units of the *Sudanese Socialist Union* as the sole and governing political party in the country and, secondly, the issue by the central government (in effect by the S.S.U.) of various guide lines for the organization and regulation of the new system.<sup>27</sup> These guide lines (or instructions, as they were) stipulated the formation of various new tiers of local government to be formed in a particular specified manner. Viewed formally, the system was to constitute a pyramid<sup>28</sup> of the People's Executive Province Council, The People's District Councils and the People's Rural or Town Councils. Below the People's Rural Councils, and at the very bottom of the system, there were to be Village People's Councils in rural areas. In the urban areas, there were to be below the Town's People's Council- as appropriate- Neighbourhoods People's Councils, Market Areas People's Councils, and Industrial Areas People's Councils.<sup>29</sup> Diagram 8:1 shows the whole series of tiers for the Gezira Province, with additional information on Hassaheisa town.

As shown in the Diagram, Hassaheisa was under the new system divided into nine residential Neighbourhoods<sup>30</sup>, later increased to 12, (from 1 to 12 in the Diagram), and about twenty



members were elected (in a mass meeting by open vote) from each neighbourhood to make up the People's Council of the Neighbourhood<sup>31</sup>, with a few local government officials<sup>32</sup> added to bring the total number of council members up to 24. A ratio of 25% of the total membership was reserved on government instructions for female<sup>33</sup> residents of the neighbourhood who were, however, elected by all residents of the area (men and women). A separate council was established for the market area of Hassaheisa *Suk*. This consisted of elected representatives for each business group (e.g. merchants, tailors, butchers, etc.). In addition, two councils were established for the two industrial areas of Hassaheisa.<sup>34</sup> These were composed of representatives elected by the industrial business owners<sup>35</sup> - of each area (the Southern and the Northern).

The representatives of all these People's Councils of neighbourhoods (13) were to constitute an electoral college for the election of 10 persons from among themselves as members of the People's Council of Hassaheisa Town.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, all the women elected from different Neighbourhood Councils formed a second electoral college to elect 6 representatives from among themselves to the Town's Council (i.e. 25.0%).<sup>37</sup> This in addition to three representatives; one for each industrial area and one for the *Suk*. The remaining five seats were reserved for local government officials representing various departments, e.g. education, health, works, etc.<sup>38</sup> With the exception of these "officials", all other elected members (19) participated in the election of the Chairman of the Council and its representatives in the yet higher tier in the system (i.e. The People's Council of Northern Gezira District).<sup>39</sup>

On the face of it, this system of political representation



Table 8:3    Membership of the Hassaheisa Town People's  
Council in the Sessions 1973/77 and 1977/81

Name	Area	Occupation	Tribal Group
<u>(a) 1973/74 Session</u>			
1. Fadlalla M. Hammad*	Suk	Merchant	Shammaliin
2. Ibrahim Sid Ahmed	Omda	Teacher	Shammaliin
3. Omer Ahmed Yousif	Jamalounat	Civil Servant	Kawahla
4. Mustafa Salih	Awssat	Merchant	Shammaliin
5. Al-Taiyb Attal Mula	Shargi	Property Owner	Dubasin
6. Al-Sir Hassan	Mygouma	Policeman	Shammaliin
7. Ahmed Yousif Mohd.**	Jadida	Merchant	Shammaliin
8. Abdel Hafiz Abbas***	Imtidad & Mazad	Merchant	Shammaliin
9. Ali Ahmed Karrar	Kambo	Worker	Shammaliin
10. Ismail M. Abdalla	Fur	Merchant	Darfurian
11. Merghani Al-Taiyb	Karima	Merchant	Shammaliin
12. El-Fatih Hamade Neil	S. Ind. Area	Merchant	Manasir
13. Mohamed Ali Osman	Suk	Merchant	Shammaliin
14. Zakia Hamza	Women	Civil Servant	Shammaliin
15. Nour el-Taiyb	Women	Civil Servant	Shammaliin
16. Mahala Ali Diab	Women	mid-wife	Dubasin
17. Su'ad Bashir	Women	Civil Servant	Dubasin
18. Ihsan Fadul	Women	Civil Servant	Shammaliin
19. Zainab Bashir	Women	Teacher	Dubasin
<u>(b) 1977/81 Session</u>			
1. Jabir Ahmed Alloub	Ghorashi	Worker	Shammaliin
2. Dafa'allah A Al-Ajab	Wad Kamil	Policeman	Dubasin
3. Yasin Ahmed Yasin	Jamalounat	Civil Servant	Nubian North
4. Banaga Haj Siddik#	Awssat	Teacher	Dubasin
5. Omer Hussein	Shargi	Teacher	Dubasin
6. Yousif Abbas	Mygouma	Med. Asst.	Shammaliin
7. Hassan Al-Jamal	Jadida	Policeman	Shammaliin
8. Mubarak Abbas	Imtidad & Mazad	Butcher	Shammaliin
9. Husein El-Khidir	Kambo	Worker	Nubian North
10. Ismail M. Abdalla	Fur	Merchant	Darfurian
11. Isam Mustafa	N. Ind. Area	Merchant	Dubasin
12. El-Fatih Hamade Neil*	S. Ind. Area	Merchant	Manasir
13. Al-Tijani Hassan	Suk	Merchant	Shammaliin
14. Eitimad Sheikh Idris	Women	Teacher	Dubasin
15. Nour el-Taiyb	Women	Civil Servant	Shammaliin
16. Badria Mubarak	Women	Teacher	Shammaliin
17. Su'ad Bashir	Women	Civil Servant	Dubasin
18. Samira Iheimir	Women	Teacher	Dubasin
19. Khadija Ahmed Omer	Women	No Occupation	Darfurian

\* Presidents of the Council during their respective Sessions.

\*\* Ahmed Yousif was changed as representative for Jadida in 1975, and was replaced by Osman Bashari, a Merchant from Shammaliin.

\*\*\* Abdel Hafiz resigned his seat in August 1975, and was later replaced by another Shammali.

# Banaga was force out of Council by his neighbourhood electorate, and was replaced by Yousif Waziri, a merchant of Egyptian Origin

(See File No. M.M.H./16/D./2 dated 1/7/1979).

Source: File M.M.H.S./16/D, Hassaheisa Council for names, tribal origin and occupation were established through informants.



achieved considerable success in breaking the old mould of politics in the Sudan, particularly in urban areas as is shown for Hassaheisa in Table 8:3. Two significant changes may be particularly noted:

1. Firstly, there is a decline in the merchants' firm "mechanical" majority on the Town's Council. Thus the Table shows that in the 1973-77 session the number of councillors with no direct commercial business concerns (i.e. teachers, policemen, civil servants, etc.) was as high as 10 (25.6%). And in the 1977-81 session they had an even greater share- i.e. 14 (73.7%). This clearly yields an appearance of increasing involvement in local political power of persons other than those with direct interests in commercial accumulation. But as I shall explain below, in essence this "participation" involved a multidimensional process of socio-economic "mobility" for the councillors and an accentuation of polarization within the community.

2. Secondly, the Table reveals a sharp reduction in the dominance of *Shammaliin* who had only 12 members (63.2%) on the council for the session 1973-77. This was a clear decrease in comparison with earlier councils, including that of 1972-73 session on which they had 17 out of 19 members. In the 1977-81 session the number of councillors of *Shammaliin* group declined even further to only 7 members (i.e. 36.8%). Again, however, it would be misleading to read too much into these figures; they are certainly not an indication of the "erosion of tribal ideology" resulting from "the campaign for political revolutionary enlightenment" or of the campaign's success in "combating the defunct political parties, sectarianism, radicalism and tribalism".<sup>40</sup> On the contrary, as I shall explain, a fuller analysis of the situation in



Hassaheisa leads us to conclude that there is an intensification of "tribalism" (and a diversification of its forms) rather than the reverse.

Apart from the question of how non-merchant councillors have promoted and safeguarded the interests of capital accumulation, which I discuss later, a number of specific observations may now be made in relation to my earlier statement that the "apparent" decline in the number of merchant councillors has not essentially undermined their general accumulation interests. As the Table shows, all non-merchants councillors in both sessions were drawn from the ranks of the State bureaucracy (civil servants), or were skilled workers. Both groups were anxious, due to their position in the social structure of the community, to establish themselves in secure/better positions within that structure through having better access to capital accumulation<sup>41</sup> and they did not hesitate to use their council membership to this end. This was appreciably facilitated by their "right" to be relieved from their normal work duties during the life time of the council's session. The following case illustrates this:

El-Khidir, a 40 years old member of Dongullawi (Nubian North) origin, works at the Gezira Scheme's Ginneries in Hassaheisa as an electrician. He lives, with his family, in the Kambo area. He was elected to serve as Chairman and representative of the People's Council of Kambo Neighbourhood in 1977-81 session. Early in 1978, he was officially released of all duties in the ginneries with full wage-payment to allow him to devote his time to "the service of the people" on the Council. In September 1978, he persuaded his colleagues in the Council to issue him a licence for a small *Kushuk* (kiosk) in the *Suk* for the sale, maintenance, and repair of electrical alternators and their spare parts. The use of this type of electrical appliance increased during recent years due to the conversion of many of the old diesel-powered water-pumping machines to electricity in nearby villages. In the autumn of 1980 he was employing three assistant electricians and a brand-new Mazda pick-up van to enable him to



travel between water-pump sites in the district. He was nevertheless one of the most active participants in the Council's routine work (meetings, committees, etc.). In an informal exchange with him in October 1980, I learnt that he was doing very well in business, yet, he ruled out any suggestion of resigning from his formal job in the ginneries, and he gave the following reasons: *firstly*, his position as a councillor was linked to his status as a resident of Kambo area which was in turn conditioned by his employment in the ginneries by the Gezira Board. Had he resigned from his job, he would automatically have lost his right to residence in Kambo and this would have disqualified him from being a member of the People's Council of Kambo Neighbourhood, and also from being Kambo's representative on the Town Council. *Secondly*, a serious consequence for him of resigning from his job would have been the immediate loss of a relatively nice and free Gezira Board house. *Thirdly*, it would naturally have costed him his work wage. *Fourthly*, it would have prevented him from using- freely- the quite expensive Board's equipment for his private business.

An additional point in relation to the decline in merchant councillors concerns the organizational basis of the whole representational system. As explained earlier, there was provision for representation on the basis of residential neighbourhoods only (with the exception of "functional" councils for the Suk and the industrial areas). But the residential distribution of the town's merchants, and indeed of other socio-economic categories, is uneven. Thus there are virtually no merchants in areas such as Kambo, Jamalounat, and Ghorashi and very few in others such as Mygouma, Mazad, Imtidad, and Fur, while there is a concentration of them in areas such as Omda (cf. Table 8:4). In fact (three of the most involved and politically controversial personalities of the town- Yousif Hassan, Ali Eisa, and Sid Ahmed- all are merchants and Shammaliin, live in Omda). Hence, merchant representation from places with no merchants was obviously not possible and it was equally impracticable to have more than one representative from each of the neighbourhoods dominated by merchants (e.g.



Omda- Mr Ali Eisa). These practical consideration were to a large extent responsible for the minority of merchants on the Council. Yet the merchants quickly realized that there was no real threat posed to their essential interests by the new councillors, partly because the representatives who "replaced" them were equally anxious to promote the same interests directly or indirectly, and partly because, in the general pursuit of the policies they favoured, the merchant "minority" found itself in the privileged position of having all the necessary experience to manoeuvre as they wished in both commerce and politics. And it is not surprising that, despite their small representation, as a group, they continued to hold the most important post of "Chairman" on the Council, a post which carried "full authority for total supervision of council work and... the responsibility of accomplishing good functioning of the Council".<sup>42</sup>

The foregoing account has centred on the question of *What* were, and are, the socio-economic groups most involved in the political/administrative system and of what were, and are, the positions held by members of these groups. The following conclusions may now be restated with comments relevant to the role and interests of the *State* in local developments.

1. An advantageous position of dominance in the administration of a local community clearly depends on the incumbents' abilities to assume and maintain *channels of contact and communication* between the local community and the local officials of the central state. In the case of Hassaheisa, the differential attitudes and behaviour of State officials- according to the interests dominant in the state- towards particular individuals and groups played,



and still plays, a crucial role in determining the relative roles of those concerned in, and with, the structure of local power relations. Through its local officials, the State ensured and perpetuated its own role in local politics, and more crucially, its paramount influence over the formation, over time, of the main socio-economic features of the structure of the community.

II. The subsequent emergence and continuing growth of new socio-economic categories in the community has affected the State's periodical "changes of heart" towards different groups, with the consequence of shifts in the "centre of power" between various sections of the dominant group of the community (i.e. between the traditional tribal family of Iheimir, Shammaliin merchants, and "others").<sup>43</sup>

III In accordance with its policies, defined in relation to the implicit and explicit interests of "ruling" groups at different periods, the State consistently acted to ensure the local dominance of those groups whose interests and attitudes were most in line with the State's own ultimate interests. Thus the continuing dominance of certain, albeit different, groups with a common interest (viz. participation in the process of capital accumulation as beneficiaries) was ensured. When we bear in mind the over-riding importance of commercial accumulation throughout the history of the town, which is of crucial importance for any analysis, descriptive or theoretical, of how the town's power structure operates, it becomes rapidly explicable that the merchants continued to hold such an influence.

IV. With the recent political participation of members of "new" socio-economic groups, the policies of the State have not altered in any significant way. There has in effect been no "need" for

any essential change as the representatives of the "new" socio-economic groups have not established or defended the essential interests of the people they supposedly represent. Far from adopting any antagonistic "rejectionist" stance, the "new" representatives have begun to follow "conformist" patterns of behaviour by becoming involved in a way or another in activities where quick profits can be made. Hence the State's traditional reliance on accumulating groups has to all interests and purposes been undisturbed; partly because the counter-interests of the "poor" masses of workers have never been effectively expressed in and through local political institutions, and partly because the underlying interests of the State and the dominant local groups has not undergone any real change. The net result is that local groups with vested interests in the reproduction of the general conditions for the working of the process of accumulation have maintained their hold on the apparatus of local government.

Once the above analysis is accepted, central questions which inevitably arise are *How* and why the less privileged masses of the town have not- as it appears- only refrained from vigorous resistance, but have in fact participated actively in the creation of institutions such as the Council, which enhance the process of accumulation and work to perpetuate the conditions under which local capital operates. To answer such questions, we have to consider two aspects of the dominant local ideology as a material force in the society: the strength and dynamics of "tribal" loyalties, and the markedly conciliatory political attitudes held by the ordinary residents of the town.



## THE POLITICS AND MANIPULATION OF TRIBALISM:

In the previous chapter I attempted to analyse the nature and development of urban 'tribalism'. I now turn to a discussion of the way in which "tribalism" as an ideology is used and manipulated in the local political arena. My general contention is that 'tribalism' conforms with and indeed is activated to serve the ultimate purpose of the dominant groups and, more specifically, that it is used by them in the circumstances of deeper socio-economic struggles for the acquisition and maintenance of political power as an important condition for the process of accumulation. This is illustrated by the use and manipulation of tribal ideology in the Council's politics at two conjunctures in particular.

I. *First* in campaigns for seats on the Council. Here 'tribalism' is activated for two important purposes, both of which virtually guarantee the election of members of the dominant group or of others who support this group and their hold on the centre of local power.

- (a) Tribalistic fever among the "voters" usually leaves little chance for more "objective" and "rational" criteria to operate in political conflict. Among the poorer sections of the town's population tribal ideology ascends at the direct expense of all other forms of consciousness (i.e. at the expense of both instinctual class interest and more reflective and articulated class affiliations). Tribalism thus tends to silence any voice which might draw attention to a real (or, at least, less distorted) conception of the social, economic, and political issues of election campaigns. Though it is difficult to substantiate this argue-



ment empirically in any fully representative way, I use one man's election campaign to illustrate my assertion.

In December 1977, my own personal political concerns, coupled with some academic interest, led me to follow and analyse various stages of the election campaign for that last session of the Town Council, with particular reference to the candidate Farah Hassan.<sup>44</sup> Farah was a member of a Shammaliin family, a teacher by profession. He stood as a candidate for the People's Council of Omda on a relatively radical leftist political platform. The balance of 'tribal forces' in this neighbourhood was finely poised. No single major tribal group predominate in the neighbourhood (See Table 7:4 in Chapter 7), and the voting behaviour of minor tribal groups in this area was difficult to predict. Since the staunchest leaders of the Shammaliin merchant group live in this area (e.g. Yousif Hassan and Ali Eisa) Farah's candidacy posed a real threat to them. In effect, Farah's most bitter critics turned out to be Shammaliin who accused him of being divisive and discordant and, more specifically of being a *Communist* with the particularly damaging innuendo that he was also an atheist. Not surprisingly, he was heavily defeated, and Ali Eisa was elected as the Chairman of that Council. The kind of reasons given by "ordinary voters" for not supporting Farah are significant, and I illustrate them with a verbatim statement by a fellow primary school teacher, also of Shammaliin origin, explaining why he did not vote for his colleague. "Farah stood a very remote chance of winning a seat on the Council. So I thought it wise to vote for some one with a chance of winning. Hence I voted for Ali whom I know and related to, rather than for 'the others' whom I don't know. I am sure Ali is going to serve 'me' better than others; after all he is a relative of mine".

- (b) In the run to the elections tribal ideology played a decisive part in "uniting" the members of each group against others and, especially behind those claimed to be the "fittest" and most qualified to *contest, win, and rule*. Thus bearing in mind the history of local political power and the varying degrees of involvement and political commitment of different socio-economic groups, it is clear that the most affluent ones with active experience in local politics are the most likely to succeed as candidates. With no organized and resourceful political parties, fitness and qualification were generally assessed in terms of the candidate's ability (a) to finance his campaign, and (b) to argue skillfully and effectively as



Table 8:4 Occupational Composition of Neighbourhoods and their Councilors on both the Neighbourhood Councils and the Town Council, 1978/79

Occupational Category & Councilors	MERCHANTS				CIVIL SERVANT				SKILLED LAB.				UNSKILLED LAB.				F A R M E R S				O T H E R S				T O T A L			
	Total Pop.		Council Members		Total Pop.		Council Members		Total Pop.		Council Members		Total Pop.		Council Members		Total Pop.		Council Members		Total Pop.		Council Members					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
Omda	6	19	6	27	15	37	10	46	2	6	4	18	8	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	9	32	100	22	100
Karima	11	41	13	65	11	41	3	15	2	7	1	5	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	3	15	27	100	20	100
Mygouma	4	22	6	25	5	28	8	33	5	28	6	25	3	17	3	13	-	-	-	-	1	6	1	4	18	100	24	100
Shargi	5	14	7	29	15	41	8	33	4	11	4	17	12	32	2	8	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	13	37	100	24	100
Wassat	20	20	4	17	18	18	12	50	29	29	4	17	27	27	2	8	1	1	-	-	6	6	2	8	101	100	24	100
Mazad & Imtidad	9	11	4	18	20	25	5	23	55	41	8	36	20	10	1	5	-	-	-	-	10	13	4	18	114	100	22	100
Jadida	11	15	10	42	17	23	6	25	27	36	4	17	15	20	-	-	1	1	-	-	4	5	4	17	75	100	24	100
Fur	16	20	4	18	6	8	-	-	24	30	12	55	24	30	3	14	2	3	-	-	8	10	3	14	80	100	22	100
Kambo	-	-	-	-	5	5	2	9	58	54	15	62	42	39	2	9	-	-	-	-	3	3	4	17	108	100	23	100
Mad Kamil	11	32	8	35	-	-	-	-	15	44	6	26	4	12	1	4	3	9	1	4	1	3	7	30	34	100	23	100
The Town*	93	16	5	21	112	19	13	54	199	34	3	13	144	24	-	-	7	1	-	-	37	6	3	12	592	100	24	100

\* In this row, ("The Town"), the figures at the bottom of the columns headed "Total Population" stand for the total number of informants from various neighbourhoods who participated in my sample; while the figures at the bottom of the columns headed "Council Member" stand for numbers of Councilors in the Town Council (as opposed to Neighbourhood Councilors in the figures above).

Source: Field-work 1978/79.

this is considered as essential for dealing with Government officials. In addition, candidates were favoured if they were considered to have the relatively scarce, but crucial, resource of "free time" to allow them to canvass and mobilize support. The use of the ideology of tribalism in conjunction with the concept of fitness had far-reaching consequences. Besides the immediate effect of mobilizing votes and winning seats, it served to establish a degree of acceptance and justification among supporters of ordinary masses for the "legitimacy" of the efforts which a councillor made to improve his "qualifications" and enhance his "fitness" so that he should be better able to do "battle" with contenders from other tribal groups. When we examine the data on the occupations of the councillors of different neighbourhoods and those of the town compared with the occupations of working inhabitants falling in my survey sample (as given in Table 8:4), one can see that certain groups (e.g. merchants and civil servants) are over-represented and others (workers and farmers) are under-represented relative to their respective proportions.

The following analysis of the way in which the competition for dominance on the Town's Council was carried out by different fragments of the dominant group reveals further aspects of the activation and manipulation of tribalism.

After the elections of December, 1977, for the neighbourhood Councils (and also to the Councils of the Suk and the Industrial Areas) and the follow up election to the Town Council, the composition of the representatives of the neighbourhoods to the Town Council was a direct reflection of the tribal composition of the town's population. The Shammaliin won 6 neighbourhoods (Ghorashi, Karima, Omda, Mygouma, Jadida, and Imtidad-



Mazad); the Dubasin won 4 (Wad Kamil, Shargi, Wassat, and Dhagalla); the Nubians of the North- not Shammaliin- won two (Kambo and Jamalounat); and the Darfurians won one (Fur), making the total of neighbourhood representatives 13. According to the Regulations these 13 were to elect only 10 members from among themselves for the Town Council, in addition to the 3 members directly elected by the Councils for the Suk and the two industrial areas, 6 members elected by women of the town, and 5 members appointed by the Province Commissioner, ( but the latter with no vote for the crucial election of the Council Chairman).

The events in the election of the 10 members from among the 13 representatives illustrate the manner and the extent to which "tribalism" can be manipulated to secure election or simply to prevent a member of a competing group from being elected. With six representatives, the Shammaliin constituted the largest single 'tribal' group and thus appeared to have a good chance of achieving their will. In anticipation of this, the Dubasin with only four, allied themselves with other minority groups (i.e. Nubians North, 2 and Darfurians, 1), and offered key positions to the "representatives" from the minority groups in return for their cooperation in preventing the dominance of the Shammaliin. The detailed agreement<sup>45</sup> finally reached was as follows:

1. The three to be eliminated should include two of the most prominent Shammaliin local politicians, (i.e. Ali Eisa of Omda and Merghani El-Taiyb of Karima; both merchants). None of the 3 minority group's representatives was asked to step down for, had one done so, the representative would in effect have cooperated with the Shammaliin and changed the balance aimed at by the Dubasin. It was thus imperative for one Dubasin to be eliminated to allow all three minority groups' representatives to be elected. Thus the Dubasin representative of Dhagalla Council stepped down.
2. When the Council was convened, the "allied" groups were to elect members from minority groups to the posts of Chairman and Deputy Chairman (Al-Fatih Hamadel Nil of the Southern Industrial Area Council and Ismaeil Mohd. Fur of the Fur Neighbourhood respectively).
3. The headships and membership of the more important Council Committees (e.g. housing and planning, finance, rationing, and urban renewal) were to be "given" to members of the "allied" groups, irrespective of their experience or abilities.

This agreement was implemented in full to the satisfaction of the Dubasin and their allies and in the face of "noisy" protestations by the Shammaliin.<sup>46</sup> And this calculated relegation of the Shammaliin had, as I shall shortly explain, some serious repercussions for certain aspects of the Council's work.

II. Secondly, tribalism was also manipulated, and thus perpetuated as an ideology, in the actual functioning of the Council. Many of the Council's routine decisions were either effected by "tribal"



considerations or oriented to strengthen "tribal" ideology and loyalty. I illustrate these claims with a few examples:

1. As the Council is constantly faced with ever-increasing problems but has progressively limited resources, it has perforce to resort to *selective tactics* in the allocation of these resources. This commonly means that the limited resources are devoted disproportionately to areas of those 'tribal' groups which support the dominant Councillors. Thus, for example, the Shammaliin-dominated Council of 1972-73 distributed 572 plots of residential land in Imti-dad and Mazad mainly to the benefit of people of Shammaliin origins, in addition to providing those areas with basic public services such as water and electricity. Or, again, the Council of 1977-81 which was dominated by the Dubasin and their allies granted the people of the overcrowded Dubasin neighbourhood of Shargi 59 plots of land in the higher valued and central area to the North of Wassat, and pledged to provide them with water and electricity.<sup>47</sup>
2. Since the resources available to meet ever-expanding mass demand and to ease public grievances are scarce and insufficient, their differential allocation has increasingly favoured fewer and fewer people. And decisions are usually made to the advantage of *key personalities* within 'tribal' group "in power" (i.e. the grass-root brokers) and to the disadvantage of key personalities "in opposition". Files on the Council's proceedings during various sessions are replete with examples of this; the following are a few selected from the *Papers* of the two last sessions:  
*1973-1977 Session* (when Shammaliin were "in power")



- (a) Atal Mannan Ismail (Dubasin) was denied a reduction in his commercial licence fees on 8/10/75.<sup>48</sup>
- (b) Abdel Kadir Al-Sidik (Shammaliin) granted a licence and a plot of land to establish a butchery in Imtidad area on 29/1/1976.<sup>49</sup>
- (c) Faddllala Mohammed Hammed (Shammaliin) granted a free table in the newly established area for meat trade on 10/2/1976.<sup>50</sup>
- (d) Sid Ahmed Ibrahim and Al-Amin Al-Attaya (both allied to Dubasin) ordered to move their established unit of hide and skin treating from the Suk area to another more distant site on 14/6/1975.<sup>51</sup>

1977-1981 Session (when the Dubasin and their allies were "in power"):

- (a) On 8/3/1978 the *Finance Committee* of the Council issued 48 licences *free of charge*, mainly for persons of the "allied groups"; 18 licences at *half* the prescribed fees, also mainly for persons of these groups; and 5 licences with *full fees* for 4 Shammaliin and one of Shukria origin.<sup>52</sup>
- (b) At another meeting on 16/2/1979, the same Committee reduced the *rates* on the property of the hiers of Khalil Iheimir (Dubasin) by 40%.<sup>53</sup>
- (c) On 17/12/1979, the full Council decided to exempt the hiers of Abdel Kadir Al-Amin Iheimir (Dubasin) of all outstanding *rates* for the year 1977/78.<sup>54</sup>
- (d) On 20/12/1979, the Council exempted Abdel Kadir Taj-el-Din (Dubasin) from all *dues and arrears* relating to a contract for butcheries in the Suk.<sup>55</sup>

#### THE FOSTERING OF THE CONCILIATION MENTALITY

In the previous section I have tried to show how the dominant "affluent" groups of various "tribal" origins used and manipulated the ideology of tribalism to distort the real nature of affairs in the town, to prevent the potential "militancy" of the poor from developing, and ultimately to use the "unconscious" support of the poor to maintain their own positions of power. I now focus on another aspect of the process of mystification which has the same effect.

We have seen that up to 1970 the exercise of local political power, and participation in local government with administrators of the central government were generally only engaged in by members of certain socio-economic categories. The main active



participants were *prominent* members of the community such as tribal chiefs, merchants and senior civil servants. The ordinary poor members of the community were systematically and consistently excluded. Since the underlying interests of both the group of prominent persons and the State through its administration were for the most part not contradictory, the involvement of the former in the local administrative structure had *no antagonistic* consequences.

Since Independence, the socio-economic conditions under which the poor live have deteriorated markedly as the process of capitalistic accumulation has intensified, and in the urban centres the situation has become significantly worse as the pace of urban growth has accelerated so that growing *poverty* has manifested itself on an aspect of the so-called "urban problem". Shortages in basic commodities, inadequate education, defunct health services, and poor and insufficient housing (including, of course, the growth of shanty towns), are the main symptoms commonly listed in describing the *plight* of the urban poor.<sup>56</sup> These 'problems' are not new, but they have developed in scale and severity in recent decades. At the same time, the old-established institutions of local government have shown an increasing inability to face up to and to deal adequately with, or even ease, the overall situation to the extent that it has begun to pose a real challenge to the ruling group's ability to impose and maintain "*public order*" and "*tranquility*".<sup>57</sup> Signs of political and social upheaval were repeatedly observed in various urban areas of the Sudan, particularly during the 1960s.

The allegedly *radical reforms* of local government institutions of 1971, were an attempt to contain and repress the poten-



tial *damaging* consequences of the eruption of this situation, rather than to recognize and accept the legitimate aspirations of the urban masses and to create institutions correspondingly. Hence the main ideological document of this 'reform' (i.e. The People's Local Government Act of 1971) placed emphasis on the need for wider "*popular participation and local initiative*" in planning and in attempts to implement programmes of economic and social development at the local level. It was thought that this could be accomplished through the "decentralization" of power and authority from the central government to local institutions. Thus local institutions were formally empowered to initiate economic and social development with the aim of ensuring "that the services rendered by them are directed towards the benefit of the citizens of the area at the highest standard".<sup>58</sup> To attain these goals the Act and its supplementary regulating Guides provided for the maximum possible *participation* of low-income groups in these institutions through *mass organizations*.<sup>59</sup>

But all empirical studies to date on the fruits of this whole experiment (including the present one) point to serious and glaring discrepancies between the seemingly "high-minded aims" of the Act and the "realities" of the situation to which it gave rise.<sup>60</sup>

It is not essentially only "the set of contradictions inherent in the system"<sup>61</sup>, nor "the fact that the Act has become more of an administrative-political framework and that this has therefore undermined its economic functions and objectives"<sup>62</sup>, nor the presence of a "strong tradition of reliance on the bureaucracy"<sup>63</sup> in the Sudan which account for the apparent failure of the system to bring people at the grass-roots level into closer contact with

the State administration. My contention is that; the causes of the failure of the system must be sought in the following quite different directions:

- (a) The 'radical reforms' were drawn up with, in essence, the aim of *eliminating the symptoms* of underdevelopment and poverty rather than the *eradication of their fundamental causes*. As such, the reforms aimed at a "progress in the quality of life" of the poor masses without even considering any of the necessary radical changes in the socio-economic and political system.<sup>64</sup>
- (b) The 'right' of participation- particularly for the poor- was *imposed from above*, and those who were supposedly enabled to participate for the first time could only exercise minimum power. They did not through the Act acquire any basic independence of action, and their scope for innovation and change remained extremely limited.

The reforms were entirely *conservative*, rather than truly radical or "revolutionary".<sup>65</sup> Their net effect in Hassaheisa (and I believe more generally) has been to maintain the *status quo* in several critical respects:

- I. They tended to blur and obscure the antagonisms between the dominant affluent groups and the poor by emphasizing the *community of interest* of the two *different* sections of the population within the territorial boundaries of the town.
- II. They thus encouraged *compromise* and conciliation in various ways, and in doing so limited the range of aspirations and demands of the poor to minimal general concessions. This is illustrated in Hassaheisa by the case of *Wad Kamil Lands* described in detail below. I shall show how the low-income population of Wad Kamil "accepted" the demolition of their



neighbourhood as a part of a Council's plan of urban renewal in return for the establishment of a new and relatively better 3rd Class residential area which was, however, to accommodate only a small proportion of the population removed from their homes.

- III. The 'reforms' also creamed off the principal "leaders" of the poor by involving them in the routine work of the Councils. As potential "trouble-makers", they were taken "off the streets" and assigned to positions in which they posed virtually no threat to the *status quo*. In this way, any potential opposition to the dominant ruling administrative group has been deprived of some of its erstwhile most vigorous leaders.
- IV. The net effect of such participation by the poor, as was allowed for, has been to firmly secure the dominant influence of the "affluent" groups by *removing* any serious threat of a radical take-over. This participation in this sense is highly controlled; its main consequences have been, by and large, highly cosmetic. The strength of the calculated efforts to ensure the continuing dominance of the affluent cannot be better illustrated than by pointing to the fact that virtually all businessmen have more than one vote in local government, e.g. in the case of Hassaheisa a businessman votes in his neighbourhood, in the Suk, and, often, also in the industrial area. And this is in addition to the inherent bias of the local administrators in favour of businessmen and the more affluent generally. The administrators favour these groups because, they say, these are the people who "are *able* to do something for the town"!

Thus the seemingly innovatory principle of participation in power by the "masses", but without any real change in the socio-economic structure of the society, can only be construed as part of a wider ideological attempt to dominate and pacify the poor. It extended and stimulated the aims of the dominant affluent groups in seeing change in poverty and backwardness as being possible only through changes in the *attitudes and motivations* of the poor and through the *willingness* of the poor to make active efforts (i.e. through *self-help*) without any effective extension of the necessary material resources for real change. In a sense, it was a way of encouraging the perception of the poor as being responsible for their own plight. As such it was an *illusion*, but it was a "*necessary*" one to keep the poor contented, subdued, and politically quiescent. As Coit puts it in her analysis of a similar process of the poor participation in *Community Action Programmes* in contemporary American cities:

By permitting some of those at the bottom of the social and economic ladder to participate or even to air their hostility toward some of the most obvious injustices to urban life and urban space, but at the same time keeping a lever on these groups, a participation that is reinforcing rather than undermining the present system of domination is being legitimized in the eyes of the poor and working-class groups. The lowest echelons of society are given false hopes that there will be justice and equality for their class if they just learn to participate.<sup>66</sup>

Having attempted to answer, theoretically as well as empirically, two questions concerning the local institutions of political power in the town- the question of *WHAT* are the basic features of the local political systems, and the question of *HOW* certain socio-economic groups came to dominate local political power and to exclude or at least neutralize the impact of the 'partial' involvement of others- I now attempt to answer the far



more crucial question of *HOW* dominant groups made such elaborate and strenuous efforts to strengthen and maintain their local political dominance. What, in brief, is the "*logic*" of the dominant groups' endeavours at the local level of the town of Hassaheisa to consolidate and perpetuate the existing pattern of political dominance relations? The next section review the empirical data I gathered on Hassaheisa on the relationship between certain kinds of economic interests and particular patterns of political behaviour; between political dominance on the Council and the interests of capital accumulation.

#### THE COUNCIL AS A VEHICLE FOR CAPITAL ACCUMULATION:

To fully understand the nature and role of the Town Council it is essential to keep in mind its function as a *form of government* and as an essential component of the neo-colonial capitalist state in the Sudan.<sup>67</sup> As such it has increasingly been delegated general authority and various administrative powers. These have included the responsibility for facilitating capital accumulation and for administering or coping with the resultant social, economic and political contradictions in ways which either positively favour or do not inhibit the further development of capital accumulation. Thus, for example, the maintenance of *public order* has always been paramount.

The Sudanese State has, as is widely recognized, always assumed a *central* and influential role in the social, economic, and political processes of the society, and the Town Council plays a similar role at the local level and commands considerable powers. The People's Local Government Act of 1971, gives the local councils the following powers:

- (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 area and to make local orders to that effect.
- (c) To make resolutions for the imposition of temporary local taxes on public entertainments or on commodities or services in order to establish or complete any public project in the area.
- (d) To prepare the annual budget proposals for the area and to approve expenditure of money appropriated to the People's Local Councils in the area to be incurred by them after the budget has been approved.<sup>68</sup>

The Council is also responsible for preparing and submitting proposals for social and economic development schemes in its area, and it has the right to:

establish or administer or participate with any other body to administer any commercial projects or projects of commercial and developmental nature.<sup>69</sup>

#### PUBLIC SPENDING AND PRIVATE ACCUMULATION:

In all the above respects, the Council is a powerful local institution with virtual command over many aspects of investments necessary to the functioning of the process of capital accumulation. A first direct illustration of this is its crucial role in administering the production and distribution of *public services and resources*. Its expenditure on "public services" can only be properly understood and explained as a form of social capital expenditure, (i.e. public money spending). But under the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the Sudan, characterised by the dominance of private accumulation, public expenditure means expenditure by the State for private accumulation in a direct sense, and, indirectly, expenditure which produces private profit.

Generally, the social capital expenditure, to which I refer, may be seen as falling into two main categories<sup>70</sup>:

I. Social Investments; These consist of the following:



- (a) The allocation of resources for the establishment of projects and services which are, to some extent, intended to effect an increase in *labour productivity* and therefore in the rate of profit for business owners who use such labour (e.g. the building and financing of institutions, mainly schools, for education and training).
- (b) The financing of various forms of "public consumption" such as projects and services which in some degree decrease the *costs of the reproduction of the labour force*, and which therefore also have the effect- other things being equal- of lowering the costs of production and thus increasing the rate of profit (e.g. the development of public health services, the provision of housing, and the subsidization of transport).

II. Public Spendings; These include the financing of projects and services (such as police stations and security night-guards in the Suk) required primarily to establish and maintain *social order*. Public spendings of this kind serve the interests of capital accumulators by ensuring the security of private business and industrial premises and by allowing them to develop and function in the confident knowledge that they are protected.

The above statements should, however, be qualified. I do not mean that social investments and public spendings are directly and immediately related to the interests of the local accumulators. But they are relevant to the local situation if we considered the following:

- (1) Since the dominant pattern of accumulation in Hassaheisa is "*commercial*", it does not directly intervene in the production process; its relation to public expenditure is more com-

plex, e.g. it benefits considerably, but indirectly, from the mere engagement of "workers" in the production process thus adds purchasing power to the local community.

- (2) Secondly, the process of accumulation in its various forms is by no means *purely local*. On the contrary, it has always had national and international dimensions. The manner in which "private accumulation" stands to benefit from "public investments and expenditure" must therefore be seen as much wider process which cannot be fully appreciated by studying one particular locality. Equally, however, the connection cannot be overlooked if we wish to understand a local community.

The way in which the Council emerges as an instrument in the local process of accumulation may also be assessed from another angle. A major part of the projects and services referred to above are *produced by the private sector* through *contracts* with the Council, (e.g. private enterprises are normally contracted with erection of schools, hospitals, public buildings, and with the provision of supplies for schools and hospitals). As such, the Council is naturally of prime importance to all who are interested in opportunities for private accumulation. Thus control of the Council, and of the way it functions are of paramount importance in the local economy. And by the same token, the Council affects the interests of those who "suffer" or "lose" through the way in which it operates. It is thus not at all surprising that the groups who benefit from the Council's mode of operation strive to obscure and distort the content and form of the politics in and of the Council. Their central concerns are thus to maintain their *hegemony* over the Council and to prevent



representatives of the "masses" from occupying effective positions in it. These representatives might conceivably decide to change the rules of the "game" altogether in the event of their dominance on the Council.

#### THE DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC SERVICES:

The second major aspect of Council politics, which is closely related to the above, revolves around the *distribution and allocation* of public services and projects among various socio-economic groups in the community. As we began to see in Chapter 3, and as Hill has noted that generally:

the residential location of a socio-economic group relative to the distribution of the town's public services, carries with it more or fewer town services, better or worse schools, more or less access to commercial activities, entertainment, health, religious and so on.<sup>71</sup>

The distribution of public services in Hassaheisa is no exception to Hill's generalization; it shows a marked relationship between the "wealth" of the inhabitants and the availability of better services on the one hand, and between personal "poverty" and the scarcity- if not the total absence- of services on the other. To further substantiate this, I analyse the available data at two levels.

The first; as there is increasing *residential segregation* between various socio-economic groups in the community, the uneven distribution of public services and resources among different neighbourhoods is taken as an important indicator to the relative power and authority commanded by each group on the Council which decides on the distribution and allocation. Thus, at this level, the analysis bears on social groups in relation to the areas in which they reside and service.

The second; some public services and resources are, however,

Table 8:5 Average Income Distribution in Various Residential Neighbourhoods, 1978/79

Income Category Res. Neighbourhood	£S 25		£S 50		£S 75		£S 100		£S 150		£S 200		£S 300		Total		Average Monthly Income(£S)
	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	No.	£S	
Onda	-	-	10	500	11	850	4	400	2	300	-	-	5	1500	32	3525	110.2
Karima	-	-	-	-	2	150	7	700	10	1500	4	800	4	1200	27	4350	161.1
Mygouma	2	50	10	500	5	375	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	1025	56.9
Shargi	3	75	20	1000	8	600	2	200	2	300	2	400	-	-	37	2575	69.6
Wassat	15	375	40	2000	25	1875	13	1300	5	750	-	-	3	900	101	7200	71.3
Mazad	7	175	19	950	14	1050	2	200	2	300	-	-	-	-	44	2675	60.8
Imtidad	10	250	28	1400	23	1725	6	600	2	300	1	200	-	-	70	4475	63.9
Jadida	11	275	32	1600	20	1500	3	300	6	900	3	600	-	-	75	5175	69.0
Fur	6	150	61	3050	10	750	2	200	1	150	-	-	-	-	80	4300	53.8
Kambo	23	550	56	2800	25	1875	4	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	108	5625	52.1
Wad Kamil	10	250	19	950	4	300	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	1600	47.1
Other Places	9	225	14	700	5	375	8	800	4	600	3	600	-	-	43	3300	76.7

Source: Fieldwork Survey



used or appropriated by certain *individuals and families* rather than whole social groups. We therefore need to examine the relative power and authority commanded by these individuals or families and to dwell on how they manipulate public resources for their private interests.

At both levels, I wish to stress how those who seek to enhance their opportunities for capital accumulation do so through the systematic appropriation of public social surplus. They *socialize* more and more of their own private domestic costs at the expense of the public. In the most flagrant instances, individuals simply use public resources in their private business firms and thus directly transfer parts of the costs of production to the public budget.

Table 8:5 gives the monthly income distribution for earners in various neighbourhoods according to my survey of 1978/79. It can be seen that the highest levels are found in Karima and Omda where most of the affluent merchants of Hassaheisa live, while the lowest levels are in the Wad Kamil, Mygouma, Kambo and Fur areas. Most of the residents of the four poorest neighbourhoods have manual jobs in different sectors of the town's economy. Using this classification of neighbourhoods and their peoples, I now examine the distribution and allocation of certain public services and resources among them.

One of the most important public resources is *residential land*. Its availability for various uses by certain individuals or groups tends to reflect their relative power and influence on the Council. Table 8:6 gives basic data on the residential use of land in the town. In the residential areas inhabited by high-income earners, (especially Omda, Karima, and Jamalounat), the

Table 8:6     Total Area, Number of Plots, Average Area of Plots, Total Population, and Average Area per Person in Various Neighbourhoods in Hassaheisa, 1981.

Neighbourhood	Total Area (sq. M.)*	No. of Plots**	Average Area of Plot (sq. m.)	Population Total No***	Average Area/ Person (sq.m.)
Omda	85000	124	686	1558	55
Karima	86963	136	639	949	92
Mygouma	42000	140	300	1462	29
Shargi	32369	66	490	1382	23
Wassat	120731	260	464	4674	26
Jadida	99600	308	323	4940	20
Fur	85000	214	397	2095	41
Imtidad & Mazad	203812	572	356	4974	41
Wad Kamil	13125	N.A.	N.A	737	18
Jamalounat	161650	N.A.	N.A.	973	167

Sources:

\* Table 5:1 in Chapter Five.

\*\* Survey Office, Hassaheisa Town Council

\*\*\* A census carried out in September 1981 by the Census Office, Hassaheisa. I found the data in a letter from the Census Officer to Hassaheisa Town People's Council dated 21/5/1981.



average area per person is very much higher than in the residential areas of low-income earners, (especially Wad Kamil, Jadida, Shargi, and Mygouma). These disparities have their origins in early colonial times when various laws were passed governing the allocation of urban land. Prominent among these was the Town Building Regulations of 1909<sup>72</sup>, which specified the various Classes of urban land, the minimum size of area in each of them, the approved building materials to be used in each class, and the dimensions of walls in each class. According to these regulations, the better residential classes went to wealthy people while the poor were excluded and confined to residence in areas with virtually no facilities. The policy according to which land is now allocated by the Town Council is still based on the classification of the different types of areas for different categories of the population. Various enactments since 1909 have been codified into an overall set of regulations which maintains gross disparities.

Other examples of the appropriation of public facilities by the affluent group, (which in effect lowers the general costs of their domestic lives and thus increases their opportunities for profit-making and accumulation), are the uneven distribution of water facilities, electricity, telephones, street lightening, public health services (i.e. rubbish collection and sewage), and so on, while the geographical location of many educational, health, administrative, religious, recreational, and shopping facilities also favour the affluent group in convenience and in reducing the transportation costs as discussed in Chapter 3.

To illustrate the direct use of the council's powers to serve the private accumulation interests of certain individuals and particular categories in the affluent group, I discuss two



cases - those of Hassan X Automatic Bakery, and the Wad Kamil lands.

(1) Hassan X Automatic Bakery<sup>73</sup>:

Since 1975 there has been an increasing difficult situation in regard of supplies of bread in the Sudan as a whole, and in urban areas in particular. This originated mainly through the scarcity of wheat flour, whether imported or locally grown and milled, because of foreign exchange difficulties and the drop in local wheat production. As a result, there developed a flourishing trade in both flour and bread on the black market. The temptation to exploit these circumstances proved irresistible to all groups interested in accumulation. As difficulties gained momentum, the Government finally accorded all concessions available under the Industrial Investments Act (1976), to any one establishing a new bakery, and especially for any that was automated.

In Hassaheisa there were 14 traditional bakeries owned and operated mainly by Shammaliin businessmen. But in 1978 (i.e. during the 1977-81 session of Council when the Shammaliin were "out of power"), the Council decided to facilitate the establishment of automatic bakeries by promising local concessions in land and sites in addition to the central government concessions. In July 1978 Hassan X (who was then the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Tenants' Cooperative Corporation for Grain Milling and Marketing which owned a milling plant 5 miles west of Hassaheisa) applied to the Council for a licence to establish an automatic bakery. This was carried through by the Chairman of the Council who put considerable pressure on the members to approve the application. (The two men originally came from neighbouring villages in Hassaheisa Rural Council). The main argument in opposition to the application (mainly from Shammaliin) was based on the fact that Hassan X was not a resident of the town and that the Council should only encourage investments by "*sons of the town*". But, however, the Chairman of the Council got his way, and the application was eventually approved in October 1979. Hassan X immediately began to erect his bakery on 1000 sq. metres of land situated adjacent to the Suk and to Karima neighbourhood.

Here it is relevant to add that the Chairman of the Council had by then- in partnership with some of his relatives- applied for a licence to establish another automatic bakery in the town and that he had already entered into an agreement with Hassan X for the provision of an assured regular quota of flour in return for the licence.

However, these developments did not go as smoothly as planned. The residents of Karima (which populated mainly by Shammaliin merchants) presented the Council



with a petition signed by a majority of the inhabitants of Karima complaining about the erection of Hassan X's bakery close to their houses (only 20 metres away). They claimed that this would cause pollution, noise, and an intensification of shopping activities (queues for bread) in an area supposed to be for residence only. They also organized a protest demonstration and for this purpose mobilized large numbers of Shammaliin from other neighbourhoods. The protest and the petition emphasized their view that opportunities for investment should be afforded for residents of the town who were working in the same field.

To calm the tense atmosphere, the Council decided on 20/12/1979 "after long discussion and exhaustive deliberations to order a halt for the building works which were going on at the site near Karima area, and to reallocate the bakery a site in the Suk area". Accordingly, the Planning and Housing Committee of the Council decided on 12/1/1980 to constitute a technical team to conduct a field enquiry in order to implement the Council's decision. The team was composed of:

- (1) The Local Government Inspector
- (2) The Chairman of the Planning & Housing Committee
- (3) The Municipal Engineer
- (4) The Health Inspector
- (5) The Survey Officer

Hassan X immediately appealed against the decision and threatened to sue the Council for the financial losses which he would incur if compelled to abandon the building which he had already begun (the foundations were then complete). The Planning and Housing Committee was again convened on 17/1/1980 to consider both the appeal and the report of the technical team. It then decided that "after careful and comprehensive consideration of Hassan X'S appeal, the complaints of the residents of Karima neighbourhood, and the report of the technical team the Committee recommends for the Council the following:

- (a) No change in the site of the bakery should be made because it is not (technically) in the area of Karima neighbourhood, but in the Suk area.
- (b) Because of its urgent nature this recommendation should be presented to the Council at its next scheduled meeting for further discussion and approval.

After hearing a detailed history of the case delivered by the Local Government Inspector, the Council on 27/1/1980 confirmed and recorded the following points:

- (1) The bakery's site is located in the Suk area and not in Karima neighbourhood.
- (2) The possibility of the bakery posing any health hazard to the neighbouring residents was minimal.
- (3) The Council would not be able to pay compensation in the event of a court decision in favour of Hassan X.
- (4) The unanimous recommendation of the Planning & Housing Committee based on the report of the tech-



nical team, that the original decision to approve the erection of the bakery on its present site be implemented.

After the settlement of this case, the Chairman of the Council got his bakery approved at the same valuable site. Also a third bakery was licensed for a Dubasin businessman at the same area with similar concessions. By 1981 the three bakeries were complete and working in supplying the market (oftenly the black one).

What this case reveals, in addition to being a general illustration of how the council uses its powers in manipulative way to serve the interests of certain individuals and groups, is the kind of resistance, albeit unsuccessful, which certain members of the community were able to mount. But such resistance was waged primarily by groups seeking to pursue their own similar interests (as opposed to a different disinterested course). In fact, both sides used and manipulated every possible source of power and pressure in essentially the same way and for the same target. The *conflict* between them could by no means be construed as an example of class struggle; it could only be conceptualized as *competition* between different fragments or factions of the same incomplete social class.

## (2) Wad Kamil Lands<sup>74</sup>:

Wad Kamil is situated in the north-eastern corner of the town between the Blue Nile and the Khartoum-Wad Medani highway. The site was originally inhabited by a small section of Dubasin who were primarily engaged in small-scale river side agricultural (*Jiruf*). Until recently, the area lay outside the administrative boundaries of the town and had no urban services such as piped water, electricity, planning controls, or school. Its "independent" status as a village encouraged increasing numbers of West African immigrants (*Fellata*) to settle there while pursuing various occupations in the town Suk (e.g. porters, tailors, and barbers). Such areas on the outskirts of towns are common in the Sudan and increasingly so since Independence as the legal requirements for entry into the country have been tightened and West Africans without proper travel documents often prefer the anonymity of rural villages like Wad Kamil where they are less exposed than in the town.<sup>75</sup> But even in Wad Kamil, the predominantly *Fellata* area remained cle-



arly separated from the rest of the village; and it was overcrowded and of "very poor appearance". Following on The People's Local Government Act of 1971, the boundaries of the town were redrawn to accomodate Wad Kamil Village, and the whole population- including Fellata- became under the administrative authority of the adjacent Imtidad and Mazad People's Council. They remained so up to June 1976 when the Wad Kamil Neighbourhood People's Council was established as a separate entity. At first this was construed as formal recognition of the 'rights' of the residents of Wad Kamil, and particularly the Fellata. Later, however, it turned out to be only the first step in a process of stripping them of the limited range of rights which they thought they had achieved. Prominent among these rights, was that of residence in this particular neighbourhood.

With the intensification of commercial accumulation and the recent increase in the size of the town's population and the subsequent escalation of the housing problem, the accumulating groups in the town began to cast their acquisitive eyes on the land of Wad Kamil. Its potential for commercial and other investments is easy to appreciate; it is located in the vicinity of the booming Northern Industrial Area and adjacent to the Through-Highway. Thus, when the Council drew up a plan for "the renewal and beautification of the town" in 1978, one of the concerns of those dominant on the Council was to plan for the *removal* of the poor residents of Wad Kamil (Fellata and Dubasin) to other areas with far less potentialities and to reclassify the area as *First Class* land for sale by open auction or to buyers who can pay in *hard currency*.<sup>76</sup> In either case, developers would build on this area in accordance with the First Class specifications contained in The Town Building Regulations. The whole plan was justified on the grounds that Wad Kamil was in the front of the town and that its appearance should be such as to impress by-passers along the Kartoum-Wad Medani road and the financial needs of the Council for new sources of revenue. But, indeed, the plan can only be properly understood as part of the wider class-based struggle over the nature of the town development and its beautification.

The Council, dominated by groups interested in accumulation, in fact took the lands away from one group of users, who were said to be using it "inefficiently", and turned it over to another group for what was described as "higher and better use" in accordance with the ultimate interests of the town. In this struggle between a low-income and legally vulnerable group on one side, and the vested interests of capitalist speculators on the other, the Council openly sided with the latter to deprive



the former of their locality of residence and to open the way for the building of luxury apartments. Moreover, the Council then provided the area with more than averagely adequate services. But the struggle involved a number of confrontations and did not develop smoothly. These were further complicated by the complex character of the different interests involved. To explain this, we need to look closely at the decisions taken by the Council Central Committee at its meeting on 8th November 1979 on this issue:

- (1) To remove all Fellata from Wad Kamil to Kambo Haj Ali (a residential area inhabited by West Africans who are working in the Ginneries and situated beyond the boundaries of the town to the West of the Main Canal). The Fellata were to be allowed to take their building materials with them, but the Council would not pay any compensation after demolishing their houses. The Fellata were thus the group to lose the most from this plan "to develop and beautify the town" and this was simply because they were the weakest group in all respects.
- (2) The poor Dubasin residents of Wad Kamil were also to be moved from the area and to have their houses demolished, but the Council was to compensate them with plots of land equal to theirs in the adjacent third class area to the North of Imtidat near the Northern Industrial Area.
- (3) The few better off residents of Wad Kamil and the leaders of the Neighbourhood Council were to be given plots of land in the replanned area of Wad Kamil, behind the first class area, and they were to benefit from the new planning and the new services. The plots they were to occupy were to be reclassified as second class.
- (4) Members of the town's affluent group were, of course, to be given the first class section of Wad Kamil where they could build luxury residences and the Council would provide this section with all services, the reasons being that if they did not do so "investors needed for the development of the town would go away".<sup>77</sup>

This case, once more, illustrates some of the ways in which members of the dominant affluent group (accumulators) use legal and administrative powers not only to appropriate a potentially useful public resource, but, at the same time, to deprive poor people of its use. It also shows very clearly that the *particip-*



ation on the Council of some leading figures from among the poor of Wad Kamil did not lead to any "positive achievements" for the poor; on the contrary, their presence on the Council may be construed as having facilitated *compromise* with the affluent and "betrayal" of the poor, for the few better off residents of Wad Kamil represented on Neighbourhood Council contributed to gearing public opinion in the area to the acceptance of minimal concessions of which they- the representatives- themselves received the lion's share.

#### REVENUES APPROPRIATION AND THE FINANCE OF PUBLIC SERVICES:

The third set of Council powers which directly affect capital accumulation concerns the financing of the "production" of public services and investments. The Council obviously has to "accumulate" sufficient revenue in order to be able to produce or to finance the production of public services and social investments.<sup>78</sup> But since it is by definition, an integral part of the capitalist State, its methods of generating and appropriating revenue are directly governed by the wider *rules* determining the relationship between the State and the process of private accumulation. These 'rules' may be summarised as follows.

Capital accumulation takes place mainly in *private enterprises*. Thus the State generally appropriates a surplus only to pass it on to the private enterprises, local or foreign. Generally, the State in a capitalist society does not reinvest in its own enterprises to produce further surpluses; instead, it invests in the building and maintenance of the infrastructure (dams, roads, the generation of electricity, railways, etc.) on which the process of private accumulation depends.<sup>79</sup> At the local level, the state through the Council seeks means of revenue accumulation other than "surplus-producing" schemes. (This is why,



as pointed earlier, all public services and projects are being "produced" by private contractors and not the public departments of the Council).

A close examination of the alternative means adopted to accumulate revenue show that the interests of private accumulation dominate and that there is an intrinsic tendency in the distribution of the burden to relieve the accumulating groups. The financing of Council expenditure is borne disproportionately by the groups who are least able to pay (i.e. the low-income earners who receive the lowest benefits from this expenditure in the first place). To substantiate these assertions, I now consider the ways in which the burden of financing public expenditure is shared by different socio-economic groups in the town. I shall attempt to answer the question: *Who pays for what is produced?*

Sources of local government revenue in the Sudan can be grouped into the three categories of: (1) Financial *grants* from the central government; (2) Locally imposed *taxes*, including "rates"; and (3) Miscellaneous *receipts* such as licence dues and court fines. I therefore broadly discuss each in turn.

(1) Government Grants<sup>80</sup>:

These may be *conditional* (i.e. they must be spent on stipulated services such as education, health or electrification), or *unconditional* (i.e. given without any specific directions as to what they should be spent on). In both cases, however, the poor and the lower-income sections of the population in the country at large are the main contributors. This is simply because, according to various studies and reports on the Sudan economy, the central government relies heavily on *indirect taxes* for revenue accumulation;<sup>81</sup> in this respect the situation in the Sudan is similar to that in most underdeveloped countries. And since in-



direct taxes have a highly regressive impact on different incomes (i.e. the rate of tax increases as income falls and vice versa), it is obvious which income groups bears the major burden. And, of course, in absolute terms the lower-income tax payers heavily outnumber the high-income tax payers. Thus the former consume much more of basic goods (which are taxed) than the latter who, of course, consume much more of luxuries which are subsidized in various ways.

(2) Direct Local Taxes and Rates:

Sources of Direct Tax in the urban areas of the Sudan have been drastically reduced since the abolition of *Head Tax*. At present, local governments in urban areas collect only what is known as the *property tax* (i.e. rates). This is imposed mainly on buildings (e.g. houses, stores, shops, factories, etc.), and the rate of the tax is related to the assessed value of the property. In general, the contribution of this tax is *modest* in relation to total local government revenue, because<sup>82</sup>: (a) First and foremost, the rates are held at a very low level (12%); (b) the rating system is inflexible so that revenue does not grow appreciably from year to year, and certainly does not match inflation; and (c) Rateable values of property do not reflect their market values, especially as revaluations are usually delayed and under-assessed.<sup>83</sup>

The modest share of total revenues contributed by the property tax is, however, largely drawn from the poorer sections of the urban population rather than from the more affluent accumulating groups. There are two main reasons for this:

(I) Although the rates are paid directly by property owners, in the final analysis the propertyless poor are the real payers;

being propertyless, they have to *rent* houses and in doing so they, in fact, pay for the rates. This may explain why the "rates are held at a very low level", to match the paying ability of the poor.

(II) In accordance with Article 25, Chapter 5 of the People's Local Government Act of 1971, local authorities may *exempt* any person unable to pay without the consent of the Minister if the amount is less than a thousand Sudanese Pounds. And this provision is commonly used by members of the Council to exempt themselves, their 'tribal' supporters, and other members of their "class", while finding- and if necessary inventing- all "reasonable justification" to reject applications for exemption submitted by the "powerless".

(3) Miscellaneous Receipts:

These include licence dues, court fines, some public services charges and fees, etc. The contribution of such receipts to the total revenue of the Council is low and stagnant. This is because the charges and fees on services are usually nominal. If that was not so, most of "the people" could not use these services (e.g. public health charges). And the licence dues are deliberately kept low to avoid discouraging "investors" for developing the locality.<sup>84</sup>

The way in which "class" interests that surround the Council politics can be illustrated is by the study of the range of policies adopted to meet the Council's growing inability to finance the "production" of services from its revenues.

(1) The Council's first source of finance is, of course, the central government grants and it can accordingly put pressure on the government for further help in financing some of



its (the Council) projects and services. But this possibility is, by and large, extremely limited, partly because of the Council's subordinate position in relation to the central administration, and partly because of the government growing inability to cope with its own severe economic and financial problems.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the government has argued that:

continuous growth in aid from the central government may have precipitated a sense of irresponsibility regarding the exploitation of local authorities' own sources, and that some local authorities have either imposed a lower rate or underestimated the value of their revenue in order to get the maximum possible help from the centre.<sup>85</sup>

There is thus increasing pressure on local authorities to cease looking to the central government for help and to find ways of helping themselves from their own resources.

- (2) The establishment of a surplus-generating projects is an obvious alternative, and is possible, but tends to run counter to the interests of private accumulation and contradicts the basic principles and 'rules' of the relationship between the State and private enterprise in a capitalist society. Thus, in spite of recent legislation attempting to induce local authorities to enter the field of commercial and industrial investment (1971 Act), the achievements to date are scarcely significant in any part of the Sudan. And this is not because of difficulties in raising capital, since the extensive financial concessions and loans for such investments are available<sup>87</sup>, but primarily because of the reluctance of those who dominate the local authorities to *compete* against private enterprise in which they are often themselves involved, directly or indirectly. The attitude of council-

ors is often " *such investment is going to be profitable, why not establish it ourselves*!"

- (3) Another possible way of increasing revenue would be to raise the tax-base on the present principles, but this scarcely practicable owing to the nature of the taxes allowed for under the Local Government Appropriation of Taxes Ordinance of 1954; being based primarily on flat-rate principle, the taxes have a regressive impact and the ability of the majority of the population (the poor) to pay more than a certain proportion of their disposable incomes is limited. I would maintain that this is the essential, and not so much, as Howell argues, that the collection system is inefficient and corrupt.<sup>88</sup>
- (4) A final alternative open to the Council would be to implement radical tax reforms and to impose progressive taxation (i.e. to increase the rate as income rises). Local councils have the power to do this under the 1971 Act (Article 4,C; Chapter Two), but the Council in Hassaheisa has never exercised this power. On one occasion in 1974, a local bus owner (Ahmed Al-Hassan) proposed the imposition of a tax of only one Sudanese pound per month on all bus owners to allow for the improvement of the "streets", but this was rejected at the same time as the Council agreed to increase the rate on *sanitary buckets* (which affects different households equally) from two to five Sudanese pounds annually.<sup>89</sup> More recently, the Council imposed a piastre on the consumption of a rattle of sugar to finance the town renewal. These are clear examples of the Council's preference for spreading the costs of services over the entire population without a corresponding spread of the services themselves. Also



Table 8:7 Hassaheisa Town People's Council Revenue  
for Selected Years (In Sudanese Pounds)

Source	1975/75	1976/77	1978/79	1979/80	1981/82
<u>Direct Taxes</u>					
Buildings	1000	5000	14150	14200	15000
Land	520	530	-	-	-
Ushur	-	-	-	-	-
Animal	12040	10000	-	-	-
Entertainment	6000	7700	13500	14000	10000
General Rates	20700	28700	58000	60000	49450
<u>Licences</u>					
Commercial	14000	14000	13000	11000	16500
Health	1750	1800	3000	3000	5500
Local Beer	12745	9175	8000	5000	-
Others	27000	20890	-	-	-
<u>Rents</u>					
Council's Buildings	3655	3655	9000	9100	10000
<u>Fees &amp; Dues</u>					
Building Fees	-	-	2000	2050	3000
Parks	-	150	150	150	450
Suk Contracts	9300	5300	7500	8000	6500
Animals'	-	-	150	150	100
Central Market	2500	2500	8000	8000	8000
Miscellaneous	775	745	4000	4000	6000
Total	111,985	110,145	140,450	138,650	130,500

Source: Various files in the Office of the Administrative Officer,  
Hassaheisa Town Council.

they illustrate the tendency of the dominant groups to share these costs with all "the people" rather than bearing them as internal costs in their businesses.

The main results of the Council's failure over the years to meet the problems outlined have been (a) a chronic financial crisis (See Table 8:7) and, (b) the rapid deterioration of the services and the Council's progressive inability to meet the ever-increasing demand for "necessary" social investments. With this general failure to "ensure that the services rendered by it (the Council) are directed towards the benefit of the citizens of the area at the highest standard", there is now a developing tendency to rely on "private" finance for essential services, and this is actually becoming the norm. With the relentless encouragement of the State and the active blessing of the dominant group of councillors, the general ideology of *self-help* and local initiative is finding some acceptance even among the poor for whom it is yet another form of subjugation and exploitation. It is now up to each individual, if he "really desires" to better his life, to put more efforts and initiative in order to win and acquire services. This is a typical middle-class attitude according to which the poor are being asked to embrace without being given the material resources to practise it. In effect we presently find the following in the town:

- (a) The lower-income groups have extremely poor facilities which are increasingly inadequate and many of which are actually collapsing. Health services in the town- including clinical examinations, and prescribed medicines- are being provided by revenue from the "Funds of Self-Help for Health Revolution". The erection, maintenance, and renewal



of water pipes are paid for public self-help subscriptions in each of the neighbourhoods. In education, an increasing number of items such as school notebooks, ink, and books are becoming the private responsibility of parents. And as the financial ability of the low-income groups is so limited, it follows that the actual services which they now enjoy are minimal.

- (b) On the other hand, the affluent group of accumulators enjoy relatively good services provided mainly through private arrangements. They attend private clinics and hospitals where the fees and charges are invariably high enough to deter the poor from even contemplating their use. In Hassaheisa there are 9 private clinics operated by "government" doctors in private premises and during private time, usually between 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. daily (2 consultants, 2 dentists, and 5 general practitioners). The fee for a private clinical examination is however quite high.

With the poor teaching facilities in the government schools, the rich of Hassaheisa commonly hire teachers privately to help their children. Thus there are what is referred to as the *consolidating classes* during the evenings for which the charges are, again, far beyond the means of low-income families. The rich also continue to enjoy other collective services, such as street lightening, refuse collection, and public parks by paying for them through private finance and subscriptions in their areas, while the poor are almost completely deprived in all these respects. But the ability of the rich to finance these services privately results from surpluses which they originally acquired from the wider

population of the town, and the original subsidy provided by the government (central or local) for these services. This partly explains their complacency and indifference towards the inability of the Council to finance such services.

#### CONCLUSION:

I have in this Chapter tried to link various issues in the study of political behaviour and attitudes in urban areas to a central problematic in this thesis: the relationship between the patterns of local politics and the economic interests of the various groups of people in the town. In conclusion, I re-emphasize the following points:

- (1) Institutions of local political dominance have for long been controlled and, in a sense, monopolized by members of the socio-economic groups directly interested in promoting and facilitating private accumulation, especially in commerce.
- (2) This has throughout the town's history been possible because any potential threat of power being assumed by members of socio-economic groups disinterested in, or antagonistic to, the process of private accumulation has consistently been obstructed by a combination of government policies and local political action.
- (3) The promotion and manipulation of the ideology of tribalism, combined with recent attempts to cultivate sophisticated norms of participation and conciliation, are the main ways through which the dominance of the "accumulating" group is maintained. The ideology of 'tribalism' has been used to confuse and distort "politics" in the eyes of the low-income masses, so that the dominant groups have succeeded in presenting the local situation as one of *partnership* and 'tribal competition' rather than



of class struggle "over resources". Potentially revolutionary and militant radical politics have thus turned into submissive political conservatism.

(4) This has allowed the dominant groups to manipulate the institutions of local government (principally the Town Council) to the direct benefit of private accumulation. Also, this process provides a good instance of the way in which the State behaves as an "executive organ" of the socially, economically, and ideologically dominant groups in the society. The main strains and tensions in the political arena thus appear as ever-present '*competition*' between various individuals and factions of the same stock seeking to control the same process. From being a manifestation or reflection of class-struggle, such competition is, in the terms which I conceive it, an aspect of conflicts to be expected between various fragments of an incomplete class, each fragment striving to establish and consolidate its position in the *class under formation*. Though not clear and apprehensible to most members of the community- and to low-income members in particular- the process of class struggle is present in the various processes of domination- economic, political, and ideological. Objectively, the contending parties to this struggle are neither the fragments of the dominant groups seen as two great collectivities, the first with common interest in the process of accumulation in opposition to the second 'disinterested' in capital accumulation, are the contending parties both as real entities and as positions.

Finally, there seems to be a general intrinsic contradiction between the processes of private accumulation and of urbanization, which should be noted. While private accumulation benefits from acceleration in the rate of urbanization- partly because accumulation at the rural level creates townward migration,

and partly because this migration provides cheap labour for urban production of services, customers for commercial commodities, tenants for urban houses, and so on - urbanization requires increasing investments in urban public services for a population progressively less able to pay for them or to contribute to the finance of their production. The Hassaheisa Council dominated by members of the affluent group, has thus far been quite unable to resolve this contradiction, or even to "defend itself against it".



# FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VIII

1. With two exceptions- Zahir Al-Sadat, F., 1972, and El-Bakri, Z.B., 1981- there are no systematic studies of the political behaviour of Sudanese urban dwellers.
2. Cornelius, W.A., 1977, p. 213.
3. For a critical evaluation of such 'propositions' about the political consciousness and participation of urban population, see, Lloyd, P. C., 1979, pp. 186-206.
4. Some of the inspirations for these views, in regard to disorganization and alienation in particular, come from classics of Western sociology such as Wirth, L., 1969.
5. See Weiner, M., 1967, p. 44.
6. This has been fully recognized by other researchers, see, for example, Woodward, P., 1982, pp. 3-6.
7. Such periodization of the history of local administration in the Sudan was originally developed by Salih, 1974, pp. 21-24, but also compare with Bakheit, G.M.A., 1974, pp. 25-32.
8. Salih, G.M., 1974, pp. 22-23.
9. This act was based on the findings and recommendations in the Report of the Commission on Coordination Between Central and Local Government (Abu Rannat Commission).
10. This Ordinance adopted in response to the recommendations of the Marshall Report on Local Government of 1949, drawn up by Mr. A.H. Marshall, the City Treasurer of Coventry, in response to an invitation by the Sudan Government to "enquire into and report on the policy and practices of Sudan Government in respect of Local Government and to make recommendations".
11. This act came out as a result of the government sponsored Conference For the Reform of Local Government which took place in Khartoum, April 1971. In May 1971 the Revolutionary Command Council issued Act No. 64/1971 of the People's Local Government.
12. District Commissioner, Annual Report, 1913, p. 3.
13. *O'mda* was an administrative title given to certain tribal leaders since Turco-Egyptian rule (1821-1885). It was usually given to heads of 'tribes' or sub-tribes of moderate size. The administrative unit under a *O'mda* was called *O'mudiya* and it comprised a number of *Sheikhships*.
14. Sudan Gazette, No. 458, 15th June 1925, pp. 2342-5. The Ordinance was applied to the area as from 26.7.1926.



15. Hassaheisa was only assigned the status of town in April 1927. Sudan Gazette, No. 490, 15.4.1927.
16. Sudan Gazette, No. 494, 15.8.1927, pp. 164-7. The strategic political concerns of the colonial administration behind these moves are evident in the following quotations from a memorandum by the then Governor-General, Sir John Maffey, putting the case for enhancing and elevating the positions of tribal leaders in the Sudan:  
 "We ought to get on with extensions and expansion of Native Administration in every direction thereby sterilizing and localising the political germs which must spread from the lower Nile into Khartoum... Such anxiety on my part may seem farfetched, but I have watched an old generation give place to a new in India and I have seen how easily vague political unrest swept over even backward peoples simply because we allowed the old forms to crumble away. Yet the native states in India remain safe and secure in the hands of hereditary rulers, loyal to the King-Emperor, showing what we might have done if we had followed a different course. We failed to put a shield between the agitators and the bureaucracy". Sudan Government Archives, Khartoum Province, 1/7, memo, 1.1.1927.
17. Sudan Gazette, No. 531, 20.5.1930.
18. Sudan Gazette, No. 534, 20.8.1930.
19. Salih, op. cit., p. 23.
20. Bakheit, op. cit., p. 30.
21. Ibid, p. 30.
22. District Commissioner, Northern Gezira, Annual Report, 1938, p. 13.
23. The Sudanese Communist Party, 1965, pp. 381-87.
24. Bakheit, op. cit., p. 48-49.
25. The compromise was based on the Note submitted by El-Shafie Ahmed El-Sheikh, then Minister for Cabinet Affairs, strongly demanding the total abolition of Native Administration, and the resolution of the General Meeting of the Senior Members of the Judiciary held in Khartoum on December 1964 favouring only the separation of the native courts from native administration.
26. Howell, J., 1974, p. 66.
27. The Minister of Local Government in consent of the Council of Ministers issued on 6th May 1973 The Regulations for the People's Local Government in the Sudan which included the regulations of the powers of the Provinces' Commissioners, the Administrative Officers, and the Chairmen of local councils. Also they include the Guidance for the formation of these councils.



28. The People's Local Government Act, 1971, Chapter 3.
29. For more details in this regard, see, Howell, J., op. cit., pp. 66-67.
30. See the Guidance for the Formation of the People's Local Government Councils, Article 15(A).
31. Ibid, Article 15 (B).
32. Ibid, Article 17 (A).
33. Ibid, Article 15 (C).
34. Ibid, Article 19 (A).
35. Ibid, Article 19 (B).
36. Ibid, Article 22 (A).
37. Ibid, Article 22 (D) and (H).
38. Ibid, Article 22 (F).
39. Ibid, Article 26 (A).
40. The People's Local Government Act, 1971, Chapter 11, Article 8.
41. Cf. El-Bakri, Z.B., 1981, Chapter Seven, for similar observations on Omdurman.
42. The Regulations for the Appointment of the Chairman of the People's Local Government Council, 1973, Article 5 (J). But also see in the same Article from (A) to (H),
43. Recently (in 1983) it is reported from the Sudan that the Government is resorting again to the elements of tribal leadership in the administration of local affairs.
44. My interest in this particular candidate was partly due to the fact that he was a friend, both personal and political. His election campaign was conducted in concurrence with a heated debate in certain Sudanese political circles over the political credibility and practical prospects of candidates affiliated to leftist groups.
45. This agreement within an anti-Shammaliin framework of political manipulation was inspired, prepared, and actually put into motion by the leading District and Town Committee of the Sudanese Socialist Union (the country's sole and Governing Party) which was dominated by Dubasin and allies. This and the agreement's details was revealed to me by Mr. El-Fatih Hamadel Nil in an interview, Hassaheisa, October 1980.



46. "Noisy" was the actual word used in the Report on the election, which was prepared by the Town Administrative Inspector, describing the Shammaliin opposition and protest to what they were calling a 'conspiracy' to prevent their "natural" right to leading positions in the Council. See Council Papers No. 13D/ Hassaheisa- Dec. 1977.
47. This was decided on 8/11/1977, Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D.
48. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/1, p. 4.
49. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/1, p. 3.
50. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/1, p. 3.
51. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/2, p. 2.
52. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./25/A/1.
53. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/3.
54. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/1, p. 5.
55. Council Papers, File No. M.M.H.S./16/D/1, p. 3.
56. See for example James, W., 1980.
57. In addition to the existing Public Order Ordinance of 1921 (See Sudan Gazette, No. 371, 15/3/1921) and its Regulations for Urban Areas (Sudan Gazette, No. 433, 26/4/1924), the Government passed the Public Tranquility Act of 1982, on 7/12/1982 (See Al-Ayam daily, 4/1/1983), in an attempt to combat increasing "unrest" in the towns, and especially in Khartoum.
58. The People's Local Government Act of 1971, Chapter II, Article 2.
59. The People's Local Government Act of 1971, specified the "Workers, Peasants, Soldiers and Officers, Revolutionary Intelligensia, and Patriotic Bourgeoisie" as the major elements of the Working People's Alliance to whom power and authority should be given. The Functional and Mass Organizations of these groups were seen as Trade Unions, Tenants Unions, Cultural Leagues, Professional Unions, etc.
60. See, for example, Howell, J., 1974; Sid Ahmed, M.A., 1974; El-Arifi, S.A., 1978; El-Bakri, Z.B., 1981; and Woodward, P., 1982.
61. El-Bakri, Z.B., 1981, pp. 338-39.
62. El-Arifi, S.A., 1978, p. 27.
63. Howell, J., 1974, pp. 70-71.



64. As evidence of this view, and also for a reasoned argument about it, see, the Central Committee of the Sudanese Communist Party, An Announcement, July 1976.
65. Cf. Coit, K., 1978, pp. 297-302. The following analysis of observations draws heavily on Coit's analysis developed in relation to a different, yet largely similar, situation.
66. Ibid, pp. 301-2.
67. Cf. Hill, R.C., 1978, pp. 213-40. Hill discusses the role local government under the advanced capitalist society of the USA. Such society as being characterized by the dominance of monopolistic finance capital resembles in its increasing "authoritarianism" and bureaucratization the situation in third world countries (e.g. the Sudan) under the underdeveloped neo-colonial capitalism where the State plays similar authoritarian role.
68. The People's Local Government Act, 1971, Chapter 2, Article II.
69. Ibid, Chapter 5, Article 19 (C).
70. See, O'Connor, J.R., 1973.
71. Hill, op. cit., p. 224.
72. Sudan Gazette, No. 163, November 1909, pp. 195-97. See also Mclean, W.H., 1980, especially pp. 142-143.
73. Information on this was gathered partly by interviews, and partly from the Council Papers (Files classified M.M.H.S/16/D/ various numbers at different dates).
74. See, Duffield, M., 1980, p. 224.
75. "Hard currency" was sought by the Council to be collected from those who work in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. The Council offered the land in the New Wad Kamil area for such persons at a lower price than the normal one, on condition that they pay in foreign currency.
77. Council Papers, 8/11/1979.
78. See, Hill, op. cit., pp. 221-24.
79. Although he is discussing the situation in a highly developed capitalist society (USA), O'Connor's following argument applies, in various ways, to the situation in the Sudan:



"The growth of the State sector is indispensable to the expansion of private industry... particularly monopoly industries... and the growth of monopoly capital generates increased expansion of social expenses. The greater growth of social capital, the greater the growth of the monopoly sector. And the greater the growth of the monopoly sector, the greater the state's expenditure on the social expenses of production". See, O'Connor, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

80. Up to 1961 the central government in the Sudan used to pay a grant-in-aid to "poor" councils, which was 85% of the sugar monopoly profits and excise duties, plus 20% of the cost of services. Later on, a fixed rate of £S 3.5 million, and a subsidy for services ranging from 13.5% to 15%, was paid. See, El-Arifi, 1978, p. 32. But for details, see also, Abbas, M.E.A., 1976, pp. 5-7.
81. See, for example, Ali, M.A., 1977, pp. 116-139, and 1974; and Sulieman, A.A., 1971.
82. See, Ali, A.A., 1974, pp. 107-12.
83. When revaluated in the town of Hassaheisa in the fiscal year 1976/77, the rates on "old buildings" were reduced by 60% and on the "new buildings" by 20% (See Council Papers, M.M.H.S./16/D/2/1- 29/12/1977. Nevertheless, the unpaid rates stood at £S 62,000- 60% of the total- on 31/5/1979- See Council Papers, M.M.H.S./16/D/21).
84. Interview with the Administrative Officer of the Town Council, Hassaheisa.
85. To illustrate the growing economic difficulties of the Sudan government, I quote the following:  
 "The immediate prospects for Sudan's economy are extremely poor. Faced with a total debt of around \$ 4 bn. (£ 2.35 bn.), the country has been kept afloat by its powerful friends, namely the United States and Saudi Arabia, and by the provision of an IMF standby credit of £ 125 m. More tangible "gifts" of wheat from the U.S. and oil from Saudi Arabia have helped to quieten popular discontent over shortages". Financial Times, Tuesday, August 17, 1982, p. 3.
86. See, Howell, J., 1974, p. 109.
87. See Chapter 6 of this thesis.
88. As is maintained by Howell, J., op. cit., p. 11.
89. Council Papers, M.M.H.S./16/D/2- 2/9/1979.



## OVERVIEW AND CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the creation, (production and reproduction) of Hassaheisa and the nature of life there today as aspects of the history and present structure of the society and economy of the region in which the town is set, and even of the Sudan as a whole. Since Hassaheisa was brought into being by and through early British colonial rule, the time span of the study extends from the early years of this century to the present. In one sense, the thesis is simply a *case study* in urbanization and urban life. But such a statement fails to draw attention to the essential nature of the study, which is that I have attempted to view the creation of Hassaheisa, and of urban growth in the Sudan in general, as 'symptoms' of *underdevelopment* rather than of 'development'. In attempting to assess the growth of Hassaheisa as a process unfolding within the specific conditions of colonial and neo-colonial capitalism, I have regarded the town as much more than an *indicator*, and also much more than a mere *consequence*, of the profound changes taking place in the country. In the view taken, Hassaheisa is an integral part and expression of these changes, and not merely an indicator or a consequence of them.

The thesis is, first and foremost, an empirical study, but the 'facts' which it presents are treated in a historical and theoretical framework which demands that many of the notions prevalent in 'conventional' urban sociology, both in Africa and the West, be discarded and replaced with concepts derived from a Marxian view of development and underdevelopment.

Apart from general descriptive data on the composition of the population, the main empirical materials contained in this thesis refer to specific conjunctures which illustrate and reveal



the dynamic role of urbanization as a factor in, and an expression of, the processes of underdevelopment.

My first task, essential for the broad aim I had set myself, was to review the historical period during which Hassaheisa came into being (i.e. the period of colonialism) with special reference to the establishment of a new socio-economic formation which had a series of specific characteristics. The main feature and by far the most dynamic aspect of this epoch (and of the period of neo-colonialism as well) has been the development of the process of capital accumulation, a process which was, we know, closely related to the dynamics and mechanisms of the global imperialist economic system.

The particular way in which the Sudan was involved in this colonial economic system was basically conditioned by the pre-existing social and economic system or systems of the country, but the 'needs' and policies adopted by colonialism to achieve capitalistic penetration in turn conditioned all subsequent developments in the society and economy of the country. One crucial and fundamental aspect of the specific manner in which the Sudan was 'linked' to the wider colonial capitalist system arose from the promotion of an economy in which peasants were compelled by various means to produce crops for cash. The need for a continuous flow of these crops to the centres of colonial capitalism at reasonable (cheap) prices led to policies which effectively established two quite basic characteristics of the 'new' colonial economy:

- (1) The systematic *stabilization* of peasants in their communities as producers of crops required as raw materials for capitalist industry (e.g. cotton). The relation of 'correspond-

ence' between the production of the crops and the needs of capitalist industry was established within the parameters of world trade through the basic mechanism of 'unequal exchange' of values favouring the latter. During the colonial period, the most 'efficient' functioning of the peasant production called for the concentration of the production of crops in those regions of the Sudan where the comparative advantages of production of these crops were thought to be highest. This concentration then called for the mobilization of the labour needed at various stages of the production process. The initial attempts to import labour from beyond the boundaries of the Sudan rapidly proved too expensive and impractical. The colonial administration therefore soon resorted to the mobilization of a labour force of an indigenous source. But this policy, in addition to the contradiction it reveals in the colonial approach (i.e. stabilization versus mobilization), faced the fact that the transformation of 'peasants' into a mobile and 'free' labour force was a formidable task and soon called for more elaborate measures to reduce and partially disintegrate the viability of 'peasant economies', or even, in certain areas of the Sudan, to bring about their disintegration. The resultant dislocation of population from some regions and its movement to those where crop production was intensified- or where labour was required for other related purposes- revealed a process of proletarianization.

Whether the colonial capitalist process of accumulation called for the *settlement* of this 'mobilized' population in rural or urban areas, did not alter the fundamental nature of the process as one involving a deep and far-reaching



transformation of socio-economic relations within and between various sections of Sudanese society. The rate and the magnitude of these movements did, of course, show significant variations over time according to the needs, crises, and the degree of intensity of development of the colonial and neo-colonial economy, and we have seen that these variations were clearly reflected in the changing rate and changing pattern of urbanization in Hassaheisa.

- (2) The second essential feature of the colonial and neo-colonial economy which ultimately affected urbanization arose from imperial capital's intrinsic need not only for a regular supply of raw materials but for supplies at low prices. Since the 'price' of any commodity, is ultimately determined by the 'value' of labour which produces it, and since the 'value' of labour is largely determined by the specific historical conditions within which production occurs, it follows that the following are engendered and maintained as conditions for the mechanism of low pricing: (a) Low level of development in all the relevant forces of production (i.e. land, labour, and implements) and (b) a low standard of living as the pre-existing societies had a very limited range of necessities. For, both of these had a profound determining impact on the measure of the level of prices or values of the peasants labour. This simply to say that; low levels of development in the forces of production and in the standard of living were intimately related to lower crop prices. And this meant that higher than average profits were recovered as the starting point for the whole process of colonial accumulation. Thus the maintenance and perpetuation of 'under-

developed' forces of production and a low standard of living were not only a logical and sensible course of action from the point of view of colonial capitalist accumulation, but were necessary for the continuation and reproduction of the whole system of extraction of profits at higher than average level to 'compensate' for the declining average rate of profit in Western Europe.

The general argument is thus that the system operated, and continues to operate, mainly through the mechanism of unequal exchange of values in the world trade. In the internal situation of the Sudan it was, therefore, necessary for the colonial system to establish a trading structure which provided an effective link between crop producers and the world capitalist market. And, because of the specific geographical conditions of the country, this trading structure was geared to the interests of accumulation outside the country. As a result of various policies established with this framework of interests, local traders were 'located' at certain *strategic "stations"* in the crop-producing regions and were allowed minimal shares in the profit created out of the over-arching system of unequal exchange. The process of commercial capital accumulation which emerged in these "stations" and carried out by local indigenous merchants, was thus *weak and uncertain* and this became a major factor in the dynamics and manner of motion of the forces shaping and structuring the communities which grew up around these "stations".

We have seen how, in the case of Hassaheisa, the weak and dependent process of local commercial capital accumulation virtually influenced the behaviour of the indigenous merchants in various ways. We have also seen how the local commercial pursuits



were, and are, 'underdeveloped' and just how precarious the foundations of accumulation on the local level are. Indeed, the nature of the 'investments' out of commercially accumulated capital indicate the inherent weakness and insecurity of the process, and do not in any way point to the development of new and higher stages of economic activity.

Such local accumulation as there has been could not lead to or effect any profound restructuring of internal social relations in the community. This is partly because commercial accumulation did not need a direct intervention into the social relations of production, and partly because the level of accumulation was too slow to manifest itself in a markedly different pattern of internal social relations. Thus the 'underdeveloped' and 'traditional' internal social relations of the community have simply tended to persist and to recur, and we have seen that their persistence has been encouraged and given impetus by the way in which the small dominant groups in the community resorted to the manipulation of these relations in the 'management' of the community's daily life. Prominent among the 'traditional' 'backward' social relations thus maintained and manipulated are those which identify different peoples with their respective regional and 'tribal' origins. Such identifications provide a basis for interpersonal and inter-group relations within and between various sections of the population.

This set of relations is what I call 'tribalism', and the consciousness which articulated them and gave them meanings is what I call "tribal ideology". This initially developed out of the direct needs of migrants to the town to assist each other (and not necessarily against each other), but over time it has changed very appreciably. It now has no more than a marginal



effect as an instrument of assistance to new comers or to the poor, while its consolidation into a firm 'ideology' has become an instrument through which *antagonisms* within the community are generated, controlled, and managed in the interests of the dominant groups. I have attempted to reveal and analyse the tendency for this 'ideology' to *intensify* with the persistence and increase of the dependent status of commercial accumulation and with the intensification of the process through which the neo-colonial extraction of profits has increasingly drained surpluses out of the country.

I am well aware that the formulations elaborated in this study, especially as they affect the process of urbanization, call for a great deal of further empirical work. Until this has been done, it will be difficult to give many of the above propositions more secure foundations. There is an urgent need for more empirical work on the way in which some sections of the urban community are overcoming the "illusions" of the 'tribal ideology'. I believe that there is some progressive disillusionment in some sections of the community, but that the salient features of daily life, in the case of Hassaheisa at least, clearly reveal the dominance of 'tribalism' and, also, the extensive way in which it is manipulated to obscure and distort the nature of the processes of differentiation in the urban community. The main aim of all sections in manipulating 'tribalism' is to achieve more *secure* positions in a situation which is inherently and manifestly insecure. For various reasons which I have tried to explain, dominant positions in the structure of local *political power* are seen as crucial for the enhancement and defence of security in an essentially insecure setting. This acc-



ounts for the fierce *competition* which exists between various factions of the "accumulating" group (where insecurity is most illustrated) for dominance and ascendancy in the Town Council. In their attempts to secure mass support for themselves, leading members of different factions do not hesitate to use 'tribalism' and, on the whole this is clearly effective despite a growing divergence of interests between the "leaders" and the supporting masses. The continuation of this process depends largely on the fundamental conditions which gave rise to "urban tribalism" in the first place, namely the conditions of insecurity imposed by the operation of the colonial capitalist economy. And, indeed, it seems clear that these insecurities are "necessary" for the operation of the economic system as it stands. In other words, it is necessary to maintain and reproduce the conditions of "underdevelopment" in order to maintain the operation of colonial and neo-colonial accumulation and thus to perpetuate the 'underdevelopment' of urbanization and urban life which is an essential part of the prevailing socio-economic formation of the country.

## APPENDIX (1)

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A SAMPLE OF 220 SUK MERCHANTS, HASSAHEISA

1. Name:2. Sex:

(0) No Answer

(1) Male

(2) Female

3. Age:

(0) No Answer

(1) 0 - 4 Years

(2) 5 - 9 Years

(3) 10 - 14 Years

(4) 15 - 19 Years

(5) 20 - 24 Years

(6) 25 - 29 Years

(7) 30 - 34 Years

(8) 35 - 39 Years

(9) 40 - 49 Years

(10) 50 - 59 Years

(11) 60 - 69 Years

(12) 70 Years &amp; Over

4. Birth Place:

(0) No Answer

(1) Hassaheisa Town

(2) Other Gezira Town

(3) Rural in Hassaheisa

(4) Hallawin Rural

(5) Other Gezira Rural

(6) Town in North

(7) Rural in North

(8) Other Sudan Town

(9) Other Sudan Rural

(10) Other Places

5. Area of Residence

(0) No Answer

(1) Omda

(2) Karima

(3) Mygouma

(4) Shargi

(5) Wassat

(6) Mazad

(7) Imtidad

(8) Jadida

(9) Fur

(10) Kambo

(11) Other in Town

(12) Other Town in Gezira (13) Nearby Village

6. Level of Education:

(0) No Answer

(1) Illiterate

(2) Khalwa

(3) Primary

(4) Intermediate

(5) Secondary

(6) University or College (7) Post-University

7. Type of Firm or Business:

(0) No Answer

(1) Retail Trade

(2) Wholesale Trade

(3) Retail &amp; Wholesale

(4) Workshop

(5) Rakouba or Kushuk

(6) Business Admin. Office



Appendix (1) Cont.8. Main Items of Trade

- |                               |                         |                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| (0) No Answer                 | (1) Meat                | (2) Building Material   |
| (3) Wood-work                 | (4) Contracts           | (5) Pharmacy            |
| (6) Tailoring                 | (7) Electronics         | (8) Books and Press     |
| (9) Refreshments              | (10) Food               | (11) Household Utensils |
| (12) Machine Spare Parts      | (13) Hair Dressing      | (14) Ready-made Clothes |
| (15) Cloths                   | (16) Mech. Rep. Service | (17) Photo              |
| (18) Shoes                    | (19) Fruits & Vegetable | (20) Wine               |
| (21) Miscellaneous or General |                         | (22) Other              |

9. Period Business Established

- |                  |                      |                   |
|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer    | (1) Less Than 1 Year | (2) 1 - 3 Years   |
| (3) 4 - 8 Years  | (4) 9 - 15 Years     | (5) 16 - 22 Years |
| (6) 23- 29 Years | (7) 30 Years & Over  |                   |

10. Type of Previous Occupation

- |                      |                       |               |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| (0) No Answer        | (1) Government Salar. | (2) Worker    |
| (3) Farmer           | (4) Petty Trader      | (5) Craftsman |
| (6) Other Occupation | (7) No Occupation     |               |

11. Type of Secondary Occupation

- |                      |                   |               |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| (0) No Answer        | (1) Govt. Salar.  | (2) Worker    |
| (3) Farmer           | (4) Petty Trader  | (5) Craftsman |
| (6) Other Occupation | (7) No Occupation |               |

12. Source of Initial Business Capital

- |                            |                   |                  |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer              | (1) Own Savings   | (2) Private Loan |
| (3) Public Loan            | (4) Inherited     | (5) Gift         |
| (6) More Than 1 from Above | (7) Other Sources |                  |

13. Size of Present Capital

- |                    |                       |                    |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| (0) No Answer      | (1) Less than £S 1000 | (2) £S 1000-1999   |
| (3) £S 2000- 2999  | (4) £S 3000 -3999     | (5) £S 4000-5999   |
| (6) £S 6000- 9999  | (7) £S 10000-19999    | (8) £S 20000-29999 |
| (9) £s 30000-49999 | (10) £S 50000 & +     |                    |

Appendix (1) Cont.14. Type of Premise Occupancy

- |               |           |            |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Owned | (2) Rented |
| (3) Other     |           |            |

15. The Manager of Business

- |                 |                   |                    |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| (0) No Answer   | (1) Owner Himself | (2) His Son        |
| (3) Sibling     | (4) Parent        | (5) Other Relative |
| (6) No Relation |                   |                    |

16. Number of People Employed in Firm

- |                   |                     |           |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) One Worker Only | (2) Two   |
| (3) Three         | (4) Four            | (5) Five  |
| (6) Six           | (7) Seven           | (8) Eight |
| (9) Nine and Over |                     |           |



## APPENDIX (2)

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE SAMPLE (410)

1. Name:2. Residential Area in Town:

- |                         |             |                |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| (0) No Answer           | (1) Omda    | (2) Karima     |
| (3) Mygouma             | (4) Shargi  | (5) Awssat     |
| (6) Mazad               | (7) Imtidad | (8) Jadida     |
| (9) Fur                 | (10) Kambo  | (11) Wad Kamil |
| (12) Other Area in Town |             |                |

3. Number of Family Members:

- |                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) 1 - 2 members | (2) 3 - 4 members |
| (3) 5 - 6 members | (4) 7 - 8 members | (5) 9 -10 members |
| (6) 11-12 members | (7) 13 + members  |                   |

4. Sex:

- |               |          |            |
|---------------|----------|------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Male | (2) Female |
|---------------|----------|------------|

5. Age:

- |                  |                      |                   |
|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer    | (1) 0 - 4 years      | (2) 5 - 6 years   |
| (3) 7 - 9 years  | (4) 10-14 years      | (5) 15- 19 years  |
| (6) 20-24 years  | (7) 25-29 years      | (8) 30- 34 years  |
| (9) 35-39 years  | (10) 40-44 years     | (11) 45- 49 years |
| (12) 50-54 years | (13) 55-59 years     | (14) 60- 64 years |
| (15) 65-69 years | (16) 70 years & over |                   |

6. Marital Status:

- |               |               |                   |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Below age | (2) Never Married |
| (3) Married   | (4) Divorced  | (5) Widowed       |
| (6) Other     |               |                   |

Appendix (2) cont.7. Tribal Group:

- |                   |                           |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) Ja'aliin              | (2) Shaikia         |
| (3) Shukria       | (4) Hallawin              | (5) Arab(North)     |
| (6) Arab (Centre) | (7) Nubians (North)       | (8) Nuba (West)     |
| (9) Dubasin       | (10) Baggara              | (11) Kordofanians   |
| (12) Darfurians   | (13) Westerners (Foreign) | (14) Other Foreign. |
| (15) Southerners  | (16) Gawama'a & Gimi'     |                     |

8. Present Main Occupation:

- |                           |                           |                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| (0) No Answer             | (1) Senior Adm. & Prof.   | (2) Jun. Adm. & Prof. |
| (3) Big Merchant & Busin. | (4) Small Trader & Seller | (5) Skilled Worker    |
| (6) Unskilled Worker      | (7) Craftsman             | (8) Farmer            |
| (9) Farm Worker           | (10) Unprod. Occupation   | (11) Below Age        |
| (12) Regular Forces       | (13) Fisherman            | (14) Other            |
| (15) Unemployed           |                           |                       |

9. Level of Education:

- |                           |                  |               |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| (0) No Answer             | (1) Unschooled   | (2) Khalwa    |
| (3) Primary               | (4) Intermediate | (5) Secondary |
| (6) University or College | (7) Other        |               |

10. Birth Place:

- |                     |                   |                 |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| (0) No Answer       | (1) Urban Large   | (2) Urban Small |
| (3) Rural Sedentary | (4) Rural Nomadic | (5) Abroad      |
| (6) Hassaheisa Town | (7) Other Place   |                 |

11. Movement to Elsewhere since Arrival in Town

- |               |         |        |
|---------------|---------|--------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Yes | (2) No |
|---------------|---------|--------|



Appendix (2) cont.12. (If Yes), Reason for Movement:

- |               |                  |                     |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Transference | (2) Search for Work |
| (3) Religious | (4) Education    | (5) Familial        |
| (6) Trade     | (7) Personal     | (8) Other           |

13. Destination of Movement:

- |                            |                         |                      |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| (0) No Answer              | (1) Gezira Urban Large  | (2) Gezira U. Small  |
| (3) Gezira Rural Sedentary | (4) Gezira R. Nomadic   | (5) Other U. Large   |
| (6) Other Urban Small      | (7) Other Rural Sedent. | (8) Other R. Nomadic |
| (9) Outside Sudan          |                         |                      |

14. Place of Last Residence before Arrival in Town:

- |               |                      |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Urban Settlement | (2) Rural Settlement |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|

15. Province of Last Residence:

- |                    |                     |                   |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer      | (1) Khartoum        | (2) Blue Nile     |
| (3) White Nile     | (4) Gezira          | (5) El-Neil       |
| (6) Northern       | (7) Kassala         | (8) Red Sea       |
| (9) North Kordofan | (10) South Kordofan | (11) N. Darfur    |
| (12) S. Darfur     | (13) Bahr el-Ghazal | (14) El-Buhayrat  |
| (15) Jonglei       | (16) West Equatoria | (17) E. Equatoria |
| (18) Upper Nile    | (19) Outside Sudan  |                   |

16. Period since Arrival in Town:

- |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) 0 - 5 years     | (2) 6 - 10 years |
| (3) 11 - 15 years | (4) 16 - 20 years   | (5) 21- 25 years |
| (6) 26 - 30 years | (7) 31 years & Over |                  |

17. Reasons for Coming into the Town:

- |               |                  |                     |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Familial     | (2) Economic (Work) |
| (3) Political | (4) Transference | (5) Educational     |
| (6) Other     | (7) Unknown      |                     |

Appendix (2) cont.18. Membership in Voluntary Associations:

- |               |         |        |
|---------------|---------|--------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Yes | (2) No |
|---------------|---------|--------|

19. (If Yes), Nature of Voluntary Association:

- |               |                    |                  |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Political      | (2) Religious    |
| (3) Sport     | (4) Socio-cultural | (5) Occupational |
| (6) Economic  | (7) Other          |                  |

20. Previous Residential Area in the Town:

- |               |             |                |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Omda    | (2) Karima     |
| (3) Mygouma   | (4) Shargi  | (5) Wassat     |
| (6) Mazad     | (7) Imtidad | (8) Jadida     |
| (9) Fur       | (10) Kambo  | (11) Wad Kamil |
| (12) Other    | (13) None   |                |

21. Length of Residence in Present Area:

- |                   |                   |                  |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) 0 - 5 Years   | (2) 6 - 11 years |
| (3) 12 - 19 years | (4) 20 - 24 years | (5) 25 + years   |

22. Reasons for Change of Residential Area:

- |                       |                      |                     |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer         | (1) Family Property  | (2) Personal        |
| (3) Government Policy | (4) Government House | (5) Near Work Place |
| (6) Economic (Rent)   | (7) Near Services    | (8) Other           |

23. Type of House Occupancy:

- |               |                    |                     |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Owned Freehold | (2) Owned Leasehold |
| (3) Rented    | (4) Other          |                     |

24. (If Rented) Amount of Monthly Rent:

- |                |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| (0) No Answer  | (1) £S 1 - 5   | (2) £S 6 - 11  |
| (3) £S 12 - 19 | (4) £S 20 - 24 | (5) £S 25 - 29 |
| (6) £S 30 - 34 | (7) £S 35 +    |                |



Appendix (2) cont.25. Number of Rooms in House:

- |                 |                |                  |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer   | (1) One Room   | (2) Two Rooms    |
| (3) Three Rooms | (4) Four Rooms | (5) Five or More |

26. Availability and Pattern of Water Installation:

- |               |            |             |
|---------------|------------|-------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Inside | (2) Outside |
| (3) Communal  |            |             |

27. Electricity Provision for the House:

- |               |         |        |
|---------------|---------|--------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Yes | (2) No |
|---------------|---------|--------|

28. Type of Bathroom:

- |               |                        |                  |
|---------------|------------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Traditional Shower | (2) Modern Bath. |
| (3) Bowel     |                        |                  |

29. Type of Lavatory:

- |                 |              |            |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| (0) No Answer   | (1) Syphon   | (2) Bucket |
| (3) Pit Latrine | (4) Communal | (5) Other  |

## APPENDIX (3)

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE SAMPLE (2850)

1. Name:2. Residential Area in Town:

- |                         |             |                |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| (0) No Answer           | (1) Omda    | (2) Karima     |
| (3) Mygouma             | (4) Shargi  | (5) Wassat     |
| (6) Mazad               | (7) Imtidad | (8) Jadida     |
| (9) Fur                 | (10) Kambo  | (11) Wad Kamil |
| (12) Other Area in Town |             |                |

3. Sex:

- |               |          |            |
|---------------|----------|------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Male | (2) Female |
|---------------|----------|------------|

4. Relation to Head of Household:

- |                  |                  |                     |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer    | (1) Head Himself | (2) Spouse          |
| (3) Son          | (4) Daughter     | (5) Father          |
| (6) Mother       | (7) Grandfather  | (8) Grandmother     |
| (9) Brother      | (10) Sister      | (11) Other Relative |
| (12) No Relation |                  |                     |

5. Age:

- |                   |                    |                  |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) 0 - 4 years    | (2) 5 - 9 years  |
| (3) 10 - 14 years | (4) 15 - 19 years  | (5) 20-24 years  |
| (6) 25 - 29 years | (7) 30 - 34 years  | (8) 35-39 years  |
| (9) 40 - 44 years | (10) 45 - 49 years | (11) 50-54 years |
| (12) 55- 59 years | (13) 60 - 64 years | (14) 65-69 years |
| (15) 70 + years   |                    |                  |

6. Marital Status:

- |               |               |                   |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Below Age | (2) Never Married |
| (3) Married   | (4) Divorced  | (5) Widowed       |
| (6) Other     |               |                   |



Appendix (3) cont.7. Tribal Group:

- |                   |                       |                        |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| (0) No Answer     | (1) Ja'aliin          | (2) Shaikia            |
| (3) Shukria       | (4) Hallawin          | (5) Arab (North)       |
| (6) Arab (Centre) | (7) Nubians (North)   | (8) Nuba (West)        |
| (9) Dubasin       | (10) Baggara          | (11) Other Kordofanian |
| (12) Darfurian    | (13) Westerner (For.) | (14) Other Foreigners  |
| (15) Southerners  | (16) Gwama'a & Gimi'  | (17) Others            |

8. Religious Affiliation:

- |               |            |               |
|---------------|------------|---------------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Muslim | (2) Christian |
| (3) Pagan     | (4) Other  |               |

9. Birth Place:

- |                     |                   |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| (0) No Answer       | (1) Hassaheisa    | (2) Other Town    |
| (3) Rural Sedentary | (4) Rural Nomadic | (5) Outside Sudan |

10. Province of Birth:

- |                    |                     |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| (0) No Answer      | (1) Khartoum        | (2) Blue Nile       |
| (3) White Nile     | (4) Gezira          | (5) Neil            |
| (6) Northern       | (7) Kassala         | (8) Red Sea         |
| (9) North Kordofan | (10) North Kordofan | (11) S. Kordofan    |
| (12) North Darfur  | (13) South Darfur   | (14) Bahr el Ghazal |
| (15) Jongolei      | (16) West Equatoria | (17) E. Equatoria   |
| (18) Upper Nile    | (19) Outside Sudan  |                     |

11. Level of Education:

- |                  |                        |                          |
|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| (0) No Answer    | (1) Pre-Primary Khalwa | (2) Primary              |
| (3) Intermediate | (4) Secondary          | (5) University & College |
| (6) Other        |                        |                          |

12. Continuous Employment during the Last Twelve Months:

- |               |         |        |
|---------------|---------|--------|
| (0) No Answer | (1) Yes | (2) No |
|---------------|---------|--------|

Appendix (3) cont.13. Are You Currently Employed?

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Yes                      (2) No

14. (If Yes), Employer:

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Public Sector                      (2) Private Sector  
 (3) Self                      (4) Not Applicable                      (5) Other

15. Main Occupation:

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Senior Adm.& Prof. (3) Jun. Adm. & Prof.  
 (3) Big Merchant & Bus.-man (4) Small Trader                      (5) Skilled Worker  
 (6) Unskilled Worker                      (7) Craftsman                      (8) Farmer  
 (9) Farm Worker                      (10) Unprod. Occupation (11) Below Age  
 (12) Regular Forces                      (13) Fisherman                      (14) Other

16. Previous Occupation:

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Sen. Admin.& Prof. (2) Jun. Adm. & Prof.  
 (3) Big Merchant                      (4) Small Trader                      (5) Skilled Worker  
 (6) Unskilled Worker                      (7) Craftsman                      (8) Farmer  
 (9) Farm Worker                      (10) Unprod. Occupation (11) Below Age  
 (12) Regular Forces                      (13) Fisherman                      (14) Other

17. Reasons for Change of Occupation:

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Better Income                      (2) Interest  
 (3) Have Some Knowledge                      (4) Easy Job                      (5) Improve Soc. Status  
 (6) End of Previous Job                      (7) Other                      (8) Not Applicable

18. Do You Have Secondary Occupation?

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Yes                      (2) No

19. Type of Secondary Occupation:

- (0) No Answer                      (1) Sen. Adm. & Prof. (2) Jun. Adm. & Prof.  
 (3) Big Merchant                      (4) Small Trader                      (5) Skilled Worker  
 (6) Unskilled Worker                      (7) Craftsman                      (8) Farmer  
 (9) Farm Worker                      (10) Unprod. Occupation (11) Below Age  
 (12) Regular Forces                      (13) Fisherman                      (14) Other



Appendix (3) cont.20. Total Monthly Income:

- |                  |                     |                  |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| (0) No Answer    | (1) Less than £S 25 | (2) £S 25 - 49   |
| (3) £S 50- 74    | (4) £S 77 - 99      | (5) £S 100 - 149 |
| (6) £S 150 - 199 | (7) £S 200 and More |                  |

## APPENDIX (4)

## LAND CERTIFICATE

Blue Nile Province  
Town Of Hassaheisa  
Section 12 Plot 7  
Title No. 74/1915

This is to certify that in consideration of the proof produced to the satisfaction of the Settlement Officer that El-Dawi Hamid formerly possessed land within the Hassaheisa Town Boundaries the Governor of the Blue Nile Province (hereinafter called "the Governor") on behalf of the Sudan Government hereby grants unto the Said El-Daw Hamid his heirs and assigners the piece of land hereinafter described subject to the conditions hereinafter mentioned which the Said El-Daw Hamid his heirs and assigners (all hereinafter included in the words "the Grantee") hereby covenants to perform.

DESCRIPTION

A piece of land situated within the Town of Hassaheisa known as Plot No. 7 in section No. 12 containing by ad-measurement 428 square metres or thereabouts and more particularly delineated on the map of Hassaheisa Town deposited in the office of the Inspector at Hassaheisa & thereon numbered as aforesaid.

CONDITIONS

1. The Grantee is bound to build on the said piece of land within two years from the First day of October 1915 suitable residential buildings with surrounding wall in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Inspector.

In the even of non compliance with this condition, the Government may re-enter upon the said land without payment of compensation and all buildings then standing thereon shall become the property of the Government.

2. The land is subject to all general rates and taxes, building and sanitary and local regulations which now exist or may hereafter be in force in the Town of Hassaheisa.

In witness whereof the parties hereto have hereunto affixed their signitures or seals this First Day of October 1915

Signed by the Governor \_\_\_\_\_

In the presence of:- \_\_\_\_\_

Sealed (or signed) by the Grantee: El-Daw Hamid

in the presence of: \_\_\_\_\_

This is registered in the Hassaheisa Town Land Register under Deed No 74 /1915 Dated this 15 October 1915.

Inspector, Blue Nile Province

There appeared before me on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_, and being identified by \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledged the above \_\_\_\_\_ to be his and that he freely and volutarily \_\_\_\_\_ this document and understands its contents.



APPENDIX (5) EXTRACTS FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL REPORT ON  
WAD HABOUBA REBELLION, 1908

Blue Nile.— At the end of April telegraphic news was received that Mr. C.C. Scott Moncrieff, Deputy Inspector of the Blue Nile Province, and Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Sherif, the Mamur of the Mesellamia District, had been treacherously murdered at a village called Tugr situated in the strip of land between the Blue and White Niles known as the Gezira, by a certain Abdel Kader Mohammed Wad Habuba of the Halowin tribe and some of his followers, who, after the crime, took up arms against the Government and entrenched themselves near the scene of the outrage.

The antecedents of the rebel leader are interesting as giving an indication of the motives which gave rise to the murder and subsequent rebellion.

Abdel Kader belonged to a well known family associated with the Mahdi Mohammed Ahmed, to whose cause and that of his successor (the Khalifa) he was always a firm adherent. When the general amnesty was proclaimed after the battle of Omdurman he returned to his property in the district of Mesellamia, where certain land transactions to which he was addicted led him into disputes with his relatives whose property he was trying to acquire.

He was known to be on bad terms with his uncle Abdulla Musaid, Omda of Katfia, and his brother Imam Mohammed, both men of influence in the tribe, who had never been supporters of the Mahdist rebellion and had been the first of the inhabitants to come forward and welcome Sir Archibald Hunter when he occupied the Gezira after the overthrow of the Khalifa.

It will be easily understood therefore how this family antagonism tended to keep alive the latent Mahdist predilections of Abdel Kader, and there is little doubt that for years past he had been working upon the fanatical instincts of his co-religionists and secretly sowing the seeds of rebellion in the Gezira Province.

The actual events which led up to the murder were as follows:—

Mr. Scott Moncrieff, having received a report that Abdel Kader had collected some forty followers near Wad Sheneina, two or three miles North East of Tugr, and had refused to come in and explain his conduct to the Mamur, went himself accompanied by the Mamur to enquire into the matter. It is clear that neither he nor Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Sherif had realized the murderous intentions of Abdel Kader, for it seems that on arriving in the Wad Sheneina District some communications passed between them and the latter, who finally sent a message saying that if they would come and interview him unattended and unarmed, he would lay his grievance before them. In this invitation he included his uncle Abdulla Musaid and three of his own brothers, all of whom it is clear he intended to murder as soon as he got them into his hands. The latter, however, declined, and tried unsuccessfully to persuade Mr. Scott Moncrieff and the Mamur to do so also.

On reaching Tugr, it seems, from the evidence given by prisoners that Mr. Scott Moncrieff and Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Sherif, who had left their escort of two policemen over a mile away, dismounted from their camels and entered the enclosure surrounding one of the houses, where they were met by Abdel Kader and some of his followers.

Mr. Moncrieff asked Abdel Kader if he had any grievance against the Government, and if so to state it.



The reply is significant as showing the premeditated intention of the rebel, as also the lack of any just motive for his action: "I have no grievance against the Government" he said "that which I am doing for Allah and I will die for him". Thereupon Abdel Kader struck down of the officials, whilst someone standing by struck down the other. This formed the signal for the crowd to rush in and hack both of them to death.

Prompt measures were now necessary. On the 30th April, an hour after receipt of the news, Major Dickinson, Governor and Commandant of the Blue Nile Province, left Wad Medani with one Company of Sudanese under Captain Logan, a Maxim, and a few camel police, and reached Katfia, a village a few miles from the scene of the murder on the evening of the following day. The force, too small to form a square, bivouacked that night, which was cloudy and pitch dark, 150 yards from the village in the form of a semi-circle with its ends thrown back, intending to attack the rebel position at dawn next morning.

A spy, however, who had been in Katfia when the troops arrived, reported their presence at Tugr, whereupon Abdel Kader made up his mind to deliver a night attack. The rebels, led by the spy, were brought silently close to the bivouac, which they charged without uttering a sound, in three parties, about 2-30 a.m. One party, slightly in advance of others, having rushed through the police lines, pierced the perimeter and made straight for the officers' bivouac, when they could keep silent no longer. The noise thus made gave the Sudanese Troops a momentary warning of what to expect when the other two parties were on them.

The men stood their ground with admirable steadiness, fighting at first in little knots with the bayonet, but gradually their Captain, Yuzbashi Hassan Effendi Taufik, who had succeeded to the Command on Captain Logan falling severely wounded in the first onslaught, managed to form them into a rough oblong round some of the wounded, and in this formation they resisted all further attempts on the part of their assailants, who finally drew off as dawn approached.

The casualties amongst the Government Troops, including camp followers, amounted to two Officers (Saghkolaghassi Abdel Aziz Effendi Magdi and Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Fahmi Yakut) and 15 men and camp followers killed; and four Officers (Captain Logan, Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Hussein Safwat, Major Dickinson and Captain MacEwen) and 35 men and camp followers wounded.

Of the wounded, Captain Logan, Yuzbashi Mohammed Hussein Safwat and one man died subsequently.

The rebels left 35 dead on the field but had managed to get away any wounded they may have had who were unable to walk.

Other precautions had in the meantime been taken on receipt of the news, and were as follows:— Half a Company of Mounted Infantry under Captain Ryan D.S.O., was despatched from Khartoum on the night of the 30th April and reached Katfia, a distance of 90 miles, at 6-0 a.m. on the 2nd May.

Two Companies and two Maxims left Khartoum on the 1st May for Kamlin and additional reinforcements were held in readiness.

A Company of Sudanese Troops was sent to garrison Geteina and Dueim on the White Nile, a half Company at each place, to prevent crossing being effected at those places.



A gunboat patrolled the river North and South of Dueim and Camel Police were kept constantly on the move on both banks.

On the afternoon of the 2nd May, a reconnoitring patrol under Captain Ryan found Tugr deserted and, lying outside the Dervish entrenchments, the bodies of Mr. Scott Moncrief and Yuzbashi Mohammed Effendi Sherif, which they buried.

On the 3rd, Major Dickinson issued a Proclamation declaring Abdel Kader an outlaw for having rebelled against the Government and murdered its Officers, at the same time warning all people to abstain from giving him assistance, with the result that on the 4th Abdel Kader was captured and brought into Katfia by the villagers of Debeiba El Dubassin.

He was tried on the 8th May at Kamlin before a Civil Court in accordance with the Sudan Penal Code and was found guilty of murder and rebellion.

His execution by hanging took place on 17th May at Hillet Mustafa, the chief market place of the Halowin tribe.

With a few exceptions all the other leaders of note implicated in the rebellion have now been captured or handed over by the people. They have been duly tried by Civil Courts and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment.

On his return from the White Nile, shortly after the action at Katfia, the Inspector General, Sir R. von Slatin, proceeded immediately to Kamlin to investigate the causes of the rising. Finding that the trouble was of a local and not of a general nature, he pointed out to the people the evil effects both to the country and themselves of coming into conflict with Government authority and, as a result, a reconciliation was effected between two sections of the Halowin tribe who had been for many years at enmity.

Pardon was then accorded by Government to the tribesmen and it is satisfactory therefore to note that, despite the leniency displayed, the district is fast recovering from the ferment into which it was naturally thrown by this fanatical attempt to upset law and order.

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