Essays in Sudan Ethnography Presented to Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard

Ian Cunnison & Wendy James

1972

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Foreword

In 1926, E. E. Evans-Pritchard arrived for the first time in the Sudan, after studying under Professors Seligman and Malinowski at the London School of Economics. He was to carry on the ethnographic survey work initiated by Charles and Brenda Seligman for the Sudan Government. Between 1909 and 1912, the Seligmans had visited the Nuba mountains, the Kababish Arabs and the Beja, and in 1921–2 they had carried out investigations in the south. But they were unable to complete their fieldwork

because of illness. Their research had already been accepted as valuable, not only in academic terms but also in a practical way to the administrators of the Sudan. The Sudan Government, and in particular Sir Harold MacMichael, Civil Secretary (1926–34), were sympathetic to this type of field enquiry, and therefore gave Evans-Pritchard every support in his work. Although his subsequent research covered at various times parts of Libya, Egypt, Syria, Ethiopia, the Congo and Kenya, the major body of his field work was carried out between 1926 and 1936 in the Sudan. The Sudan material is a rich source of ethnographic information, published in seven books and over 150 articles. These writings, together with the later study of the Bedouin of Cyrenaica, form the basis of Evans-Pritchard's world-wide standing in social anthropology, and have attracted the attention of philosophers, psychologists, historians, political scientists and economists.[1]

To indicate adequately the importance of Professor Evans-Pritchard's work would be impossible here, and we are not attempting to do so. But we feel it might be of interest to give a brief chronological outline of his various Sudan expeditions, based on published material. This fieldwork record is in itself an outstanding achievement.

Evans-Pritchard's first field expedition was to Dar Funj; he started from Khartoum about the end of October 1926, and established himself at Soda, in Ingessana country. The record he has given us of Ingessana society has not since been bettered. On 12 December, he left on a tour of the "Burun" country to the south, and arrived back in the Ingessana Hills on 7 January, 1927. During this period of scarcely a month, he made many detailed and accurate observations on the languages, history and custom of the southern Funj hills, providing a framework for future investigations. After passing south through Sillok and Ulu, he was prevented by illness from travelling more than a few miles beyond Wadega, into the Uduk speaking area; but he completed the circuit *via* Kurmuk and Keili.

Later in 1927, Evans-Pritchard arrived in Zandeland for the first time, and in connection with this trip spent five weeks on investigations among the peoples of Amadi District. On the basis of this first expedition to the Azande, he prepared a doctoral thesis for London University; and by late 1928 was on his way back to the Azande. In March 1929, he spent nine days in Bongo country, in Torn District, on his way home from the Zande trip. In his report on the Bongo *(Sudan Notes & Records,* 1929), he makes an appeal for others to follow up his research: "Owing to the shortness of my visit, my own notes are lamentably incomplete..." This appeal was to be echoed in many of his writings on lesser-known peoples, which, however, remain important and sometimes unique records.

For most of 1930, Evans-Pritchard was engaged on field research. He made his way, at the special request of the Government, to Nuerland, arriving there (unfortunately

[1] An authoritative bibliography of Evans-Pritchard's writings appears in T. O. Beidelman (ed.), *The Translation of Culture,* London, Tavistock, 1971, pp. 419–34. For the account which follows the main sources used were the series of articles he published in *Sudan Notes and Records* from 1927 onwards.

without most of his baggage) early in the year. In spite of misgivings, he spent some time in Leek and then in Lou country. He experienced so many difficulties, however, in particular political suspicion because of recent punitive patrols against the Nuer, that after three-and-a-half months he decided to return to the Azande.

This third and final visit to Zandc country brought the total period he had spent there to about twenty months. On his travels to and from Zandeland he continued to make brief investigations on a variety of non-Zande peoples: for example, he spent four days making enquiries among the Mberidi and

Mbegumba, on the old Yambio-Tonj road, in 1930, in connection with his Zande historical studies. He also prepared some notes on the Moru of Amadi District.

In the dry season of 1931, Evans-Pritchard returned to Nuerland. He went to the eastern Nuer area, spending the first fortnight at Nasser and then moving to the cattle camps on the Nyanding River. Physical conditions were harsh and movement almost impossible, so he went on to the Yakwac cattle camp on the Sobat and stayed there until the early rains. He had intended to go back to Leek country, but had a severe attack of malaria and was obliged to retire to Malakal hospital and England. This trip had lasted for five-and-a-half months; it was his longest in Nuerland. Just before taking up the Chair of Sociology at Cairo University in 1932 he read a paper to the British Association in which he remarked: "I do not regard my work among the Nuer as finished, and I hope to complete it when circumstances are more favourable."

In 1935, after being appointed to a research lectureship in Oxford, he was awarded a Leverhulme Fellowship for two years, to study the Galla of Ethiopia. There was, however, a delay in making arrangements, and so he spent two-and-a-half months on the Sudan-Ethiopian border, making a survey of the Anuak. When at last he entered Ethiopia, the Italian invasion was imminent, and so he had to return to the Sudan, and he then spent seven weeks among the Nuer at Pibor. It was in the rains, and this trip again ended in sickness. But in 1936, after a period of fieldwork among the Nilotic Luo of Kenya, Evans-Pritchard returned for the fourth time to the Nuer, entering Adok in western Nuerland on October 1st. He had to retire once more after seven weeks, because of fever.

The bulk of Evans-Pritchard's Sudan fieldwork was concluded by 1936; but in 1940 "I found myself back in Anuakland... and was able to make some further observations about their political system during a strenuous, if very minor campaign."

The research tradition combining scholarship with an explorer's determination which is peculiarly that of Professor Evans-Pritchard was established in a former era of the Sudan's history. Since then, the country has welcomed many political changes; and it has continued to foster academic studies in social anthropology, in recent years through the University of Khartoum, the Anthropology Board of the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Education.

The essays in the present volume are offered as examples of contemporary work in the ethnography of the Sudan. They are the work of members, past members and informal associates of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology in the University

of Khartoum. In their geographical spread (Nuri village to the Didinga, Darfur to the Ethiopian border), the varied character of the communities in which they are set (nomadic pastoralists, sedentary cultivating villages, Omdur-man and El Obeid) and the range of problems with which they deal (economic development, oral tradition, political and legal organisation, rite and symbol, the logic of kinship and the place of anthropology in the Third World) they indicate an important place for this subject, both in the intellectual life of the Sudan and those connected with it and in the practical social administration of the country.

We dedicate the essays in this collection to Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard, after his retirement from the Chair of Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford, as a token of our debt to his pioneering example, our affection, and our gratitude for the unceasing interest he has shown in the development of social studies in the Sudan. We remember with pleasure his recent visits in the capacity of external examiner to the Department of Anthropology and Sociology in the University of Khartoum.

February 1972
Ian Cunnison
Wendy James

Editors' Notes

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The Editors thank A. J. Arkell and Godfrey Lienhardt for helpful advice and encouragement at the time the book was being planned. The latter also read a draft of the Introduction, and Edwin and Shirley Ardener kindly commented on parts of the manuscript. The Editors also thank Derek Waite, of the drawing service at the Library of Hull University, for preparing most maps and diagrams, and Teresa Weatherston and Eileen Lee, of the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Hull, for secretarial services.

The Contributors

Andreas Kronenberg was from 1957 to 1964 an anthropologist attached to the Ministry of Education, Sudan, and is now on the staff of the Goethe University, Frankfurt-am-Main; he conducted fieldwork together with W. Kronenberg. Ladislav Holy, of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences at the time of his fieldwork, is now Director of the Livingstone Museum in Zambia. The other contributors are, or have been, staff members of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology in the University of Khartoum, at the dates indicated. James C. Faris (1966—9) is now in the Department of Anthropology of the University of Connecticut at Storrs. Wendy James (1964–9) was subsequently Leverhulme Research Fellow at St. Hugh's College, Oxford, and has

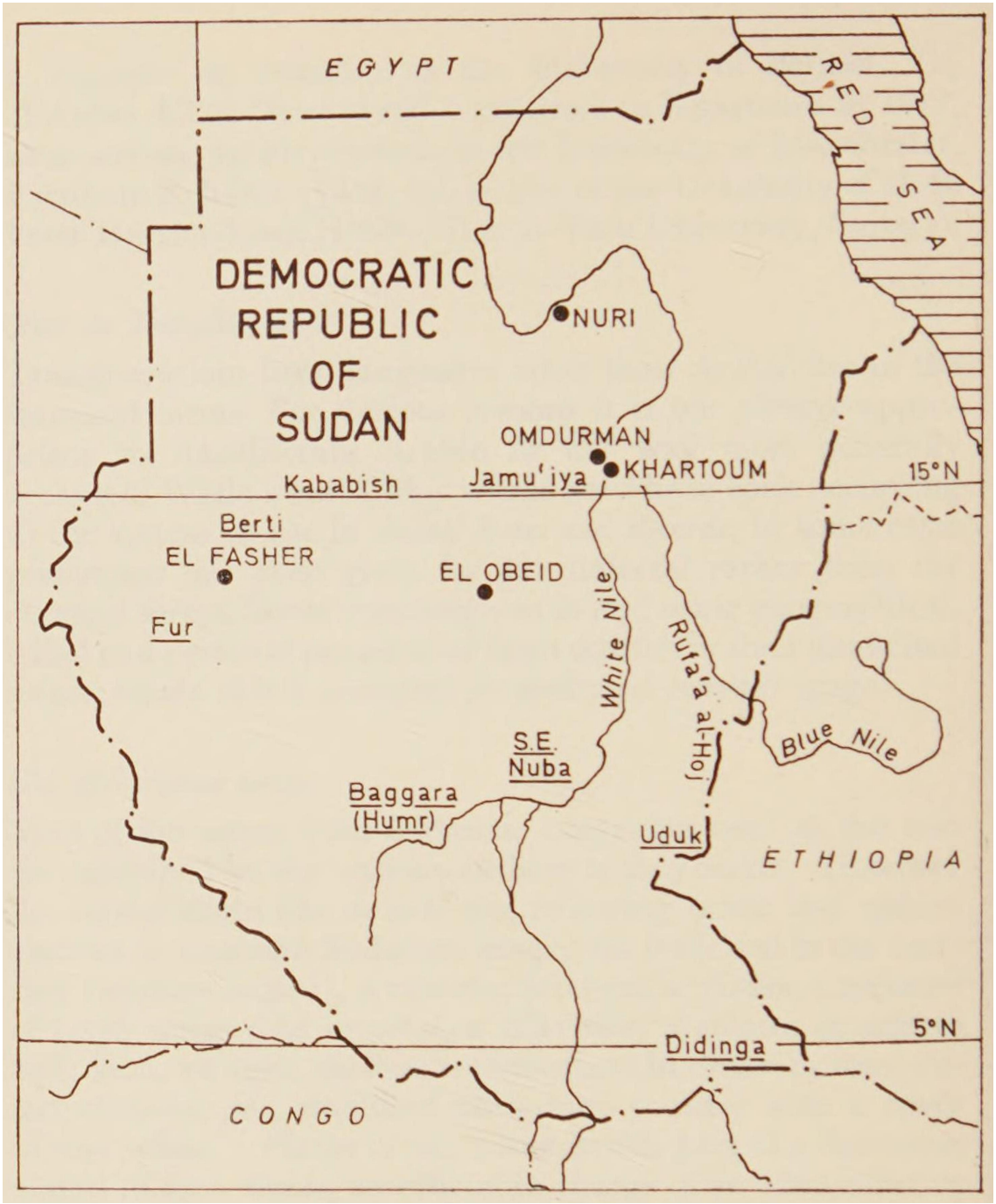
since been teaching at the Universities of Aarhus and Bergen. Ahmed Salman al-Shahi (1965—70) returned to Oxford to write up his research. Ian Gunnison (1959–65) is now at the University of Hull. Talal Asad (1961–6) of Hull University is at present in Egypt on a British Academy travel grant. Gunnar Haaland (1972-) paid two visits to the Sudan from the University of Bergen in connection with the F. A.O. Jebel Marra Project. Abdel Ghaffar Mohammed Ahmed (1970-) is engaged on research at the University of Bergen. Taj al-Anbia Ali al-Dawi (1966-) returned to Khartoum in 1971, after writing up his research at the University of Manchester. Farnham Rehfisch (1958–69) is now at the University of Hull. Peter Harries-Jones (1969–71) is at York University. Ontario.

Note, on Transliteration

Transliterations from languages other than Arabic arc in the standard forms. For various reasons it is not always appropriate to transliterate Arabic in the way most generally accepted. While most Arabic words have been spelt according to the system in use in *Sudan Notes and Records,* in some cases preference has been given to the dialectal rather than the classical forms. Some common words and some geographical, tribal and personal names have been written in their anglicised forms, where this is accepted or preferred current usage.

Use of Sudanese terms

Most of the terms from Sudanese languages used in the text are explained by the various authors as they occur. However the reader might like to note the following terms and abbreviations in common Sudanese usage, not italicised in the text: *dura (sorghum vulgare)*, a common food grain \ *feddan,* a measure of 1.038 acres; *jebel* or *jab al,* a hill; *khor,* a stream or stream bed; *wadi,* an open shallow water-course in desert or semi-desert country; *goz,* stabilised sand-dune country with a cover of vegetation. *Piastre* or *pt.,* a hundredth part of a Sudanese pound *(LS). Omda,* an official in charge of an adminisrative unit, the *omodiya.* In the system of local government prevailing until recently, several Omdas might be grouped under a *Nazir.*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RED SEA
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SUDAN
NURI
OMDURMAN
KHARTOUM
Jamu'iya
Kababish
15°N
Berti
EL FASHER
EL OBEID
Fur
White Nile
Rufa'a al-Hoj
Blue Nile
S.E. Nuba
Baggara (Humr)
Uduk
ETHIOPIA
5°N
Didinga
CONGO

The Sudan

I. Southeastern Nuba Age Organisation

James C. Faris

This paper is a description of the age organisation and its variations amongst the Southeastern Nuba. It will be argued that circumstances involving the history of the wider colonial society are sufficient and necessary to explain the variations documented in the Southeastern Nuba age system.

We are all now aware, I assume, that descriptions are (or in fact imply) theories, and that social anthropology's theory and method are as much a part of its imperialistic heritage as the definition of its subject matter. This may sound pedantic and even rhetorical. But given the contemporary social anthropological proclivity for the speculative interpretation of symbol systems,[1] and the previous poverty of limited functional explanations (particularly of variation and change[2]), it is time to restate the case for historical materialism in explanation. It is perhaps appropriate here to do so as Professor Evans-Pritchard is one of the few British social anthropologists who have attempted to stress diachronic perspectives.

The Southeastern Nuba[3]

The peoples here designated Southeastern Nuba reside in three villages in the southeast corner of Kordofan Province, Democratic Republic of the Sudan. The villages—Kao, Nyaro, and Fungor—have a total population of under 2,500. This small group of sedentary farmers (who keep some animals) live on and around the base of the last small group of low rocky mountains before the country slopes off to the *sudd.*

They are physically and socially rather isolated from other Nuba of central Kordofan, although they share certain cultural features with the Southern Nuba group (Mesakin, Talodi, Werni) and the North Central Nuba group (Heiban, Otoro, Tira)—the latter

[1] Cf. M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966; V. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual,* Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1967.

[2] Cf. S. F. Nadel, "Witchcraft in four African societies", *American Anthropologist,* liv, pp. 18–29, 1952

[3] Field research amongst the Southeastern Nuba was intermittent from December 1966 to April 1969. I should like to acknowledge the support of the University of Khartoum, the Ford Foundation, and of officials of the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Local Government, Democratic Republic of Sudan, without which the research would not have been possible. Abdel Basit Said assisted in a brief

with whom they also share a language family (speaking a mutually unintelligible dialect).[4] Today closest neighbours are Baggara Arabs (Awlad Himeyd) to the north and west, and Shilluk to the south and east.

Their social organisation, characterised by duolineal descent and clanship, is quite likely an amalgam of the matrilineally-organised Southern Nuba and the patrilineally-organised North Central Nuba. This is borne out by traditions of migration, and by the sharing of certain matriclan section names with the Southern Nuba Werni peoples and certain patrician section names with the Tira and Otoro Central Nuba. The local duolineal system is a unique and peculiar adaptation, however, not found elsewhere in the Nuba Mountains.[5]

Oral tradition documents Nuba habitation prior to the movement of Baggara nomads into the area.[6] Surface habitation and stone tool evidence indicate the Southeastern Nuba have been in their present location for at least the past 200 years, and genealogies and linguistic separation from others of the same language family would indicate an even greater time depth. There are also traditions in linkage to the Funj kingdom (Tagali branch)—apparently a rather common claim of non-Arab groups on either side of the White Nile at this latitude.[7]

However reliable these oral data, it is certain the Southeastern Nuba have suffered locally at the hands of a series of raiders and slavers for a long time. Most relevant to this paper are the raids during the Mahdiya period.

While the Mahdi mobilised at Gedir in 1881,[8] he was met by the peace priest and assistants from the Southeastern Nuba. On the presentation of several pots of honey, local tobacco[9] and other gifts, a promise was extracted from the Mahdi not to attack

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portion of the field research, and Abdel Ghaffar Mohammed Ahmed was of great help in Hillat Fungor, Omdurman.

[4] Probably of the Koalib-Moro group of Kordofanian languages—see R. G. Stevenson, "A survey of the phonetics and grammatical structure of the Nuba Mountain languages," *A frika und Vbersee,* xli, pp. 27–35, 1957-

[5] *Contra* S. F. Nadel, *The Nuba,* London, Oxford University Press, 1947; and "Dual descent in the Nuba Hills," in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde (eds.), *A frican Systems of Kinship and Marriage,* London, Oxford University Press, 1950. Gf. J. Faris, "Some aspects of clanship and descent amongst the Nuba of Southeastern Kordofan," *Sudan Notes and Records,* xlix, pp. 45–57, 1968, and "Some cultural considerations of duolineal descent organizations," *Ethnology,* viii, pp. 243–54, 1969.

[6] About 1800, cf. I. Cunnison, *Baggara Arabs,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966, p. 3.

[7] W. R. James, "Social assimilation and changing identity in the Southern Funj," in Y. F. Hasan (ed.), *Sudan in Africa,* Khartoum University Press, 1971, pp. 197–211.

[8] P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan: 1881–1898,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1958, pp. 48, 70.

[9] Smoking and the use of tobacco was considered more repulsive by the Mahdi than alcohol, and he is quoted as saying, "The sin of the smoker of tobacco is heavier than that of the drinker of wine, for the drinker of wine is beaten with 80 lashes and the smoker of tobacco is beaten with a hundred lashes" (quoted in Holt, *The Mahdist State„.,* p. 115). People relate that the Mahdi, while honoured with the gifts, nevertheless ordered several Southeastern Nuba elders in the party to be beaten for their tobacco use. Pleas that they were old and heathen and knew no better were successful, and the order was rescinded. The incident appears to have had no effect on Southeastern Nuba tobacco habits.

the Southeastern Nuba.[10] Tradition holds that this promise was respected during the Mahdi's lifetime, but ignored after his death by his Baggara successor, the Khalifa 'Abdallahi.

It is said that three of the Khalifa's lieutenants, known locally as Rashid, Majbur, and Al-Nur 'Anja, raided[11] the Southeastern Nuba, and at least once were successful in overcoming Fungor, the least defensible and smallest of the three villages of the total society. Although some people escaped, the majority were captured, branded (and the

[10] M. Shibeika, *The Independent Sudan,* New York, Speller, 1959, p. 56.

[11] I have not been able conclusively to identify these men. Research now under way in the Department of History of the University of Khartoum on the army of the Khalifa may shed light on the problem.

Tradition holds that Majbur actually raided Fungor, while Rashid raided Jebel Werni—about 35 miles to the west of the Southeastern Nuba, southwest of Gedir. The peace priest and assistants from Kao and Nyaro met Rashid, and, with gifts, extracted from him a pledge not to raid Kao and Nyaro. A similar peace was established with Al-Nur 'Anja with the presentation of a young woman of Jebel Werni. Al-Nur 'Anja might have been related to Hamdan abu 'Anja, leader of the *jihadiya* troops, or perhaps Al-Nur 'Angara, a Government official of Kordofan who later became an important lieutenant of the Mahdi. Slatin (R. Slatin, *Fire and Sword in the Sudan,* London, Arnold, 1896, p. 110) documents that Al-Nur 'Angara was in the habit of collecting women in his campaigns, and that in 1887 he served Hamdan Abu 'Anja in southern Kordofan (p. 418).

Shibeika *(The Independent Sudan...,* p. 57) describes a Fungor chieftain, Taifarah, who was supposed to have first harboured and then deceived the spies of the Mahdi, revealing them to Yusuf Hasan al-Shallali, the leader of an expeditionary force against the Mahdi at Gedir in 1882. The later raids on Fungor may have been in retaliation for this treachery. It is locally claimed, however, that the peace priest of Kao and Nyaro had effected rituals to bring destruction to Fungor— peace and war being a sphere of ritual activity over which the priest and his clan section assumed control. Tensions arose between Kao/Nyaro and Fungor regarding support for the Mahdists. Kao and Nyaro wished to cooperate, whereas Fungor wavered. Tradition in fact documents that the people of Kao and Nyaro lit fires on the mountain tops to warn the Mahdi at Gedir of the approach of hostile Government forces (a fact corroborated by Shibeika, *The Independent Sudan...,* P-49)'

There is the remote possibility that Rashid here is in fact Rashid Bey Ayman, the Governor of Fashoda. It is documented that Rashid Bey Ayman moved against the Mahdi at Gedir in 1881 (cf. Shibeika, *The Independent Sudan...,* p. 49–50; Holt, *The Mahdist State...,* p. 48), and was defeated and killed. The Southeastern Nuba villages stand directly on the route from Gedir to Fashoda. As Government troops were frequently slaves—acquired by means not unlike slave-raiding (cf. Holt, *The Mahdist State...*, p. 11), it is possible the Southeastern Nuba were raided by the Turko-Egyptian Government forces as well. On the defeat of Rashid Bey Ayman (and later, Yusuf Hasan al-Shallali, see Holt, *The Mahdist State...*, p. 49; and Shibeika, *The Independent Sudan...,* pp. 56ff), many Government irregulars probably became part of the Mahdi's *jihadiya,* or slave soldiers, to be later organised against the British under Hamdan abu 'Anja at Omdurman. In any case, Southeastern Nuba slave soldiers ended up in the same army.

MacMichael (H. A. MacMichael, *The Tribes of Northern and Central Kordofan,* Cambridge University Press, 1912, pp. 49–50) states that the Khalifa himself went to Fungor *via* Gedir in early 1899. Pursued by Wingate, and "...hard pressed all the way by the Nuba who were eager for plunder and had scores to settle for the dealings of Abu 'Anja with them in the past", the Khalifa was killed in November, 1899, at Umm Dibaykerat, approximately 3 days'-march from the Southeast Nuba villages. MacMichael does not indicate the source of this information, and I have been unable to find any other mention of the Khalifa at Fungor, although it is known that Wingate stopped at Fungor in late October, 1899, in pursuit of the Khalifa (cf. W. Churchill, *The River War,* London, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1951, p. 354).

men circumcised), and eventually taken to Omdurman to fight against Kitchener in 1898.[12]

The Southeastern Nuba were of sufficient numbers or renown that today one section of the modern city of Om-durman still bears their name.[13] After the fall of Omdurman in 1898 the remaining Southeastern Nuba returned to Kordofan. The circumstances and period of enslavement, however, resulted in several unique features of the Fungor social organisation and local community—not shared by Kao and Nyaro.[14] The major feature relevant to this paper is the variation manifested in the age organisation.

The formal age-group structure[15]

There is no term which can be translated 'age organisation', nor a term which may be translated 'age grade'. There are three named units (here designated grades), the names of which may be translated, each composed of subdivisions (here designated sets) which are named and for which there is a term. The formal structure is illustrated in Table 1.

The grade names, *Ider, kadundor,* and *kadonga,* may be translated as 'responsible boys', 'males of *kadundor* hair style', and 'elders', respectively. The term for age set,

[12] Brands were on the face, and either cheek—'fk formales, ///for females.

[13] This is Hillat Fungor—just north of Khor Abu 'Anja and west of Shari' al-Arbafin. Heretofore, to my knowledge, the origin of the name of this section of Omdurman has been a puzzle (cf. F. Rehfisch, "An unrecorded population count of Omdurman," *Sudan Notes and Records,* xlvi 1965, pp. 33–39), for no clue is to be found in the present inhabitants, who are today primarily 'Westerners' from southern Darfur. Neither are any credible traditions remembered by older residents of Omdurman about the origin of the name—although several acknowledged that this was the location of one of camps of Hamdan abu 'Anja. Holt *(The Mahdist State...,* p. 119) documents that Abu 'Anja and his *jihadiya* troops were among the first to be stationed in Omdurman after the fall of Khartoum in 1885, and contemporary source material (such as the map by Slatin, *Fire and Sword...,* rear endpaper) indicates this area was occupied by *jihadiya* troops.

[14] More details of these unique features are available in a manuscript submitted to the 1969 conference of the Philosophical Society of the Sudan, "Society and change in the Southeastern Nuba Mountains." The conference was unfortunately never held. To give but one example, consider the circumcision forced upon the Fungor male captives. Upon returning from Omdurman, certain males found themselves the only surviving members of one particular patrician section. Male circumcision is never practised by the Southeastern Nuba, except in the rare case of a Muslim convert, and this mark is regarded as a prime segregating feature of the afterlife—circumcised males (such as Arabs) joining their ancestors, and uncircumcised males their own separate ancestors. The results in the case of the returning circumcised males (who were not converted to Islam), is that all their descendants (males of this patrician section) are now circumcised *immediately after death* (in what may be a unique practice in the world) in order that they may be able to join their circumcised ancestors in the afterlife. The importance of circumcision to the Southeastern Nuba can hardly be overemphasised—one semantic gloss for the term *Itdera,* 'Arab', is, in fact, 'circumcised'—and it is a paramount symbol for placement in the afterlife. Any functional attempt to explain this unique custom without recourse to the historical circumstances is folly.

[15] It should be initially pointed out that the age organisation discussed herein is specific to males. Functions peculiar to the various age groups have only tangential bearing on female age statuses. Female

lame kangeren, may be rendered 'people of the same age', as the term *ngeren* means simply 'age mates'. The translations of the set names are given in Table 1, and will be explained further below.

Grade (no term)	*Set* (lamē kangeren)	*Hair Style*	*Diacritical Marks*		*Approx. Beginning Age*
I *lōer*	1 *chūr* (fallen testicles)	small skull cap + *rūm*	use of red permitted		8—11
	2 *bakabak* (broad shouldered)	larger skull cap + *rūm*			11—14
	3 *patera* (large)	larger skull cap + *rūm*			14—17
II *kadūndōr*	1 *ēya* (new)	*kadūndōr* strips + *rūm*	use of yellow permitted	use of black permitted	17—20
	2 *krō ka tāchō* (children of the fighting stick)	*kadūndōr* strips + *rūm*			20—23
	3 *krō tōrga* (children in-between)	*kadūndōr* strips + *rūm*			23—26
	4 *krō kōren* (old children)	*kadūndōr* strips + *rūm*			26—29
	5 *dāgenya* (fathers)	*kadūndōr* strips + *rūm*			29—31
III *kadōnga*	1 *ketlēng* (little)	*kadūndōr* strips only			31—45
	2 *kōren* (old)	head shaved			45—

Table 1: *Southeastern Nuba Age Structure*

age organisation is a far less complex situation—there is an elaborate set of diacritical marks, chiefly scarring, which accompany a host of minutely discriminated physiological changes. There are no female group activities or recruitment mechanisms based wholly on the age organisation.

Grade (no term)	*Set* (lame kangeren)	*Hair Style*	Diacritical Marks		*Approx. Beginning Age*
I *loer*	1 *chur* (fallen testicles)				
2 *bakabak* (broad shouldered)					
3 *patera* (large)	small skull cap + *rim*				
larger skull cap + *rim*					
larger skull cap + *rim*	use of red permitted		8—11		
11 —14					
14—17					
II *kadunddr*	i *eya* (new) *kadunddr* strips + *rum*				
2 *kro ka tacho* (children of the fighting stick)					
kadunddr strips + *riim*	use of yellow permitted	use of black permitted	17—20		
20—23					
23—26					
26—29					
29—31					
	3 *kro torga* (children in-between)				
4 *kro koren* (old children)					
5 *dagenya* (fathers)	*kadunddr* strips + *rum*				
kadunddr strips + *rum*					
kadunddr strips + *rum*			16		
III *kadonga*	1 *ketldng* (little)<b>2 *koren* (old)	*kadunddr* strips only head shaved			31—45
45—					

The term *kadundor* may crudely denote 'warrior' in some circumstances, but it would be a mistake so to translate it. In its most narrow translation sense it labels the two-shaved strip hair style—a hair style which may be worn by men who have not yet become members of the actual soldier police ('warrior') force, the *talmara,* or by men who have recently retired from it.

The Southeastern Nuba age organisation is linear rather than cyclical. That is, individuals (or sets) do not 'revolve' in the system: the *kadonga koren,* 'old elders', do not become *Ider kachur,* 'responsible boys of fallen testicles'. Neither do initiation sets acquire a name peculiar to them which they maintain for life. All Southeastern Nuba males pass through a fixed linear structure, moving in groups of initiates which form sets, into new set statuses every three years. The age sets are grouped into broad categories (grades) which crudely denote certain functions and divide males into boys, young men, and elders. The *kadundor* grade, which might be glossed 'young men's grade', only approximates the range of age sets which may constitute the soldier/ police force (the *talmara}* and the degree of approximation is much greater in Kao and Nyaro than in Fungor.

Male infants and very young boys are not differentiated into formal age groups, and their hair fashion, later to become the group indicator, varies with the whim of their fathers.[16] At about the age of 8 to 11 years, a boy ceases to wear a random or clan-specific hair style, and begins to wear a tuft of hair on the crown of his head, the *rum,* which will remain until senior elderhood. In addition to this, he begins to have his hair groomed in one of two ways, either two narrow straight stripes originating at the *rum* and spreading forward at an ever-increasing angle to the front of the head *(drothb),* or a small skull-cap type of hair patch, with the *rum* tuft at roughly the centre *(ludu).* The size of this skull cap increases until initiation into the *kadundor* grade, some nine years later.

At the first indications of a boy's approaching maturation, his hair style is changed and he is considered a member of the first set of the first grade. Entry is usually the decision of the village section elders, and involves no ceremony save the new hair style. At this time a boy may begin to decorate his body with red or shell-white base colours, and designs in black.[17] He is also now eligible to compete formally in wrestling tournaments.

The first *Ider* set usually wrestle only within the village section. They wrestle in other sections of the same village only after advancing to the second set of the first grade, *Ider kabaka-bak,* 'broad-shouldered boys'. Boys advancing to the final set of the grade, *Ider patera,* 'big boys', wrestle in other villages— they meet opponents of their

[16] Certain patrician sections of the society give their infant males characteristic haircuts, and all infants and children belonging to the *chimtipn* society have a small tuft of hair at the top of their neck; see J. Faris, "Non-kin social groups of the Southeastern Nuba", *Sudan Society,* v (forthcoming) for a description of this society with ascribed membership.

[17] For complete details of the colour and design rules and restrictions, see J. Faris, *Southeastern Nuba Personal Art,* London, Duckworth, 1972.

age set and others of *loer* grade whom they will be likely to meet in one or another of the sports of the society for the next ten years. The junior sets of *loer* grade may wrestle with foreigners who come into their village sections, but they cannot cross village section boundaries to do so.

In these inter-village wrestling matches (as in the more dangerous sports characteristic of the next grade), boys fight hereditary opponents—those with whom they have no traceable links—and the determination of potential opponents acts to inculcate a large measure of genealogical knowledge and awareness of intricate social networks.

Except for the increase in size of the *ludu* skull cap and the increasing formalisation of the wrestling activities, there are but few overt distinguishing activities of the various sets of the *loer* grade. For one example, only *loer kabakabak* of the village compete in the long distance race at the new year's activities *(alete).*

But even if the distinctions have heretofore not always been clear between the various sets of the *Ider* grade, the *patera* set (final set) is carefully chosen, and all boys who have been age-set mates up to the time for advancement to the *patera* set may not necessarily be advanced to it together. Some boys, of course, mature more quickly than others, and elders of each village section decide which boys are of sufficient maturity to be advanced. This normally includes boys who arc from fourteen to seventeen years old; a physically precocious fourteen year old may be advanced to *loer patera* at the same time as a slower maturing seventcen-year old.

Advancement into the first set of the *kadundor* grade also depends on physical maturation, plus a host of other necessary factors, such as the maturity state of a young man's betrothed and his health at the time. The young men chosen for advancement to *kadundor eya* begin first by adopting the *kadundor* hair style, and next by the use of yellow background in body design. Their formal initiation (which is really initiation into the sport of bracelet and stick fighting) comes two or more years later. After the initiation and the bracelet fighting debut, the *kadundor eya* are entitled to use rich black background in body painting, and are entitled to use a stick in the tribal sports, and become *kro ka tacho,* 'children of the stick' (see Chart 1).

Advancement through the last four sets of the *kadundor* grade involves no shift in diacritical markers—only attendance at a yearly age organisation ritual, *ngorana,* where every third year persons in the grade are advanced one set. It is at this ritual (see below, p. 20) that decisions are publicly announced regarding membership in the village soldier/police force, the *talmara.* Advancement by set each three years through the entire grade is automatic after entry into the *eya* set; no mitigating circumstances delay formal progression. When a man has been in the *kadundor dagenya* set for three years, a stick is broken which symbolises his set's retirement from the sport and entry into the next and last grade, *kadonga.* A man at this time will be approximately thirty-one years old (see Table 1).

The *kadonga* grade is divided into two rough parts—the *kadonga ketleng,* 'little elders', and *kadonga koren,* 'old elders'. No formal ceremony marks the shift from 'little' to 'old', but normally a man ceases to decorate his body and stops wearing

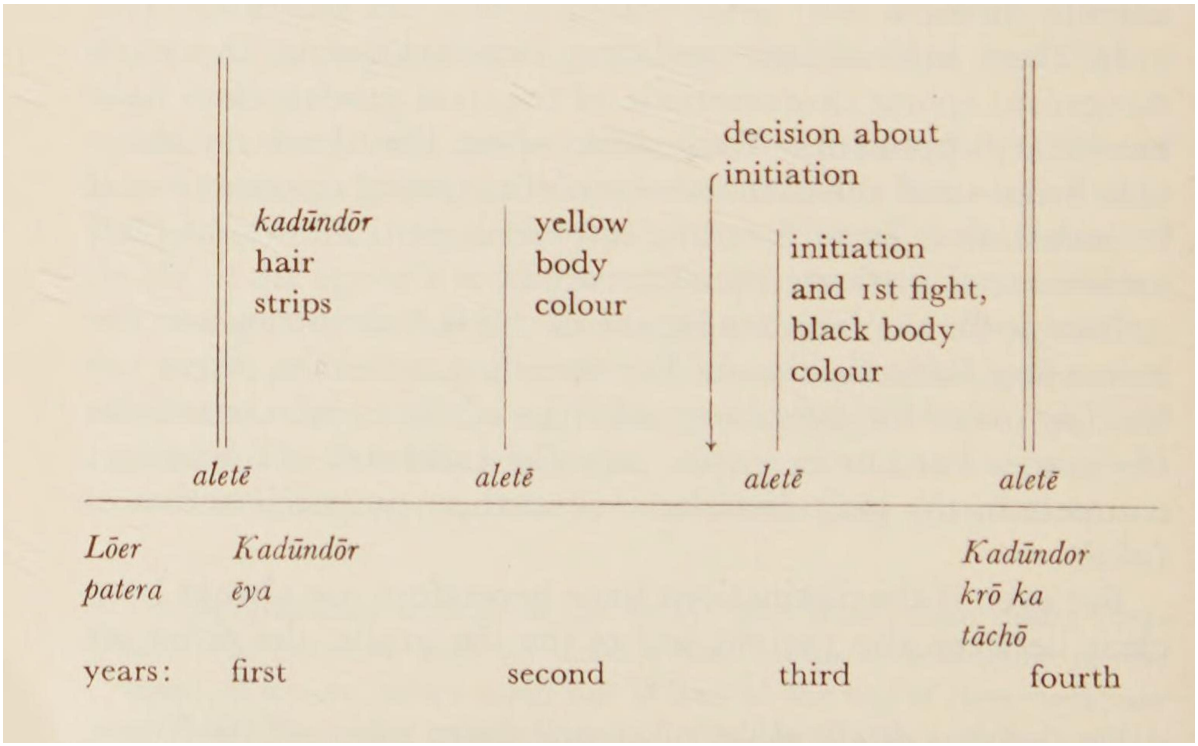

Chart I. Kadundor Eya Age Set Graph

the *rum* tuft of hair and *kadundor* strips, and begins to keep his head entirely shaved. Entry into the *kadonga* grade need not correspond to retirement from the *talmara* (soldier/police). As will be seen below, the age of recruitment to and retirement from the *talmara* varies markedly between the village of Fungoi' and the villages of Kao and Nyaro, and even slightly within Kao and Nyaro over periods of time.

Elders no longer engage in sports, though their own fighting praises may still be sung by the drummers in the praise song cycles, and they may still prance and scream challenges at this time. It must not be assumed that a man's life is labour after retirement from *kadundor* grade, however, for only after becoming *kadbnga* is one eligible for the very many ritual leadership posts.

Age and the organisation of production

The entry into *Ider* grade (marked only by a hair style and potential use of red body decoration) is normally coincident with goat-herding activities. Boys, singly or in small groups, are responsible for goats of the village section for at least the duration of their membership in the *chur* set. By the time boys enter the *bakabak* set they may have begun herding calves— which during the dry season requires that they accompany the older calves for distances up to two to three days from the villages in search of water and grass. If there are few boys in the set, they may have responsibility for the entire herd of a village section. Although it is herded together, each boy is normally responsible for the calves or herd of a father, a father's brother, or a mother's brother. Though every adult man does not have cattle, it is a rare youth who does not find himself caring for a few cattle for some senior patrikinsman—or more commonly, senior matrikinsman.

While a *bakabak,* a boy normally will become betrothed to a girl some six to eight years his junior. During his tenure as *loer patera* he will begin the required bride-service—which continues until the girl becomes pregnant, normally about six to eight years from initial betrothal.

The amount of work involved in bride-service to a girl's father (or appointed surrogate) is substantial. A boy is required to provide yearly contributions of grain (in the amount of about two bushels, threshed); to build at least one normalsized living hut and one large cattle hut; erect fences around the fields adjacent to the village sections to keep cattle and other animals from the crop; and to contribute substantial weeding chores each season—amounting to at least two days' labour by all members of his age set in the village section. Moreover, he is required to provide oil (an amount of approximately eight gallons each year) and coloured ochre for his betrothed (girls cover themselves completely with red or yellow ochre and oil from about five years of age until pregnancy), and various gifts, such as on occasions of scarring—which accompany all physiological changes in females. Demands are also made on a young man by his future mother-in-law for gifts of cloth, oil and money.

Depending on the maturity of a young man's betrothed, he may begin a farm on his own while in the last year of *Ider* grade. If not, he will undoubtedly begin a crop of his own after advancement into the *kadundor* grade. The marriage is finalised normally on pregnancy, or, if this is not forthcoming, at an appropriate time after initial menstruation, usually about two years. Even the very rare girl who is without a betrothed will take on a skirt, cease to wear oil and ochre, and assume the appearance of other young married women

of the community about two to three years after initial menses.

It occasionally happens that a young man's betrothed becomes pregnant while he is still *loer patera.* In this case, he is immediately advanced to *kadundbr* and enters the next bracelet fight—to wait for formal initiation when the next *Ider patera* set is advanced to *kadundbr eya.*

After advancement to *kadundbr,* young men always assume their own fields. On finalisation of the marriage, a young couple normally moves into one of the husband's father's huts or, if none is available, into a vacant hut of another resident senior patrikinsman. Only in rare circumstances will a man and his new wife move into one of his matrikinsmen's huts, and almost never into a hut of the girl's kinsmen. With the common occurrence of cross-cousin marriage, of course a young man and his wife share many kinsmen. The physical consummation of the marriage, part of the pregnancy, and the delivery of the first child (only), takes place, however, in the wife's natal home.

Wives to a new *kadundbr* (the society is characterised by common polygyny) are a vital production asset. Apart from domestic support, wives carry grain from the fields to the threshing arenas, and make the beer necessary for weeding, harvesting, and threshing parties.

With the agricultural techniques available and rigorous environmental conditions, there are limits on the size of fields a man can handle. Weeding, harvesting and threshing are collective activities, but beyond a certain amount it is impossible to capitalise on existing agricultural produce. Grain can seldom be stored more than one year without ruin from vermin and elements, and there are no reasonably accessible markets for surplus grain sale. Occasionally grain is sold to nomadic Arabs or Fellata (Sokoto Fulani) going through the area, but this is not a substantial exchange.

Some young men without wives (usually whose wives have been stolen) have begun to cultivate cotton in the past few years. This is sold to Arab merchants in the nearest market town, but it is important to note that most of their proceeds must go for grain purchase. With a new wife and young children this becomes a dangerous and uneconomic investment. Older men with mature sons of *Iber* grade may attempt both cotton and grain production, but the exigencies of production in current technological and ecological circumstances make this diversification possible only with a more sizeable labour force. A man's productive life after retirement from the *kadundor* grade is precisely related to the labour force in sons and attached kinsmen he may command. The very aged usually attach themselves to a son and contribute what labour they can.

Aged men without offspring are the responsibility of more distant kinsmen, usually matrikinsmen.

Very little of a grown man's time is spent on herding or cattle care activities. But generally elders spend an increasing amount of time in hunting pursuits. Game is still reasonably plentiful, and at least every other hunt yields some meat. Hunts are seldom more than one or two hours from the village, except where a specific group of men (based on friendship and residential networks) go after giraffe or other large species found at greater distances from the villages. Fishing is sometimes pursued in lakes during the spring—a productive activity which is most commonly carried out by young *kadonga* and older *kadundor*. This is never for more than about two weeks in any year, however.

Even though 'elderhood' begins at approximately thirty-one years, it would be wrong to assume tensions and strain from a premature retirement and antagonisms based on early transition to elderhood, as does Nadel.[18] On becoming *kadonga* the demanding and onerous *talmara* duties are nearing an end (particularly in Kao and Nyaro, see below, p. 26), and a rich and full ritual life begins. Moreover, prestige accrues from agricultural and hunting success and the fathering of many children.

The time invested in ritual activities should not be underestimated—and to a large extent this is specific to elder males. On the assumption of adult personality (after the bracelet fight initiation), young men participate in the affairs of the ritual societies to which they may belong by ascription; the kin-group rituals (patrigroup and matrigroup); kin groups linked to one's own (sec below, page 21, note 24, for reciprocal clan relations), and matrikin groups of one's father. Investment at this point is limited to group participation, but on reaching elderhood, a man assumes various leadership posidons in the ritual activities, which involve considerably more time.

For four or five sets of *kadunddr f kaddnga* (six sets in Fungor) men, the *talmara* soldier/police force requires time, in weeding assignments for important priests as well as other society functions (see below, p. 21). In former times the *talmara* constituted the raiding organisation and first defence force. The time and work is so demanding that men always press for early retirement and release from *talmara* activities.

Age-group recruitment and group function

The formal recruitment mechanisms for age-group structure have been outlined above. For the tribal sport of bracelet and stick fighting *(timbraf* and for the village-specific *talmara* force, the age-organisation recruitment mechanisms are specifically mechanisms for personnel selection to the activity. In other age-based activities, age-group memberships are prerequisites or correlates of activities, but the recruitment mechanisms themselves are not necessary to these functions and activities.

[18] S. F. Nadel, "Witchcraft in four African societies".

(1) The *timbra*

By far the most important sporting activity of the Southeastern Nuba is the bracelet and stick fighting which generally characterises the *kadunddr* age grade. Boys train for this activity during their wrestling years and the results of the sport form the basis for dance praise (or ridicule) songs composed by the drummers' society—a vitally important public acknowledgement of one's performance. These praises are remembered, recounted many times publicly, and transmitted through members of the drummers' society *(chabajaf)*[19] to be sung on occasion during a man's waning years and finally to form the central dance praise song at his funeral. The importance of this sporting activity and its consequences for adult males can hardly be overemphasised.

(a) Initiation

Decisions about changes in status of young men in the age system are made at the *ngbrana* ceremonies in October or November (see below, p. 20), and become effective or are implemented at the following New Year's rituals *(alete)* normally held in January. In the case of *kadundor eya,* a decision is reached about their initiation at the fall *ngorana,* and is normally effected at the following *alete* (see Chart 1).

The 'initiation' or period of isolation prior to the first fight is normally from ten days to two weeks. Young men are initiated in village-section groups[20] and spend most of the period of seclusion in caves on the mountainside immediately adjacent to their village sections—only coming down in the evening to sleep in a special cattle hut prepared for the occasion. They are covered each day with sacred mud *(ku)* and ash, both to give them strength for the coming initial fight, and to protect them from the potentially dangerous stares of others. This is washed off each night when the young men descend from the mountain to sleep, and is the same mud that will be smeared on them prior to all other *timbra.* fights in which they will participate for the next ten years. On coming down each evening, the initiates also put on sandals as protection from dangerous substances or signs on tlie ground which might have been set by witches or enemies. For the same reasons— fear of pollution and loss of strength—the initiates do not cross village-section boundaries during the isolation period.

The isolated fighters are served by a chosen *Ider patera* boy who will belong to the next set to be initiated. He keeps their sleeping hut clean, brings them water and food, and keeps the initiates company—particularly important if only a few arc involved. Food is particularly rich and heavy, involving much oil and honey. Milk and meat are made available in large quantities, and the normal grain-porridge staple is mixed with water and strained, and the liquor drunk. Food is provided for each initiate by female matrikin and wives of patrikinsmen. In real ways, the isolation is a fattening period.

[19] J. Faris, "Non-kin social groups..."

[20] Village sections each have a men's hut *[tawd)* in which dances are held and in which men of the village section gather to gossip. Residential affiliation to these huts 'defines' the geographical limits to membership in the age set for purposes of initiation and affinal work parties. It may be that any particular village section has but a single young man so eligible, or as many as six to eight in each age set.

The isolated initiates are visited by village-section elders who advise them of appropriate behaviour during the initial fight and when later visiting other villages. Much of this is, of course, common knowledge. The elders also offer considerable moral instruction, and constant admonition to fight well, to not dissipate strength on lovers, and to be as brave as the elders were in their day. The end of the isolation is marked by an extended and elaborated version of the common prefight ritual used by all combatants of the *kadundor* grade.

Each village section has a special priest for rituals involving the *timbrd* fight. This post is hereditary in specific resident patrician sections, and the incumbents are responsible for all pre-fight ritual of new initiates as well as older fighters. This specialist mixes the village section's *ku* mud and prepares the herbal mixtures applied to the bracelets prior to fights. He arranges the invocations preceding each contest, supervises the tying-on of the bracelets (which are kept in a special storage place near his compound). He also makes decisions about allowing a young man who may be weak or ritually polluted, such as from the death of a close kinsman or from recent sexual intercourse, to prepare ritually, put on a bracelet, and attend the contest. These initiates approach their fight much less conspicuously than older fighters, for they do not yet wear rich shiny black which protects against the stares of others, and which can be worn only after the first daytime performance of their first fight's praise song and dance (usually taking place within the month following the initial fight). The initial fight is a combat with the heavy brass bracelets only, the stick fight portion of the contest not coming until entry into the second set of the *kadundor* grade, *krb ka tacho* ('children of the stick'). All the village section rejoices if a youth does well in his initial fight, and then begins to collect the necessary material and money required by the drummers' society to pay for the composition of the praisesong cycle of his initial fight. This is extremely expensive (amounting to LS 7) but critical, for without it, the prancing and shouting which take place at the dance are impossible, and the payment is further supported as the drummers' society will not perform at a man's funeral until this initial payment is completed.[21]

After this praise song is composed and performed the first time, the young fighters may weai' the rich black background colour in body designing, and may shortly begin the stickfighting portion of the *timbrd* combat. The initiatory aspects of the *kadundor* grade are then finished. At this point a young man is considered to have a wholly adult personality.

The entire initiation is one of classic form: ritual removal; a period outside society characterised by extraordinary behaviour and diet; a ritual re-introduction with new knowledge and superior strength; and a changed status realised by entry to the tribal bracelet fight and the diacritical shifts after the first fight's praise songs.

(b) Combatants

[21] J. Faris, "Non-kin social groups..."

Opponents in the *timbrd* fight are determined by an examination of the kinship and affinal bonds between potential combatants, or between an elder spectator and two potential combatants. Should any male older than the fighters object, and should such objection be supported genealogically, the fight cannot take place. Combat is between those with no traceable links to one another or to a third party objector. The degree to which kin and affinal relationships are considered is sometimes striking. Fights between matrikinsmen and between patrikinsmen are prohibited—sanctioned respectively by witchcraft fears and the threat of expulsion.[22] Another categorical prohibition includes the same-generation members of the father's matriclan (i.e., classificatory FaSiSo), the same-generation offspring of males of own matriclan (i.e., classificatory MoBrSo), and the same-generation offspring of males of father's matriclan (i.e., same-generation offspring of males of the same matriclan). This category is coded by a term, *da^da^a,* and fighting between *da^da^a* automatically brings about leprosy. But quite apart from these mechanical prohibitions, a not atypical example is illustrated in Figure 1.

A refused to allow B (his wife's brother) to fight C (A's mother's uterine half-brother's daughter's son).

The complicated kinship and affinal networks narrow the range of potential opponents. This has become so serious in the society that most combatants are now from different villages—the intra-village possibilities now being negligible. In some cases a fighter may have only one or two potential combatants for the entire range of his fighting years. Others, however, especially of small matriclans and small patricians, may have many possibilities and frequent opportunities for , combat.

Should there be no traceable (or objectionable) kinship or affinal links between the potential combatants or between them and an objecting third party, the fight may take place. Referees watch carefully to attempt to ensure that no undue advantage accrues to either of the fighters, as, for example, in the case that one stumbles, breaks his fighting stick, or loosens the bindings holding his brass fighting bracelet.

But age, relative size, and skills learned from several years in the grade are normally irrelevant to determining combatants, and a small, young and inexperienced fighter in his last *eya* set year may find himself matched against a large, experienced fighter in his last *dagenya* set year. The only consolation to the young fighter in such a case, as the outcome of the individual fight is obvious, is that he must only meet this opponent for one year, since the older fighter is soon to retire from the grade.

If two young combatants enter the fight at the same time, they may be expected to fight each other up to three or four times a year for a period of nine to twelve years. Given the kinship basis of defining opponents, a fighter may find many of his opponents are siblings to each other.

An important point with regard to the age organisation is the fact that its recruitment mechanisms initially dictate the participants for the fight, and although any given fighter is active in the *timbrd* for only about ten years, his opponents' ages will vary

[22] J. Faris, "Some cultural considerations of duolineal descent...", p. 248.

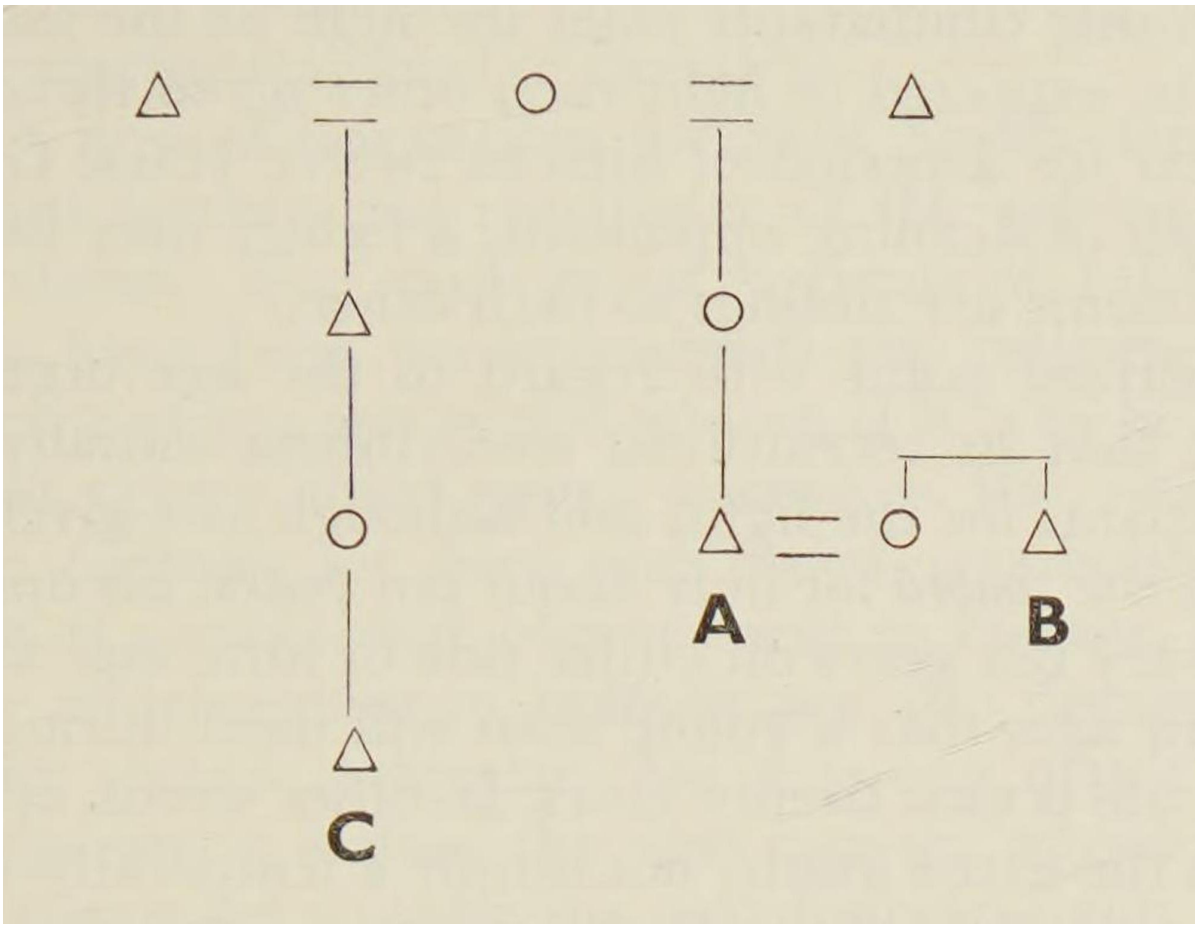

Fig. I

ten years on either side of him, and the range of opponent ages that a young man will meet during his ten years in grade is thus twenty years. In other words, opponents come from the entire grade, not simply a temporally-identical set, and he may fight old *kadunddr* when he is young and young *kadunddr* when he is old.

(ii) *Ngdrana* ceremony

After the ripening of the first grain (about October), the *ngdrana*[23] ritual is held. Most males of *kadunddr* and *kaddnga* grade attend, the specific date being set by the hereditary priest-in-charge. This leader is the rain priest (or a surrogate from the rain priest's clan section) in each village. The relationship between rain and the age organisation is manifest only in the *talmara* (soldicr/police force) relationship to the rain priest. They weed his fields, may build his huts, and should his ritual control bring insufficient or too much rain, the *talmara* arc responsible to the entire society for forcing a correction. The annual 'tax' due the rain priest (paid in grain contributions) may be collected by the *talmara* should it not be forthcoming voluntarily, and should action be necessary because of inadequate rain control, the *talmara* beat him or tie him to an ant-hill (or both), which may result in death. This 'punishment' is regarded as putting into motion a purely mechanical kind of causality.

After a host of invocations for good health, long life and production success, the remainder of the *ngorana* ceremony is age-related. The rain priest announces (although the decisions have been predetermined) the retirement and/or recruitment of age sets to the *talmara,* if it is to be done, and may also (every third year) announce the retirement of a senior *kadundor* set from the *timbra* (symbolised by the breaking of a stick) and advancement to *kadonga.* Individual cases for advancement to *kadundor* are also discussed at this time, and should it appear that a young man's wife may become pregnant before the next age-set advancement, he may be instructed to enter the next bracelet fight.

Should any change in *talmara* leadership be necessary (for reasons of retirement, incapacity or incompetence), it takes place at the *ngorana,* the rain priest announcing the new incumbent after consultation with elders. And *talmara* strength and performance (see below, p. 23) is discussed, including such issues as undue harassment of a priest or ritual specialist; or conversely, insufficient warning or punishment of recalcitrant specialists. The rain priest may bring complaints against the *talmara* for insufficient aid in weeding, house building, collection of grain due, or non-cooperation in general. *Talmara* members younger than the elders bringing the complaints must not dispute the charges (see below, p. 28 for relative age behaviour).

[23] *Ngorana* is the name of a place near the village of Kao where the annual age organisation ceremony is held for Kao *only.* In Nyaro and in Fungor the same ceremony is known by different terms (in these latter two cases, also the names of places where the ritual takes place). As in most other cases, ritual and ceremony amongst the Southeastern Nuba is village based. Various society-wide rituals may be held at each village at slightly different times, thus enabling people from each village to participate in rituals of villages other than their own.

The *talmara* then leave the *ngorana* site, go to the village near farms, and each take four heads[24] of ripe unharvested grain. They are accompanied by the rain priest's assistants who collect grain as 'tax' for rain services rendered. Some of the *talmara* grain is boiled, roasted and eaten, and the remainder is made into beer by the wives of *talmara* leaders to be consumed by the *talmara* later. After feasting on the boiled and roasted grain, the *talmara* return to the Helds near the village sections to confiscate loose animals (pigs, goats or cattle) which might get into fields to eat the newly-ripened grain.

Should loose animals be confiscated, those responsible for keeping the animals penned may be beaten (i.e., younger *Ider* boys and young girls). The animals are divided equally between all *talmara* members, except that the head, spleen, liver, chest and kidneys go to the peace priest, who may also command a fine from the animal's owner for having let it become loose.

No one attempts to block *talmara* action during these activities, for fear of being beaten or tied to an ant-hill. At no other time of year, however, do *talmara* have authority to confiscate animals, unless so ordered by the peace priest for payment of fines, or for provision for special external guests (such as the rare occasion when a district Local Government Inspector visits the community).

(iii) The *talmara*

The age organisation also provides the basis for recruitment to the *talmara* (soldier/ police force), but the way in which this is effected is quite different in the village of Fungor from that of Kao and Nyaro. The latter two villages share the same recruitment/ replacement system.

(fl) Kao/Nyaro recruitment

At every third *ngorana* the formal advancement of persons to higher sets takes place. Except for the initial *kadundor* sets and the final *kadundor dagenya* there is no ritual, and advance is without ceremony or diacritical marker. More important,

is food', an unrelated non-reciprocal clan sections are *llga*-—those 'between whom there is fire'. See Faris, "Some aspects of clanship..." for details.

however, is consideration of *talmara* strength, and this may take place at each year's *ngorana.* If the strength of the *talmara* is down from natural causes, or if a potential incoming set is small, decisions will be made to delay retirement of the eldest set of the group, even if this set is retired from *Umbra* combat and the *kadundor* grade. If strength is sufficient, one set may be retired without admission of a new set; if strength

[24] The grain collection, like the punishment of priests mentioned below, is in fact a complicated situation. *Talmara* only take grain from fields of persons whose patrician sections stand in a non-reciprocal and nonbrother relationship to their own. Relationships between patrician sections are of three types: brother clan sections of the same clan; unrelated reciprocal clan sections with whom there are very important ritual bonds (most ritual assistants to one's own priests come from reciprocal clan sections to one's own) and with whom one may share the same residential village-section men's hut, *tawo* \ and others not of these first two categories. Reciprocal clans are *dab a*—those 'between whom there

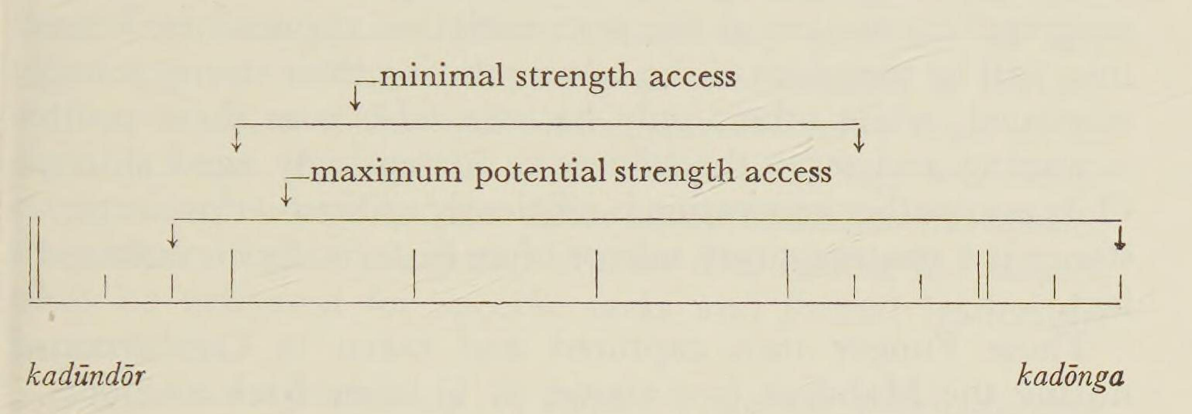

Chart 2 *Talmara* strength (Kao-Nyaro)

is insufficient, a new set may be admitted without retirement of the eldest set. This may be diagrammed, as in Chart 2.

If sets are large, then *talmara* strength is kept up with fewer of them, but if they are small, it may be that four or more sets are required. This variability is clear evidence that the *kadundor* age grade and the *talmara* soldier force are not exactly the same and should not be confused. Indeed, a concrete example of the necessity of this flexibility in *talmara* recruitment may be seen in the case of Fungor.

(b) Fungor recruitment

The age-grade and age-set system of Fungor is identical to that of Kao and Nyaro. But the use of the set system for recruitment to *talmara* is strikingly different. The Fungor *talmara* may at one time be roughly the *kadunddr* age grade, such as it is in Kao and in Nyaro. But at another time it will contain only members of the oldest set of *kadundor,* while the great majority of members will be *kadonga.* Recruitment in Fungor, instead of every third year, is but *once every eighteen years.*

The Fungor *talmara* is normally composed of up to six sets, in contrast to the four-plus sets of Kao and Nyaro. At the time of recruitment, the youngest members will be *kadundor eya,* and the oldest members the youngest *kadonga* set—a range from about eighteen to thirty-six years of age. Just before the time of the next recruitment to the *talmara,* eighteen years later, the youngest member will be a young *kadonga ketleng',* the oldest members will be *kadonga koren,* about fifty-two to fifty-five years old. In terms of able bodies, then, the Fungor *talmara* are strongest just after an initiation, and become progressively weaker as the next initiation approaches. Some men will be members of the *talmara* during their strong young manhood, while others only become *talmara* as their youth is waning and serve the *talmara* as increasingly aged ciders. Only every other generation is efficiently utilised—this circumstance is a contemporary mirror of an historically necessitated fact.

Those Fungor men captured and taken to Omdurman during the Mahdiya (see above, p. 4) came back as elders. In reconstituting a *talmara* force they had only themselves and the offspring they might create in future. Thus they continued to serve as the Fungor *talmara* until the new offspring matured to *kadundor* and were initiated.

A 'generation' of potential *talmara* was wiped out in the raids on Fungor, and the recruitment system today maintains this generation gap. Rather than the slow trickle in and out of the *talmara* every third year which characterises the Kao and the Nyaro *talmara,* the Fungor *talmara* jumps with a complete change of personnel every eighteen years each incumbent then serving the entire eighteen years of the duration between initiations. Without a change in recruitment, there is no way of adding to the numerical strength of the force, whereas in Kao and Nyaro, sets may be added or dropped as size and strength demand.

A proto-Fungor *talmara* may have looked like that found in Kao and Nyaro today. Certainly the flexibility of the Kao and Nyaro system is suggestive—for should strength be low, retirement may be delayed. This is exactly what happened in Fungor, but the delay had to be until an entirely new generation of males could be bred and matured to *kadundor*—an 18-year delay. This delayed retirement then became an instituted feature of the Fungor *talmara* selection, and the Fungor *talmara* today contains the requisite six sets (eighteen years), the time necessary for maturity to *kadundor* of a newborn. The flexibility provision characterising the entire Southeastern Nuba *talmara* selection, was then evoked in the extreme to permit reconstruction of the Fungor *talmara.*

(c) *Talmara* leadership

The elder leadership positions for the *ngorana* age ritual have been described above. Formal leadership positions in any given age set are not necessary, as mobilisation is villagesection based, and this will seldom involve more than six to eight persons. Age grades and village-wide age sets never emerge as corporate groups. After acceptance into the *talmara* the entire village-wide group of men constituting the *talmara* must be activated for specific tasks and formal leadership is necessary.

The *talmara* leadership is fixed in specific patrician sections—that is, the post is hereditary in the clan section, the specific incumbent being chosen by the *ngorana* leaders. But this is slightly different for each village of the society. In the village of Kao there is one leader with two assistants, both of whom come from patrician sections of a different village section than the leader. These men are hereditary assistants and never leaders. This means, in Kao, with three village sections, one village section provides neither leader nor assistants. During the tenure of my research this was a sore point, and there was discussion by the "disadvantaged" village section *talmara* of forming a separate *talmara* society.

In the village of Nyaro, the same imbalance is not found, as there are two *talmara* co-leaders, each post hereditary in patrician sections of each of the two village sections of the village.

In Fungor, the number of *talmara* leaders exceeds the number of village sections, and each section is represented by at least one leader (succession again in the patriline).

There are six co-leaders in total. In Fungor, however, one 'leader' (of appropriate patrician section) *must be an infant.* This baby attends all *talmara* functions—being carried or placed on a donkey until old enough to walk. This youth serves as a marker, whose maturity and advance to *kadundor* is an indicator of the appropriate time for another *talmara* force to succeed. Shortly after this youth is initiated to the *timbra,* the existing *talmara* force is retired and another *talmara* comes into being, with this young man as one of its adult leaders. Another infant male of his patrician section also becomes a leader at this time, and the eighteen-year *talmara* tenure period begins.

In all villages, the *talmara* leader (s) and assistants make decisions about *talmara* actions, mobilise the membership for these actions and direct sanctions against members who have not participated in the *talmara* chores. This is not an easy or popular task. No glory or praise songs accrue to *talmara* activities, and they are generally regarded as onerous. The *talmara* must weed the fields of the rain priests and the peace priest, and must frequently run errands for the latter. Today this involves various courier assignments, including messages to the nearest police post, about forty miles away, the summoning of persons to the public moot of the peace priest, and the enforcement of decisions of the moot. Thev must also meet nomadic Arabs to turn them and their herds away from Nuba water sources in very dry years—not a popular assignment and a constant source of friction between the sedentary Southeastern Nuba and the nomadic Baggara Arabs. And they must decide upon and execute various punishments to recalcitrant priests and ritual specialists should failure occur in the sphere of activity over which these specialists and priests bear responsibility.

None of this activity is rewarded, and it takes determined and strong leaders to decide upon action and mobilise the force for these assignments. *Talmara* who do not participate may have their granaries invaded by the membership, the grain so acquired being distributed to members after it has been made into beer by the wives of the *talmara* leaders. This 'fine' levied on recalcitrant members who do not have acceptable excuses for their lack of participation is heavy, being many times the worth of the labour required in the *talmara* activities.

The *talmara* must never take prepared food, however, in any of their requisitioning actions, and there are important sanctions (accompanied by a series of symbolic equations) which specify persons who may command cooked or prepared food.[25]

Relations between sets, internal set solidarity, relative age behaviour

Specific relationships exist between adjacent and alternate sets. It has been pointed out above that those running errands and keeping the isolated *timbrd* initiates company are members of the adjacent younger set, i.e., *Ider patera.* This aid is symbolic of

[25] J. Faris, "Non-kin social groups..."

the close relationships which exist between adjacent sets who will remain sources of support to each other throughout life. To a lesser extent, close relationships exist between alternate sets—a member of an older alternate set is, for example, considered best to help bind on one's *timbrd* bracelet, for then it is less likely to come loose. And older sets, adjacent and alternate, have authority, can scold, give unwanted advice, and criticise. Younger sets must accept this, however onerous it may become.[26]

Internal set solidarity is based first on the common experience of age, reinforced by many factors. By the time boys are herding cattle, their constant companions will be age-set mates from the same village section. Patrician sections are localised and boys are cautioned not to cross village section boundaries until they are *kadunddr*—save on the sanctioned occasions such as a *bakabak* or *patera* wrestling match. Thus age and sex are visible in most group activity of young people until after their *timbrd* initiation when they begin to participate in matriclan rituals (matriclans are dispersed) and in other non-kin organisations and societies[27] in which both adult men and women are involved.

There is age-set cooperation in herding, as mentioned. But when a young man begins bride-service—which involves considerable work time in weeding and hut building—villagesection age-set help is essential. Cooperative age-set work teams take care of each other's bride-service obligations in turn. A man's reputation *vis-a-vis* his affines rests to a large extent on his abilities to mobilise his village-section age-set mates when required. Indications of unsuccessful bride-service can result in rejection of a young man as a suitable mate. As relative age demands respect, there is little redress a young man has should a future father-in-law reject him.

Age-set solidarity for adults is, of course, basically manifest in the fact that the men of a group are recruited and retired together—they enter and leave the *talmara* together, for example. And finally, on a death, the drummers sing the praise songs of the deceased and his age-set mates, and such age-set mates are obliged to prance, utter challenges, and otherwise express their mourning loudly and publicly.

The very great degree of respect tended elders by younger men can be seen first in the fact that any older person can object to a fight *(timbra}* and the younger combatants must accede to his objection, however poor his reason may appear—i. e., however remote the links may be that he traces between himself and the two combatants or simply those that he perceives between the two fighters.

The respect involved in relative age distinctions can also be seen in any formal interaction setting, such as a ritual or a public moot. Here, any younger speaker should not directly address an elder—he should address indirectly the person the statement is intended for, by making his comments to another attending elder, preferably a kinsman. In fact, this caused me initial grief, as my familiarity with the language did not allow me to see at first that most statements in moots and rituals were actually directed to

[26] This is, of course, concomitant with any relative age behaviour, see below.

[27] J. Faris, "Non-kin social groups..."

persons other than those to whom they were in fact addressed. In all decision-making situations, relative age distinctions always dictate authority where it is not otherwise specified.

Youths must not eat from the same container as their elders (members of other grades), nor sit on the same sleeping racks.[28] In greetings, a younger person always initiates the action and extends his arm so the elder may touch the top of the wrist or the extended hand. Only age mates shake hands, and a younger's hand must be placed beneath an cider's in the hand-touching greeting. This is perhaps one of the most concrete manifestations of the superordinate-subordinate character of relative age behaviour.

Conclusions

The age organisation of the Southeastern Nuba has been described in brief. It differs from the better-documented age organisations of East Africa[29] basically in that Southeastern Nuba personnel move through a fixed linear structure, as opposed to a peer group (set) 'revolving' in a cyclical structure (cf. Karimojong, Jie, Turkana, Kikuyu). Although the Fungor *talmara* structural variation initially looks similar to the 'generation set' described for the Karimojong[30] and others of East Africa, it should be clear the similarity is spurious. Without knowledge of the history of the wider social structure of the Sudan, however, it might seem less so.

Enough detail has been presented to demonstrate that there are insufficient differences between the Kao-Nyaro and Fungor systems to derive a functional explanation of the differences in the *talmara* organisation. The absolute equivalence in formal age organisation and functional equivalence in *talmara* activities demands that explanation for the *talmara* recruitment and retirement differences be sought elsewhere. This illustrates in these circumstances the poverty of explanation of a synchronic comparative approach.

Even in this limited aspect of the age organisation of an isolated tribal society it can be seen that colonial history is a necessary and sufficient factor in explanation. How much more critical should be historical materialism, then, for causal questions in wider African settings. We must, as Thompson says,

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[28] For details and analysis, sec J. Faris, "Sibling terminology and crosssex behavior: data from the Sootheastern Nuba Mountains," *American Anthropologist,* Ixxi, 196g, pp. 482–8.

[29] As for the rest of the Nuba Mountains, age organisations are unreported in the north-central Heiban and Koalib Nuba. Age organisations are found in the north-central Otoro, l ira, and Moro Nuba, and amongst the south-central Korongo and Mesakin Nuba (see S. F. Nadel, *The Nuba,* p. 53; and Nadel, "Witchcraft...", p. 23). These age organisations seem in many ways unrelated to the Southeastern Nuba system, for unlike the other Nuba age organisations, the Southeastern Nuba do not accompany changes in statuses with scarification, circumcision or flagellation.

[30] N. Dyson-Hudson, "The Karimojong age system," *Ethnology,* ii, PP-353–4°i-

... look at history *as* history—men placed in actual contexts which they have not chosen, and confronted by indivertible forces, with an overwhelming immediacy of relations and duties and with only a scanty opportunity for inserting their own agency...[31]

POSTSCRIPT

Since this paper was written I have received information from Prof. P. M. Holt on a recent summary translation of the unpublished *Kitab sa‘ adat al-mustahdi bi sirat al-Imam al-Mahdi* (Isma‘il b. ‘Abd al-Qadir) prepared by Dr. Haim Shaked as a thesis in the University of London, 1969. This hagiographical account contains references to Rashid Ayman's advance on Gedir in 1881:

On reaching Jabal Funqur, Rashid warned the inhabitants not to inform the Mahdi of his march, hoping, thereby, to take the Mahdi by surprise (Shaked, p. 128).

It continues:

When the Mahdi heard that the people of Jabal Funqur, which is two days from Qadir, had aided Rashid with transport animals, provisions, and some fighting men, he set out with all his companions, to raid them. After the Mahdi's arrival at Jabal Funqur, its people wanted to fight him, but God cast fear in their hearts and they requested the Mahdi's *aman,* which he granted them. In accordance with his noble practice he pardoned them and returned without a battle (Shaked, p. 131).

I have noted the oral tradition that the people of Kao and Nyaro did in fact on occasion notify the Mahdi of advancing Government troops with signal fires, and the new information above corroborates the general tradition that Fungor was, for its treachery, on at least two occasions the focus of the wrath of the Mahdi.

[31] E. P. Thompson, quoted by B. Fitch and M. Oppenheimer, in *Ghana: End ofan Illusion,* New York, Monthly Review Press, 1966, p. xi; and B. Magubane, "Pluralism and conflict situations in Africa: a new look," *African Social Research,* vii, 1969, p. 529. The latter two works arc among the few examples of the application of scientific history to explanation in Africa.

II. The Politics of Rain Control Among the Uduk

Wendy James

Professor Evans-Pritchard's earliest fieldwork was in the southern Funj region in 1926–7; and in his reports many questions are raised which have not yet been given the attention they deserve. For example, he records in several parts of the region the importance attached to rounded stones, symbolic objects which have been noted in various parts of the Sudan,[1] especially in connection with rain. Unluckily, Professor Evans-Pritchard became ill and was unable to complete his investigations. However, even after the short time he had available for enquiries among the Uduk, he writes:

My single note on their customs consists of a reference to rain-making. I was told that the rain-maker keeps rainstones in a bag and that when he wants rain he makes a hole in the ground and places the stones in it and pours water over them. The stones are then washed and the blood of a sacrificed ox is added to the water. When rain is no longer desired the stones arc covered over in the hole with earth...[2]

It has been my privilege to carry out fieldwork recently in the southern Funj region, particularly among the Uduk-speaking people,[3] and to take up some of the ethnographic problems first posed by Professor Evans-Pritchard. My debt to him is even greater in that he has been my teacher for many years, and it was partly through him that I was drawn in contact with the peoples of the Sudan, at first through the literature and later personally. This essay will deal with some aspects of the significance of attempts to control the weather in Uduk society, of the sort indicated in the quotation above.

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[1] See, for example, the account of Bari rainstones in the Seligmans' *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* (1932), pp. 280–289, and their article "The Bari", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* Iviii, 1928; and compare M. W. Cavendish, "The custom of placing pebbles on Nubian graves", *Sudan Notes and Records,* xlvii, 1966. Rainstones are reported from various parts of the Nuba Hills; Dr. J. C. Faris tells me they play an important part in the ritual life of Kao-Nyaro. References to rainstones among the Acholi, Lotuko, Madi, and other peoples may be found through the index of the Seligmans' 1932 volume.

[2] "Ethnological observations in Dar Fung", *Sudan .Votes and Records,* xv, 1, 1932, P-32.

[3] My fieldwork, between 1965 and 1969, was generously supported by the University of Khartoum, and a grant from the Ford Foundation funds allocated by the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies. 1'he present paper was written during the tenure of a Leverhulme research fellowship at St. Hugh's College, Oxford. Dr. Godfrey Lienhardt was good enough to read an earlier draft ami make some helpful comments.

In the Kurmuk District live some 10,000 people who speak the Uduk language,[4] mainly in scattered hamlets on the three Khors Ahmar, Tombak and Yabus. They rely largely on the hoe cultivation of dura (sorghum), maize and sesame for subsistence, although some livestock is kept (cattle, goats, chickens and pigs). They conceive of their own social organisation in terms of incorporation by blood into matrilineal clans *(wak"),* but this tic is complemented by important reciprocal obligations between a person and his father, and father's clan. The named matrilineal clans arc widely scattered, but within them are exogamous units (also *teak'* we may call subclans, which usually form the core of local residential groups. The subclan is a joint cultivating, herding and consuming unit, and is jointly responsible for debts incurred by its members. It is in theory the unit for blood-vengeance.

There is no formal political ascendancy of clans in Uduk society; nor are there formalised positions of leadership, apart from the Omda, sheikhs, officials of the Chali Church (started by the Sudan Interior Mission) and local council representatives, whose authority is derived from outside "traditional" Uduk society. The Uduk area, in regional terms, is a political vacuum: in the context of several local religious cults the Uduk are politically tributary to the Jum Jum and Meban, their northern and western neighbours; in relation to wider questions such as administration and national politics, the villagers on the whole accept the leadership of local merchants and the officials mentioned above. Struggles for influence and ascendancy within Uduk village society take place on a small scale, and are rarely of more than local significance.

However, it is within the context of local political struggles that the main significance of rain-control ritual can be seen. Control over the weather, not only to bring rain necessary to produce the crops, but also to use storms and the threat of damage to lives and property as a means of commanding tribute, co-operation, and the payment of bad debts, is a component of most forms of power as conceived in Uduk thought. It would be misleading to take Uduk rain rites and beliefs and analyse them as a formal system, apart from the way they are actually used in the context of social action. To perform a rain ritual is not simply to carry out a naive "symbolic" act which is supposed to have instrumental efficacy; it is to make a calculated move in a very real game of social and political manoeuvre. That moves in the local power game are often of a "symbolic" character should require no special explanation, as symbolic action is bound up with politics everywhere. Politics is played not only with such obvious symbols as flags, banquets and cricket matches, which may be opposed in the mind to the reality that they symbolise; but also with symbols which are themselves a reality, a means of social articulation and political control. Currency is such a symbol, the

[4] The Uduk language is included by Greenberg in the Koman branch ol the Nilo-Saharan family of languages. Other members are Koma, Ganza, Gumuz, Mao and Gule, but Uduk is substantially different from any of these.

The system of orthography followed in this article is that of the S.I.M. Uduk Dictionary, 1956 revision (unpublished). Underlining indicates aspiration; an apostrophe preceding a consonant indicates explosion or implosion; and an oblique stroke indicates a glottal stop.

circulation of money and financial policy being in themselves the stuff of politics. The hard cash in one's pocket is of value, but only in relation to the economic and political creditworthiness of one's country, the nature of which may affect what can be done with one's money. On a larger scale, financial manipulation may build up or destroy political power. Control over the rain is one of the main idioms through which power relations are worked out in Uduk society; and although rainstones, the main medium of such control, may not be compared with currency directly, their manipulation might be seen as analogous to the higher levels of financial politics. This is certainly not a field of "mere" symbolism, but of real political competition and the building up and destruction of credit.

It would be valuable to know why political symbolism draws so heavily on rain control among the Uduk; but I do not have sufficient historical information to answer this question. This essay attempts to explain how the symbolism of weather control is used today in the southern Funj, particularly within Uduk society, and falls into three parts. Firstly, I consider ecological conditions in relation to the Uduk conception of the nature of rainfall; secondly, I show in general terms how the symbolism of rain-control enters into social and political relations; and thirdly, some case-situations are examined.

I

Geographical and climatic conditions in the southern Funj may certainly be described as marginal for peasant cultivators. The Kurmuk District receives, on average, about 1000 mm. rain each year in the south-east, decreasing to about 800 mm. in the north-west.[5] With the decrease goes increasing irregularity of the showers. Most of the rain falls between mid-May and mid-November, and is brought by south-easterly winds, which having deposited most of their rainfall on the Ethiopian Highlands, have little left by the time they reach this "rain shadow" area. In the villages of the western Kurmuk District, one often waits in bright sunshine for the first few showers to cool the scorched earth, while day after day there are dark clouds and heavy precipitation over the hills to the east.

The Uduk annual cycle is of five seasons, based on the pattern of agricultural work related to the three main crops, dura, maize and sesame. Dura and maize are of approximately equal importance as food grains, and each has different essential rain requirements: maize needs regular showers in the early part of the rainy season (May-July); and dura can survive with less regular showers during the middle, and later, rainy season. Although it often happens that one crop or the other does badly, it is only rarely that both fail. Sesame, which is a subsidiary crop, is used for transactions rather than direct consumption and may be used to purchase food grains if necessary.

[5] There is a useful chapter on climate in K. M. Barbour, *The Republic of the Sudan,* University of London Press, 1961. These estimates are taken from the map on page 47.

Although there are various risks to the crops (such as insects, birds, flocks of the nomads who pass through the area, and even village livestock), the shortage or excess of rainfall, its maldistribution, or associated floods are the greatest single worry of the Uduk farmer. Famine conditions are never very far away.

Rain showers are not only irregular in terms of frequency, they are often highly localised and geographically erratic. The region is a fairly uniform plain, drained by wide valleys opening to the west into the White Nile swamps; but there are scattered hills, outliers of the Ethiopian Highlands, rising to five hundred and sometimes a thousand feet above the general level of the plain. This pattern of relief obviously makes for localised showers in the vicinity of the hills. Indeed, the hills are often capped with cloud in the rainy season, and showers seem to spread from them. It is therefore not surprising that rain showers are usually associated with particular hills; and this association becomes significant when it is realised that hamlets, too, are often grouped around hills. One can, under these conditions, sympathise with a farmer whose fields remain dry, in spite of the fact that rain has been visibly falling over several neighbouring hills.

A final characteristic of rain in this region, as indeed in much of the Sudan, is that it very rarely falls in a mild and continuous form. Most of it comes in short, intense downpours, and is often accompanied by wind, thunder and lightning. Such storms are not only dramatic and rather unpleasant; they may cause a good deal of damage. Crops may be battered, trees or huts may be struck by lightning or blown over, and people may be hurt and even killed. Thus, although rain is beneficial and life-giving, it cannot be dissociated from potential danger and destruction. By the very nature of local meteorological conditions, farmers are bound to have a highly ambivalent attitude to the rain.

The Uduk word *asho'k,* which in some contexts appears to be the equivalent of the English word "rain", can be fully appreciated only in relation to the local climatic conditions. It has a broader range of reference than "rain", for which there is no exact translation. Its focus is upon the atmospheric disturbance behind the weather which produces rain, rather than upon the falling water itself. The word can be used equally of heavy clouds, winds, whirlwinds, thunder and lightning, and falling rain. *Asho'k* manifests itself in all these forms, and is therefore perhaps best rendered by an insubstantial word such as "turbulence" or "storminess".[6] The concepts of thundering, rain, and so forth are commonly expressed in the Uduk tongue by using the "abstract" noun *asho'k* with a variety of verbs. Thus, one says *asho'k doro'd* (the "storm" is beating, or thundering), *asho'k mi'da war* (the "storm" is making lightning), *asho'k hethe'd* (the

[6] The essential notion of turbulence was illuminated for me when one day in early May, there was a strong damp southerly wind. One or two people had already commented to me that this meant Meban rain, and that the Meban were killing fish in their pools on the Yabus. 1 asked for further explanation, and an old man said, 'Yes: the wind is coming from the water, from the place where the Meban are killing fish; there are great fish there, writhing about in the water, moving like the rain *(asho'k)':* and he expressed with his hands the seething mass of fish.

"storm" is raining) or *asho'k eke'dayide^* the "storm" is pouring out water; the same verb, *ek,* can be used with noise, to suggest loudness). At the heart of the turbulence named *asho'k,* there is sometimes said to be a ball of fire, an idea which makes sense of the action of lightning, and of the way in which dry winds can apparently set huts on fire. In the dry season, and during occasional dry periods in the rainy season, *asho'k* is said to go into a hole underground. However, it can be active in the drv months, when it causes strong winds and dust devils, o

Iii Uduk thought, disturbed weather is not part of a blind and uncontrollable nature. Turbulence in the atmosphere, so often the home of spiritual powers, is thought to be influenced by the activity of spiritually potent men. I think the Uduk see the interplay of human passions, especially the anger of powerful men, being worked out in the winds and violent clashes of the upper air. This human element in the atmospheric struggle, of which rain is a by-product, is understood in the Uduk word *asho·k.* Whenever a shower or storm is mentioned, it is never inappropriate to ask, "Whose rain? Whose storm?" (oy^o'Z; *maja?)* The answer may be, "I don't know", or "Probably God's rain" *(asho'k ma rum)*; but as often as not an individual, or a group of people, will be named as a possible source. I have seen men furiously shouting directly up at the heavens in a downpour, urging their own rainstones to ward off the danger from those of their adversaries.

II

Control over the weather is one of the commonest forms which power in Uduk society is thought to take. Most influential people, even though they are not primarily responsible for the rain, have nevertheless a certain effect on it, which may be beneficial or harmful. Diviners *fari)* for example, possess small stones which they wash and anoint in various curative rituals, and this incidentally encourages the rain. The anger or ill-will of any ritual specialists can inhibit the rain. The tribute and respect paid to Meban religious leaders is rationalised in terms of the need to please them to avoid the danger of drought. When missionaries began work at Chali, they were suspected of trying to prevent the rain from falling.[7] He who controls the rain, possesses a double-edged power to bless or to curse; and this quality, derived from the nature of rainfall itself, makes it a particularly suitable idiom for the symbolic expression of political power, also ambivalent in character.

Although there are various sources of power over the weather, the commonest is through the possession of rainstones. This means of control is indeed said throughout the region to be typically Uduk; rainstones are one of the few ideas which the Uduk have exported to other peoples, for example, on a small scale to the Meban. The stones are known as *wosha sho'k* (stones of the "storm"), or simply as *asho'k.* The stones are

[7] See M. Forsberg, *Land Beyond the Nile,* New York, Harper, 1958, especially Chapter 20.

kept in collections, which may number anything from two upwards. I have not heard of any stone being kept singly. They must be rounded, river-worn pebbles. Bright colours and translucent clarity are admired, and many of the stones I have seen appear to be quartz. Stones like this do not occur naturally in the Uduk area, but are acquired by various means from people living in the Ethiopian foothills, or near the Blue Nile. Stones do not, of course, "work" automatically as soon as acquired; new stones have to be consecrated by sacrifice before they are thought to have any potency. Ideal stones should be at least an inch and a half long, I would guess; but the bigger the better. They should feel cool to the touch, as "there is water inside". Individual stones are classified according to colour, the commonest being white and red. Black stones may be included in a collection, but may fall into another category, that of the *koykoro]* agricultural ritual, aimed at bird and insect control. Their use in this capacity has the incidental effect of encouraging gentle rain. Otherwise, there does not seem to be a clear division of labour according to the colour of the stones. They are also, however, classified according to sex: the elongated, egg-shaped stones are male, and the spherical ones female (I have even heard of stones described as pregnant, or as little children). The female stones, in particular, are said to bring steady, gentle rain, and the males to cause dangerous storms. Each collection should include both.

Rainstones are effective only in relation to the symbolic treatment they arc given. If a man neglects rainstones he is entrusted with, he may become sick. An important part of the treatment accorded rainstones takes the form of animals contributed for sacrifice, and the wider the area from which the contributions arc made, the more effective the stones arc expected to be. It is said that the stones must be "fed" on the blood of such sacrifices. In the past, according to general opinion, there were only a few sets of stones in the country, and because each set was fed by people bringing animals from miles around, there was plenty of rain. Whereas

today, the former large collections of stones have been broken up through quarrelling and rivalry, and each small group of stones is fed only from a small area, and that is why the rains are so poor these days. Today, certainly, stones are kept in many small hamlets, and few collections are thought to be widely effective.

Rights over rainstones are normally vested within a matrilineal subclan, and one or two people within the subclan are responsible for administering them. The stones may sometimes be referred to by the clan name of their owners. Some collections have a relatively long history, and special names. The ideal rule is for a man to pass on the stones to one of his sister's sons, so that they continue to be administered from within the clan of their owners. Very often, however, a man will pass them on to his own son, which can lead to complex situations. The stones remain the property of their original owners, however, and should eventually be returned to them.

The normal sequence of treatment for the rainstones throughout the year is as follows. At the beginning of the dry season, each collection of stones is "tied" by its owner. This is usually done by burying the stones in a hole with special substances, but sometimes stones are tied by putting one of them in an antelope horn filled with

water, which is stopped up with mud and wood ash. The horn is then kept under the eaves of the hut for the dry season, and the stone stays there in the water. The stones should be quiescent during the dry season.

The first rains that fall after the dry season, before any stones have been brought out, are known as *asho'k arum* (the rain of God). It is only later, when the planting of maize has begun and occasional showers become vital to the growing crop, that the rainstone man will "untie" his stones, usually by digging them up, washing them, perhaps sacrificing a chicken and touching them with its blood, and finally anointing them with a little oil. The stones will then be exposed overnight. Rain will be expected within two or three days. During the rainy season, the stones are normally kept in a shallow hole in the ground, covered with a shard. The minimal treatment, if rain is to be encouraged, is to wash and expose them. The maximum treatment, when rain is desperately needed, is to make beer and sacrifice animals; black animals are required for this purpose.[8] Any special event, such as the moving of the stones from one place to another, may be marked by a special beer party.

As the rainy season progresses, a little of each new crop that ripens is dedicated to the rainstones (for example, maize, beans, squash, sesame). Wild leafy plants used as food (mainly in sauces) are also "fed" to the stones when they first appear in the early rains. This action of dedicating new foods to the stones is thought in itself to encourage rainfall. It is explained in terms of acknowledging the part played by the rain in producing crops which feed people; because the stones bring the rain and the rain brings the crops which we eat, we should therefore give some of the crops back to the stones. At harvest time, beer is sometimes made for the stones, to express the same notion of thanksgiving.

In the heart of the rainy season, when the maize has already ripened and the dura is coming on nicely, and when there is no great anxiety about the rain, the stones do not receive much attention. The rain falls as the rain of people in general, the cumulative effect of everybody's efforts. The early rains, when the crops are sprouting, is the time when the greatest anxiety is shown and the stones receive the most careful attention. At this time of year each darkening cloud on the horizon may be discussed and watched, and the source of each shower may be a subject of speculation.

If the rainy season proceeds smoothly, and everyone is satisfied with the progress of his crops, there is little cause or excuse for social tension. But this rarely happens. Two main problems arise from the weather which may cause great suffering: that of drought, in spite of normal measures taken to ensure rainfall; and that of the damage done by violent storms. In both cases, a full explanation has a social component. Drought is

[8] I have been told that when big sacrifices are held for the rain, there will be a gathering of women with small babies, women whose milk is coming down like the rain (this corresponds to Evans-Pritchard's information, *op. cit.,* p. 32). The women dance and sing with *publish* leaves. I have seen Meban women singing and dancing for rain with these leaves (which I have not identified botanically). The colour black, of course, occurs widely in Africa and elsewhere in connection with rain and fertility.

a major political matter, while storms affect local subclan relations. I will deal with each in turn.

When rain fails to appear, after rites have been carried out in one's own hamlet to release the power of the local stones, the commonest interpretation is that the more powerful stones of a nearby village have not yet been brought out of the ground. As time goes on and there is still no rain, complaints against the owner of these powerful stones will increase; when perhaps he lets it be known that his stones require sacrifices, people will bring animals from neighbouring hamlets. The owner, who may be thought to be angry for some reason, and to need placating, will go on extracting tribute in this way, until rain falls; or until his political credit collapses. At this point, the blame for the drought is likely to be placed farther afield, at the door of some powerful religious leader, and the same pattern will be repeated, whereby he will be placated with tributes until the rain comes, a sign that he is at last satisfied; or until his credit also collapses. The blame may then be transferred right outside Uduk society, perhaps to Meban religious leaders. Such leaders may drop timely hints that they are indeed responsible for the drought, and on the strength of this claim, will extract what material homage they can from as wide an area as possible. For example, 1966 was a rather dry year, and the reason was generally thought to be the anger of the Meban spiritual leaders, over the murder in 1965 of a senior Uduk member of a religious cult controlled by them (people of the spirit of Leina). He had been killed by an Uduk, and on the strength of this situation, special tribute was demanded by the Meban leaders from the whole Uduk area, for the following two years. The leaders of this cult take advantage of whatever opportunity presents itself for extracting material support from the Uduk, and even if the murder had not taken place, some other reason would probably have been found for turning the dry year of 1966 to their political advantage. The failure of the rains, therefore, creates a situation in which the political credit of accepted leaders is put to the test. At the beginning of a drought, the struggle is between local leaders, at hamlet and neighbourhood level; and as the drought continues, the struggle grows in scale and is eventually removed from the hands of local people altogether.

Sometimes, in the course of this process, the political credit of a particular leader collapses so completely that people turn against him. They may blame him personally for causing the drought through his own ill-will; he may be labelled a witch, and killed. This rarely happens because of drought alone, but in conjunction with other accusations of witchcraft, and of causing illness and death. It may however happen primaiily because of drought; I have an example of an Uduk rainstone man being murdered by Meban, in the last generation (at Beni Mayu), for causing drought. This perhaps suggests that at that time the Uduk were more powerful in relation to the Meban than they are today.

William Danga describes the way in which witches *(dhathu* can prevent the rain from falling, in the following passage. It should be remembered that anyone may be described as a witch, if opinion turns against him sufficiently.

Some people can... ride on the rain, to stop the rain from falling. The clouds gather, and the rain is about to fall, and some witches ride inside to divide the clouds and clear the sky. The rain refuses to fall. They can do that. They beat it, to stop it from falling... with a whip, yes, *ciw, ciw, ciw...,* to clear away all the rainclouds.

Witches may also be held responsible for excessive rain when it is not needed, indeed harmful, for example at the time of dura-harvest, when all the rainstones have been "tied" and placed in the ground.

Whereas prolonged drought tends to affect a wide area, and therefore to pose large-scale political problems, damage caused by violent storms tends to be local and specific. This type of misfortune, which usually affects individuals or at the most individual hamlets, is thought to arise from bad relations between subclans. In particular, it is thought that grumbling about an overdue debt will cause the subclan's rainstones to become aggressive and strike the property of the debtor's subclan with storm damage, or perhaps hurt or kill one of its members. There is a double advantage in having rainstones, for if there is a storm overhead, by exposing the male stones you can ward off the potential danger; or your male stones can be aggressive on your behalf against your debtors. The debt then has to be settled. It is in this sphere of the claiming and payment of debts that the subclan emerges clearly as a corporate economic unit; all members may be required equally to contribute towards a debt payment, which becomes the joint property of members of the receiving subclan. Requests for help towards the payment of such a debt may not be made to outsiders (for example, patrilateral kinsmen). The debts in question are usually straightforward ones of wealth or property. The principles involved are clear in the following-brief example. The house of a merchant in Uduk country burnt down for no apparent reason, and he moved to Meban country. His house there also burnt down. People asked him, why don't you go to *nfeki?* An Uduk diviner commented to me, "If he came to us, we would be able to tell him the reason: he has swindled and cheated people for so long that he owes them a lot of money, and now people are angry, and their rainstones have sent the wind to burn his house."

To possess rainstones, then, is an insurance against being cheated, and against bad debts. It means that wealth may be collected in from debtors, if the debts are grumbled about sufficiently to arouse the rainstones to threaten the debtors. They are not thought to be active in this way unless their owners are grumbling. I asked a minor rainstone owner if he had collected in many goats through his stones; and he laughed in reply, saying that he had collected nothing, as he never grumbled about other people. Storm damage is therefore a sign of discontent and hostility.

In practice, the sequence of events is on the following lines. Some damage is caused, and those who suffered it consult a diviner (usually one of the numerous *rjari,* but there are other oracular specialists). After making the necessary oracular enquiries (usually by examining the pattern made in a gourd of water by burning ebony sticks over it: the method is commonly used for diagnosing illness), the diviner suggests or hints at the particular debt which lies behind the damage. His verdict obviously depends partly on

his knowledge of local gossip, and current complaints against the subclan in question. It may not, of course, be a disinterested opinion.

However, his clients are obliged to open negotiations with the creditors who are the supposed source of trouble. Ceremonies are held, at the first hamlet to remove the danger of further damage, and at the creditors' hamlet, when the required wealth is handed over and relations are healed by a sacrifice.

These transactions rarely take place in isolation. They often form only part of a continuing series of similar payments between one subclan and another over a period of years, signifying a continuing relation of tension. There is no permanent domination of some subclans by others in this sphere; the pattern between subclans is one of overlapping dyadic relations, one subclan being a debtor to a second but a creditor to a third. Nevertheless this is a field in which people may, and do, strive to further the interests of their own subclan, and in which particular subclans may achieve temporary political success. Before this can be fully appreciated, I must explain something of the significance of inter-subclan debts.

There are two main ways in which debts can arise. The first is through the loss or death of animals, for which the owner holds someone else responsible. This situation may occur through the common custom of lending goats or cows to be herded together with those of another subclan, in order to re-inforce a relation of friendship and alliance. The second subclan may neglect or lose the animals, or may kill them for private use. Or, a man may become angry at the incursions of his neighbours' animals into his fields, and kill them. There arc numerous incidents of this sort, which may be generously forgotten, or may later be used to press a claim.

The second source of debt claims is the professional activity of diviners and men of God in healing illness. If a patient dies, no fees are payable to the specialist; but if he recovers, a substantial payment is often required, and is usually made at a special beer-party some months later, when the specialist shaves the head of the patient to show that he is free of his obligations. Until the day of that ceremony, which is itself known as the beer of shaving the head *(asum 'thi 'kufA,* the patient should leave his hair to grow. The long hair is a sign of the unpaid debt. The Uduk word for debt, *amure,* is closely linked with this concept of hair *(amur}*; and both grow with time. Sometimes these debts are not paid for years, for it may be necessary to plant extra crops in order to be able to afford

to pay up; and if there is a series of poor years, very few debts will be paid immediately. In a small hamlet at any given time, there are likely to be several unpaid debts of this kind, usually arising from the treatment of children's illnesses, and thought to lie upon the mother and children equally. If the situation drags on for years, the specialist may die; or the patients may move out of the area. But the debts are unlikely to be forgotten by the relatives of the specialist; and eventually storm damage may be attributed to their dissatisfaction. Even if fees are handed over after recovery from an illness, storm damage may later suggest that the specialist did not feel he had received adequate payment.

Thus, there is a complex network of debt relationships between subclans, some of which may fade away with time, especially if they are between people who are friendly; but others, especially where there is already resentment and hostility, will be the subject of complaint until, after a storm threat, they are paid up. When repayment is made, it should be as generous as possible, in order that the creditors should be satisfied. In any case, it is not a question simply of replacing the original wealth due; the debt has grown with time, and one could say that it is the original sum plus interest which has to be paid. Uduk informants explain this in terms of the fact that if I give you one goat, it will give birth many times, and its children will also multiply, and you will eventually buy cows with its progeny. Moreover, the formal repayment of a debt includes the transfer of other categories of goods, such as spears, bangles, hoes, oil, and tobacco (though money has not, as yet, entered into these transactions). The symbolic, rather than purely commercial, character of the transfer is further reflected in the fact that a small counter-payment is made at the same time, the recipients providing at least a goat for sacrifice, and perhaps a chicken and other small presents for the former debtors to take home.

These transactions are quite frequent, most subclans being involved in one or two each year. They are moreover some of the most substantial transfers of wealth which take place between subclans, and are of importance in articulating economic and political relations. The reason for their relative importance lies partly in the restriction of alternative avenues for the pursuance of rivalries and hostilities between subclans under conditions of modern administration. Thus, there are inhibitions today on direct violence, feuding, witchcraft accusation and the killing of witches. I think it likely that there has been a related increase in the expression of hostility through complaints over debts. A further reason for the importance of debt claims in Uduk society, as compared with neighbouring communities, is the highly self-contained character of the subclan group, in economic and social terms. The most valuable asset of the subclan is its womenfolk, and rights over them are not transferable. Bridewealth is not paid.[9] The next most valuable wealth of a subclan is its cattle; and the herd of cattle may be increased only through the investment of surplus crops grown by the members of the subclan. There is no pattern of exchange transactions between Uduk partners whereby the "capital" of the group may be increased. When animals are transferred from one subclan to another, for example in direct payment for ritual services, or as presents from father to son, they should be consumed and not invested. They are essentially gifts, and it would be immoral to keep them to multiply, that is to treat them as capital for investment. The only major channel through which the subclan capital of animal stock *may* be added to, is the pursuance and collection of old debts. Animals transferred in payment of a debt, consequent upon a threat from the rainstones, may be treated as capital and kept to multiply.

[9] An official attempt to introduce bridewealth payment into Uduk society, in 1063, tailed. I have explained this situation in my article "Why the Uduk won't pay bridewealth", in *Sudan Notes and*

It is only in relation to these restrictive rules of economic morality, which limit the means whereby livestock resources can be built up, that we can appreciate the importance attached by Uduk farmers to the possession of rainstones. They are not only an insurance against bad debts, but, used with political skill, one of the few means of increasing the subclan's wealth while maintaining the fiction that a state of balance and equality is merely being restored. Of course, no subclan is able to become very wealthy through this means, as each debt claim tends to set off a reaction; the debtors look around for ways of regaining the animals they have had to pay out. and start complaining about debts owed to them.

The importance of the role of diviners in this situation can hardly be exaggerated. Even though a subclan possesses rainstones of some reputation, it is necessary to have sympathetic diagnoses from diviners before any claims can be made. Diviners have to make the crucial decision, in each case of storm damage, as to which debt is in question. Even though they may do their best to point out as creditors their fellow ritual specialists, oi' subclans friendly with their own, their position is politically very delicate: for it is the aggrieved party, and not the potential beneficiaries, who approach the diviner and pay for a diagnosis. The party who has suffered the damage will of course try to find a sympathetic diviner, who may indeed listen to their own suggestions as to the source of the damage; and they will certainly not approach a man who is likely to give a judgment greatly to their disadvantage. Efforts are often made to find an outside diviner, usually from some distant village, who will give an accurate and neutral opinion; Uduk villagers are always willing to try new forms cf divination introduced from outside, and non-Uduk diviners. This sometimes gives to outsiders considerable influence over internal Uduk politics.

These principles do not mean that a subclan without rainstones cannot become influential. But the paradigm which emerges, of an Uduk subclan attaining relative economic and political strength partly through the practice of ritual specialisms and the possession and manipulation of rainstones, is of some value in interpreting local political life.

III

In this section I present, partly in informants' own words, material relating to a situation in which the symbolism of rain control is significant, and which illustrates the general principles described above. The situation is one of continuing tension and rivalry between the Lake subclan based in Waka'cesh, in the Pam'Be area, and other subclans in the Chali area some five miles away. Ra'da administers rainstones on behalf of the Lake subclan in Waka'cesh. His people used to live in the Chali area, until about 1937.

Records, li, 1970.

William Danga, a brother of Ra'da (in the classificatory sense of belonging to the same subclan) gave the following account,[10] which after indicating the work of rainstones in general, in the dry season and the rains, describes a personal experience of being struck by a rainstorm. He then goes on to explain the situation which lay behind the event.

In the dry season *(moyurante)* the rainstones remain in the hole. They are all tied up by people. There is no thunder, or lightning, in the dry season. But they stir up whirlwinds and come to strike those houses which have a debt upon them. Sometimes a wind comes whirling with fire inside, and sets a house alight. Or again, a house will just explode, and burn. •

And in the eleventh month, November, people tie up their stones. They keep them all in their house (i. e. in holes in the ground). Inside holes. Some stones are tied by people and kept in the open, then tied with *'kos* wood, and some of the nest of the *sisi* bird is brought to tie them, together with the *'kos* wood. This is to secure all the stones. Then they stay inside the hole, and nothing further happens. There is no lightning and no opportunity for them to thunder. And if they want to intervene because of outstanding debts, they just stir up a whirlwind and go to strike the house on which thev have a claim. It is from their z

owners. From the words of their owners, because they are continually grumbling, saying: 'Why don't those people arrange something for a head-shaving ceremony? Why don't those people have a head-shaving?' And people complain all the time like that, until the stones hear their words and go to do their work. Because of those complaining words of their owners. And off they go, just striking huts, *puthul! puthul! puthul!*— with mighty whirling wind, breaking the roof frame; if it wants, it will break the centre poles of all the huts, or it will lift off the whole roof with great might and throw it on the ground.

Then people must go to seek advice, saying, what is the explanation of this wind which lifted the roof and threw it on the ground ? And they will find someone who is a diviner *(iiari)* to divine by fire, and to explain that a debt exists from such and such a place, and that is why the hut was lifted by the wind. That is why the wind struck the roof.

And they must brew beer, to invite those people (to their village) to treat them (put matters straight, ritually). Because of the hut which is struck by the wind, people will arrange ritual treatment. Because of that hut which is struck by wind.

And sometimes a wind will come to set a hut on fire all at once. It ignites the hut and the hut burns. And others come with tongues of fire, with great strength, and you will see, if the wind roars in great anger, sounding very loud and shaking the trees, waving them and bending them to the ground, that that is a wind which comes in search of something. It comes to claim a debt; that is why it seizes the trees and

[10] This account was recorded in December, 1967, transcribed by Shadrach Pcyko Dhunya, and translated by him and myself. Proper names in this case have been altered.

shakes them so much, and sounds so loud and strong and is about to make thunder like the rain. You will hear something roaring very loud from a whirlwind. It goes on, and on, to find the exact place it is looking for. It does its work, and burns the hut. Or if it doesn't want it to burn, it will use its force, shake the hut, shake, shake, and knock down the corner-posts, the corner-posts inside the hut. Knocks them down. And again, the place may suddenly become quiet, and it goes; and a hut may burn for no reason at all. The hut burns from an explosion inside, although there is no fire in the hearth. It just explodes by itself; and the fire will never burn from the ground upwards, the fire will burn the top of the centre-pole. From inside the hut, the fire burns the centre-pole, and then cracks through to the outside, *he!* and people see it, and run to save the things inside the hut and take them away.

And those of the rainy season: yes, their owners sit complaining too. Grumble, grumble, grumble, and it begins to thunder *(dor:* the same word means to beat). It will beat a person; if it wants to kill him, it will beat him inside his hut. The person will be sitting there, and it beats him and throws him outside. It throws him outside with great force and then the hut burns. If a person is killed by it, the hut will not remain; it will cause the hut to burn because it has killed the person.

It was like that here too in the rains, a great storm came and it poured with rain. We were sitting at home. Ra'da was in his house, and Dukke (his wife) was absent. Ra'da ran to shelter with me in the hut there. There were three of us sitting there, with Bwaybonya (speaker's wife). It was a furious storm, thundering, thundering, thundering, until the whole place was reddened. Water was flowing all over the ground, red as red *('per mo ki piw).* I was sitting on the bed like this, and it came and pushed me over; I fell on the ground, *'de'k|* I got up again, and Ra'da shouted out, while my face was red all over, it really was fiery, red as red. Then I came outside, with Ra'da, to fight the storm. We beat it with long sticks, beat it with long sticks, and we shouted, went on shouting, shouting, shouting. We shouted until the rain had stopped. I was shivering like anything with cold (a sign that you have been struck by the storm)...

It happened because of a certain debt: it was something of Kabala's (a brother now living on the Yabus). This man called Pak (another name of Kabala) lives over there, he is a child of Umpa who was treated (when young) in Chali. He was treated by a diviner in Chali there, treated for *ako* (sickness from the mother's milk). Things were given; one goat at first that year, and a few other things were given perhaps. And later, because these things were insufficient, people complained. And still they are complaining, saying this is not enough, not enough, not enough. This thing took action on Nyale (a sister) first, in a drcam. It pushed her over too. And so they took goats, three goats and another which couldn't walk; it was beaten by Ra'da with a stick, *dug! dug!* and then was unable to walk. So they left this goat on the road, and went on as far as Chali. Those people cut one goat (of their own) for them, to wash them with the blood. Then they explained that 'One of the goats couldn't come with us, perhaps because I beat it, and perhaps this goat will die. I don't know if it will go home.' They explained this and then they came home.

And the goat lived; it became three years old, and gave birth to little ones. People took the little ones, and used them for various purposes. Then those people (to whom the goat should have been paid) sat wagging their tongues, wagging their tongues like anything. Those people of Milla wagged their tongues, wag wag, like that. They kept on repeating the story of the goat, and then this thing happened, as a result. Then we took some goats: we took that very same mother goat (to Chali), with two young ones, making three with her, and then we took that little *This E* ('lost one', name of a particular kid). We took the little one you called *This E,* we took it and added it to the others to make four. It was to stand instead of the required gourd of oil, because there was no oil. The oil was about to be squeezed, (but) we took this young female goat to take the place of the oil. To take the place of the oil. Then we went; and we asked their opinion (as to whether the payment was now complete). They gave us a chicken to cut, and bathed us with the rainstones (i.e. water from a gourd containing the stones). Ra'da gave them a dog-toothed spear, to cut the chicken with his spear. They kept this spear. These are the things we gave: four goats and one dog-toothed spear, on that day, to finish off the debt. We asked them: 'Is there anything else? If so you just tell us.' They said: 'No! It's finished, we suppose. It's finished. You go, and watch carefully in case anything else happens. Something may happen, but it seems to us to be finished at last, completely.' They said it was finished. That's how it happened.

Those people are Lake (i.e. same general clan as ourselves). The man spoke like this: he said, 'The rain acted, but recoiled at the same time. For we are related (to *bungwar*—have, or are of, a body)'. He said it was because we are related *(abas,* blood) that the rain stopped short of killing us. The rain is aware of these things, that there is a slight relationship. Because they are Lake like us.

That's all.

The debt in question arose when Ra'da's subclan was living in the Chali area, and from relating it to other events, I would place it in the early 1920s. As William Danga explains, one of their brothers (an elder half-brother of Ra'da) was treated for sickness by a diviner from another Lake subclan in Chali, now usually referred to as Milla's people. The diviner concerned died before the "head-shaving" ceremony and the payment of fees was arranged; according to Lente, another brother, the amount due was not very great as the patient was a boy and not a girl—perhaps 2 goats and 5 bangles.

In the late 1930s, Ra'da's subclan was dispersed from the Chali area. This was the result of mounting suspicion of witchcraft, in connection with a local spread of smallpox cases. Most of the subclan moved to Pam'Be (their present site is about six miles west of Chali), and some members moved elsewhere. Kabala, the brother whose treatment had not been paid for, went to the Yabus area (about 25 miles south of Chali). Then, in 1965, the dream of Nyale was interpreted (I am not sure by whom) as being a consequence of the grumbling of Milla's people over this debt. But as William explains, one of the goats which should have been paid returned home, and they kept it and consumed some of its offspring. The storm described by William happened about

October, 1966. They consulted two diviners, one of whom was Lente, and were satisfied with the explanation of the storm as resulting from the annoyance of Milla's people over the unpaid goat. William describes how four goats and a spear were handed over to finish off the debt; this took place, I think, in the summer of 1967.

But this was not the end of the story. In the middle of April, 1968, the roof thatch of another brother of Ra'da's, Moho, was blown away. Ra'da placed one of his stones on the roof to ward off further damage. There was some desultory discussion as to what diviner should be consulted, but only through the pressure of the womenfolk did the men get round to making any consultations. Lente, himself a diviner, kept voicing his own opinion that the damage was caused by some of their own rainstones, which had been passed on to a son's son, and were signifying their desire to return home, from where they were being kept in Chali. (I shall return to this situation later.) However, Moho eventually went to a local diviner, of a subclan allied to their own, who suggested that the trouble was from the same source, the stones of Milla. His brothers were not very satisfied with this opinion, especially Lente; and they persuaded him to consult a famous specialist, Jida, from the Ahmar valley, through whom a Meban spirit gave oracular advice, in order to get the truth. Lente was hoping, I am sure, to get a verdict favourable to them, which would enable them to secure the return of their rainstones from Chali. When Jida arrived in the district, on other business, and when with some difficulty Moho had been granted a consultation, on May 2nd (at a cost of 50 piastres), the local diviner's diagnosis was confirmed. The spirit informed Moho that the people of Milla were still not satisfied with the settlement; and the main reason was that Kabala himself, who was originally responsible for the debt, had been absent from the reconciliation and had not contributed to the previous transactions. He must therefore appear in person, and partake in the ritual to settle the affair. Details were given as to the payment that had to be made, and as to Kabala's own contribution. Beer was to be made by Moho for the people of Milla, and they were to have a sacrifice for his people, after the payments were received.

So a few days later, two of the younger brothers of Ra'da went off to the Yabus, to fetch Kabala. He arrived, and on May 9th beer was ready at Moho's. A number of men from Milla's subclan came, and also one of their sons, who was actually looking after their rainstones on their behalf. I cannot describe the proceedings in detail here; but briefly, the visitors made a show of patching up the damaged roof, discussed the whole situation with Moho after diviners from both parties had jointly consulted the ebony fire oracle, and then a small chicken sacrifice was held to "reconcile" the stones with the people of Moho. They were finally anointed with burnt sesame and oil, a rich black mixture thought to be a protection from the rain. Further, less formal discussion, took place when the ritual was completed, and quite soon the visitors left.

The next day all the local householders (married men, and those of their mothers or divorced sisters with huts of theii' own) of Ra'da's subclan, with Kabala, left for Milla's hamlet near Ghali. They took with them two goats, five ordinary spears, one toothed spear, one hoe blade, twenty arrows, and two loaves of tobacco. A further

ritual, of the sacrifice of a goat, was held for them; and special attention was paid to Kabala himself. The hosts seemed satisfied with the amount of goods handed over.

However, Kabala himself did not actually bring any contribution from his home; all the goods were provided by his relatives in Waka'cesh. I asked if this meant that the stones of Milla could strike again, as the oracular instructions had not been carried out exactly; and Moho and his brothers agreed that it could happen, but was unlikely.

The reaction of Lente to this series of imposed payments to the Chali group had clearly been increasingly hostile, although he was obliged to accept the position. But, as I suggested above, he lost no opportunity for airing his own views on the possibility of his own subclan's stones in Chali expressing through wind and turbulence their desire to return home. He even represented this to me as being the diagnosis of the first diviner who had been consulted, although Moho, who actually made the consultation, did not mention it. Later, I heard Lente telling the Chali people, in the informal discussion at Moho's place, that Jida's spirit had given this as a partial reason for the damage. I am sure that this was a fabrication on Lente's part. The previous day, among ourselves, he had expressed his grievances over the whole relationship with people in the Chali area. I must briefly summarise the issue of Ra'da's rainstones. They were acquired from a Berta man killed in fighting, probably about the end of the nineteenth century, by a man of the Lake subclan now based in Waka'cesh. He married a woman of the Woshakwaye subclan in Chali, and gave the stones to his son, Nyarjgal, who took them to his subclan village when his father and father's brothers died. Later, he passed on the stones to his own son, Tumko. Later, Tumko and his sister decided they woxdd return the stones to the Lakes, and handed them over to Ra'da and his brother Shayib (now living some distance away on the Ahmar). Later, Tumko's house was seriously threatened by a storm. According to Lente, he was afraid that this was a sign of a debt his father's people the Woshakwaye, with whom he was still living, owed to the Lakes. This was a debt of four goats which had been killed for trespassing, in the 1930s when Ra'da's people were living in Chali. So he apparently came to Waka'cesh and removed some of the stones, to prevent further damage. He may have done this with the connivance of Ra'da, to Lente's annoyance. Lente was complaining against the Woshakwayc, therefore, on two counts: because their son had taken charge of the Lake rainstones, and because of the original debt. I will quote his own words on that situation:

And there is something else in that village. A debt exists among them there... A debt remains, a debt of our goats remains with them. They killed four goats. Up to now they haven't given them back to us... *He!* They killed the goats when we were living in Chali there.

Lente extended his complaints over the Woshakwaye, and their son Turnko, to the whole complex of subclans in the Chali area, many of whom are linked closely in various ways, and in particular brought togethei' his resentment of the Lake subclan of Milla and the Woshakwaye. He said (and here I quote only roughly from notes):

If those people of Milla insist tomorrow on taking a lot from us, all right: we will give them a cow. Let them have a cow. And we will remind them that there are some people in Chali, the Woshakwaye, who are in debt to us... If we have to pay a lot to Milla we shall ask for our own debts too... A few years ago our stones disturbed the Woshakwaye people, because we were grumbling about them here. Tumko took some stones away; Ra'da gave them to him. I wouldn't have done that.

If the Woshakwaye don't give us our goats back, we shall demand a cow.

This kind of talk is the "grumbling" which is thought to activate the rainstones, and which in practice is well-known to the diviners who have to diagnose storm damage.

The pattern which emerges from the material quoted is one of mutual hostility between the subclan of Ra'da and various others in Chali; this hostility appears to be channelled through claims and counterclaims over rainstones and debt, and through the diagnoses of diviners. The tension almost certainly is to be explained in relation to the witchcraft suspicions which focussed on this particular subclan in Chali in the 1930s and caused them to flee elsewhere; and also in relation to the wider pattern of rivalry and opposition between the areas of Chali and Pam'Be.

In the same material may be seen other, small scale tensions characteristic of Uduk society. Firstly, the resentment arising between brothers of the same subclan in connection with this debt is marked: Lente voices his disapproval of Ra'da's weak action in letting Tumko remove some of the rainstones which are properly theirs; and a good deal of resentment was expressed over the fact that Kabala, generally regarded as irresponsible, was at the root of the trouble and didn't make any contribution to the payment. The Yabus area where he lived is rich land for tobacco-growing; and Lente asked him where was the tobacco he'd brought? Or did he still spend all his time drinking beer?

A second typical source of tension arises from the conflict between a man's relation to his sisters' sons i his "legal heirs", and to his own sons, with whom he has a strong personal bond. This tension is related to that between subclan brothers: for a man helps his own sons, let us say by lending them his subclan rainstones, at the expense not only of their crosscousins but at that of his own brothers. Each brother would like to use subclan property, such as animals or rainstones, to strengthen his relationship with his own sons; and if one does so, he deprives his brothers of the same advantage. Very often, rainstones may be lent temporarily by a man to his son, and as long as the father lives, little may be said. But if the father dies, and the son keeps the stones, his father's subclan will begin to resent the situation. In the case described above, the son of a member of Ra'da's subclan in this situation not only kept the stones of his father's people but passed them on to his own son. The latter was administering them on behalf o

of his father's people, the Woshakwaye of Chali, and it was this situation which underlay much of the tension between Ra'da's subclan, expressed mainly by Lente, and the Woshakwaye. This was probably the reason why he had deliberately brought up the old debt of foui' goats.

The position of a young man in relation to his father's subclan is another point of general political relevance which is highlighted by the material on rainstone disputes. A smart young man will utilise what opportunities he can from both his own people and his father's. Although ownership of rainstones cannot be wholly transferred to a son, he can make good use of them while he can retain their custody. One of the most powerful sets of rainstones in the Yabus area is that which belonged to Sheikh Marinyje, who died some years ago. He was not only a government official but a religious specialist and healer of wide reputation. Today, one of his sons holds not only the official position of his father, but is a religious leader in his own right and administers the rainstones of his father's subclan. Many people still owed fees for treatment to Marinyje when he died; and his son now collects these, partly on the strength of the rainstones. It is only fair to add that sometimes a proportion of the payments are handed on to his father's clansmen.

How can people regard rainstones as real and effective instruments? Let us return to the analogy with money, which however solid and effective in the pocket, is often talked of in "unreal" ways: sterling is "getting on its feet", confidence is rising here and falling there, prices on the stock exchanges reflect the rise and fall of statesmen and their policies. The symbols of rain-control are in a broadly similar way a system of giving shape and substance to social and political credit. One could not compare a rainstone with a piece of money, true; but one could suggest a parallel between rights over rainstones and, say, shares in an insurance company. To ask "Why do you believe in rainstones?" is in some ways parallel to asking "Why do you believe in the Sudanese pound?"—and not at all parallel to the question "Why do you believe the radio weather-forecast?" Belief in rainstones, as in currency, is rooted in local political structures of confidence and credit between people.

III. Residence Among the Berti

L. Holy

The Berti, who number about 25,000, inhabit the Northern Darfur District in the region around Melit, their traditional centre, situated about thirty-five miles northeast of El Fashcr. Their original language belonged to the Middle Sahara language group and was closest to the Zaghawa language, but for several generations now they have been cpiite arabicised. They live in small permanent villages in the dry steppe of Northern Darfur and depend on agriculture with bulrush millet as the staple, animal husbandry and gathering gum which they sell at the local markets.[1]

The Berti, as all other societies, have "norms of residence"; that is to say, in their society there exist certain general rules about how the residence of a domestic family established in the process of marriage should be arranged. In other words, they consider a certain type of residence as normative in the sense of being expected or usual. Again as in all other societies, not all the residential arrangements of every domestic family correspond to these "norms". Some domestic families arrange their residence differently. In this article I discuss mainly two points. Ehc first one is that the existing norms of residence are structurally determined in the sense that they are the result of the operation of different systems of relations both inside and outside the domestic family. The second is that the residential arrangements which considered from the point of view of the norm appear as deviations, are basically determined by the same systems of relations that determine the "normal" residential arrangements: it is only that these systems of relations have been differently manipulated by the actors involved to serve their particular ends. Before discussing the structural factors determining the existing forms of residence of the newly established domestic family, I give some basic data on marriage and the ways in which an independent domestic group is established in Berti society.

It is always the father who in the final instance decides the choice of the future spouse, whether for his son or for his daughter. While the boy has sufficient opportunity to reveal his own opinion about the choice of spouse, and very often to push it through when discussing his marriage with his father, the girl is fully subservient to her father's

[1] Another, probably larger part of the Berti now live in Eastern Darfur, where they migrated during last century under pressure of the neighbouring Meidob's expansion into their original territory in Northern Darfur. My contribution is solely concerned with the Berti in the Northern Darfur District among whom I did fieldwork in 1961 and 1965. I gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the International African Institute which made my research possible.

will. The father's decisive position as far as his children's marriage is concerned follows from his supreme authority over them and, in the case of the son, from the fact that it is he who pays the whole of the bridewealth.

The mother's opinion about the marriage of her children is not decisive at all. Even when it differs from that of her husband, she is unable to reveal it publicly and is obliged to submit to her husband's opinion. The boy's father, or if he is dead the man who represents his authority, first of all comes to terms with the girl's father; when he gets his consent he discusses it formally with the girl's mother. Even when the girl's mother personally opposes the marriage she is obliged to express agreement. Nevertheless, her personal attitude is usually well known and when it is negative she receives *hagg aie* (the payment for consent; lit. the payment foi' "yes") from the boy's father; this can be anything up to ten Sudanese pounds. The girl's mother can even demand *hagg aie* herself and make her consent dependent on its payment.

The proper process of marriage, during which a new family is established and finally becomes an independent domestic group, has three stages. The first is the *fatha,* during which the groom's father or the man who represents him pays the so-called *sidag,* that part of the bridewealth upon payment of which the marriage is legitimised. However, the groom and the bride do not start to live as a married couple immediately after the *Jatha.* They do not meet and they go on living in their original households with members of their families of orientation. They start living as a married couple only after the second stage of the marriage, the *'irs,* which takes place about six months after the *Jatha.* The *'irs* ends with a seven day period which the bride and groom spend together in a.shelter especially built for them in the homestead of the bride's parents. After the *'irs,* the husband regularly visits his wife in this shelter. When both parties come from the same village the husband returns only at night; during the day he lives and works in his own parents' household. When they come from different villages the husband visits his wife periodically, always spending a longer time in her parents' household; the actual period depends primarily on the distance between their villages.

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The new family exists as such from the *'irs,* but it is not yet an independent domestic group. It becomes that after the third stage, the *rahula,* when the couple establish their own household and become economically independent of their parent households. The right of the young married couple to establish their own household is bound to the completion of bridewealth payment by the groom's father to the bride's parents. Payment is usually protracted, and the average interval between *'irs* and *rahula* is about four years. Most couples have one or more children by the time of *rahula.*

Thus the newly established family is not an independent domestic group until *rahula.* During the visits to his wife the husband works together with her in the way that any visitor works with his hosts; he performs this work in the framework not of his own but of his wife's parents' household. The wife has no fields of her own; during his visits in the rainy season he cultivates, with her and the other members of her household,

her parents' fields. Also the wife does not cook specially for her husband; but she helps her mother to cook for all members of the household. She carries the meals to her husband in the shelter where he always stays during his visits. His wife eats with the other women in the household, and the male members of the household (i.e. the wife's father and her brothers) eat together. The husband either eats alone in the shelter or shares his dish with some neighbours—friends of his in his wife's village; only during the absence of his wife's father can he eat with his wife's brothers.

After *ʿirs* it is the theoretical duty of the husband to buy clothes, shoes, glass beads and other ornaments, soap, oil, and perfumes for his wife. Most husbands bring these things to their wives in the form of occasional presents. Similarly, it is the theoretical duty of the husband to buy clothes for his children; these, however, are more often bought by his wife's brothers or her father from their own means. On the other hand the husband has no responsibility for feeding his wife or his children, who live with her in her shelter and later on in a small hut built in her parents' homestead. The wife is still a member of her parents' household, possessing full rights in the household in which she was born and bred. She takes part in all the work carried out by women in this household and during her husband's visits she is helped by him, especially in the cultivation of the farm. His children eat together with their mother, who herself eats with the other women living in the same household.

When the whole of the bridewealth is paid, the man can ask his wife's mother to prepare *rahula*—the departure of the wife to his household. *Rahula* is the third and final stage of marriage and its actual date depends on the bride's mother who is responsible for supplying the future household with the *ʿidda,* the foodstuffs, dishes, furniture and other domestic implements. *ʿIdda* is bought by the bride's mother from the money received in bridewealth.

In the year that the man intends to establish his own household, he founds a small farm near the village in which he and his wife will be living. His wife, it is true, gets a certain amount of grain from her mother as a part of *ʿidda* but this is usually insufficient, and the grain from the husband's new field helps to support the household during the first year of its independent existence. The couple usually extend this field the following year and it becomes the core of the land they will cultivate in future.

Before the *rahula.* the husband also builds his own homestead. At first this usually consists of a single hut for himself and his wife; he extends it later by adding further huts and shelters. Some couples do not move during *rahula* directly to their own homestead but build their own hut in the homestead of one of the spouses' parents; this hut is separated from the rest of the homestead by a fence and has its own entrance. Such families usually build their own homesteads only after the lapse of some time. Nevertheless, after *rahula,* every family forms an independent economic unit even when they live provisionally in the homestead of the parents of one of them: they cultivate their own farm, they own their cattle, and it is the wife, no longer her mother, who does the cooking for her husband and children.

Thus after *rahida,* every family forms a domestic group which is an independent unit of production, distribution and consumption. This does not mean that the family can exist without the help of other groups in all economic processes; on the contrary, it is dependent on the help of wider kinship groups over a whole range of economic activities. After *rahula* also, every newly established individual family becomes an independent residential unit, and it is during the process of *rahula* that the residence arrangements of the new domestic family are determined.

As the classification of residence arrangements has been extensively debated and there is no general agreement among anthropologists about the use of terms,[2] I have to start by defining the terms I shall be using. When a newly married couple establish their residence in the village where the husband's parents live, I speak of virilocal residence; when their home is in the village of the wife's parents, uxorilocal residence; when it is in the village where both spouses live, bilocal residence; and when it is separate from the village of cither spouse's parents, neolocal residence.

My analysis of residence arrangements among the Berti is based on a census of 87 households in 5 villages.[3] Deficiencies of classifications based on a synchronic census only, when genealogical data and life histories of subjects and their kin are neglected, are now generally known.[4] To avoid distortion I consider a couple's residence as it existed immediately after *rahula.* A homestead might not have moved since *rahula,* but

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still may have to be classified differently from the way suggested by the census. For example, Yahya Addin and Hawa Adim live in their own household in the village of Duda. The household of the parents of Hawa Adim the wife, is situated in the same village, while Yahya's father Addin Isma'il has his homestead in the village of Nair. If we take no other facts into consideration, we classify the residence of Yahya Addin and Hawa Adim as uxorilocal. Similarly the homestead of Hawa Adim's brother 'Abd al-Rahman Adim who married ☒

Yahya Addin's sister 'Asha Addin is situated in Duda. The residence of the latter couple has to be classified as virilocal. The picture changes, however, if we take into consideration the life history of Addin Isma'il. His parents lived in Nair and he resided after his marriage uxorilocally in Duda. Later, when his mother in Nair became ill, he moved his homestead from Duda to Nair to be able to look after his mother who had no close kin in Nair, and after her death he remained permanently in Nair. At the time when both his children built their homesteads in Duda his own household was also

[2] Cf. Ward H. Goodenough, 'Residence rules', *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology,* xiii, 1956, pp. 22–37; J. L. Fischer, 'The classification of residence censuses', *American Anthropologist,* lx, 1958, pp. 508–1 7; Harry M. Raulet, 'A Note of Fischer's residence typology', *ibid.,* Ixi, 1959, pp. 108 11; J. L. Fischer, 'Reply to Raulet', *ibid.,* Ixi, 1959, pp. 679–81.

[3] Ol these eighty-seven households fifty-four were virilocal (62.1 per cent); nineteen uxorilocal (21.8 per cent); thirteen bilocal (15 per cent); and one neolocal (1.1 per cent).

[4] Cf. Goodenough, 'Residence rules', pp. 26–7.

situated in Duda and therefore both the residence of Yahya Addin and Hawa Adim and the residence of ‘Abd al-Rahman Adim and ‘Asha Addin are properly classified as bilocal.

In the case of polygynous families the homesteads of individual wives are never in the same village if their husband is still sexually active. As far as the residence arrangements of these homesteads are concerned, I consider only the homestead of the first wife, because choice is possible only for this homestead. A husband never moves the homesteads of subsequent wives to the village of his first wife's homestead: they are established in the villages of the wives' parents, that is uxorilocally.

Although some families do move later during *rahula* the Berti couples see their choice of residence as lying only between the villages of husband's and wife's parents. With the exception of families resulting from *gabuna* marriages[5] they never reside neolocally immediately after marriage.

The Berti, and especially their menfolk, consider virilocal residence the ideal. This is connected with the type of economic relationship within kin and domestic groups. If a man inherits a considerable part of his father's gum garden it is easiest for him to work it when the garden is in the immediate vicinity of his village of domicile, for then he and other members of his parents' domestic group are in a position to carry out readily all activities necessary for gum gathering. Before *rahula* a man founds a farm which becomes the core of the plots which his future domestic group will possess. If this farm is near his own village he can easily cultivate it with the help of other members of his parents' domestic group. The founding of a similar farm is much more difficult in his wife's village, where he can rely neither upon the help of the members of his parents' domestic group, nor upon the help of other inhabitants of the village—with whom he is not yet bound by ties of neighbourliness.

When residing virilocally a man is living among his nearest lineage kin, who form a group which provides him with an effective protection in all his disputes with members of other lineages.

Virilocal residence, however, is not universal. Nineteen married couples from the total of 87 (i.e. 21.8 per cent! live uxorilocally. Apart from the individual preferences of the married couple, determined by such factors as whether the wife's village is "good" (i.e. relations within it are suitably harmonious), or whether it is near a well or market, or whether it has fertile soil, there are other reasons which lead to uxori-local residence. Of these the most important is the fact that the *rahula* only exceptionally takes place with the full agreement of all who participate in the decision about it, the most important of whom arc the married couple themselves, and their parents. *Rahula* is a typical situation whose end, the

[5] If the father does not agree to a marriage of his son's choice, the son can make arrangements to elope with the girl to a Muslim judge. The judge will summon the fathers or guardians of both and demand from them their consent to the marriage. The consent not given, the judge can still marry the couple. Such a marriage is called *gabuna.*

founding of an independent household of a newly established domestic family, can be differently defined by all participants. The general characteristic of a *rahula* is the opposition to it of the wife's mother, who can keep postponing it by pointing out that she has not yet prepared all the items which her daughter is supposed to get as the *'idda.* It is in this situation that the conflict between a man and his wife's mother, which can be taken as the prevailing pattern of their relationship, appears publicly for the first time. This conflict is largely a consequence of the mother's inability to influence the choice of her daughter's future spouse. While her explicit agreement to her daughter's marriage is required during negotiations, she can demand the *hagg aie* for it; by this she shows for the first time that her private opinion is different. Such differences of opinion often lead to a conflict between mother and father but this conflict does not result in divorce; nor is it recognised as a ground for divorce: it would be a breach of proper conduct if the wife revealed openly, in her husband's presence, dissatisfaction with the future spouse he has chosen for her daughter. Of course she can slander him to her neighbours, but she has to take care that her husband does not hear of it. An antagonistic relation between a man and his wife's mother easily results in a hostile relation between the man and his wife. The mother shows a tendency to comment on the behaviour of her daughter's husband in her presence, to point to his bad temper, and to compare him continuously with other men who, in her opinion, would make better husbands. If she succeeds in antagonising her daughter against her husband, which is especially easy when the daughter herself was an unwilling partner in the marriage, not only is it improbable that the daughter would establish an independent household without the formal *rahula,* but it is highly probable that the daughter would not compel her mother to prepare the *rahula.* If a man's mother-in-law continues to postpone the *rahula* he can appeal to the authorities, but their measures are not always effective. Many men resolve the *rahula* problem by marrying another wife, building a homestead and preparing the *rahula* for their second wife. It would be a disgrace for the first wife if the second should have *rahula* before her; when this danger threatens, the first wife and her mother usually insist on it themselves.

Uxorilocal residence, however, does not come about only as a solution to the conflicting interests of these actors. The establishment of the new household is a situation in which members of the domestic groups of the husband's parents and of the wife's parents typically compete for its economic loyalties.

Among the Berti, working groups recruited on the basis of kinship ties are organised for cultivation, water supply, animal husbandry, and gum gathering, in situations where the organiser cannot perform the tasks with the labour of his domestic group and where he has not the means to mobilise a neighbourhood group, or to pay for labour directly. Working groups composed of kin are thus mobilised by those household heads, both men and women, who are too old to work in the farms or gum gardens, or those whose households lack young labour to perform the necessary work. This is usually the case with old couples or with widows and widowers, and with old divorcees living alone in their own households. Even if they cannot afford to hire wage labour or mobilise

a working group from among neighbours, their farms will not remain unweeded nor their gum-trees uncut. Their children or grandchildren living in the same village will do this work for them. Old couples and those living alone in their own households, unable to perform the necessary economic activities themselves, can rely on the help of their nearest kin, most frequently again their children or grandchildren. The activities concerned here arc sowing and harvesting, water supply and the care of cattle.

Temporary kin-based working groups take care of the cattle in the cattle-camp when a household has insufficient members able to leave the village for a considerable part of the year. These working groups facilitate the organisation of cattle husbandry, including the milking of cows, driving cattle to grazing, watering the cattle at wells, and occasionally looking for lost animals. Members of related households join together not only for watering cattle but also for drawing drinking water when one household has not enough members to perform this work. Apart from these temporary working groups, the kinship tics between members of different households are the basis for forming permanent working groups to take care of the herd composed of cattle belonging to kindred living in different households. So in many cases related members of different households keep their cattle in one herd not only in the dry season camps but also during the rainy season when the cattle are kept in the villages.

Economic activities whose participants are recruited on the basis of kinship ties beyond the range of the immediate family are naturally performed in a certain spatial frame. With the exception of the joint care of cattle in the cattle-camp, the frame is the village. From this it follows that all forms of economic cooperation between kindred can be effective only among those who live in the same village and that the economic help of the members of the newly established household will be gained by the domestic group of the parents of that spouse in whose village the young couple build their own homestead. Even when the households of the parents of both spouses are in the same village, the newly established household tends to co-operate strikingly with the domestic group of the parents of the husband and not of the wife, and eventually with other domestic groups of the near kin of the husband. Even when the wife is bound by closer ties of kinship to the members of the domestic group of her parents than to the members of the domestic group of her husband's parents, these ties alone do not justify her offering her services to her parents and siblings, while her husband co-operatively performs the same economic activities with his own kin. The economic loyalties of the household are indivisible because the wife is subject to the authority of her husband as far as the disposal of her own labour is concerned.

As virilocal residence is expected, in Berti society there exist certain jural norms whose meaning we can fully understand only when we consider them to be norms whose end is to compensate the loss which the household of the wife's parents will suffer consequent on virilocal residence. Further, if we consider that the newly established household tends to unilateral economic co-operation with the households of the husband's near kin, we can easily understand the son-in-law's obligation to help weed the fields cultivated by his wife's mother. A man helps to weed the field cultivated by

the members of his wife's parents' household not only before he has his own household and when his wife still lives in her parents', but also for up to three days a year when he later lives with his wife in their own household. Unlike other cases when the working groups of kin are formed this arrangement is not of great economic value because the husband weeds the field even when the members of his wife's mother's household are easily able to carry out the weeding themselves. On the other hand this activity clearly shows that we have to deal with the reciprocity typical of related domestic groups. That is, the mother-in-law after completing the weeding of her own field very often helps for up to three days in her son-in-law's field.

The behaviour of the wife's mother and efforts to gain the economic loyalty of the newly established domestic group are not, however, the only factors influencing the residence of the new family. There are other elements in the domestic economy and the family system which operate in the same direction.

Unlike many other African societies, it is rather rare among the Berti for kin beyond the range of the individual family (which represents a typical domestic unit in all stages of its development) to live with that family as members of the domestic group. This is because the forms of economic cooperation among cognates permit the existence of one-man households. Old widowers live as attached members of households because, unlike the widows, they could inhabit their own households only if they deviated from the norms of the division of labour—if they performed all the domestic work that is normally the task of women. A widower therefore usually attaches himself to his daughter's household. The reason the Berti give for the fact that he moves to his daughter's and not his son's household is in accord with the structure of economic relations in the domestic group and with the norms of the immediate family. An old widower attaches himself to an existing domestic group first of all because he needs someone to prepare food and millet beer for him every day. Cooking and brewing are tasks of the woman responsible for the domestic economy of the household. If a widower moved to his son's household he would depend on his daughter-in-law. Her duties and obligations toward him, however, are not so binding as those of his own daughter. The Berti characterise the different degrees by saying that it is a disgrace *(Jadiha'}* to refuse to help a father-in-law, while it is a sin *(zanb)* to do the same to a father. 1'hey say that a woman takes care of her father-in-law only because he is the father of her husband whom she must obey and to whose authority she is bound; when her husband is away from the household, she will, however, immediately neglect his father living in her household. So a widower moves to his daughter, who takes care of him devotedly and affectionately regardless of whether her husband is present or not. A widower invariably prefers to move to the household of a daughter in his own village; if he moved to one elsewhere he would have to break off his everyday relations with his own kin. Thus establishment of uxo-rilocal residence accords with the interests of the wife's father as well as those of her mother.

The degree of pressure from the wife's parents to which the newly established family is exposed during *rahula* depends on the pattern of their domestic group. During the

rahula of the wife whose father is a widower, it is possible to expect that he himself will strongly oppose a move to the husband's village. Similarly, if there are only daughters in a family, the wife's parents try to prevent a son-in-law from establishing his household in his own village. Every household needs male labour for drawing water from the well and for watering and grazing the cattle. In such a case the girl's parents try to postpone *rahula* as long as possible because her husband during his visits does the household work that they find difficult to do themselves ; he goes to the well to draw water and water the cattle, and when he visits his wife in a cattle-camp he takes care of the grazing cattle and looks for stray animals. But since they cannot postpone *rahula* for ever they try to persuade their son-in-law to establish his household in their own village. In particular, rich families owning large herds and lacking the necessary man-power to take care of them usually insist on uxorilocal residence for their daughters. When the parents want the daughter's husband to build his homestead in their village, they buy clothes not only for their daughter but for her husband too; they take care of his children, they tolerate his small deviations from the accepted norms of conduct, and so on. Sometimes they may agree with a proposed marriage only on condition that the couple will reside after *rahula* in their village. The son-in-law, however, is not bound by this condition later, because the moment his whole bridewealth is paid he has the right to *rahula* and he can bring his wife to his own homestead built according to his own desires either in her village or his own. His ultimate residence thus depends more on the actual behaviour of the wife's parents and other members of the household towards him than on the preconditions of the marriage.

Residence patterns among the Berti result from the operation of a wide range of different systems of relations, the most important of which are the system of economic co-operation inside the household and between the related households, the system of the division of authority between the husband and wife over their children, the system of inheritance of certain productive resources, especially the gum gardens, and the system of relations between the patrilineal lineages and local communities. These constitute the most important structural variables determining the form of residence of each Berti couple. Put differently, the domestic family is necessarily a multifunctional group, a group which is a point of contact of different systems of relations. Residence is a result of the operation of the relevant systems of relations which, of course, operate with different force in each case.

The way that individuals negotiate in the *rahula* decisions is the result of the operation of relationships in these systems. The wife's mother will act in one way if she agrees to her daughter's marriage and in another way if she does not; the wife's father will act in one way if he needs to acquire a man's labour to take care of his cattle and in another if he does not; the husband's parents will act in one way if they are desperately trying to gain the economic loyalties of the new household, and in another if they are not; the husband himself will act in one way if he is likely to inherit a big gum garden, and in another if he is not. Accordingly the residence of each couple is thus in one way or another a compromise between different and conflicting aims.

The Berti themselves consider *rahula* to be a conflict situation in which the competing interests of the families and domestic groups of the parents of both spouses meet. Preference for marriages of the children of siblings and for marriages within the same village are solutions to this conflict, since in this situation the economic loyalties of the new domestic unit can be bilateral and still remain undivided.

IV. The Bovine Idiom and Formal Logic

Andreas and Waltraud Kronenberg

Usually we feel upset by paradoxical formulations, because they run against our established ways of thinking, and challenge them. One of the famous paradoxes of anthropological literature is Evans-Pritchard's statement on agnation and uterine descent among the Nuer.[1] "It would seem it may be partly just because the agnatic principle is unchallenged in Nuer society that the tracing of descent through women is so prominent and matrilocality so prevalent." Statements of this kind either provoke criticism or inspire rethinking. An example of the first reaction is David Schneider's criticism of that paradox:[2] "When Evans-Pritchard is faced with the odd fact that, although the lineages are territorial units, and although they seem to be patrilineal as patrilineal can be, descent is traced through women, and many people live matrilocally. In order to reconcile these apparent contradictions, we were treated to those special gems of paradoxical obfuscation for which Evans-Pritchard is justly famous." Far from pouring scorn on Evans-Pritchard's formulation, we believe it to be justifiable for the Nuer, and even more widely. In this paper we attempt to resolve a similar paradox for Didinga society.[3]

Didinga and Nuer social idioms can be reduced to similar logical constants.[4]

The title of this paper itself sounds rather paradoxical and we have to explain it.

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[1] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1951, p. 28.

[2] David M. Schneider, "Some muddles in the models: or, how the system really works", in M. Banton (ed.) *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology,* London, Tavistock (A.S.A. Monographs, 1), 1965, PP-25–85, at p. 74.

[3] A. N. Tucker and M. A. Bryan in *The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa,* Oxford, 1956, pp. 87–91, classify linguistically the Didinga, together with the Longarim, Murle, Suri and other units, as the isolated "Didinga-Murle" language group. The Didinga live on the Didinga and Boya Hills, and to the north; the Longarim (called Boya by the Topotha) on the Boya Hills (Eastern District, Equatoria Province).

[4] "If we are to have any words in our pure logical language, they must be such as express 'logical constants', and 'logical constants' will always be, or be derived from, what is in common among a group of propositions derivable from each other, in the above manner, by term-for-term substitution." Bertrand Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy,* 11 th edition, London, Allen and Unwin, 1963, p. 202.

Evans-Pritchard's description of Nuer interest in cattle is general knowledge among social anthropologists.[5] His analysis culminates in the statement that the Nuer tend to define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle. Their social idiom is a bovine idiom. We have worked among two cattle peoples of the Southern Sudan, the Didinga and Longarim on the east bank of the Nile and we had to learn and then analyse their bovine idiom. The Didinga and Longarim belong to the vast group of East African peoples who are patterned by what Herskovits[6] has aptly called the cattle complex, and are organised in agnatic clans. The Didinga classify and relate a wide range of their social behaviour such as sexual relations, marriage, kinship, age-organisation, and what we would call their political, economic and religious systems according to the bovine context of these aspects of life. All important matters among the Didinga are cattle matters. We want here to demonstrate the range of this bovine idiom which gives social behaviour a frame of reference such that it becomes difficult to distinguish a field of bovine relations from a field of relations of other sorts. The following example may serve as an illustration: if a Didinga (or Longarim) has a favourite beast,[7] the same cattle name is used for the "father" (owner) of the animal as for the beast itself, and if Didinga sing praise songs of their favourite beasts, it is impossible to distinguish either linguistically or on the level of sense between the man and the animal. If Didinga talk about actual animals, they are able to grasp intellectually, to evaluate, and to connect what would seem to be separate categories of social life. Among the Didinga the bovine idiom is a universal idiom which gives relevance and meaningful relations to what they perceive, express and do. In everyday life Didinga have to deal with actual cattle and practical problems.

The bovine idiom gives form and meaning to social facts and situations. Thus sexual relations are always cattle matters. The Didinga say it more drastically: "What girls have is for cattle only." This manner of speaking typically conveys the interweaving of the bovine and social idioms. For example, marriage cannot be defined except in terms of cattle transfers.

Men and women are related to cattle in opposite ways. A man increases his status by his ability to inherit, acquire, and give away cattle. The circulation of cattle increases status. The more cattle a man can give away, the greater his potential for receiving them. A girl can increase her status by marrying early and so helping her family to obtain cattle, because her bride cattle are used to acquire a wife for her full brother. If her full brother can marry soon, the circulation of cattle speeds up. Her family of

[5] 'The stimulus of the chapter "Interest in cattle" in Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940, was most seminal, as was his treatment of the other aspects of the social life of the Nuer. Among many authors, we want to mention here N. Dyson-Hudson, *Karimojong Politics,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966; P. H. Gulliver, *The Family Herds,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955; Godfrey Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961.

[6] M. J. Herskovits, "The cattle complex in East Africa", in *American Anthropologist,* xxvii, 1926, pp. 230–72, 361–80, 494–528, 633–44.

[7] A. Kronenberg, "The Longarim favourite beast", in *Kush,* ix, 1961, PP-258–77.

procreation hope for many daughters for whom they will obtain cattle as bridewealth. Thus men form, and women transform, cattle-relations. Women mean cattle for men, and cattle mean men for women. In exceptional circumstances these socially defined sex roles need not coincide with "natural" sex. It suffices to mention woman-to-woman marriage in this regard. To us it now seems very "natural" that a Didinga girl should fall in love with a bull,[8] or that the lover of a Longarim wife caresses the husband's favourite beast. The cattle-relations of a man are activated through his sex, marriage, kinship, and age-grade relations.

A sexual relation implies that a man exchanges a class or collection of his cattle-relations against the cattle-value of a sexual relation. This transaction gives continuity to his cattle-relations and intensifies them. It is expressed in such a way that it allows the immediate distinction of cattle relations among relatives, because kinship terminology' makes explicit certain categories within the family herds. Since usually only men own cattle, women are materially, and men are idiomatically, associated with cattle. This applies only to sexual relations which lead to cattle transfers. Incest for instance is a contradiction of sexual relations as expressed by cattle, because incestuous sex cannot create a new cattlerelation: if brother and sister committed incest, the brother would have to pay the adultery' fee to himself. Such illegitimate sex cannot be expressed by the bovine idiom and is an act of witchcraft. Sodomy is the most spectacular case, and such a witch is killed immediately by his brothers. The situation is similar if a man remains unmarried and hoards cattle for their own sake. Cattle have to circulate. Otherwise the herd stagnates, is good for nothing, the animals die of old age— *edicay,* "are finished", the Didinga say.[9] Breakdown of circulation is a deliberate waste of cattle (we would say, waste of life). If an elderly unmarried man dies, his body is witchcraft; no one should touch it, and he is pushed with sticks into his grave.

It could be argued that among the Didinga, there are other cattle matters which arc not related to sex. But this argument cannot be sustained. Blood-cattle for example can only be paid between unrelated persons; the blood-cattle compensate the cattle-value of the slain, whose brother marries a wife in his name. Payment of blood-cattle between brothers or other kinsmen would be just as nonsensical as bride-wealth cattle payment in incestuous unions.

If a man wants to have the recognised status of a pater towards children, he has to compensate in cattle the cattlevalue of his wife's fertility by paying bridewealth to her brother. What remains of his herd will be inherited by his sons. It does not matter whether the man from whom I will inherit is my genitor. Pater is a person who can transfer his herd to his sons by inheritance. The sons have cattle-rights in the fertility of their full sisters but not of their paternal half-sisters, for these cattle-rights are defined in relation to the mother of full siblings only. Polygynous marriages are

[8] Kronenberg, *op. cit,* p. 266; Lienhardt, *op. cit,* pp. 17–18.

[9] Kronenberg, *op. cit.,* p. 269.

frequent, and because mothers live together with their children in one house, until they marry, the term "house" is used to indicate the uterine line.[10]

It can happen that a wife gives birth to daughters only. The eldest of the sisters now has to perform the role of a full brother. She inherits the share of the family herd that a full brother would inherit, and because she is female she receives bridewealth cattle on her own marriage as well as her sister's. With all these cattle she now "marries" in a woman-to-woman marriage and plays the role of a pater. She is called "father" by her wife's children, who belong to the patrilineage of their female "pater" and inherit the lineage cattle from her.

A man's full herd derives from two sources: firstly by inheritance from his father, and secondly from the bridewealth received for his sisters. Thus half a man's herd consists of the share which he obtains for his sister's fertility on her marriage. The remaining half is composed of cattle which his father obtained in the same way for his sister, and his father's father obtained for his, and so on. Thus, my sister's fertility approximates the sum of all these shares. If now I marry, I give away half of my herd to my wife's brother, and therefore only half of the cattle which I have received for my sister will be inherited by my sons.

Thus a man's herd is completed on the marriage of his full sister and if he marries, he gives half of this herd away as bridewealth for his wife (or wives). In this way my herd is divided into two parts on my marriage: one half is given for the mother of my children, and half is inherited by my sons. My son will have a complete herd again, when his full sister marries.

We have now presented the barest of ethnographic data, and we want to discover the formal structure of this system. The analysis proceeds "to greater and greater abstractness and logical simplicity; instead of asking what can be defined and deduced from what is assumed to begin with, we ask instead what more general ideas and principles can be found, in terms of which what was our starting-point can be defined or deduced."[11] That is, if we try to understand things in their context, which is what the anthropologist surely does, we have to work on our state of mind as investigators. And that is the procedure of formal logic also.[12] We have to ask the fundamental ethnographic question: how can cultural material be analysed within its own context, free from projections of our own social matrix?

Evans-Pritchard was able to put forward his paradox, which is contradictory on the level of meaning but not as we hope to demonstrate on the level of sense, because he could think about Nuer kinship within the operation-rules of their system. He did not consider the formal relational svstem or the term-by-term substitution of logical constants on the level of sense when using such terms as agnatic, patrilineal, descent through women and so on. Such a consideration is vital to avoid misunderstanding by

[10] Compare Gulliver, *op. cit.,* pp. 49–57.

[11] Russell, *op, cit.*$_9$ p. i.

[12] *Ibid.*

culturally biased persons—as we all are—otherwise the sense and the meaning of those terms might belong to different systems.[13]

To indicate the difference of meaning and sense we give two examples. Morning star and evening star have the same meaning; but they do not have the same sense. Sense here refers to the way the perception of this star is interpreted and associated with other phenomena by people who can communicate, discuss and evaluate the information they perceive. Again, as another example, if we write the number 10, you will say that we have written ten, but if we go on and write

10 — 1 = 1	or	11 + 1 =100

you will say we are mistaken, unless you realize that we are using binary numbers. The difficulty of binary numbers consists only in dissociating from them our standard arbitrary operation-rules and in using unfamiliar ones. For the sake of our later argument we have to dwell on this point for a few moments, and we shall try to explain how these binary numbers work, because here we think lies the key to an 'algebra' of kinship and associated behaviour in traditional societies.

Binary numbers were already used in Ancient Egypt[14] and China, they were rediscovered by Leibnitz, and now they are used to write programmes for computers. Two symbols are used, 1 and 0. The principle is that the postposition of a zero multiplies by two instead of ten; in a sequence every 1 has double the value of its successor or

[13] Translated into anthropological terms, meaning is used here as a particular fact observed by the ethnographer, and sense is its socio-cultural context. Russell, *op. cit.,* p. 25, was influenced by Frege, and we think that it is useful here to quote Frege's definition of meaning and sense: "Es seien a, b, c, die Geraden, welche die Ecken cines Dreiecks mit den Mitten der Gegcnseiten verbinden. Der Schnittpunkt von a und b ist dann derselbe wie dcr Schnittpunkt von b und c. Wir haben also verschiedcne Bezeichnungcn fur denselben Punkt, und diese Namen, ('Schnittpunkt von a und b', 'Schnittpunkt von b und c') deuten zugleich auf die Art des Gegebenseins, und daher ist in dem Satze cine wirkliche Erkenntnis enthalten. Es liegt nun nahe, mit Zeichen (Namen, Wortverbindung, Schriftzeichen) ausser dem Bezeichneten, was die Bcdcutung des Zeichens heissen moge, noch das verbunden zu denken, was ich den Sinn des Zeichens nennen mochte. Es wiirde danach in unserem Beispiele zwar die Bedcutung der Ausdriicke 'der Schnittpunkt von a und b' und 'der Schnittpunkt von b und c' dieselbe scin, aber nicht ihr Sinn... Aus dem Zusammenhange geht hervor, dass ich hier unter 'Zeichen' und 'Namen' irgendeine Bezeichnung verstanden habe, die einen Eigennamen vertritt, deren Bedeutung also ein bestimmter Gegenstand ist (dies Wort im weitesten Umfang genommen), aber kein Begriff und keine Beziehung... Die Bezeichnung eines einzelnen Gegenstandes kann auch aus mehreren Worten oder sonstigen Zeichen bestehen. Der Kiirze wegen mag jede solche Bezeichnung Eigenname gennant werden." Gottlob Frege, '"Uber Sinn und Bedeutung" in *Zeitschrift fur Philosophic und philosophische Kritik,* NF ioo, 1892, pp. 25–50; new edition in Frege, *Funktion, Begriff, Bedeutung* (ed. Gunther Patzig), Gottingen, Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht, 1966, p. 41.

[14] S. R. K. Glanville, *The Legacy of Egypt,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1942. See the chapter on "Science" by R. W. Sloley, p. 168.

conversely half the value of its predecessor.[15] Binary numbers might thus be useful in demonstrating the principles of different kinship systems, if we could develop an adequate algorithm in binary numbers for each system.

We should like to demonstrate, in the analysis of Didinga kinship and associated behaviour which follows, how we can avoid using the individual as the focus of social relations. In discussing kinship, Ego is usually the starting point, but we argue that the notion of Ego already implies a whole system of relevant relations.

The analysis of a kinship system by the method we now use for the Didinga, consists in finding an algorithm based on the proposition that we should dispense with Ego; and further that with respect to his kinship relations every individual consists of collections of characteristics which he or she shares with others. In our binary algorithm these collections of characteristics have different place-values and cardinalities for different categories of individuals, irrespective of the actual number of persons defined by each category. Some categories, in particular cases, may even have no members.

To discuss relevant relations among the Didinga, we have to explain what we mean by binary progression and regression. If we draw a line, we can recognise relations between its parts, by dividing it into classes or categories of halves and halves of halves. We thus obtain a compact binary progression[16] (see Fig. 1).

A binary regression or "thinning out" is the contrary movement in the other direction, in order to define subclasses of the first set. We indicate them by writing zeros, because we deal with subclasses within the same class. Thus 10 indicates that we remain within the first class, i.e. the first half of our line, but that we deal with its second half only (see Fig. 2), and any section of our line can be defined in that way (see Fig. 3).

Didinga define the kinship of men in relation to the cattle which a man inherits from his pater, and in relation to the cattle which a man and certain categories of his relatives have to give to certain categories of a woman's relatives, for this man

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[15] The place values of binary numbers are

| |
| instead of |
| in decadic numbers, or to put it in a relational way as fractions: |
| 1/2 1/4 1/8 1/16 ... 1/00 |
| instead of 1/10 1/100 1/1000 1/10000 ...1/00 |

in decimal fractions. Because we will use relations, i.c. fractions only, we can dispense with a comma. The binary numbers used in this paper are binary fractions which define the numbers and relations of parts but not of the one-class. "If circumstances made it practical to calculate differently than we do, i.e. because things multiplied or disappeared regularly upon being counted, we should adapt arithmetic calculations to the circumstance": Alice Ambrose, "Wittgenstein on some questions in foundations of mathematics", in K. T. Fann (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: the Man and his Philosophy,* New York, Dell Publishing Co., 1967, p. 273.

[16] The last defined, i.e. the smallest, part of this progression is the computing unit. To its right there is an undefined section of the same size as the computing unit. If we should add it to our progression, we would obtain the one-class and would have thus an entity, but we would lose any notion of parts and relation among parts, i.e. our notion of order. Therefore an entity is neither more than the sum of its parts nor equal to the sum of its parts, because the notion of entity and the notion of parts exclude each other.

to become the pater of the woman's children. In discussing bridewealth, Didinga first have to consider what categories of relatives of the groom should give cattle and what categories of relatives of the bride should receive cattle. This part of the bridewealth discussion has nothing to do with the numbers of persons and cattle in these categories.

Didinga explained these categories of kinsmen to us again and again: (i) "peoples of the house", *et cik cyeso,* (ii) *midini,* and (iii) *oto.* There is no fourth term, because kinship ceases to be recognised among the descendants of *oto.* These three categories of groom's and bride's kinsmen give and receive cattle, irrespective of the numbers of persons involved. Each of these three categories contains persons of lesser or greater uterine distance, and the set of full brothers nearest to the groom or the bride is the one that becomes necessarily, while the others remain potentially, involved in bridewealth exchange. Theoretically all persons in the uterine line would belong to a single "house", but in practice, after three or four generations mother's mother's mother's brother is dead and sister's daughter's daughter's children are not yet born. The problem of the principles underlying the Didinga definition of these categories of kinsmen is the core of the following investigation.

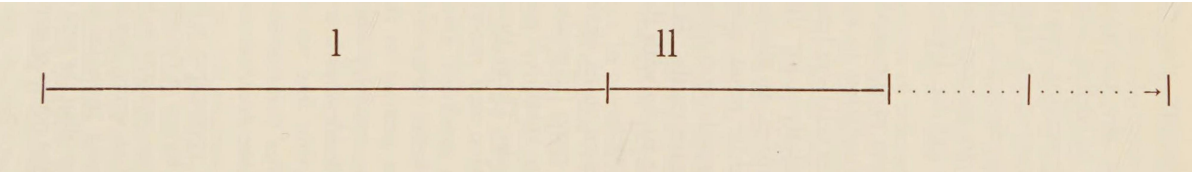

Fig. 1. The first and second classes or categories of a binary progression, written 1 and 11. The arrow indicates the direction of the progression.

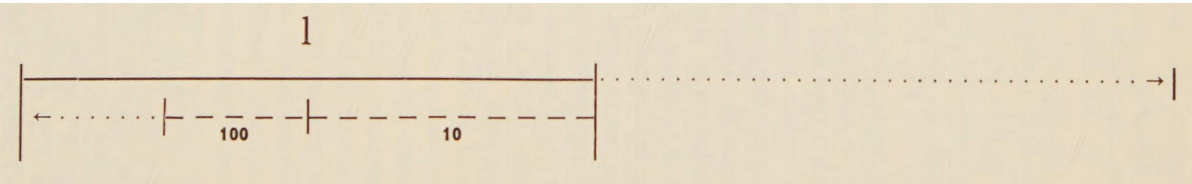

Fig. 2. Two classes of a binary regression, written 10 and 100, within the first class of a binary progression, written 1. The arrows indicate the directions of the progression and regression.

A man's herd is composed of the following shares or categories: first, what he obtains on his sister's marriage; second, inherited cattle which his father obtained for *his* sister; third, inherited cattle which his father's father obtained for *his* sister, and so on. Didinga formulate this by referring to the cattle which a man has received from his house, from his father's house, from his father's father's house and so on. We can demonstrate these categories of cattle by a compact binary progression 11111, etc.

Every herd is built up in this way, and so reflects Ego with all its relevant categories (see Fig. 4).

If a man wants to marry, he has to exchange half of his herd as bridewealth for his wife. This bridewealth share does not simply consist in handing over the share of cattle which he obtained for his sister: the numbers of cattle handed over are similar, but theii- derivation is various. He gives half of the share which he obtained for his sister, half of the share which his father obtained for *his* sister and whose half of it he has inherited, and so on. By doing so a man divides his herd again into two parts: one half of the herd is given for the mother of his children, and the remaining half is inherited by his sons. The sons will have a complete herd again, if their sisters marry. (The binary regression within one class refers to SiCh, SiDaCh, SiDaDaCh or to Mo, MoMo, MoMoMo, etc. But at any step of the regression, there may be another progression, e.g. SiSoCh MoFaSi.)

We shall try to show how this is done, by tracing the placevalue and cardinality of a common share in a herd among the descendants of siblings. The bridewealth which a brother obtains for his full sister is the maximum of an asymmetrical cattle relation. The descendants of a brother and sister will be connected with this maximum share in cattle, but unrelated people who marry them, adding foreign cattle-shares, thin out this maximum relation.

This process of binary progressions and regressions can be made operational by a simple method: for a set of full siblings, a male genealogical link is a progression, a female genealogical link is a regression. Thus if we draw a paradigm of kinship of a set of siblings, Ego is shown in all its partial relations: male genealogical links are indicated by 1 and female links by 0, and we obtain the values shown in Fig. 5. To find out what category of kinship exists between two persons, a Di-dinga has to ask only whether the genealogical links are men or women, brothers or sisters.

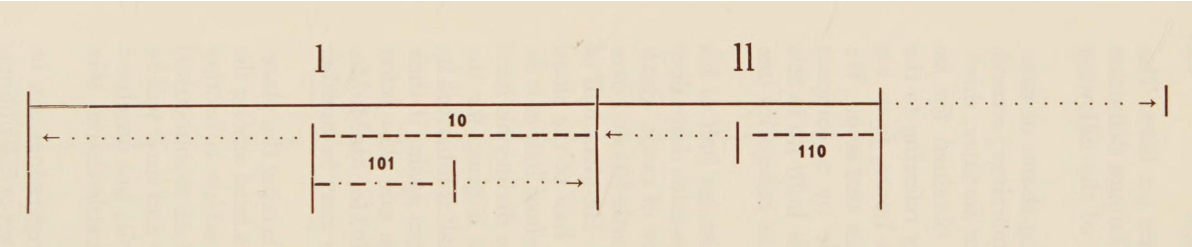

Fig. 3. Two classes of a binary progression, written 1 and 11. Within the first class there is a binary regression, written 10, and within this sub-class there is a further sub-sub-class of a binary progression indicated by 101. Within the second class of the binary progression, written 11, there is a sub-class of a regression, written 110. The arrows indicate the directions of the progressions and regressions.

The numbers of this paradigm look like natural binary numbers, and although they order all natural numbers they are topological numbers. We do not discuss here the

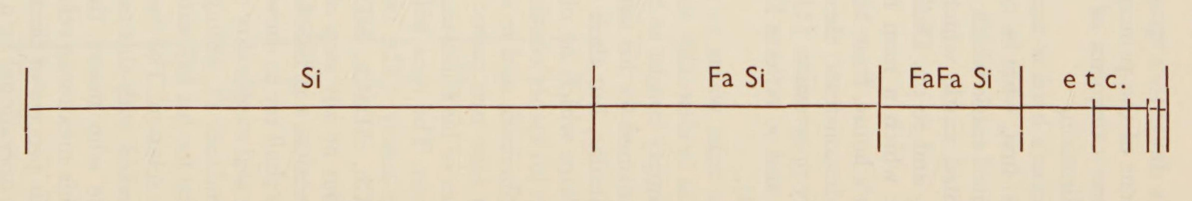

Fig. 4. Sequence of cattle-shares in a complete herd. In binary numbers they would be indicated by 1, 11, 111, etc.

fascinating questions which lead us into the hoary problems of the theory of numbers and logical types, but we wish to show the practical use of binary topological numbers for an ethnographer, who can now deduce the categories of kinship which are recognised in this system. Every relation occurs just once. The relation So:Fa is thus represented by 11, the relation children: Mo by 10. The basic relation between brother and sister is represented by 1. The series of ratios can be divided again and again into two parts, of which one wholly precedes the other, and of which the first has no last term (binary progression), while the second has no first term (binary regression).

We can see already that the relation in the uterine line (regression) refers always to the same class or the same subclasses of a particular herd of cattle. Therefore all the individuals involved in this class fall under the term of one "house". It has nothing to do with our notion of generations, for this term conveys the information that the share in cattle which a brother has received for his sister belongs to the same class of cattle which sister's son receives for sister's daughter etc. An anthropologist will immediately realise that we have here a Crow-type skewing of generations among cognates, not with Lounsbury's skewing rule as a postulate,[17] but as an inherent part of this algorithm, and there is no difficulty in finding with a minimum of binary digits any term referring to cognates with the same speed and accuracy as Didinga do.

In sister's uterine line the cardinality remains constant, only its place value changes, while in the "agnatic" line cardinality and place value change analogously. The "skewing" of generations arises out of the switching from progression to regression. Within the last defined category of an "agnatic" progression a female link is a regression, and all its successors remain within the range of this "agnatic" category.

The relationships result from the cardinalities and place values of the binary numbers as shown in Fig. 5. The place values indicate the number of generations in our bilateral use of this word, while a cardinality expresses the common shares in a herd, i.e. one class oi' category. The kinship terminology of "house", *midini* and *oto* refers to the same class of a binary progression, which has for two persons of reference a different place value and can be thinned out differently. These shares in common are the

[17] Floyd G. Lounsbury, "A formal account of the Crow- and Omaha- type kinship terminologies" p. 357, in Ward H. Goodenough (ed.), *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology,* New York, McGraw-Hill, 1964.

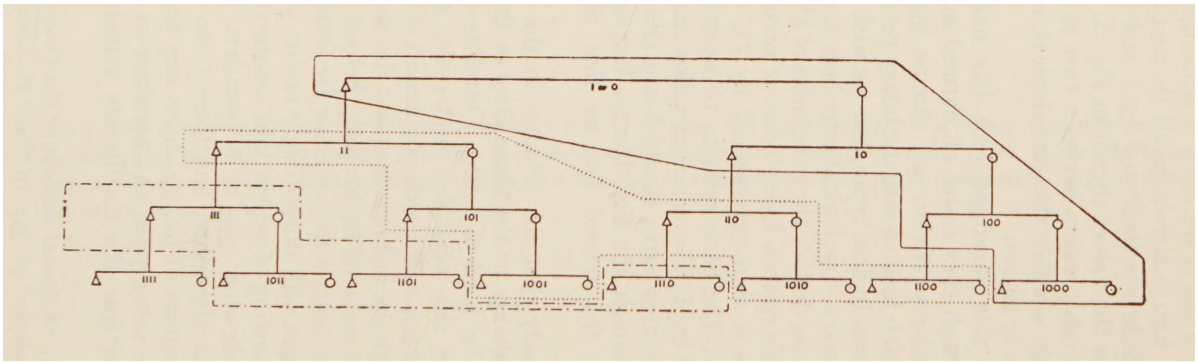

Fig. 5. Paradigm of kinship of a set of siblings. Ego is shown in all its partial relations. The Crow-type skewing of cognates is indicated by three different lines.

bridewealth cattle given for a woman, or in other words the cattle value of a woman's fertility.

The range of the above mentioned three kinship terms are expressed in our binary numbers as follows:

(i) "people of the house": The class of reference is full siblings, indicated by 1, and the field of relations lies between $1 < 11$, or

cardinality + place value $= 0 < 1 < 11$

(ii) *midini:* Children of males of the above "people of the house" and the uterine line of each single set of full siblings. The class of reference is full siblings in relation to their FaSi, as indicated by 11, and the field of their relations lies between $10 < 11 < 111$, or

cardinality + place value $=10<ll<lll$

(iii) *oto*: children of male *midini* and the "people of the house" of each single set of full siblings. The class of reference is full-siblings in relation to their father's father's sister, as indicated by 111, and the field of their relations lies between $110 < 111 < 1111$ or

cardinality + place value $= 110 < 111 < 1111$

When discussing bridewealth, Didinga refer to these categories of people. If a man marries, the categories nearest in the uterine line of the "peoples of the house", of *midini* and *oto* have to give cattle, and if a girl marries, these categories of her kinsmen receive cattle.

To sum up, the basic principle of this system is that a woman is the mother of her children. The ability to have children is inherited by the daughters. The sons inherit lineage cattle from their pater and cattle rights in the fertility of their sisters, which they use together with inherited cattle to exchange for kinship with the children of their wives. The operation-rule, in terms of our binary algorithm, consists in the preposition of the cattle-shares which are obtained for the sister, and the postposition of the inherited cattle-shares from father's sister, father's father's sister, etc. Thus

my uterinity has the first cardinality, father's uterinity the second, father's father's uterinity the third and so on. Uterinity is a share in half a herd of cattle, and agnatic descent means in this context the approximate sum total of different uteri-nities.

This principle illuminates the structure of the Didinga patrician, whose herd is built up in this way because it is exogamous.[18] Therefore we can now make a statement about the Didinga, similar to that of Evans-Pritchard about the Nuer, that although lineages seem to be patrilineal as patrilineal can be, descent is traced through women, and it is because the agnatic principle as a sum of uterinities in the male line is unchallenged in Didinga society, that the tracing of descent through women is so prominent.

We suggest that a variation of the algorithm we have used for the Didinga could be applied to the Nuer material. At least we hope now that those who have not lived among East African peoples can better understand Evans-Pritchard's paradox, and might even find it evident how culturally specific operation-rules generate regularities of social behaviour. From empirical data we can extract such operation-rules and translate them into logical constants which give general relevance to ethnographic data.

[18] A patri-clan is an order of uterinities in the male lines, and the computing unit is the sister of the clan-founder.

V. Proverbs and Social Values In a Northern Sudanese Village

Ahmed S. al-Shahi

I

This paper attempts to show how proverbs and sayings are related to and reflect the value system of a particular community.[1] These proverbs and sayings have been collected from Nuri village but they may have wider application among Arabic speaking communities in the Sudan. Attention to the study of oral tradition as a subject in its own right has become popular in recent years. This new concern with the study of oral literature is reflected in an increasing number of publications. The lead in this has been taken by the *Oxford Library of African Literature* under the editorship of Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard and others.

It is my intention here to illustrate certain ideas concerning "collective expressions". My contribution owes its inspiration to an article by Professor Evans-Pritchard in which he discusses obscenities as group expressions with a social significance and a function in specific situations.[2] The proverbs and sayings with which I am concerned are used by individuals in such contexts as those of insult, abuse or joking, and they express certain collective ideas and values which distinguish the various social groups in Nuri community.

In a rigidly classed community, such as that of Nuri, expressions concerning the origin, intellect, and moral and physical characteristics of people tend to emphasise the existing group distinctions. These expressions suggest, as will be shown later, certain stereotyped categories into which people fall. They represent what people think of one another and they help to maintain the exclusiveness of each social category and its related social values. In the particular case with which I am dealing these proverbs and sayings reflect the onc-sidcdness of a community in which the socially superior group

[1] I am grateful to the Ford Foundation for granting me funds to carry out fieldwork among the Shaigiya tribe of the Northern Sudan, and to the University of Khartoum for facilitating my research. Further, my wife Anne, Dr. F. C. T. Moore and Sayid Al-Haj 'Abdallah Bilal have kindly read this paper and made valuable suggestions.

[2] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "Some collective expressions of obscenity in Africa" in *The Position of Women in Primitive Societies and Other Essays in Social Anthropology,* London, Faber and Faber, 1965.

seeks to maintain its position of dominance by reminding the other lower-status social groups of the differences between them.

II

Nuri village is situated in the Northern Province of the Sudan on the left bank of the River Nile at a point where the river flows in a southwesterly direction and takes a gradual bend to the east on the upstream side towards the Fourth Cataract. About nine miles due west lies Merowe, the ancient site of Napata and the present administrative centre of Merowe Rural Council. On the opposite bank of the river lies Karima, the commercial centre of Merowe Rural Council and the terminus of the railway line from Khartoum. Nuri village lies in a basin which prior to 1917 was irrigated by the traditional method of water-wheels, *saivagi* (singular: *sagiya).* In that year mechanical irrigation was introduced resulting in a physical expansion of the village and in its present prosperity. Nowadays, the economy of the village depends on cash crops, citrus fruits, mangoes and dates, which are exported to the internal markets of the Sudan. Another landmark in the history of Nuri was the flood of 1946 which destroyed most of the village and forced people to go and live on higher ground, the *Jabal.* Thus a new settlement was formed by the name of *Ahl al-Jabal,* the people of the hill. The Government tried to establish a new residential area on the *Jabal* away from the river in order to develop the land in the village proper which previously had been used for housing.

This was opposed: Nuri people did not wish to live among *'abid, 'arab* and *halab.*[3] who are considered of a lower social standing. It is from this time that the village came to be divided into two physically and socially separate communities. The village proper is divided into a number of settlements, *hilal* (singular: *hilla}* which are scattered among the tree gardens and palm groves. The inhabitants of these *hilal* I call Nuri people, as a distinct social group whose membership in the village proper is determined by kinship and land ownership.

Nuri village and the *Jabal* settlement have a total population of 4,104 and there are 46 *hilal* with an average of 4.9 persons per house.[4] The population is divided in the following way:

Nuri people 3,461

'Arab 346

[3] *'Arab* (singular: *'arabi}*: nomads; in Nuri village they are semi-nomadic. Sometimes they are called *'arab ruhal. 'Abid* (singular: *'abd}:* ex-slaves; a female ex-slave is called *khadiirr,* for young children the terms *farkh* (boy) and *farkha* (girl) are used. Among themselves ex-slaves refer to one another as *Sudani* (male) and *sudaniya* (female). *Halab* (singular: *halabi)*: tinkers; a female tinker is called *halabiya.* The number of *halab* in Nuri fluctuates because of their movements following trade in the area.

[4] These figures are according to the census which I carried out in April-May, 1967.

'Abid. 281

Halab..... 10

Not every inhabitant of Nuri village is in close touch with what goes on in the village; people living in one part of the village may rarely see others, except on social occasions, who reside at the opposite end of the village and who have their fields in that direction. This is one side of the residential pattern; the other side is that people living within a *hilla* have frequent informal everyday contacts. The *hilal* are connected by a number of small paths and there are three main roads linking Nuri with neighbouring villages. The area covered by the settlements and fields of Nuri village is quite extensive; at maximum point the width of the village is about two miles and the length is about three miles.

Nuri village has the following services: two markets, three clubs, one dispensary, a police station, two nursery schools, three primary schools, two intermediate schools, a post office and telephone exchange, a ferry boat, a rest house and a Government experimental farm. Several factors have been responsible for the development of these services: increase in population, greater prosperity due to the introduction of cash crops, and education. Nuri village has a *shaikh,* headman, who is elected by the villagers and whose function is to collect taxes on crops, trees and livestock for Merowe Rural Council. He represents the Native Administration, *al-iddra al-ahliya,* and he has administrative, but no judicial, powers.

Nuri is connected with two other villages, Jereif and Sagai, mainly through the pump-scheme established in 1917. The total land area irrigated by this pump-scheme is nearly 4,500 feddans[5] of which Nuri constitutes half. Land is the basis of the economic and social life of the people; it is a source of income, a symbol of status and a security. The transfer of land holds certain implications: to buy land gives a man prestige but to sell land, even out of necessity, is shameful. Because of its value in the economic sphere, individuals are insisting on their inherited rights to land which is resulting in land fragmentation; this, to some extent, has been a hindrance to agricultural development.

Now I shall discuss briefly the social composition of Nuri community as a whole. I will deal with each social group separately.

Nuri people: they inhabit the village proper and belong to seven tribal sections: (i) the Tsaiyab who arc Shaigiya and who regard themselves as the 'owners' of the village, *ahi al-balad',* (ii) the Kawarir who are from the Jamu'iya tribe; (iii) the 'Oragab who arc 'Abbasiya; (iv) the Hamadtiyab who arc from the Bakriya tribe; (v) the Musallamab who arc from the Ja'aliyin tribe; (vi) the Kinana from the Kinana tribe; and (vii) the Nuba who claim to be the original settlers of the area before the coming of the Arabs. Thus the social group of Nuri people is composed of members from various tribes. 1'he Kawarir, 'Oragab and Hamadtlvab came to the village successively as men of religion and established Koranic schools, *khaldwi* (singular: *khalwd)',* they intermarried with

[5] I feddan = 4,200 square metres = 1.038 acres.

the ‘Isaiyab and acquired land through these marriages and by gifts. Each section inhabits a particular part of the village but sections may own plots of land in other parts of the village. Marriages between members of different sections do take place but it is preferable that people should marry within their own sections, partly to keep land and property within the section. Differences in economic, religious and political status exist between the sections. For example, the ‘Isaiyab are the wealthiest and most influential section in the village, whereas the Kawarir, ‘Oragab and Hamad-tiyab are regarded as the religious leaders of the village. Recently, national politics came to play its role in dividing these sections and the members of particular sections. Alignment to different political parties cut across tribal sections but these divisions did not upset, to any great extent, the social and economic relationships between the members of a particular section.

‘Abid: they came to be incorporated into the Nuri community through three channels; they were acquired through the Shaigiya raids in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they were bought in open markets, or they came fleeing from their former masters in neighbouring areas. Some people in Nuri still remember how the *‘abid* used to be brought chained to the village and then sold. The community of *‘abid* is the only *Jabal* group which has been in long association with Nuri people. The majority of them live on the *Jabal,* but there are still some who live with their ex-masters in the village proper. There are a few individuals who own land or who have trees given to them by their ex-masters and registered in then’ names. Although slavery was abolished after the re-occupation of the Sudan, the *‘abid* still have obligations towards their ex-masters. On social occasions such as marriages, circumcisions, funerals, etc., the *‘abid* render help and their presence is expected. Publicly and directly, Nuri people do not refer to the *‘abid* as such, but in private they may refer to an individual as ‘our slave’, *‘abidnd.* The social stigma attached to ‘*abid* has led the younger generation to leave the village and seek residence and employment in the big towns. Even the older generation *of‘abid* criticise Nuri people for not having *hinniya,* affection and help, such as their forebears showed towards the *‘abid.* When the exodus of the *‘abid* from the village to the

Jabal took place after the flood of 1946 a feeling of independence prevailed among them. This feeling led to the rise of Sa‘id al-Mahi as a leader of the *‘abid* in the 1950s. He defended them, dealt with their problems and represented them in various situations. Further, to assert this independence, he established a *khalwa* and brought *a. Jaki* to teach the children of the *‘abid.* His actions were aimed at establishing some form of equality with Nuri people. However, after his death in the early 1960s the *khalwa* was abandoned and the movement collapsed.

Halab: the present families of *halab* in the Nuri community have been there since the turn of this century. Before their departure to the *Jabal* they used to live with Nuri people. There is one family of *halab* who have a number of trees in Nuri village registered in their name. On account of this registration and other historical associations, this particular family live permanently in the village but most *halab* lead a nomadic

life. Though this cannot be established with any certainty, the *halab* claim that they have come from Upper Egypt and relate themselves to the Ja'afra tribe.[6]

'Arab: in one context to claim descent from an *'arab* tribe is a matter of pride; in another context, to be an *'arab* indicates a nomadic way of life and an associated inferior social status. (Conversely, nomads look down upon sedentary agriculturalists.) The present semi-nomadic group of *'arab* in Nuri live on the *Jabal* and are composed of members of various tribes: Kababish, Manasir, Suwarab (a Shaigiya section) and Ja'aliyin. Their number has increased recently because of the greater economic opportunities resulting from the economic changes in Nuri. The *'arab* help in various agricultural activities, they work as carriers of goods, and they supply livestock to the village. Some of them still return to the Bayuda Desert during the rainy season, *kharif,* taking their herds with them. Others among them work as middlemen selling livestock and they move from one market to another. The wealthiest have managed to acquire the right of cultivation, *tazri'a*[7] over some plots of land in the village, although this intrusion is resented by Nuri people.

These four groups in Nuri community differ in status. In social terms Nuri people hold the highest status and the *Jabal* people are the lower-status social group. Within the *Jabal* community the three groups are graded accordingly: first the *'arab,* second the *'abid,* and lowest the *halab.* This gradation is based upon social rather than economic considerations. The *'abid* have a higher social status than the *halab* because of their long historical association with Nuri people. The *'arab* have a higher social status than the *'abid* and *halab* because they have an origin, *mu'assalin,* i.e. they belong to known tribes which the other two groups do not. In economic terms *'arab, 'abid* and *halab* individuals have been able to acquire wealth but this material wealth has not enabled them to improve their social standing in relation to Nuri people. It is stated categorically that a poor Nuri person is ranked higher socially speaking than a wealthy *'arabi, 'abd* or *halabi.* The significant feature of the system is that status is attached to groups rather than to individuals.

There are various principles underlying this system of social stratification which I shall now proceed to discuss in more detail.

Occupation: Nuri people are sedentary agriculturalists in the main, but some of them have other occupations as well— traders, merchants, shopkeepers, etc. With increasing prosperity it has become customary for Nuri people to employ manual labourers, *tard-bla* (singular: *turbal),* to work the land for them. The *'arab* are the principal livestock suppliers of the village and some of them work as animal traders, *sabdbi,* and others as carriers of goods, *jamali.* Merchants, shopkeepers and farmers need transport for their goods and the *'arab* use their camels for this purpose. The *'arab* also help to pick the

[6] The *halab* claim that they came from Upper Egypt and MacMichael makes reference to the "Shurafa el Ga'afira" who were traders. See H. A. MacMichacl, *A History of the Arabs in the Sudan,* 2nd edition, London, Frank Cass, 1967, Vol. I, p. 142.

[7] *Tazri'a* is a contract by which the ownership of the land is not transferred but only the rights of cultivation for a specified length of time in return for an agreed proportion of the crop.

dates and fruit during the harvest season and receive wages in cash and in kind for their services. There are a few *'arab* who hold rights to cultivate land in Nuri village by the *tazri'a* but Nuri people discourage this as they do not want their land to go to strangers. The *'abid* help in agricultural tasks and they are given small plots of land to cultivate by their ex-masters on the basis of crop-sharing. Recently, some *'abid* who have bettered themselves economically have come to hold rights to cultivate land by the *tazri'a* and some others have become traders and merchants. Most of the younger generation of *'abid* leave the village and seek work elsewhere. Some of their women engage in making the native spirit from dates, *'aragi,* in order to earn cash but this is prohibited by law. The *halab* men work as blacksmiths, an occupation despised by Nuri people; they repair tools, make knives, sickles, charcoal stoves, etc. They wander from one village to another following market days in the area. Cash is paid for their services and sometimes their payment is in kind. For example, a *halabi* may render services to a farmer and in return the farmer will alow him to cultivate a small plot of land in fodder crops. *Halab* women, to supplement their livelihood, tour houses in villages and wander in markets selling cookery utensils, clothes, shoes, perfumes and ointments. In the economic system, then, there is an interdependence between Nuri people and the three lower-status groups; the latter are indeed indispensable to Nuri people.

Marriage'. Marriages between Nuri people and members of the three lower-status social groups are strongly disapproved of and discouraged by Nuri people. Similarly, marriages between members of the lower-status groups are disapproved of by these groups. Thus marriage among each of the four groups is largely endogamous. There are, however, a few exceptions: Nuri men have married some *'abid* women and *'arab* men have married some Nuri women. These marriages are frowned upon, though the children acquire status in the social group of their fathers. Though some of the *'arab* are Shaigiya by tribal affiliation, this makes no difference to their chances of marrying a Nuri woman.

Residence: Nuri people occupy the village proper and land is owned privately by them. The exceptions to this are some *'abid* who are still living among their ex-masters. The majority of *'abid* and all the *'arab* and *halab* live on the *Jabal* because they do not own land in the village upon which they could build houses. Recently, a few Nuri people have moved to live on the *Jabal* because of population pressure on land in Nuri village but this change of residence is not favoured by Nuri people. There is one lineage group of Nuri people who have stayed on the *Jabal* after the 1946 flood, but they live in isolation.

Social occasions'. Besides the economic interdependence between Nuri people and the three lower-status groups, many individuals have *mu-dmala* relationships: contributions, mostly in cash and sometimes in kind, are made at marriages, circumcisions, funerals, etc. These *mu'dmala* relationships bind members of the different groups in a system of reciprocity. The function of these exchanges is to assist people at times of

heavy expenditure. Nuri people attend the social occasions of those with whom they have *mu'dmala* relationships among the lower-status groups and vice versa.

Colour'. There are various shades of skin colour among members of the Nuri community and social stigma is attached to two of these: *azrag,* black, and *ahmar,* light. The first is associated with the *'abid* and the second with the *halab',* these two groups stand out from the rest of the population in respect of their skin colour. Among Nuri people themselves there is a variety of skin colour but it is rude to refer to a Nuri person as being *azrag* even though his skin is of this colour because such a reference equates him with the *'abid.* Moreover, there are some '*abid* whose skin colour is *ahmar,* similar to that of the *halab,* but they are considered as *'abid.* In marriages within each group skin colour does not constitute a barrier; it is simply a further distinguishing feature of members of two of the social groups which make up the Nuri community.

Religion and politics'. Although *'arab, halab* and *'abid* observe the rituals of Islam, yet they do not participate in the religious life of Nuri people. They are lax about attending religious ceremonies held by Nuri villagers even if they are invited. The avenues for achieving power and authority in the village are also blocked to them; no member of any one of these groups would be elected to a position of authority in the village. However, they are called upon to lend support when a Nuri person stands for election to a position of power. Indeed, the votes of members of these groups were much sought after in the 1968 General Election because there was a delicate balance of power between the two candidates who stood for election in the Southern Merowe Constituency. Since the participation of members of these groups is called upon only in times of need, they show indifference to what happens in village affairs.

Furthei'more, their physical separation from the village proper makes communication and participation difficult.

III

The proverbs and sayings which will be listed in the next section of this paper convey certain themes which support some of the principles of social differentiation already mentioned. I will take each theme separately using proverbs and sayings as illustration.

Descent and origin: Slavery is viewed as a hereditary element which denotes a certain type of personality and an ascribed social status. The descent and origin of an *'abd* mean that he can never better his social standing even though he may be able to improve his economic position. *'Abid* and *halab* have no sense of 'belonging' and they have no certain affiliation; they are not *muassalin,* people of known descent. This theme is illustrated in the proverbs, 'He is a slave through and through', and 'His grandfather was a slave, a hundred years later he reverts to being a slave'. There is another proverb in general use which conveys related values: 'Give your son an uncle'. The particular uncle in question is the mother's brother who has various obligations

towards his sister's children. If the father is dead, if he is negligent, or if he is absent from the village, the mother's brother assumes the responsibilities of educating his sister's children, of providing financial support, food and clothing, of looking after them in times of trouble or difficulties, and sometimes of having them to live with him. Further, a mother's brother should be *hurr,* free, and *mu' as sal,* a man of known descent.

Inferior social position'. The lower social status of *'abid* and *halab* is closely linked to the previous theme. There is a proverb equating the low price of the *'abd* with his inferior social position: ' The slave's price is a bag of rice'. The economic dependence and comparative poverty of the *'abd* is indicated in the proverb, 'He is a slave and let him marry at the same time as his master'. On the one hand, it costs the *'abd* nothing if he marries at the same time as his master; and on the other hand, the marriage of an *'abd* costs his master very little because he is not worthy of lavish festivities in view of his inferior social status. Another proverb, 'A slave has no slippers except the thorn and no cap but the sun', suggests that any person of respectability should wear something on his feet and cover his head in public; but the *'abd* is not worthy of these signs of social acceptance on account of his inferiority. It is impossible for an *'abd* to hold a position of power and authority because the traditional system of allocation does not permit this. The proverb, 'It is a blot on the settlement to have a slave for its headman' implies that the mind and behaviour of an *'abd* are not equal to those of a 'free' man and his advice is not worth listening to; it does not refer to a real situation. This proverb may be said about anyone who is thought unworthy of the position which he holds in society.

Halab are looked upon as people with a different code of behaviour and as social outcasts in the same way as *'abld* and *'arab.* Physically and socially it is thought undesirable by Nuri people to incorporate *'arab* and *halab* into the community: 'Tinkers, nomads, lepers and mice, may God keep their homes far from us'. Just as marriages are not made between Nuri people and *halab,* so is sexual intercourse between members of these groups met with disapproval. It is thought to cause pollution, *najasa.* Hence the proverb, 'If you have intercourse with a (female) tinker you will not be clean for forty days until you have scrubbed yourself with a red brick'. Not only Nuri people, but also *'arab* and *'abid,* look down upon the *halab.* Among Nuri people, *'arab* and *'abid,* the following is said to someone who begs money, speaks loudly or shouts, is a coward, tells a lie, or walks with his wife publicly, 'Are you a tinker?'

Small-mindedness, lack of understanding and stupidity: Irrespective of the generations which have passed between an *'abd* and his forefathers, and of the various changes in their lives, an *'abd* is regarded as no different from his forefathers in understanding and he is constantly reminded of them. 'You have no more understanding than your grandfathers'. The *'abid* also use this proverb among themselves but in a rather different sense. They think that they are better than their forefathers and the proverb is used to imply that an *'abd* should know better. Nuri people consider that actions done by an *'abd,* which in normal circumstances would be disapproved of, cannot be

taken seriously. If he is caught red-handed, he is not looked upon as being responsible; but it is thought that he came to act in this way because his forebears are known to have behaved in the same manner. Hence the proverb, 'Do not put the blame on him whose grandmother is a slave'. Further, it is thought that the mind of an *'abdis* static: 'A slave's mind does not function till midnight'. This proverb probably refers to a time when water-wheels were in use and the *"abid* were responsible for their working. There were four main shifts, one of which ended at midnight. The proverb implies that an *'abd* does not think while he is engaged in the monotonous functioning of the water-wheel, but he is ready to talk and exercise his mental faculties after midnight when everyone else is asleep. So an *'abd* has no opportunity to improve his mind. Another proverb which expresses related values suggests that however much something is explained to an *'abd* and instructions given to him to carry out a task, he cannot perform it properly. 'A slave understands a beating and he does not come to his senses without one'. It is thought that an *'abd* does not learn things in the normal way; but he is regarded as an unintelligent person who keeps repeating his mistakes and only pressure can make him return to his senses.

'Arab are also thought of as stupid people; if an *'arabi* is told to do something he invariably makes a mistake. Hence the saying, 'O nomad! Your brain is like that of your camel'.

Loyalty, submission and lack of perseverance: An *'ahd* is thought to follow his emotions which guide his actions, rather than his intellect, and there is a proverb to this effect: 'The slave follows his heart'. If he were to think in a rational way, then his attachment to his master would come to an end; for it is the heart of an *'abd* which binds him to his master. If an *'abd* is told that his master is exploiting him, he will deny this and show contentment with the relationship. He is expected to obey his master and he should not go against the wishes of the latter; submissiveness is a quality demanded from an *'abd.* Hence the proverb, 'The female slave of the man of religion is obliged to pray'. In general, women are not expected to perform their religious duties with the same rigour as men. This proverb implies that although the female slave is less strict in the performance of her religious obligations, she must nevertheless obey her master. It is also used generally when someone is compelled to undertake a task which he does not want to do, but he has no choice in the matter. *''Abid* are considered to lack patience and perseverance as the following proverb suggests, 'She finished grinding most of the grain and when only a small part was left she threw herself into the river'.

'Abid can be trusted because of their emotional attachment to their masters, whereas *'arab* cannot be trusted with material goods or women: 'There is no safety with a nomad'.

In retaliation, *'arab, 'abid* and *halab* use sayings among themselves which attribute certain characteristics to Nuri people. They say, 'The Shaigiya are unstable'; 'The Shaigiya deceive one another'; 'The Shaigiya betray one another'; 'The Shaigiya are fooled easily'. In reality, within the community of Nuri people there is bickering, conflict

and friction Which can be observed openly; but the lower-status social groups tend to keep their problems and disputes to themselves and appear, at least outwardly, united.

IV

The following proverbs and sayings about *'abid* are used by Nuri people, *'arab* and *halab:*

(I) *'Abdan li (la) ga'r al-gadah*[8]

He is a slave through and through.

The literal translation of this proverb is:

He is a slave to the bottom of the wooden bowl.

(II) Al-jiddu[9] tiya[10]

In tamma al-miya

Yarja'a li tiya

His grandfather was a slave A hundred years later He reverts to being a slave.

Other proverbs in general use express the same underlying idea:

Al-irg dassas The root goes deep.

In tar al-samayd hu 'abd Even if he reaches heaven position) he is still a slave.

(III) *Jibtafahm ajdddak (jidudak)*

You have no more understanding than your grandfathers.

(IV) *Md biyitwakadh al-habubtu*[11] *khddim*

Do not put the blame on him whose grandmother is a slave.

(V) *Fahmufahm al-yadugg al-tuza*[12]

His understanding is that of the drummer.

(VI) *Al-abd mukhu yaji al-sa'a ithna'ashr*[13]

A slave's mind does not function until midnight.

(VII) *Al-'abdfug galbu*

The slave follows his heart.

(VIII) *Wad girf*[14] *in dagguhu 'arif*

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[8] *Gadah:* a wooden bowl used for food or milk; it is rarely used nowadays.

[9] *Jidd:* a grandfather, either father's father or mother's father; also used as a term of address to any male of that generation.

[10] *Tiya:* another term for an ex-slave.

[11] *Habuba'.* a grandmother, either father's mother or mother's mother; also used as a term of address to any female of that generation.

[12] *Tuza:* a small longitudinal drum beaten only by *'abid* and brought by them to the area. Until recently, *'abid* used to beat these drums at Mcrowe on festive occasions. Nowadays, the local type of drum, *nuggiira,* is beaten usually by *'abid.*

[13] There were four shifts for the working of the *sdgiya,* water-wheel: *daghashaivi,* from midnight until morning; *subhdivi,* from the morning until noon; *duhrawi,* from noon until sunset; *'ishdivi,* from sunset until midnight.

[14] *Girf:* the bark of a tree or the skin of a fruit. *Wad* is an abbreviation of *walad* (son). *Wad girj* is

Wa in khaluhu rayu tilif

A slave understands a beating

And he does not come to his senses without one.

(IX) *Tahanat al-muW*[15] *'ind al-tasi waga'at al-bahr*

She finished grinding most of the grain and when only a small part was left she threw herself into the river.

(X) *Al-abd rds malak muri (or tasa) 'aish* The slave's price is a bag of rice.

(XI) *Al-abd na'lu al-diraisa*

Wa tdgitu al-shams

The slave has no slippers except the thorn And no cap but the sun.

(XII) *Sajam al-hilla al-dalila 'abd*

It is a blot on the settlement to have a slave for its headman.

(XIII) *Hu 'abd wa al-ya'ris ma'a sidu*

He is a slave and let him marry at the same time as his master.

(XIV) *Majbura khadim al-fagi 'ala al-sald* The female slave of the man of religion is obliged to pray.

The following saying and proverb are applied to *'arab* by Nuri people, *'abid* and *halab-.*

(XV) *Yd 'arabi mukhak gay mukhjamalak*

O nomad! Your brain is like the brain of your camel.

(XVI) *Wad al-'arab ma 'indu aman*

There is no safety with a nomad.

The following proverb and saying are applied to *halab* by Nuri people, *'abid* and *'arab:*

(XVII) *In nikta al-halabiya arba'in yaum*[16] *md tathar*

ili titbaradfug al-tuba al-hamra[17]

If you have intercourse with a (female) tinker you will not be clean for forty days until you have scrubbed yourself with a red brick.

(XVIII) *Inta {inti} halabi (halabiya)?*

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another term for an *'abd.*

[15] *Muri and fasi:* these are dry measures.

Muri `</em> i ardeb = 12 keila = 198 litres. <br><br> <em>rnuri</em><em></em> - 6 <em>girat</em> <br><br> i <em>girat</em> <em>` 8 *ids at*

Therefore, i *muri* = 48 *tasat*

Hence the female slave has ground 47 *lasdt* and only 1 *tdsa (tdsi)* remains. The meaning of *'aish* is *dura.*

[16] *Arba'inyaurrr.* forty days was the period of 'danger' after a *rite de passage* during which the subject was guarded by angels *(fi al-maldyka)* from devils *(shaydtin).* Previously, the bridegroom and bride, the circumcised boy and girl, and a woman who had given birth stayed at home for forty days; now the period is shorter.

[17] *Al-tuba al-hamra:* the red brick; this is a brick which has been fired as opposed to the native mud brick. The inference seems to be that the fired brick is meant to be used for cleaning off dirt because it is harder.

Are you a tinker (female tinker) ?
The following sayings are used of Nuri people by *"abid,* [l]*arab* and *halab:*
(XIX) *Al-Shawdiga*[18] *yakhunu ba'adhum*
The Shaigiya betray one another.
(XX) *Al-Shawaiga yaghadru ba'adhum*
The Shaigiya deceive one another.
(XXI) *Al-Shawaiga mutartashin*
The Shaigiya are unstable.
(XXII) *Al-Shawaiga mughaffalln* The Shaigiya are fooled easily.
The following proverb is used by Nuri people and *"abid'.*
(XXIII) *Al-halab wa al-arab wa al-jarab wa al-far*
Allah la dandlhum ddr
Tinkers, nomads, lepers and mice, May God keep their homes far from us.
The following proverb is in general use by all social groups in the Nuri community:
(XXIV) *Saw li waladak khal*[19]
Give your son an uncle.
Other proverbs in general use stress the importance of the mother's brother:
Al-khdl walid
The mother's brother is father.
Al-walad khdl
The son is mother's brother.

In Nuri community there are rigid distinctions between the four social groups to which I have referred: the principles which separate members of the different groups are applied in reality and they are expressed in verbal terms. Mobility between the social groups is very difficult: *''arab* who have married Nuri women, or who have acquired land by the *tagrVa* system in the village, are still looked upon by Nuri people as being *'arab* and 'not one of us'. This also applies to *"abid.* It appears that the oppressed social group in Nuri are the *'abid* who, therefore, tend to leave the village because they cannot advance their social status and they can only advance their economic status to a limited extent in Nuri community.

Although the distinctions between the social groups give an impression of disunity in the Nuri community, their separation is counteracted by their functional interdependence. In the economic sphere each group is needed by the other groups. Moreover, all the groups participate in each other's social occasions. The payment of financial contributions, *mu'dmala,* on these occasions binds the social groups in a system of exchange and reciprocity.

While individual achievement is sought after, an individual is looked upon in terms of the status of his social group as a whole. It is this fact which makes it difficult

[18] *Al-Shawaiga:* this term is used by *'abid, 'arab* and *halab* to refer to Nuri people; but Nuri people include people of other tribal affiliations as well as Shaigiya.

[19] *Khal:* mother's brother.

for any individual to raise his social status above the status of the group to which he belongs. This is to say that group status has a greater significance in the system of social stratification than does individual status.

The cardinal factors which determine membership in the highest-status social group of Nuri people are: kinship, land, and the concept of *muwatinin,* those who belong to the place. A person qualifies for consideration as a *muwatin* through possessing a combination of kinship affiliation and inherited rights to land in Nuri village. The *Jabal* people do not possess these qualifications, and however much an *'abd, 'arabl* or *halabi* betters himself in other respects he can never be a *muwatin.*

VI. Blood Money, Vengeance and Joint Responsibility: The Baggara Case

Ian Cunnison

Evans-Pritchard's account of the consequences of homicide was crucial to his analysis of Nuer politics. Vengeance, leading perhaps to prolonged feuding, operated in the absence of a settlement by blood money when the parties were socially distant from one another or when people took the 'law' into their own hands. Vengeance and blood money are responses to homicide also among the Humr tribe of Baggara Arabs (whose seasonal movements fringe those of the north-western Nuer). The customs of these two peoples, as may be expected from the diverse historical backgrounds, are different in detail. But there is a more basic distinction; for while the Nuer customs at the time that Evans-Pritchard observed them were for all we know peculiarly their own, those of the Baggara have to be taken in the setting of a wider system, the law of Islam, and of the constraint of a coercive authority, the Sudan Penal Code.

The Humr are part of the Arab Muslim world and belong, if peripherally, to its long and extensive cultural tradition. They claim to be descended from pre-Islamic Arabs, with whom they probably have some physical and cultural continuity: it is likely that lineal ancestors of some present-day Humr lived in Arabia before the time of the Prophet and that some later ancestors left Arabia for North Africa, whence they made their way to the south of the Sahara and occupied with others the present 'Baggara belt'.[1]

Just as the allegation of Humr ancestry goes back to pre-Islamic days, so docs the tradition of blood money in the Arab world generally. Robertson Smith, Procksch, and others have discussed the complex of related practices including talion, blood money, and the feud, and have shown that continuities existed between pre-Islamic and Islamic precepts.[2] Nevertheless the Humr do not in these matters follow either Islamic law or what is commonly understood about the pre-Islamic practice; but these are the basis of many received notions about nomadic Arab society and so they will be considered

[1] Y. F. Hasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan,* Edinburgh University Press, 1967, PP- 167–71.

[2] W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (ed. S. A. Cook), London, A. & C. Black, 1903, Chap. II; O. Procksch, *Vber die Blutrache bei den vorislamischen Arabern und Muhammads Stellung zu ihr.* Leipzig, Teubner, 1899, Chap. IV.

for the argument of this paper. This leads up to a contrast between what the Humr do and certain classical interpretations of the form of Arab societies; in particular it will be shown that the different ways in which Humr organise their blood money and vengeance institutions are hard to reconcile with ideas of joint responsibility shared by tribesmen of a certain degree of kinship. It will be necessary also to examine the relationship between Humr practice and the modern binding Sudan Penal Code, in order to appreciate what in Humr practice is affected by it. The line of argument thus has to set together three sources of law, *Shari'a, qanun,* and *'urf*-—Islamic law, the secular law of the state, and tribal custom.

Robertson Smith argued that changes in the social organisation took place in Arabia shortly before the rise of Islam. From a situation in which a 'tribe' *(hayy)* of agnates shared in vengeance, inheritance, and the distribution of blood money, there was a move to place emphasis on the 'family' and, he claims, it was this new recognition of degrees of kinship within the tribe which led to 'the disintegration of society in the fraternal wars which rent Arabia in the century before the Flight'.[3]

As a result of the Prophet's entry on the scene of growing insecurity, attempts were made at control; and a Shari'a procedure developed which, while generally accepting talion and blood money (but outlawing the feud) brought significant changes into them. J. N. D. Anderson has summarised the nature of these changes: 'only the guilty party, and not his fellow-tribesmen, was liable to be killed... and then only if the homicide... was regarded as both deliberate and wrongful, and after the facts had been established before the Ruler or Judge. No attempt was made, however, to change the system itself, so it was still for the... nearest heirs... to bring the matter before the judge; and it was still in their absolute discretion to pardon the culprit altogether, to settle the case out of Court, to accept the payment of blood-money instead of retaliation, or to claim the right of appropriate retaliation in person'.[4]

The Shari'a rules of blood money *(diyd)* and talion *(kisas)* are complex. Different situations give rise to different precepts. These vary, for example, according to the respective status in Islam of killer and victim; to the status of the killing, deliberate, 'quasi-deliberate', or accidental; to the manner of the death whether from individual action or affray; to the Rite followed by the respective parties, and so on. Similar problems also attend compensation or retaliation for wounds, and the types and circumstances of woundings give rise to actions or payments of different kinds. This paper refers only to the situation of homicide between Muslim males. The most general of the precepts which came to be recognised about them in the Shari'a may be outlined as follows.

For the regulation of talion it was laid down that premeditated killing alone deserved it (killings in retaliation being of course exempt). Heirs of the blood alone could exact

[3] *kinship and Marriage...* p. 63.

[4] J. N. D. Anderson, 'Homicide in Islamic law'. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* xiii, 1951, pp. 811–28, at p. 812.

talion, only after a court hearing, only if they requested it unanimously, and only upon the killer himself. The heirs of the blood had the right to choose between talion, blood money, and total remission. Blood money was payable at different rates according to the degree of intention shown in the act. It was measured in terms of camels, money, or gold, the amounts varying with the nature of the killing and the victim's status. In deliberate murder, the killer alone paid; in other forms of homicide the group of people known as the *ʿakila* paid. The recipient was the heir of the blood, who then distributed it to those who would receive inheritance from the deceased, and in the same proportions. If the killer was among the heirs of the blood, vengeance was not exacted and blood money was not paid.[5]

For these rules to operate it was necessary for civil cases to be brought to properly constituted courts whose decisions could be enforced. Not all Muslim societies have lain within the orbit of such effective enforcement, and nomadic tribes have predominantly lain outside. E. Tyan has said for the camel nomads of the Middle East generally: "Among the Bedouin tribes, with their innate hostility to a state organisation, the system of private vengeance tempered by the practice of *diya* still survives upon a basis of customs in several particulars—though they differ from tribe to tribe—and which often contradict the precepts of the Koran and the rules of Islamic law. The efforts of governments concerned have not been able to achieve more than the imposition upon these groups of certain regulations of a procedural character and of limited scope".[6]

This generalisation about Bedouin can be applied to the Huinr as they existed until the latter part of the nineteenth century. For some centuries before then they had clung to the edges of various of the sub-Saharan sultanates, avoiding integration with them. While in the nineteenth century much of the present Sudan, including Kordofan province, was an outpost of the Ottoman empire, records from the period suggest that Baggara were never under the effective administration of the Khedivial province headquarters at El Obeid. Huinr were interested in avoiding tribute payment and this was enough to make them use their mobility to keep out of the way of authorities, and it is most unlikely that the Turks had the power to regulate the consequences of homicide. During the Mahdiya, when the Sudanese again became independent, the Humr as Baggara were an integral and important part of the new Islamic state.[7] But in the tribal areas there was, during this period, a disruption of the social organisation since most of the men were in Omdurman and the customary pattern of relationships could not be said to exist in the tribal lands. It was only with the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in 1899 and the further consolidation with independence in 1956 that there has been direct and effective control by government authorities of the Humr as a local community. Humr activities relating to homicide and its aftermath

[5] J. Schacht, arts. 'KatF and 'Kisas'; E. Tyan, art. 'Diya'; in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd cdn.); Anderson, 'Homicide...'

[6] E. Tyan, art. 'Diya', p. 342.

[7] For the position of the Baggara during the Mahdiya, see P. M. Holt, *The Mahdist Stale in the Sudan,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1958, pp. 141–5.

came under a state with power to coerce. A system of courts was established and alongside them a network of Sharp a courts and assessors was part of the formal legal structure of the country.

Accordingly at those times when the Humr have been formally administered it has been by a secular foreign regime, the Condominium, and by its successor, the Republic, which by and large has continued until now (1970) the administration of justice as the Condominium established it. In other words, in carrying out their customs relating to homicide they have never been a part of an Islamic state strictly administering the Shari'a; but they came to constitute part of a secular state strictly administering a penal code.

Humr practice differs from the SharPa precepts in many details but the general principles are held in common: homicide is followed by blood money or retaliation; the upset of relationships to which it leads is adjusted locally. But between Humr practice and the Sudan Penal Code the difference is basic. Such a difference exists where codes patterned on the western model and the Shari'a are found together. One of the areas in which this difference is most evident is homicide, for what in the SharPa lay in the realm of delict is in the new codes treated as a crime against the state; what for the state is the worst of crimes could only doubtfully under the SharPa be considered to contain a 'criminal' factor. For the state, a homicide is followed by the creation of a special relation between the state and the killer. The beneficiary of the penalty is the state itself. For the SharPa, the state enters not as an agent of criminal justice but as an intermediary between the killer on the one hand and the victim's heirs of the blood on the other; it controls the retaliatory act; the beneficiary of the penalty is the kin group of the victim. For the Humr, the state had no part; there was no state that mattered; and the adjustment the Humr set in motion was between a range of kin of the victim on the one hand, and the killer and a range of his kin on the other. Here as in Islamic law the adjustment takes the form of retaliation or blood money. With the state it is punishment. The state is hostile to the notion of retaliation which it views as another and aggravated homicide, leading to another act of punishment; but it is less clear about the moral and legal status of blood money, and this has led different state organisations into confusions about its purpose and inconsistencies in its treatment.

Some of these confusions and inconsistencies emerge in a study by M. J. L. Hardy of the developments in Ottoman codes after 1839 when 'the principles of responsibility upon which Islamic law had traditionally been founded were gradually superseded... by legislation derived from foreign models'.[8] Elements of punishment and of civil reparations have at one time or another been included, resulting in various degrees of logical congruity between the parts of the system. In the Sudan also the question of blood money has had much attention from the authorities. Here the matter is made complicated because of the wide range of pre-existing practices in both Muslim and

[8] M. J. L. Hardy, *Blood Feuds and the Payment of Blood Money in the Middle East.* Leiden, Brill, 1963, p. 47.

pagan societies of which the new legislation had to take some account. The traditional systems, Muslim and pagan, had in common that there was no state-demanded punishment. To the new legislators it was no longer enough for a homicide to be settled by force or pecuniary adjustment between groups of kin; the state had to take charge; any local adjustment that was made was subordinate in the state's view to the punishment of the culprit. The state could not be seen to agree that murder might be settled as if it were of the same order as a debt. And while the legal authorities in the Sudan decided that blood money could continue to exist, it became an optional extra to standard practice in the wake of homicide rather than an inherent part of it.

The courts of the Sudan arc guided in these matters now by Criminal Court Circular 18. Its issue in 1932 was preceded by wide-ranging correspondence between the Chief Justice and legal authorities in the provinces, and some of this has been published.[9] It shows that the use of blood money, while tolerated, is hedged about by restrictions particularly in relation to the balance which the legal authorities see as important between the idea of punishment on the one hand and the idea of compensation on the other. Reasons adduced for allowing blood money to continue at all included a desire to "satisfy the native idea of justice" and the recognition of its effectiveness as a peace-keeping mechanism.[10] The Circular reads as follows:[11]

1. It is not possible to lay down any fixed rule as to what extent, and how, the customary payment of dia in cases of homicide should be taken into consideration in arriving at the proper punishment under the Code, but where that custom is applicable and it is allowed (whether in addition to a sentence of imprisonment on the actual offender or not) the general principles set out in the following paragraph should be followed.

2. *(a)* Dia is essentially a tribal custom. It should not therefore be considered in detribalised communities or towns.

(b) Dia should not be considered in cases of murder where appropriate sentence is sentence of death. But where a Court passes sentence of death and is satisfied that on the event of such sentence being commuted 'dia' would be payable in accordance with tribal custom, a recommendation to that effect may be recorded.

(c) In tribal affrays, or where the accused is immature or where the death is due to accident or where the actual offender is unknown but it is known that the death was caused by one or more member of a tribe or section, dia being the customary mode of settlement may be allowed, whether with or without a sentence of imprisonment. Of course, in some of the class of cases mentioned above no offence against the Penal Code has been committed at all and dia is a complete settlement.

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[9] See R. A. Cook (ed.) 'Blood money and the law of homicide in the Sudan: a documentary survey'. *Sudan Law Journal and Reports,* 1962, pp. 470–84. This reproduces some correspondence with officials in the southern provinces only.

[10] *Ibid.'* see letters by Chief Justice Bell, p. 473, and Governor Equatoria, J. F. Tierney, p. 477-

[11] The text here given is copied from the reproduction in Muhammad abu Rannat, 'The relationship between Islamic and customary law in the Sudan'. *Journal of African Law,* iv, i960, pp. 9–16.

3. Where an offence has been committed and there is sufficient evidence to put the offender on trial the case should be tried under the Code of Criminal Procedure whether or not the custom of dia is applicable.

4. Where the Court is satisfied that the case falls within that class of cases which are customarily concluded by the payment of dia the Court should impose the sentence which it considers appropriate under the Penal Code and add a recommendation to the effect that if all parties agree to dia, and if the dia is duly paid, then the sentence should be reduced by a certain period. The length of that period should be assessed by the Court and set out in the recommendation.

This directive applies to Muslim and pagan areas in the Sudan alike. The leejal treatment of homicide is uniform throughout the Sudan. There is indeed a difference between the legal processes generally in the north and the south, for where all parties are Muslims the existence of Shari'a assessors in civil courts guarantees them a hearing in those spheres of law that indicate it; but where the parties are not Muslims naturally the SharP a assessors do not intervene. Section 5 of the Civil Justice Ordinance lays down that 'where in any suit or other proceeding in a Civil Court any question arises regarding succession, inheritance, wills, legacies, marriage, divorce, family relations, or the constitution of Wakfs, the rule of decision shall be (a) any custom applicable to the parties concerned which is not contrary to justice, equity and good conscience...' The Chiefs' Courts Ordinance (for southern provinces) and Native Courts Ordinance (for northern provinces) also lay down that 'native law and custom' are applicable if they are not contrary to 'justice morality and order'.[12]

The Shari'a has provisions which govern the consequences of homicide. However the criminal aspect of it which the Penal Code introduced means that the burden of dealing with it lies in the criminal courts. Similarly the Shari'a has provisions which govern the administration of blood money. But the Ordinances do not take specific mention of blood money and the Circular empowers criminal courts to consider whether blood money should be paid or not in cases they hear. Subject, thus, to this intervention by the criminal courts, it appears that when blood money is taken cognisance of in the courts it comes under the category of 'native law and custom', whether it is operated by Muslims or pagans. In practice this appears to mean that on occasions when some matter of blood money turns up in the course of a civil or criminal case, it is treated not as a matter on which a Shari'a jurist has to pronounce, but as a matter which can be adjudicated by anyone of the court who has a specialised knowledge of local custom.

The blood money of the Arabs in the Sudan is thus determined by neither the Shari'a nor the *qdniin.* The secular law recognises it as inoffensive local custom and the authorities take an interest in it for the role it plays in the maintenance of public

[12] Muhammad abu Rannat points out, however, that the rules of Shari'a are not subjected to this test in the Sudan, 'as what has been laid down by God obviously cannot be treated as "unjust".' *Ibid.,* p. io.

order. As for the Shari'a it is unlikely that the jurists are embarrassed by the divergence from Islamic law, for while 'the consensus of scholars denied conscious recognition to custom', yet 'custom and customary law have coexisted with the ideal theory of Islamic law, while remaining outside its system, in the whole of the Islamic world'.[13] Shari'a courts appear not to be approached on blood-money questions.

The wording of the Criminal Court Circular is ambiguous, but it seems that criminal courts can 'allow' blood money to be paid in certain cases, and can 'recommend' that if it is paid then the appropriate sentence given should be lessened. But this is as far as it lets the courts go.[14] The details of any particular payment or receipt of blood money are worked out at tribal level by the groups mainly concerned in the event. For the Humr, the nazirs, who have courts with limited powers, take a part in the negotiations but it is likely that they do this in their capacity as 'notables' or as political officers (rather than as legal authorities), whose presence adds formality to the proceedings and who influence at times the details of the payments from their overall view of the crisis in the local community.

I turn now to homicide in the community of Humr. Some detail on this has been published[15] and I simply outline the procedure, which will then be reviewed in the framework of a different argument. Certain established moves are regularly made, but there is one area of great flexibility, and that is the composition of the groups that cooperate in payment and receipt of blood money. This is an issue that will be considered in the context of views about common blood and collective responsibility, which orientalists have seen as the crux of Bedouin societies.

When a killing occurs among the Humr, the usual procedure is that *ajawid,* senior men who are not identified with the contending parties, immediately come to the place, seize the male kin of the dead man and physically restrain them from attempting retaliation. They get the victim's camp to move out of the area. They call the police; these take the killer, as well as the dead man's kin, whom they imprison while their desire for vengeance cools. A guarantor of the peace is named, usually a man of standing of the victim's lineage and closely linked to the other. When the result of the trial (which takes place outside the tribal lands) is known talk of blood money begins. Eventually a notable connected with the killer goes to meet the other party, proclaims the guilt of his own, and offers blood money. Separate discussions follow, amongst potential participants, about who is to pay on the one hand and who is to receive on the other; finally up to sixty head of cattle are handed over. After a while a further meeting, a *murda",* or final reconciliation, is arranged, with the purpose of restoring the parties to their former relationships.

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[13] J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964, p. 62.

[14] But cf. Cook (ed.) 'Blood money...', p. 471, footnote 9: 'The courts will ordinarily *order* the payment of *dia* in murder cases where the death penalty is commuted to imprisonment under a recommendation to mercy' (emphasis added).

[15] In *Baggara Arabs,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966, especially pp. 157–62, pp. 173–86 and Appendix 5.

It may happen however that homicide is followed not by blood money but by a vengeance killing. Thus an affray which incurs deaths may be followed by another affray, which results in unequal total losses, and so the matter may continue for a while; or else the kin of the dead, after their release, may have less than the normal restraint and resolve to kill in vengeance. This is much less usual, although a vengeance killing may occur at any time if the personalities of the dead man's close kin are such that the death continues to rankle with them; it may occur even after a settlement by blood money. Vengeance killings are carried out always by one or two of the very close circle of the dead man's kin; the victim may be the killer himself if he is not imprisoned, or anyone from his very close circle. This can in turn lead to countervengeance, but mutual killing does not continue for long. Pacification occurs in one of two ways: either there is extreme pressure from neutrals, including the nazirs, to bring the affair to an end; or else one of the parties feeling itself grievously offended will move to another part of the country, perhaps even to another tribe, to be out of all contact. Even then they are not forgotten but after a generation approaches are made to ask them to return, with the offer of a generous price of peace.

On any killing, the appropriate behaviour for uncommitted people and for the elders of the groups concerned is to press for restraint and eventual settlement by blood money. But side by side with this, it is equally appropriate for the younger kin of the dead man, and for youths in general, to speak of the need for retaliation. This also has the approval of their girl friends. The threat of vengeance after a killing is felt as very real, and the killer's kin go in fear and travel circumspectly in case of ambush. It appears nevertheless that even before the legal penalties for vengeance were brought in, settlement by blood money was the usual outcome. We should ask why. Although they are recognised as alternatives, they are not equivalents, either in their immediate effects or in their underlying consequences. For the receipt of blood money marks a step on the way to the restoration of relations, while resort to vengeance makes eventual settlement less likely.[16]

The two accepted modes of procedure have opposite effects.

There are few situations in which the outcome of a homicide is predictable. For the Nuer Evans-Pritchard speaks of the 'likelihood' of a homicide developing into a blood feud:[17] some groups may settle by blood money while others in similar structural situations may resort to violence. Prediction is possible only in a statistical sense. For the Humr, the government's non-Islamic view of homicide and vengeance no doubt has some effect on the relative frequency with which these occur (the avenger takes no care to hide, but boasts, and shaves off his beard for the world to know). This apart, we must recognise that blood money and vengeance are not equally political decisions. Blood money comes as a result of a deliberate choice in which most of the interested

[16] *Pace* E. L. Peters, who shows that a vengeance killing can lead to settlement: 'Some structural aspects of the feud among the camelherding Bedouin of Cyrenaica'. *Africa,* xxxvii, 3, 1967, pp. 261–82, at p. 265.

[17] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 158.

parties have participated, while vengeance is a matter of an emotional and personal nature or else the result of chaos following an affray. There is an element of chance, in the personalities of the dead man's close kin; but the influential decision-makers are to be found among those who have restoration of relations as a high value.

The varying influence of structural relations on the consequences of homicide have been often enough written about. For the Tonga of Zambia, Colson claimed that the feud (as a lasting series of vengeance and counter-vengeance killings) could not occur, the society being such that, despite the acknowledged duty of vengeance incumbent on the victim's matrilineal group, its members were effectively prevented from feuding by the interlocking of individual and group interests.[18] In a society like the Nuer of Evans-Pritchard's model, these conditions for restraint exist, but only at village and tertiary-tribal level.[19] For the Bedouin Arabs of Cyrenaica, Peters has indicated levels of segmentation at which responses of particular kinds take place: notably feuding between secondary sections, and blood money and vengeance between tertiary sections (both, in this case, 'achieving the same end of bringing about a restoration of peaceful relationships'.[20])

For the Humr it appears that there is no level at which relationships are of such little consequence that they can be dominated by feuding. Ecological factors at least partially account for this. The terrain is such that it is possible for Humr to spread out in the dry season, but the rains quarters are cramped, and especially in the early weeks of the rains the pools fill irregularly and herders from all omodiyas are compelled to concentrate where the water happens to be. The situation demands great forbearance in dry years. This same need to intermingle is recognised also in the absence of sectional land rights, tribesmen being free to set up camp in any part of the whole tribal land, no matter to what section of the tribe they belong.

Permanent hostilities are out of order, but hostilities as well as alliances of shorter term exist and change with passing events. Homicides force people to declare where they stand, and the patterns of alliance and hostility, far from following predetermined lines, are fluid. In the payment and receipt of blood money on the one hand, and in the alignment of hostility in situations of vengeance and counter-vengeance on the other, people unite on different principles. In this respect Humr practice is clearly distinct from pre-Islamic practice according to most accounts, and from the precepts of Islamic law.

In Islamic law the group of people who participate in the payment of blood money is called the *'dkila.* While Humr do use some technical terms from the Shari'a in their discussion of blood money they do not use this one, but instead speak of people who *bedrubu jemi'*—'pay together'. The *'akila,* in Brunschvig's definition, is 'the group of persons upon whom devolves, as the result of a natural joint liability with the person

[18] E. Colson, *The Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia,* Manchester University Press, 1962, p. 120.
[19] *The Nuer,* p. 159.
[20] Peters, *ibid.,* pp. 267–9 (the quotation is from p. 267).

who has committed homicide or inflicted bodily harm, the payment of compensation in cash or kind'. He points out that in this there was continuity with pre-Islamic practice: 'the schools of law are thus virtually unanimous on the point that the *"akila* comprise, as in the pre-Islamic period, the *'asaba* of the guilty party, that is to say the male relatives or

agnates'. Later the nature of the *'dkila* was changed to fit the urban situation; its use was gradually eroded; and it 'seems that collective responsibility today exists only in societies where the joint responsibility of the tribe is still an active force, for example among the Arabic-speaking nomads...; customary law then predominates, only influenced in varying measure by Muslim law'.[21]

It is hardly possible to suggest which, if any, Humr group corresponds in its extent with the *'akila* since a clear definition of this is lacking. Islamic scholarship is weak on many details of crucial importance to the anthropologist, and the meanings of groups called family, kindred, clan, tribe, or agnates, in terms of which *'akila* is usually discussed, are vague. But it seems clear at any rate that no Humr group corresponds in function with the *'dkila,* or with the *khams* of certain Bedouin tribes;[22] for Humr have no permanent or semi-permanent groups, or series of groups varying with the relationship of killer and victim, which participate in payment. Inter-tribal cases apart, it is impossible to predict who the participants will be. For the most part blood-money discussions raise basic political problems, such as who is willing to cooperate with whom in payment and receipt. Humr indeed have a model of the proper participants, based on the omodiya and its constituent lineages; but there is every time an overlay of tactical considerations which brings endless variability to the patterns.

According to the relationship of killer and victim there are three broad categories of arrangement within which the variations take place. In the comparatively unusual case of a killing between the Humr and another tribe the blood money has the special name of *diyat el-saff-,*[23] the arrangements are controlled to some extent, since they are watched over by the government for reasons of public order. There used to be no blood money between tribes but separate agreements between pairs of neighbouring tribes now lay down that settlement is by blood money, and specify the amounts. These written agreements are lodged with provincial headquarters. The tribe however arranges the details of their administration. If the Humr are the payers every family is involved in payment and if they are the recipients every family is involved in receipt. The nazirs first divide the amounts in set proportions between the omodiyas, but from that stage the sharing within each omodiya is worked out by representatives of its parts.

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[21] R. Brunschvig, art. "Akila', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.).

[22] See for example E. Marx, *Bedouin of the Negev,* Manchester University Press, 1967, p. 64.

[23] More likely than the transcription in *Baggara Arabs,* p. 102. Cf. the use of *saff* defined as 'durch eincn Defensivpakt verbundene Stamme': E. Graf, *Das Rechtswesen der heutigen Beduinen,* Walldorf-Hessen, Verlag fur Orientkunde, n. d., p. 190.

The second case, blood money between different omodiyas of Humr, is distinct from the first in that very few groups, or none, from outside the omodiyas concerned participate.[24] But according to the local situation at the time the whole of the omodiya may or may not take part. In this case, as always in the first, there is usually no overlapping between donor and recipient groups.

The third case, which is much the commonest, is blood money within the omodiya. At this level the pattern of payment and receipt is widely variable, not only in terms of participants, but also in terms of the methods of sharing out the sums between sub-groups of payers, and between families within the sub-groups. And it happens not uncommonly that there is some overlap between donors and recipients. This point gives a distinctive quality to blood money within the omodiya. For in the first two cases, in inter-tribal and inter-omodiya transactions, there is a separation between the paying and receiving groups. Some are the guilty, they collect cattle and hand them over to others, quite different, who are the aggrieved. Each participant is squarely on one side or the other. A gift of wealth from the killer and his people compensates another set of people for a death. There is a clear moral separation between the two sides, and the arrangement is not incompatible with the notion that a group shares a joint responsibility.

Whereas an omodiya as a group cannot withhold from inter-tribal cases, constituent parts of an omodiya can withhold from inter- and intra-omodiya cases. The omodiya is the group

within which negotiations and debates go ahead concerning the way a blood-money transaction is to be administered. There is a wide choice for the constituent parts of an omodiya in reference to any transaction, for a given group may pay and not receive, or receive and not pay, or do both, or do neither. Decisions here are a major field of political choice.

These decisions are slowly worked out at a series of meetings called by lineages of various orders of segmentation. In this particular blood payment are they going to participate? If they arc who does it mean cooperating with? In terms of current relations within the omodiya do they accept the implications of such cooperation? Are they going to divide the shares straight away according to the number of men, or first among the number of constituent lineages? These tactical considerations derive largely from the power relations within the omodiya surrounding the office of Omda.[25] The decisions which are reached on these and similar matters reflect quite subtly, so refined are the possible variations, how the parts of the omodiya stand to one another. Various transactions overlap in time, for injuries as well as deaths lead to them, and the result is a continuing series of meetings, ostensibly about blood money, but in

[24] The existence of'Book' alliances, by which impermanent blood-money arrangements are occasionally made between lineages of different omodiyas, is immaterial to the argument of this paper *(Baggara Arabs,* p. 160).

[25] *Ibid.,* Chap. XII.

reality defining the momentary state of relations within the omodiya which are given their clearest expression in terms of blood-money participation.

No two payments follow the same pattern. If relations within the omodiya are good all its members may be assessed as having to pay something and having to receive something, but the proportions may differ according to various considerations. Even if all agree to participate, they do not necessarily agree to participate in equal measure. It is much more typical however that some of the lineages withhold participation on account of hostility arising from some other matter—but they do not do this evenly. Cutting across the agnatic kinship shared by all members of an omodiya, there arc tactical hostilities creating distance between agnatically close lineages and tactical alliances drawing more distant lineages together. The result can be a pattern of payment and receipt which bears little relation to the formal agnatic structure.

One conclusion towards which this tends, is that within the omodiya there is no enduring entity which blood money is directed to compensating. If we think in terms of compensation for a loss, and restitution made on account of guilt, two things do not fit. One is that the associates differ from occasion to occasion, and the other is that the same people may be involved in both sides of a single transaction—as both offenders and offended, guilty and innocent, debtors and creditors, donors and recipients. The omodiya is marked out as the unit within which these opposing categories become mixed.

But two other indications bear on the question of joint responsibility. One concerns the way in which blood-money shares, in both payment and receipt, are divided, for in any transaction distinction is made between 'the share of the blood' and 'the share of the many'. On the killer's side the share of the blood (usually called the 'spear-head') constitutes a third of the total and is due from the killer and his immediate agnates (father, brothers, possibly father's brothers). The remaining two thirds is the share of the many due from the rest of the participants in proportions worked out separately for each occasion. On the side of receipt the share of the blood, two thirds, goes to the father and brothers of the dead man and the remaining third to all the other participants in shares worked out for each occasion.

This indicates that some special responsibility lies upon the *dydl rajl* (father and sons) on each side. There is, however, a contrary indication, in the way in which Humr use the expression 'blood is indivisible'. This invariably relates to the 'blood' of a larger group, the *surra:* this is the five- to seven-generation lineage which forms the basis of the camp, and within which blood money is not paid for homicide. Affairs of blood, as many other events, close its ranks and point to it as a group with corporate interests. In the context of blood money the phrase implies that whoever else in the omodiya may decline to pay along with the killer, the surra always will pay; that if the killer is in difficulties over a blood debt it is fellow members of his surra who have to help him with his share. When a man wishes to move permanently away from his own kin, this is the smallest unit into which he becomes incorporated, for the same reason. Despite the metaphorical unity however, members of the killer's surra do not usually pay more

than the 'many'; members of the dead man's surra may receive only marginally more than the many. It would appear that although the surra blood is 'indivisible', those who are customarily responsible for and who are the main beneficiaries of blood money are the immediate agnates; and that the many, including the rest of the surra, are people who willingly help, rather than people who are inescapably liable.

In situations of vengeance and counter-vengeance alignments again occur, but not for the enactment of a specific task like the payment or receipt of blood money. While acts of vengeance take place within narrowly delimited groups of kin on each side, scarcely more than the *'iydl rajl,* the sense if not the physical expression of hostility extends more widely. Humr define and name various degrees of hostility, and these correspond to various kinds of avoidance behaviour. The generic expression is *beinathum tar* (there is vengeance between them); the specific types are *muwagafa* (stoppage) in which males avoid one another socially, and *mugdta^{i}a* (cutting off; in which pre-existing arrangements to join together in bloodmoney transactions are cancelled, and there is more widespread avoidance. Such states of hostility typically activate fewer people than blood-money transactions do: whereas bloodmoney payments may enmesh all members of an omodiya, states of vengeance are usually confined to the two minor lineages within it most closely concerned. Others within the omodiya may or may not take sides on the issue, but the institutionalised expression of hostility is limited in this way.

These remarks indicate that just as there is a clear difference between the consequences of blood money and vengeance, so there is a clear difference in the way in which the two are organised. And the organisation of each differs from that of agnation. This being so, it is worth while to point to the contrast with the classical accounts of nomadic Arab society. Thus, in Robertson Smith these three features of social organisation arc congruent. He says: 'The key to all divisions and aggregations of Arab groups lies in the action and reaction ol two principles: that the only effective bond is a bond of blood, and that the purpose of society is to unite men for offence and defence. These two principles meet in the law of the blood-feud, the theory of which is that the blood-bond, embracing all men who bear a common *nisba* or group-name, constitutes a standing obligation to take up the quarrel of every tribal brother.'[26] And further, 'Every tribesman risked his life equally in the blood-feud, and every tribesman might be called upon to contribute to the atonement by paying which blood-feud could be healed. This is still the rule of the desert.'[27] The separation of organisations within Humr society means that they can be seen to interpret, rather than to define, a political reality. In the first place there is the great fluidity in arrangements; through this, political choice can clearly be expressed. Secondly the fact that participation in blood-money transactions is wider than in instituted expressions of hostility, can be seen as a customary recognition of the politics of ecological constraint. The environment

[26] Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage...* p. 69.
[27] *Ibid.,* pp. 63–4.

forces a degree of cooperation which is incompatible with the hostile state and the wide participation in blood money brings public opinion to reinforce this as a value.

The difference between these organisations, and their fluidity, invite consideration of certain classical notions of joint responsibility. It would be a mistake to consider that the members of the omodiya, or any other unit, share in a responsibility such that all are punishable for the guilt of one. More especially is it a mistake to consider that there is some sort of mystical bond of blood, covering a particular agnatic span, through which the act of one of its members becomes the moral responsibility of all. In the Shari'a, responsibility became personalised: only the killer could be killed in talion. Yet there are suggestions that the idea of the *'dkila* did still include legal-philosophical notions of collective responsibility. Brunschvig has said: 'Attention must be drawn to a theoretical discussion... on the nature of the obligation devolving on the *'akila.* Does this obligation rest on the *'akila "per se"...* that is, are they considered as debtors *"per se"*, or does it result from a legal "transfer"... from the guilty party, the "acceptance of responsibility"... being made by the group?' His own view on the varying interpretation in different schools of Islamic law is that the first hypothesis would 'doubtless tally better... with the primitive conception by which the clan, jointly responsible, feels itself bound to offer reparation collectively, as much or even more on its own behalf as on behalf of the guilty party.'[28]

The Condominium government in the Sudan was no less ambiguous, for its legal and administrative philosophies clashed in respect of this problem. The government tolerated blood money which carries an implicit suggestion of joint responsibility; but if the culprit was known, his sole criminal responsibility was recognised. On the other hand, the principle of joint responsibility was also implicit in the device of the 'administrative fine' by which the administration, unable to find the perpetrator of some offence, fined as a whole the omodiya, or other lineage, to which they had good reason to know he belonged. The device was specially handy, since there was already a mechanism for gathering the fine—namely the well-established procedure of blood-money collection. (Before the days of personally assessed taxation, 'tribute' also was collected from the tribe by the same method.) Thus the political officers were asserting the principle of joint responsibility, whose validity the legal officers had abolished by their introduction of a criminal code.

I have reviewed for various sizes of groups the occasions on which they exercise some sort of corporate activity in the wake of homicide and suggested that it is difficult to identify any one group whose members are united in some ultimately binding moral collectivity or joint liability. The *'iyal rajl* perhaps comes nearest to it, being avengers and avengees, and having the bulk of blood money to pay and receive, but this is no more than a group of father and sons who are bound already by intense family intimacy and common interests in the herd. In blood money all others are helpers, even the surra which is the ideological 'blood' unity in Humr metaphor. The minor

[28] Brunschvig, Art. 'Akila', p. 33g.

lineage, which gives strong moral support in situations of vengeance, has a special role to play in blood money—but there is nothing automatic about the support it gives, and groups within it can opt out if they so wish.

The position of the omodiya is special. Except for the intertribal case, in blood money it is the largest unit of potential cooperation; in exceptional circumstances when political relations make it possible there could be complete representation of all its families on both sides of a ti'ansaction. It is in this sense the ultimate simultaneous diya-paying and diya-receiving unit. Potentially therefore all its members could, through a blood-money transaction, express their solidarity with both sides of a dispute within it and so emphatically assert the omodiya's unity in the face of internal strain. That this seldom (if ever) happens is only partly significant: for Humr carry with them the idea that this is what ought to happen, and do what they can to achieve it in the face of political constraints. Significantly this is not only the smallest unit with a modern government-sponsored authority position (which gives rise to most of the political struggles in it); it is also the smallest of the three levels of lineage segment called by the name *gabila,* a word usually translated as 'tribe'. The joint responsibility which this 'tribe' carries is not the sharing of responsibility for a death, but that of exercising pressure against divisiveness by the widest possible participation in the peace-bringing blood-money agreements.

These data do not sustain the notion of a 'natural joint liability'[29] for homicide vested in any particular kind of group. The Humr are one of numerous tribes of Arab nomads, about whom many generalisations of this sort have been made. A close look at processes within similar societies might well suggest that for them, also, generalisations based on knowledge of pre-Islamic documents and the precepts of Islamic scholars are not enough; and that however strongly ideology may appear to dominate them, this must give way in the face of an understanding of the political and ecological setting within which social crises take place.

[29] *Ibid.,* p. 338.

VII. Political Inequality in the Kababish Tribe

Talal Asad

I

It has been said by critics that when modern anthropologists talk in terms of "the tribe", they are talking about a rapidly diminishing world ("the world of the primitive"), or misrepresenting much of the real world ("the Third World"), because there are now very few communities, if any, which are politically or economically isolated, or whose social boundaries are clearly and permanently set. Recoiling from this charge, anthropologists have reacted in a variety of ways. Some have avoided the problem altogether by choosing areas of research which could not in any sense of the word be called tribal. Others, refining an older tradition, have addressed themselves to the problem of defining "the tribe" as a complex empirical unit: they have tried to sort out traits, traditions, linguistic and ethnic criteria, in order to describe more precisely the overlaps and interconnections between "tribal" units, and to trace the fluid historical boundaries between such units, as well as between units that arc defined as "tribal" and others described as "national" or "imperial".[1] Finally, there has been the attempt to understand "tribalism" as a new phenomenon in its own right, in which "the tribe" is treated as a cognitive category by which rural immigrants in cosmopolitan milieux identify and rank themselves and each other.[2]

Although both these concerns have proved worthwhile, very few anthropologists have tried to identify the *ideological* significance of the concept of tribe or its equivalents—i.e. its significance as a concept which, besides representing a collective identity, aspiration, and way of life, has the quality of masking divisions, contradictions of interest, forms of exploitation, and conflicting modes of social experience. But to understand the significance of concepts in this way it is necessary to criticise them—i.e. to attempt to discover the kind of error they contain and what its social determinants and consequences are. One reason why this approach has not found

[1] Eor a recent example, see the collection edited by June Helm entitled *Essays on the Problem of Tribe,* Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1968.

[2] Well-known instances in which this problem was first systematically explored in the African context include studies by M. Gluckman, J. C. Mitchell and A. L. Epstein.

general favour among anthropologists is connected with the doctrine that in his treatment of indigenous social concepts the social scientist may re-interpret the data but not criticise it.[3] The standard anthropological view on this matter is well represented in the following remarks by Leach: "The anthropologist as distinct from the philosopher is concerned with what is the case rather than with what ought to be the case. To this end a dialectic of good and bad, free and unfree seems too polemical. The anthropologist's concern is not with right and wrong but with rights and obligations."[4] The position taken in the present paper is very different: although it is inappropriate for the anthropologist to apply arbitrary labels of "good" and "bad" to his data, there is an important sense in which what is the case in the social world can only be properly understood if one is prepared to apply certain critical standards—within which the factual and moral aspects cannot always be clearly distinguished and, where they can be so distinguished, should not be completely severed.

In what follows I attempt a brief exposition and schematic explanation of the structure of political inequality in the Kababish tribe. I do so on the explicit assumption that no adequate explanation of this phenomenon can be attempted unless it incorporates a critical approach towards the concepts that help to maintain it, which in the present case are all articulated through the categorising concept of "tribe". The criticism as it is developed here is necessarily directed at three targets which are connected in a triangular relationship of mutual confirmation—the colonial administrator, the Kaba-bish, and the anthropologist. For the first, "the tribe" as an administrative convenience represented a unit of authentic interest, regulated but not shaped by the colonial government. For the second, "the tribe" as an experience of structured inequality appeared as part of a just and natural world of rulers and ruled. For the third, "the tribe" as a theoretical construct for approaching the problem of political domination was ultimately based on specific assumptions about the nature of man, assumptions which he shared with the colonial administrator to the extent that both participated in a common cultural tradition. The first helped to create, the second to maintain, and the third to validate the structure of inequality which was the tribe.

[3] Cf. E. Gellner's paper "Concepts and society" in *Transactions of the Fifth World Congress of Sociology,* Washington, 1962: a valuable discussion of the anthropologist's "extreme conceptual tolerance", but one which does not go far enough.

[4] E. R. Leach, "Law as a condition of freedom", in D. Bidney (ed.), *The Concept of Freedom in Anthropology,* The Hague, Mouton, 1963, PP- 76-7-

II

The present pattern of political inequality among the Kababish is the product of historical circumstances which I have described in detail elsewhere.[5] Here I recapitulate only the most important events.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries "Kababish" was the name of a loose confederation of tribes of diverse origin which occupied what is now the north-western region of the Sudan, straddling three major caravan routes from the Nile valley to Central and Western Africa. There was no clear-cut boundary which marked off a given set of tribes as belonging permanently to "the Kababish"; groups appear to have joined and left the confederation at different periods, and migrated from one locality to another. In the nineteenth century the confederation was headed by a Paramount Shaikh who was recognised and supported by the Turco-Egyptian regime, then ruling the Sudan. Although it is difficult to say precisely what was his formal authority, it is clear that his *de facto* power over members of the confederation was uneven.

It is also hard to say what was the internal constitution of the Kababish tribes, except that some of the shaikhs appear to have wielded autocratic power over their own followers, while others had very little, and that the groups varied greatly in their dependence on pastoralism.

During the turbulent years of the Mahdiya (1883 -98) the confederation broke up after an initial resistance by one or two of the tribes (including part of the Paramount Shaikh's tribe) against the Mahdi. Over the years drought, civil war and disease impoverished "the Kababish", as well as other inhabitants of the West, and drove most of them eastwards towards the Nile.

Immediately after the Anglo-Egyptian Reconquest, the British Administration appointed 'All al-Tom as Nazir (chief) of "the Kababish Tribe", whose traditional *dar* (home territory) was recognised to be in northern Kordofan Province. Gradually scattered remnants of many of the pre-Mahdiya "Kababish tribes", who had been living along the riverain tracts, re-entered northern Kordofan and moved across in a westerly direction towards the remote, ill-defined frontier between the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and the autonomous sultanate of Darfur. (From now on I refer to the nineteenth-century Kababish "tribes" as "clans", although British officials refer to them as "sections" or "subdivisions". The Arabic term used locally for "the clan" is *gabila,* which is the same as that used for "tribe".)

Uneasy relations between the British Administration at Khartoum and Sultan 'Ali Dinar of Darfur aided Shaikh 'All al-Tom in his policy of applying judicious pressure against the latter's borders—an activist policy which strengthened his position in the eyes of his overlords in Khartoum and his power in relation to his fellow Kababish. By 1916 the Darfur policy of Shaikh 'Ali al-Tom converged with that of the British

[5] "A note on the history of the Kababish tribe" in *Sudan .Notes and Records,* xlvii, 1966, and *The Kababish Arabs: Power, Authority and Consent in a .Nomadic Tribe,* London, Hurst, 1970.

Administration at Khartoum when a full-scale military attack was launched against ʻAll Dinar and the Sultanate destroyed.

In the two decades after the absorption of Darfur into the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the British gradually elaborated and regularised local administrative practice.[6] In its fully-fledged form the local administrative system (known officially as Native Administration) was a system of government of, for and by the Natives who were all (with a few exceptions relating mainly to urban areas) arranged into "tribes", each under "representative leaders" (i.e. shaikhs, chiefs, omdas). The practice of utilising Native institutions at the local level for administrative purposes was well established in many other British colonies, and it was justified by the doctrine that the primary concern of government is to be efficient. And since efficiency was to be measured essentially by financial solvency and minimum opposition, government through Native institutions (such as shaikhs, chiefs and omdas of tribes) was reckoned to be highly efficient on both counts: it was relatively cheap and relatively trouble-free. Thus the tribe with its authoritative hierarchy became necessary to the colonial regime, as the colonial regime became necessary to the tribe.

The formal, legal autonomy that this system of government gave Shaikh ʻAll, as well as the mandate for imposing a primitive bureaucratic structure, enabled him to complete the process, begun much earlier, of eliminating the independent power of the "clan" shaikhs, and dissolving such corporate character as the "clans" had possessed. (This last process was also facilitated by the fact that the Pax Brittanica, and the new pasturelands opened up after 1916, allowed the adoption of a flexible pastoral system, with greater opportunities for independent movement by individual households or small groups of households.) All the important executive and judicial posts within the "tribal structure" were kept within the circle of Shaikh ʻAll's close relatives—which eventually developed into the privileged Awlad Fadlallah lineage. The government-imposed animal tax passed through the hands of this lineage (the "clan" shaikhs were finally little more than tax-collectors), and the "traditional" tribute was retained by them. When in the early 1950s an elected rural council was constituted within the district, seats were allocated by tribe—to the Kababish and to a number of other smaller tribes within the district. The Awlad Fadlallah had undisputed control of Kababish seats and were generally also able to dominate district-level politics. Independence in 1956 left the system virtually untouched.

Thus when I began my study of "the Kababish tribe" in 1961, the total reality began to make sense as a structure of inequality comprising the Awlad Fadlallah rulers and their subjects, a structure which I saw as involving *exploitation.*[7] This exploitation took a material form (e.g. extraction of tribute retained by the Awlad-Fadlallah rulers), as

[6] The most important legal stages of this process were marked by the *Powers of Nomad Shaikhs Ordinance 1922,* and the more inclusive *Powers of Shaikhs Ordinance 1928.*

[7] I use the word "exploitation" in both a moral and a factual sense. Most anthropologists would claim, with Leach, that if one can, one ought to avoid such terms precisely because of their evaluative connotations. A few are prepared to make the kind of compromise that exemplifies the dilemma that all

well as a psychological form (the exclusion of the overwhelming majority of Kabbashi householders from crucial areas in which political decisions affecting their life were taken). The structure itself was thus summed up in *(a)* the exclusive political authority of the Awlad Fadlallah, and (Z>) the atomistic social organisation of subject Kabbashi pastoralists. In its essentials, it reproduced in miniature, and received indispensable support from, the larger structure of inequality which had held together the entire colonial Sudan.

Seen in historical perspective the objective formation of a Kababish "tribe" represents the emergence and crystallisation of a determinate pattern of inequality between the privileged chief's family and their subjects, established by 'AH al-T6m under the aegis of a colonial government (which was concerned with particular problems of consolidating and administering the Sudan as a whole, and of implementing or developing international policies in the colonial African context), and continued under various nationalist governments from 1956 to 1969. In conceptual terms our concern is with a particular ideological category, "the tribe", which served British officials with a concept for rationalising (in both senses, Weberian and Freudian) a host of administrative decisions and actions on a pan-Sudanic scale, which they alone were taking, as decisions and actions concerned with the identity and welfare of an unambiguous entity held to be part of a widespread and interlinked system of similar entities throughout the rural Sudan. At this level it was a concept born of the colonial encounter, which at once represented regular administrative practice, and obscured real political contradictions. For the structure of tribal administration enabled the ruling British elite to deny any representative character to the troublesome urban nationalist,[8] while claiming for itself just that on the grounds that it remained the essential co-ordinator of the system of

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of us in anthropology face: "...when used in a pejorative sense [exploitation] might be restricted to cases where the tribute was *squeezed from an unwilling subject population* to maintain not only the political elite at an extravagant level, but also the whole group from which they are drawn..., members of which do not carry out political duties." (P. C. Lloyd, "The political structure of African kingdoms" in M. Banton (ed.), *Political Systems and the Distribution of Power,* London, Tavistock (A.S.A. Monograph 2), 1965, p. 78). Apart from the awkward question of deciding what is "an extravagant level", the whole position comes dangerously close to the dubious principle that our moral concern may be activated only when human beings voice a vigorous protest against subjection. We do not avoid taking a moral attitude if we use a so-called "neutral" word, we simply insist on our privilege of remaining uninvolved, and on our option of bringing in the labels "good" or "bad" from a private box of ethical standards whenever we choose. I have used the word "exploitation" to describe the Kababish structure for reasons that I hope will emerge in the next section. It will be seen that these reasons have nothing to do with "too much" as against "only a little", or with "unwillingness" and "protest". (For an interesting discussion of the ideological roots of the principle of ethical neutrality in social science see A. W. Gouldner, "Anti-Minotaur: the myth of a value-free sociology" in I. L. Horowitz, (ed.), *The New Sociology,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1965. For a more general work on the historical transformations of the fact/value relationship, see A. MacIntyre's admirable *A Short History of Ethics,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.)

[8] For example when the Graduates' General Congress (a proto-political party of non-sectarian, urban nationalists) put forward a number of important demands to the colonial government in 1942, they were violently rebuffed. "The real reason", according to a British ex-Administrator, "had nothing to

Native Administration, which held together and represented most of the real Sudan. Thus [Cl]the tribe" and "the tribal system" from being a means of efficient administration became the justification for perpetuating colonial domination.

III

Let us look a little more closely at this entity, apparently designated by such terms as "the Kababish", "the Kababish tribe", and (in Arabic) *"gabilat al-kababish",* in its local context.

Roughly speaking the Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs and their subjects share a common culture (mode of life, material artefacts, technology, language, religion, etc.). But so too do the Kababish and the neighbouring pastoral populations (e.g. Hawawir, Kawahla). More important in the context of the present discussion, therefore, is the fact that the Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs and their subjects are distinguished from one another by separate (and even contradictory) experiences of political life. These differences are represented in and obscured by the expression "the Kababish tribe" as used by government administrators, the anthropologist, and Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs (in the Arabic equivalent "gabilat al-kaba-bish"—or simply "al-kababish"). In what way are these separate experiences significant in the lives of the people concerned? Or, to put it another way, what separates the Kabbashi population, and what brings them together as "a tribe"?

Take means of existence: among the pastoral Kababish livestock is owned by individuals and managed by households, while grazing and water-points are collectively-owned resources. The collective process of production among Kabbashi pastoralists makes available a surplus which is partly appropriated by the Awlad Fadlallah rulers. In other words, the elite does not contribute uniquely to the collective process of production, i.e. to the basic means of existence, but it does appropriate a privileged portion of the collective surplus.

Yet does the elite not do something correspondingly unique and indispensable to the basic conditions of collective existence—i.e. "secure social order"? "Order" for some functionalists refers to a normative system which it seems may be compatible with a state of almost continuous violence (as among the Nuer): it is clear that such normative order does not depend upon a ruling elite. But does not the Kabbashi elite "secure order" in a more positive sense also, i.e. by helping on a consensual basis to underwrite a relatively *peaceful* acceptance of social norms and customs (in local law courts, etc.), and by representing the collective interest?[9] In this connection two points are worth making: first, so do most ordinary Kabbashis, for custom as the norm of everyday life

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do with their demands. It lay in their claim to represent the whole country, which Government could not admit, as it repeatedly emphasized." K. D. D. Henderson, *Sudan Republic,* London, Benn, 1965, p. 80.

[9] This is the classic Hobbesian formulation of the problem of social order. Hobbes, it may be recalled, argued the need for an absolute "sovereign" (individual or group) to represent the collective

is largely underwritten in the practice of everyday life with its own (relatively peaceful) system of reciprocal pressures and moral orientations. I have shown in my detailed account of the ordinary Kabbashi pastoralist's mode of life, that he has neither the material nor the moral means to establish permanent exploitative relations with people outside his household, and still less to constitute a permanent threat to their collective existence.[10] I must stress this again, because the argument that the need to secure a relatively peaceful acceptance of social norms is a sufficient *sociological* reason for the tribal elite's political privilege (regardless of its *historical* origins), rests on certain far-reaching assumptions about human nature and society. In particular, it rests on the assumption that since aggressiveness and acquisitiveness are innate human characteristics, and material scarcity a universal social condition, the population of any given society must be controlled by a governing elite according to generally agreed rules if it is not to fall into a condition of violent anarchy.[11] Second: the alternative to the function of maintaining a given system of social norms and moral values is not necessarily

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interest by ensuring the basic conditions in which a desirable social life could be lived. But he argued that the sovereign's position to be effective required a monopoly of *authority* rather than a monopoly of *force.* It is as absolute umpire not as absolute tyrant that Hobbes sees the sovereign performing his essential function. Hence it is not surprising that the dominance of the sovereign is represented as being based on consent, regardless of whether he acquires his position by conquest or by contract (i. e. *force* and *consent* are not contraries). But as C. B. Macpherson has shown in his brilliant study *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford, 1962), Hobbes's theory was an attempt to describe and resolve the political dilemmas of an emerging market society, with its pervasive values of aggressive, acquisitive individualism and its unequal distribution of property. It is given this background that the function of a sovereign becomes essential, for without him the desirable social life, as commercial, propertied England was coming to conceive and live it, would indeed be impossible. The only important factor that Hobbes's theory appears to have overlooked is the existence of class interest and class cohesion, a factor which made it both unreasonable and uncongenial, from the point of view of the propertied classes, to accept the indispensability of an *absolute* sovereign. Hence the perennial preoccupation of English liberal political theory with constitutional checks and balances, the conditions of true consent, the bases of representation, etc. Is it entirely fortuitous, or without material consequence, that Western anthropologists have been so ready to conceptualise structures of political domination *in all kinds* of non-capitalist societies within the terms of a Hobbesian world?

[10] *The Kababish Arabs.* Kabbashi individualism does not take the form of a hypersensitive concern for personal honour or of an unlimited desire for accumulating possessions, but rather of the drive to attain self-sufficiency.

[11] Hence the identification of *social control* by so many anthropologists as the central political problem. For example J. Beattie opens the chapter entitled "Social Control: Political Organization" in *Other Cultures* with the following sentences: "There could be no coherent social life unless the social relationships which bind people together were at least to some degree orderly, institutionalized and predictable. The only alternative to order is chaos. To maintain an orderly system of social relations people have to be subjected to some degree of compulsion; they cannot, all the time, do as they like." Thus "in every society some sort of internal order is secured on a tribal or territory-wide basis, external relations are provided for, and decisions in regard to these matters are taken in accordance with *generally accepted rules.* The political problem is how, in a society being studied, these things are brought about." *Ibid.,* p. 143. Hence the position of a governing elite which upholds a system of norms and values relatively peacefully may be viewed as being based on consent. This consensual element, seen sometimes as vested in the sovereign, sometimes in the norms and values, is a theme echoed or explicitly developed

chaos but a radically different system. This last point may be seen concretely in the fact that the underwriting of social norms was carried out just as effectively during the early years of this century, *before* Shaikh 'Ali consolidated undisputed power for himself and his family, as *after.* And there is no reason to insist that if the paternalist structure of this part of the Sudan were to be effectively dismantled the population would immediately lapse into normlessness. This point is perhaps almost platitudinous in its present formulation but it should serve to raise the question "what then does the political elite really do? What are the alternatives to what it does?"

There is one further argument concerning the ruling elite's indispensable function, namely that they represent the tribe as a collectivity in relations with outsiders—other tribes, the government, etc. In recent anthropological literature this kind of representative function has been analysed with the aid of explicit economic imagery, in which the chief or ruling group has been seen as an indispensable entrepreneur or middle-man.[12] Such market imagery does have some relevance in the Kababish situation, although it is likely to obscure as much as it reveals. The political elite may indeed act in the capacity of entrepreneur, middleman or representative, but it does so as a middleman who has a privileged monopoly in relation to his tribal "clients". As with all holders of crucial monopolies this gives the elite-middleman dominant power over others: the middleman is able to define the conditions for the fulfillment of his clients' interests, and even to determine their essential priorities. And as with

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by innumerable anthropologists: P. C. Lloyd, Swartz, Turner and Tuden, F. G. Bailey, and G. Balandier—to mention only a few recent writers. Like Beattie, none of these writers is prepared to consider whether a political anthropology which bases itself on certain assumptions about the nature of man need make any intellectual contact with psychological anthropology or develop its own comparative social psychology.

[12] See, for example, F. Barth's lucid discussion of the representative function of the Basseri chief: '"Perhaps the chief's most important function is to represent the tribe in its relations with the Iranian administration, and in conflicts with sedentary communities of persons... Where persons or groups belonging to such different parts of a plural society meet, there must be mechanisms mediating the relationship between them—*within the limited situation of their interaction, they must be 'comparable' in some appropriate framework.* Usually... this situation is the market place, where people meet as buyers and sellers, producers and consumers, and are equally subject to the 'terms of trade' regardless of the differences in their backgrounds... In the relations between groups of tribesmen and the organs of government, or where conflicts between a nomad and a sedentary arc made the subject of judicial procedure, however, the situation is far more complex", although still based on the market model... "A workable mechanism can only be achieved by channelling such conflicts through administrative superstructures which bridge... difference(s) by transforming the interests and the social units concerned to a poitit where they become comparable and thus able to communicate." *(Nomads of South Persia,* Oslo, 1961, pp. 77–9.) The market model, which has been applied with great ingenuity by recent anthropologists to "exotic" politics, is not only compatible with the Hobbesian model, but an elaboration of it: within the tribe the sovereign (as umpire) is necessary to orderly social life because he can regulate relations in conditions which tend to resemble imperfect competition; as between tribes the sovereign (as middleman) is necessary to orderly social life because he can transform particular interests and units into general exchange values in conditions which tend to resemble perfect competition—i.e. conditions in which (theoretical) equals meet, and the market regulates itself. In neither model are conflict and struggle seen as precluded by the presence of consent.

all effective cases of crucial monopolies, arguments justifying the existing arrangement in terms of requirements of the market, or of the clients' interests, are not wanting, but there is no a priori reason why the anthropologist should regard himself bound to accept such arguments at their face value. Alternatives do exist, and in the case of the Kabbashi political elite's representative function, the alternative is any arrangement which gives the ordinary Kabbashi greater choice over the political decisions affecting his life than he has at present.

Much more important than its maintenance of the social norms and social welfare of the Kabbashi population or its representative role is another function of the political elite— the perpetuation of a particular structure of inequality *which is part of its definition of "the Kababish tribe".* This is the essential mode in which the Kabbashi population is brought together. And in order to carry out this function effectively, the rulers must impose a distinctive ideological order on their experience of political life. They must convince not only their subjects but also themselves of the legitimacy of their distinctive position and privilege, and in seeking to meet this need they set themselves ideologically apart from those of "the Kababish tribe" who are dominated by them. They perceive the political structure in characteristic fashion, justifying it and describing its reality in ways that are not those of the non-elite. The non-elite for their part must make sense of the reality of their subordination.[13]

Although their perceptions differ, both elite and non-elite accept the political structure, with its privilege and its exclusion, as *legitimate*—i. c. as part of a just and natural social order. Hence we must speak of the "political authority" and not merely the "political dominance" of the elite. As I pointed out in my book, it is neither physical force, nor consent that constitutes the primary condition of Awlad Fadlallah political authority, but rather the complex historical reality of legitimate structural exclusion.

Broadly speaking the Awlad Fadlallah rulers tend to think in terms of the authority of norms, and their subjects in terms of the authority of persons. In their conceptualisation of "the tribe", the elite tend to stress homogeneity, unity, consensus. In conversations with outsiders they often represent "the Kababish" as a kind of collective personality—whence their assertion that "The Kababish stand as one man". Thus they present their sectional interests in universalist categories. In legitimating their political dominance and privilege as *authority,* they appeal to the legality derived from central government fiats and historical continuity, and to the need for performing essential administrative tasks within "the tribe" (keeping law and order, judging disputes, collecting taxes, managing the essential business of the Rural Council, which they feel they are better equipped to carry out than the non-Awlad-Fadlallah tribesmen. The ordinary Kabbashi pastoralist's view is partly of a heterogeneous collection of "clans" (each of which is seen as a homogeneous category of kinsmen—those who have the

[13] In this differential conceptualisation and justification of the political order we find another reason for questioning the use of a consensual framework for understanding the relations between Kabbashi rulers and their subjects.

same origin, the same clan name, and therefore in some measure the same identity) and partly of interlinked groups of politically equal households. It is therefore in terms of kinship ideology that the ordinary Kabbashi seeks to represent household interest in relation to his political peers. It is rarely if ever that he has occasion to speak in terms of "the Kababish tribe".[14] If he speaks of himself as "Kababish" when confronted with, for example, a non-Arab Meidobi tribesman, it is to refer to part of his concrete individuality, and to his address, which is summed up by the category "Kababish". In relation to the superior position of the Awlad Fadlallah he sees himself subordinated by an individual condition of powerlessness. Superior political power is *ipso facto* legitimate power (authority) because its exercise is seen as reasonable and just. This statement may appear tautological, but I have attempted in my book to spell out the terms of this tautology which saves it, I hope, from being completely vacuous. I have there tried to describe the social circumstances which help to give substance to Kabbashi notions of reasonableness and justice, and to show how existing socio-economic conditions permit the average Kabbashi pastoralist to pursue his normal aspirations within the present structure of political inequality.

IV

Political ideology refers to an expression of the experience that is formed in the process of adjusting to, or shaping, or in some other way responding to political reality. It conceptualises political reality, as well as being part of it. But the conception of political reality that an ideology contains is partly a distortion because it is inevitably influenced by the fact that people have to adjust to circumstances, to hope for alternatives, and to justify their hope or their adjustment.

I have suggested above that the rulers' conception of the political structure is ideological not only because it is an expression of social reality perceived, experienced and lived out, but also because it is a partial, obscure and distorted account of that reality. But the ordinary Kabbashi's conception of the political structure is in its own way no less ideological. In my book I was able to analyse the ideological character of the Awlad Fadlallah conceptions of authority because I adopted the contradictory perspective of the ordinary Kabbashi subject based on his distinctive mode of life and work. But I did not go beyond this point in my analysis (as I should have done) by examining the ideological components in the subject's own conceptions from the contradictory perspective of the Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs after this perspective had itself been criticised. Thus my analysis of the Kabbashi subject's ideology, because it was essentially uncritical, remained incomplete and somewhat misleading—*in fact it was little more than a restatement of that ideology.*

[14] In my fieldwork I was at first constantly frustrated by the answers that ordinary Kabbashi informants gave to my detailed enquiries about "Kababish customs": "People are not all the same..." they would begin. Awlad Fadlallah informants, on the other hand, were far more ready to generalise

When I returned briefly to the Sudan in July 1970[15] in order to collect data for a more developed analysis of Kabbashi political ideologies than the one I had been able to provide in my book, I encountered certain practical difficulties in the field: first, exceptionally heavy rains at a time when most Kabbashi pastoralists were themselves on the move made physical communication a complicated matter; secondly, potentially far-reaching political changes were beginning to be initiated by the central government, which made it impossible for me to question adequately those members of the Awlad Fadlallah I was able to contact, concerning their views on the political structure of "the tribe". I did, however, have a number of discussions on this subject with ordinary Kababish, which served to clarify some aspects of their ideology, and hence some of the conditions that had made the pattern of inequality the viable structure that it was.

I give a few extracts from one such conversation I recorded. In connection with a particular incident involving a third party known to both of us, I asked my informant about the role of the section shaikh—of whom there are generally several to one 'clan', and who are the historical successors to the autonomous tribal shaikhs of the nineteenth century Kababish confederation.

The *shaikh far a"* (section shaikh) has certain administrative duties but in the event of some injustice we go straight to the big shaikhs (Awlad Fadlallah). When he comes before the Nazir or the big shaikhs the *shaikh fara'* is just an ordinary Arab. He has no *sulta* (authority)... Or we go straight to the Rural Council office—the *hakilma* (government) has *sulta.*

(If the hakuma commits an injustice against you, will you accept it quietly?)

What can we do? Are we above the hakuma? The hakuma is the hakuma and we are like cattle. From the time that God created man there has always been hakuma. In the old days, they say, the hakuma used to cut off people's heads and destroy them. People could only run away into the wilderness or jump into the river like Esh in order to escape. Is there any other way? • • •

Our complaint is against the merchants—they raise the prices of everything we buy, so that if we sell them animals and buy goods from them we come away with nothing in our hands. By God they are so clever, they can even deceive the hakuma. If anyone comes by lorry from the towns they sell to him at the fixed price, but to the Arabs they sell dear. They sell us tea at 30 and 35 (piastres per pound), and last year it cost 20 and 21. By God this hakuma has helped us more than anything because it has fixed the prices of many things which were not fixed before. But the merchants are clever. They oppress us. They have no *sulta* but they have the benefit of the pen which gives them a way to the hakuma.

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The Nazirs and the big shaikhs do nothing for us. They ought to help us.

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about "Kababish customs".

[15] I am grateful to the Social Science Research Council for the grant that enabled me to make this visit.

(Why do you say that? How can they help you?)

They ought to go to the hakuma and say "Fix such and such a price for the Arabs who are oppressed by the merchants". For after all, do the Nazirs and the big shaikhs not benefit from us (lit. eat from us) ? When a king comes or a guest of the hakuma, is it not from us that the Nazirs and the big shaikhs collect the animals and the gifts? The hospitality that they give is all from the Arabs. Is it not right that they should help us against the merchants? But they don't care. They leave us and the merchants to ourselves.

A few points are already apparent from these brief extracts. The hakuma is seen as all-powerful and as part of the natural order of things—being all-powerful it is perhaps not subject to moral approval or disapproval (which is not to say that it does not have a moral aspect). My informant's reference to the hakuma during what I take to be the Mahdiya, though scarcely complimentary, was made not as a criticism of the gross injustice of that hakuma, but rather as an instance of its all-powerfulness. This does not mean, of course, that when the occasion came, the ordinary Kabbashi would be incapable of conceiving of hakuma in terms other than limitless power. It is merely that under present circumstances the hakuma appears to the ordinary Kabbashi as a kind of *deus ex machina.* It seems to impinge on his life only indirectly, impersonally and arbitrarily—mainly through the authority of the Nazir and the big shaikhs, and through the problem of merchants and rising prices.

Thus another clement in the Kabbashi subject's perception of the political structure is the *sulta* of the Nazir and the big shaikhs, and the homogeneous subordination of all non-Awlad-Fadlallah. He does not see a pyramid of graded offices which embraces the whole tribe, but a dichotomous structure of a group with power and authority and a group without. This is how things are and this is how they should be, for there is no attempt to question this inegalitarian structure in any fundamental way. On the contrary, such criticism of the Nazir and the big shaikhs as there is depends for its force precisely on a positive acceptance of this inequality. My informant did not criticise the tribal rulers for taking animals and tribute from their subjects, but for not carrying out their moral duty as rulers who owe their subjects something in return for what they take. The rulers are blamed for their inaction in relation to the merchants, and there is therefore some conception of a just and adequate group of rulers which docs not coincide exactly with the way in which today's real rulers are sometimes seen to act. Thus in this part of the view of political structure entertained by the Kabbashi subject *things as they are* and *things as they should be* are distinguished in a way that they arc not in the part that relates to the hakuma.

A third clement in the Kabbashi subject's perception of the political structure is the merchant, who is seen as exercising dominant power over the ordinary tribesman, but a power that is resented even though it is submitted to. The merchant may not commit any explicit legal offence, but he is seen as using his power cxploitativcly. In fact no clearcut distinction is made between the merchant's dominant power as such (his manipulation of the commodity market for personal profit) and his unjust use of

that power. The Kabbashi pastoralist sees the merchant's dominant power (rightly) as market power, which he resents, perhaps because of a vague feeling that it conflicts with the notion of just prices (prices that do not increase?) At any rate, one may see that it is because the merchants do not have *sulta* that their dominant power is resented—the reverse is not true, for Awlad Fadlallah behaviour may be resented without any questioning of their *sulta.* Hence *sulta* is a legitimation of dominance relationships which represents much more than a *practical acquiescence* in dominant power. For although the merchant's exercise in dominant commercial power is accepted (it is not yet pervasive), it is, *as coercion,* seen as an incongruous intrusion into a just and natural world.

One of the most important ideological features of the text quoted above is the sharp distinction made between the hakuma and the shaikhs. Not only are different moral attitudes adopted in relation to the hakuma and the shaikhs, but the two also seem to constitute different kinds of existential category. One obvious aspect of this is the personal, regular, anticipated character of shaikhly political activity, something that the hakuma lacks: it is possible that the willingness to pass moral judgement on the former but not on the latter is connected with this difference. Yet in reality the Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs are an extension of the hakuma (central government), in the shape of the Native Administration System and as constituted members of the Rural District Council. Of course, they have considerable autonomy and initiative, but always an indispensable measure of their dominant power is derived from the central government, first colonial and then nationalist. The shaikhly rulers see this quite clearly, but their subjects do not. It is in a partial, distorted sense that the subjects see this connection: for them the Awlad Fadlallah shaikh as *hakim* (ruler) shares in that quality of all-powerfulness that is a primary defining characteristic of the hakuma. But in this ideological form the connection works only one way—it helps to re-enforce the legitimacy that is claimed by the Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs as something due to all rulers (who must, as rulers, at least possess the visible signs of dominant power). It docs not provoke the question of how the central government (what it stands for, what it achieves and how it relates to "the Kababish tribe") is to be evaluated through its tribal extension; or the equally important question of how *relevant* the structure of tribal authority is to certain practical problems which the ordinary Kabbashi recognises (easier watering, more medical and veterinary attention, improved grazing, "reasonable" prices for goods bought and animals sold) and which can only be resolved at the pan-Sudanic level. It leads him to exaggerate the power of the tribal elite, and to see his particular predicament entirely in relation to this elite rather than to the hakuma, within a structured political reality whose foundations were laid in the colonial epoch.

Thus the ideological pattern that links together in a specific way hakuma, Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs and Kabbashi pastoralists, is not simply an *ideational structure* (which has a mainly logical relationship to society), or simply a set of *social norms* (which has a mainly instrumental value in social situations), but primarily a *form of consciousness* which has a determinate yet dynamic connection with socio-economic

conditions, and which contributes towards the maintenance of the objective structure of political inequality in this part of the Sudan.

V

If the ideological positions of Kabbashi subjects and their rulers are different (as I have suggested) and even to some extent contradictory, why do they not come into direct conflict? The brief answer to the question is that up to the present, socio-economic conditions have permitted them to remain not incompatible.[16] It might have been apposite at this point to attempt a sketch of the socio-economic circumstances which would be likely to bring out into the open a direct clash between the ideological position of the Kabbashi pastoralists and that of their shaikhly rulers, had it not been for the fact that certain political developments emanating from the capital make such a discussion redundant.

The revolutionary, military regime that came to power in 1969 has now (1970) abolished the Native Administration System, and the elected Rural District Council—in this as in all other areas of the Sudan. For the moment the business of the district as a whole is carried out by central government administrators (Inspector, Executive Officer) together with other civil servants (local Medical Officer, Veterinary Officer, Education Officer, etc.). The Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs still function as tax officials, but section shaikhs who do the actual work are being increasingly encouraged to bypass them and deliver directly to the executive headquarters at Sodiri. More important, Awlad Fadlallah shaikhs continue to work as local court judges (court presidents), but the central government has plans to replace them soon by trained judges who are gazetted civil servants.

All of this points to the probability that "the tribe" will dissolve into "the district" in a way that was not possible before. If, when this happens, "tribalism" of the kind that has been reported and analysed for West and Central Africa were to emerge here, it would of course be a very different ideological phenomenon from the one represented by "the tribe" with its authoritative structure of cohesive, privileged shaikhs ruling in the name of "the Kababish". Now that the Native Administration system has been repudiated and is to be progressively dismantled, one ideological element encapsulated in the concept of "the Kababish tribe" should become more evident to the ordinary Kabbashi pastoralists, for nothing will now stand between them and the hakuma to

[16] When anthropologists have been aware of the existence of contradictory ideologies, it is generally in relation to revolutionary situations (e.g. L. de Heusch, "Mythe et socidtd feodale", *Archives de Sociologie des Religions,* xviii, 1964). This is the point at which ideologies become relatively articulate and coherent, when they emerge from the concrete levels of sense-certainty and perception to the abstract levels of understanding and theory, the point at which contradictions between ideological positions become by definition explicit and explosive. But there is no reason to assume, as many anthropologists do, that in times of "stability" a single ideological order prevails—or even more strongly, that stability is *dependent* on the prevalence of a single ideology (see, e.g., P. C. Lloyd, *op. cit.).*

obscure the latter's true character. One hopes that this development will make them more aware than was possible before, of the way in which their destiny is affected by decisions taken (or not taken) at the pan-Sudanic level. And perhaps it will also reveal to them that the hakuma is not as all-powerful as it once appeared to be.

VI

I will not insist that my analysis of the Kabbashi subject's ideology is correct in all respects, still less that it is complete. A fuller analysis would reveal the ideology to be far richer and far more contradictory, within itself and in relation to developing socio-economic circumstances, than I have been able to demonstrate here. But I think I have said enough to make the main point in my paper a little clearer: we cannot understand historical structures of political domination unless we also undertake a critical investigation of ideologies in order to uncover the partial, distorted conceptions of reality built into them, and which being thus built, constitute an indispensable part of such structures. And in so far as such critical investigations are also a kind of challenge to claims about the true nature of moral/political reality, the understanding of facts gained must be allowed to interact rationally with the moral and political assumptions of the investigator himself.

It will be seen that this kind of analysis has been pursued for at least a hundred years in the context of theory which is aimed primarily at understanding *European (i.e. Western}* political experience. In the context of theories concerned mainly with non-Europcan, "exotic" politics, however, this approach is still very rare. In most cases the term "ideology" is handled by anthropologists in a non-critical way, to indicate (i) a set of moral ideals from which (men being what they are) actual conduct falls short; or (ii) a set of more or less *articulate* beliefs (myth, theory) which has a certain "fit" in relation to social structure (symbolises it, reflects it, adjusts to it); or (iii) a set of publicly accepted rules of behaviour which are sufficiently ambiguous or flexible to allow the individual to manipulate them to his advantage (hence, the essential "rationality" of all men is vindicated). Although such conceptualisations of ideology have yielded insights into the nature of political reality, they are all essentially non-critical, and based directly on the principle of the strict separation of fact and value.[17]

Certainly the systematic theoretical elaboration of a *critical* approach would involve the Western anthropologist in difficult and disturbing questions, including the

[17] An instructive example of the misunderstanding of the difference between a critical and non-critical approach to ideology is represented in the following comments by Merton: "...functionalists, with their emphasis on religion as a *social mechanism* for 'reinforcing the sentiments', may not differ materially in their *analytical framework* from Marxists who, if their metaphor of 'opium of the masses' is converted into a neutral statement of social fact, also assert that religion operates as a social mechanism for reinforcing certain secular as well as sacred sentiments among its believers. The point of difference appears only when *evaluation of* this commonly accepted fact came into question." *Social Theory and Social Structure,* Glencoe, Free Press, 1957, p. 44. Such Marxist assertions are not "neutral statements

ideological implications of his own cultural position from which his views of "tribal", non-European societies are drawn. He would have to consider whether, to what extent and why these views tend to represent such societies basically in the image of European historical experience. He would have to consider the fact that these societies have been and still are militarily, economically and intellectually *vulnerable* in relation to his own. He would have to ask himself how he can account for this systematic historical fact without criticising their conditions and ideologies, as well as the conditions and ideologies of his own society which in theory denies the systematic significance of this vulnerability, and in practice re-enforces and deepens it. Finally he would have to re-examine whether the extreme theoretical relativism which he believes is necessary for science, and is also by a happy chance an indication of his moral integrity towards Native human beings, does in fact serve the cause either of science or of a common humanity.[18]

Perhaps one reason why these questions are not raised, or raised only to be contemptuously brushed aside, is that unlike the Western theorist of Western society, *the Western anthropologist has not yet been compelled to argue with the objects of his scientific contemplation.* Is this not in effect the substance of the recent claim (in a synoptic account of political anthropology) that by concentrating on the "relatively isolated", "small-scale", "pre-industrial" society, in which he is not himself apparently involved, the anthropologist avoids "the problem of ideology" which has "thwarted" the work of such thinkers as "Marx, Carlyle, Weber, Durkheim and K. Burke"?[19] Is the epistemological privilege the anthropologist claims after all much more than a reflection of the political privilege he unconsciously enjoys as member of a prestigious profession in a powerful society confronting immeasurably weaker ones?

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of social fact" with an optional flavouring of value—they are epigrammatic references to a theory which incorporates a critical approach towards historical modes of consciousness. Whatever one may think of the theory as a whole, the Marxist statement about religion does not refer to the same "commonly accepted fact" as the functionalist.

[18] For a recent discussion of some of these problems, see *Current Anthropology,* December 1968.

[19] A. Cohen, "Political anthropology: the analysis of the symbolism of power relations", *Man,* June, 1969, pp. 227–8.

VIII. Nomadisation as an Economic Career Among the Sedentaries In the Sudan Savannah Belt

Gunnar Haaland

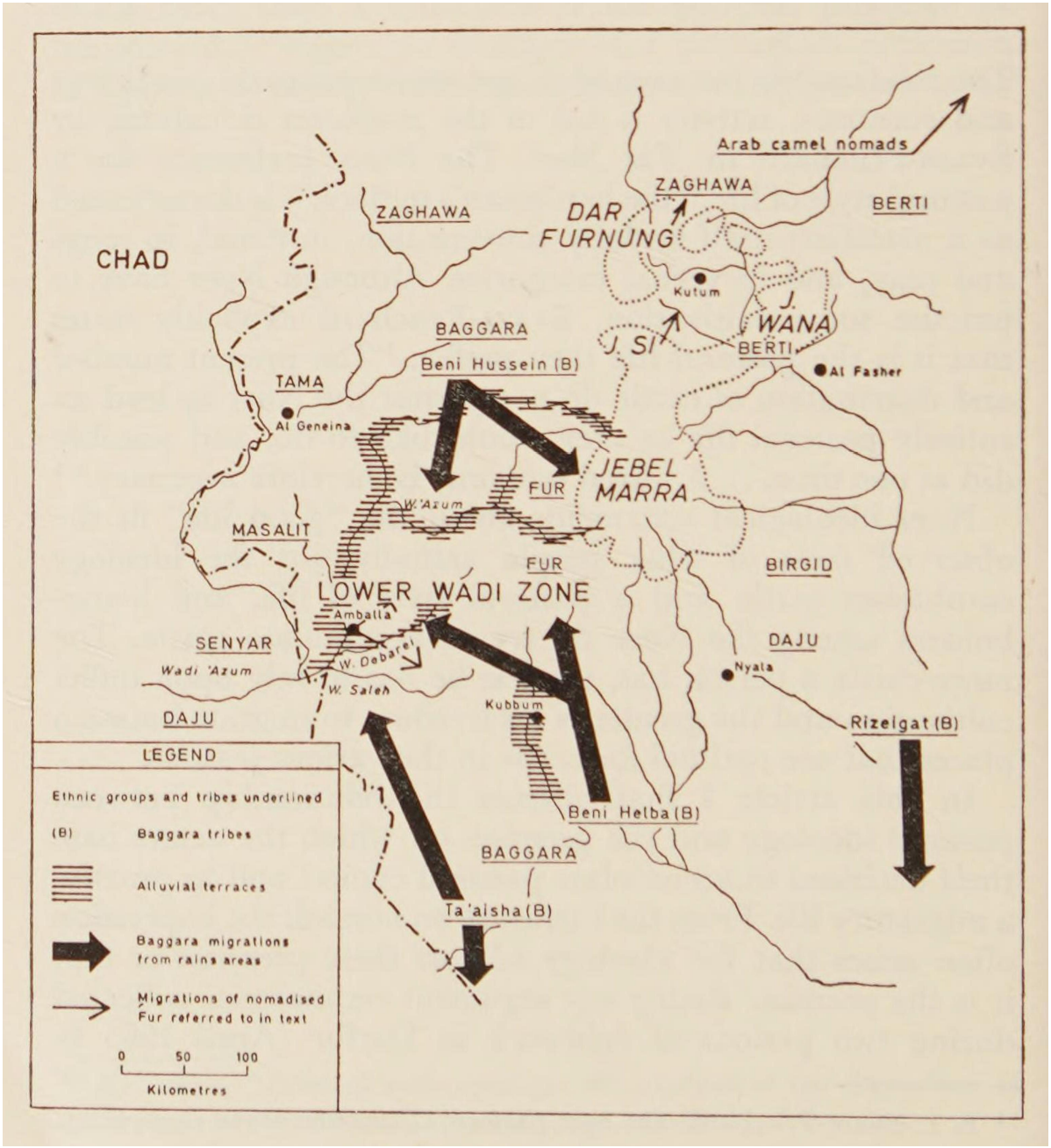
The relationship between ideology, environmental conditions and economic activity is one of the problems elucidated by Evans-Pritchard in *The Nuer.* The Nuer preference for a pastoral style of life, "the herdsman's outlook", is documented as it manifests itself in daily conversation, in ritual, in songs and play, and in verbal categories. Although Nuer have to practise some cultivation, Evans-Pritchard explicitly states that it is the pastoral life they prefer: "The present number and distribution of cattle do not permit the Nuer to lead an entirely pastoral life as they would like to do, and possibly did at one time... A mixed economy is therefore necessary."[1]

Nuer ideological statements about the "good life" fit the observed facts of what people actually do; the ideology emphasises cattle and a pastoral style of life, and householders among the Nuer do try to accumulate cattle. The more cattle a person has, the less he has to rely upon millet cultivation and the greater is his freedom to migrate between places that are optimal for cattle in the various seasons.

In this article I shall discuss the relationship between pastoral ideology and the premises on which the actors base their decisions to accumulate pastoral capital and to practise a migratory life. From the literature on nomads the impression often arises that the ideology mirrors these premises or that it is the premise. Basing my argument on material collected during two periods of fieldwork in Darfur (April 1965 to May 1966, and April 1969 to November 1969), I shall here suggest that this relationship is more complicated.

The dominant traditional subsistence activities in Darfur are camel nomadism, cattle nomadism, and grain cultivation. The geographical location of these activities is related to environmental conditions. Cultivators are mainly located in the centre of the region in places where there are permanent water supplies and where soil fertility makes it possible to base one's livelihood on cultivation, while seasonal fluctuations in water supplies, natural vegetation, and the presence of insects encourage the pastoralists to migrate between dry and rainy season areas; the camel nomads migrating in the parts and the cattle nomads migrating in the southern parts.

[1] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 25.


Arab camel nomads
ZAGHAWA
BERTI
ZAGHAWA
DAR FURNUNG
CHAD
Kutum
J. WANA
BAGGARA
J. SI
BERTI
Beni Hussein (B)
Al Fasher
TAMA
Al Geneina
JEBEL MARRA
FUR
W. Azum
MASALIT
FUR
BIRGID
LOWER WADI ZONE
Amballa
SENYAR
DAJU
W. Debarei
Wadi 'Azum
Nyala
W. Saleh
Kubbum
Rizeigat (B)
DAJU
LEGEND
Ethnic groups and tribes underlined
(B) Baggara tribes
Alluvial terraces
Baggara migrations from rains areas
Migrations of nomadised Fur referred to in text
0 50 100
Kilometres
Beni Helba (B)
BAGGARA
Ta'aisha (B)

These subsistence activities are typically associated with different ethnic groups; Fur, Masalit, Daju, Senyar, and Tama are localised in the central region and their members mainly subsist on grain cultivation (dura on the alluvial soil, and dukhn elsewhere). Baggara Arabs of several political groups (Ta'aisha, Beni Helba, Habbaniya, Rizeigat, and Beni Hussein), and recent Fulani immigrants pursue cattle husbandry, while camel nomadism is practised by Arabs and Bideyat. The Zaghawa practise all these subsistence activities but emphasise livestock: camels, cattle and sheep.

Ethnic groups are thus identified with one of the traditional subsistence patterns, and ideologically one also finds that each emphasises its own characteristic pattern and associated style of life. The Fulani and Baggara ideologies show preferences for pastoralism[2] while my first impression during fieldwork was that the Fur, Masalit, and Daju were identified with grain cultivation and sedentary village life. Thus, it was a surprise for me when I came across several cattle camps whose members came from Fur, Masalit, and Daju villages.

Out of a total population of 8681 (according to the 1956 Census) the nomadised sedentaries in the Amballa Omodiya number as follows:

Camps	*Ethnic origin of household heads*	
I	5 Fur	
II	4 Fur	
III	7 Fur, 1 Senyar, 1 Rizeigat	
IV and V	No census data, probably all Fur	
VI	4 Daju	
VII		
VIII	7 Masalit	
3 Masalit	From Dar Masalit just west of Amballa	

In addition informants in Amballa named twelve Fur and one Masalit who originally came from Amballa and surrounding villages but who now migrate with the Baggara outside this omodiya.

Interviews and census data from the Fur village of Amballa also showed that several of the villagers had lived in cattle camps part of their life. Here I shall describe two cases that are particularly interesting in this connection.

Hawa Arbab was an old Fur widow in Amballa. As a young girl she had for seven years migrated to Kubbum with her father, mainly in camps composed of Baggara Arabs of a Salamat lineage. She then married a Fur cultivator and settled in a village.

[2] I. Cunnison, *Baggara Arabs,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966; D. J» Stenning, *Savannah Nomads,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959; C. E. Hopen, *The Pastoral Fulbe Family in Gvuandu,* London,

Her brother, who was married to a Fur woman, continued to migrate with the Salamat. Three of his sons married Salamat women and are still in camps, but she does not know where.

Mahmud Yumma, a Fur farmer about fifty years of age, had spent twenty years in camp. The first nine years he migrated to Kubbum with his father and his brother Adim. When their father died, Mahmud and Adim inherited his cattle, but Mahmud did not succeed as a nomad; disease and bad management reduced his herd and he had to choose migratory routes that were less favourable for the cattle but where he could grow enough grain to make up for the reduced income from his herd. However, he did not manage to build up his herd again and he is now a sedentary grain cultivator in Amballa. His brother Adim succeeded in his cattle enterprise and attached himself to a camp of Heimat Baggara. He married a woman from the camp and stayed with them until he died. Mahmud does not know where his brother's son is, but he assumes he is with the Baggara and that he docs not know the Fur language.

In certain ways this seems to be a situation similar to that of the Nuer: most households are sedentary cultivators here, but some have accumulated enough cattle to base their subsistence on them and lead a migratory life. Census data from Amballa indicate a yearly nomadisation rate in the order of one per cent.

At first I thought that my initial impression of Fur culture was wrong and that this nomadisation was a consequence of a cattle complex, and I started to look for ideological manifestations of such cultural preferences. Further observations did not, however, confirm this hypothesis.

For all Fur, grain products (porridge and beer) are the dominant items of diet and all of them, except those who have become pastoral nomads, gear their productive activity towards self-sufficiency with regard to grain. Both daily meals consist of porridge with a spicy sauce including vegetables, meat or milk. If one cannot afford these last ingredients wild herbs may be substituted for them. If one has no grain, on the other hand, one is faced with hunger. The fact that grain products are important for a man's subsistence does not necessarily imply that his ideology will reflect this. Ecological circumstances may make agriculture a safer livelihood although ideologically he evaluates cattle and pastoralism higher. This I understand is the case for some groups in East Africa (Bunyoro, Kipsigis, Arusha) who would ideologically fall in the cattle complex area, but who economically mainly rely on agriculture. Among the Fur, however, the ideological emphasis is consistent with the subsistence importance of grain. I shall try to document this ideological emphasis by comparing the ritual importance the Fur attach to grain and cultivation versus cattle and herding.

Grain products, porridge and beer, are set apart from other goods in the sense that they cannot be transacted in the market place. They belong to the domestic sphere like sex; to sell them in the market would be an act similar to prostitution. Marriage among the Fur establishes very little jointness between the spouses in terms of resources

Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958.

and decisions, in fact they constitute separate households. I suggest that the special position of porridge and beer in the husband-wife relation is associated with the fact that sex and preparation of food are the only important services the wife renders the husband. The importance of cultivation is indicated by grain products having these associations, and not milk products.

At critical phases of the agricultural cycle various rituals are performed. A historical source, Al-Tunisy,[3] tells how the Sultan of Darfur initiated the growing season by ritual sowing. In Amballa I have been told that in order to get sufficient rain the old women used to gather under a special tree where a sacred snake was supposed to live. There they sprinkled a mixture of flour and water on the tree in order to make the snake stay in its hole down under the tree and not come outside and thereby prevent the rain from falling. The form of these rituals apparently varies within the Fur area.[4] Today islamised rites are more commonly performed when drought threatens. If locusts threaten the crop, there is a special locust magician *(dambare)* who performs magic rites to drive them away.

The Fur thus have rites for protection and increase of the grain harvest while I have not come across corresponding practices pertaining to cattle. The ritual use of grain also indicates its special importance in Fur culture. At circumcision, while a boy is waiting in his mother's hut before the operation, a group of relatives will come into the hut with a gourd filled with a mixture of flour and water and sprinkle the contents over them while exclaiming *bora fatta* (white milk—mother's milk). The same mixture is used in the rain-making ritual. When war with the Masalit threatened, the old men of Amballa used to go to some special stones east of the village where they asked their ancestors for support *(kuing wouonga adonga kele alang kaue*—our grandfathers, the enemy is coming to kill us) while placing grain dough on the stones. Grain is also used in rites performed when certain diseases occur.

Compared to the ceremonial use of cattle, I think there are some striking differences. Traditionally, bridewealth was two or three cows, now it is usually money. At ceremonial occasions like circumcision or the commemoration of a dead relative, an ox is slaughtered. This may also be the case in some rain rituals. Typically, the use of cattle on these occasions either implies that rights in this specific form of wealth are exchanged for other types of rights, or arc lost without the person gaining access to new rights although the consumption of cattle may enhance the giver's prestige or prevent him losing reputation on occasions demanding display of wealth. Cattle arc thus exchanged or consumed on occasions where transactions over important values take place while the consumption of grain products on ritual occasions does not have such implications. I suggest that because cattle are the most important among the few concrete objects of value that can be accumulated in Fur society they may serve as

[3] Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Tunisy, *Voyage au Darfour,* Paris, 1845.

[4] H. G. Balfour Paul, "A prehistoric cult still practised in Muslim Darfur," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* Ixxxvi, i, 1956.

a medium for channelling the distribution of prestige and important rights. In other words the use of cattle on ceremonial occasions has both symbolic functions and pragmatic consequences. Without committing myself to a statement which implies that these pragmatic consequences are the single cause underlying this ceremonial practice I will draw attention to the fact that cattle in this and other parts of Africa are the most convenient economic means which can have these consequences.

The value of grain used on ritual occasions on the other hand is hardly measurable; the amount is so small that it is not a scarce resource for anybody. Consequently it cannot have the pragmatic implications that the use of cattle has; its functions are purely symbolic. I suggest that the fact that this product is chosen to have symbolic functions in important relationships and at specific, intensely meaningful and crucial situations in a person's life, indicates the agricultural orientation of Fur culture.

Furthermore, one does not find the elaboration of verbal categories relating to cattle that is so common among cattle people; in fact, terms relating to migratory camp life are to a large extent derived from Arabic.

My interpretation of these formal aspects of culture corresponds very well with observation of how the Fur themselves describe the relationship between cattle and grain, camp and village: "A nomad is rich but camp life is a poor way of life"; "cattle is a man's wealth but grain is his food". The focus of daily conversation is to a very small extent concerned with cattle and camp, it is rain, drought, grain and village affairs that figure most prominently.

The ideology as it was explicitly or implicitly formulated in culturally codified statements was thus not fully consistent with the observed behaviour patterns. In fact, the nomadisation process seemed to be a paradox in the light of the ideologically expressed preferences for a sedentary agricultural life. The general statements about "the good life", preference or correct behaviour that was ideologically formulated, could not thus unambiguously be understood as the actual determinant of behaviour. I was therefore forced to look at the problem from a different point of view.

Whatever the ideological importance cattle may have, they represent a type of value, and the question of why people accumulate cattle can alternatively be analysed in the context of value management.

Such an economic analysis has been published elsewhere[5] and I shall therefore merely summarise the main argument. The management unit among the Fur is the single, grown-up individual; marriage thus does not establish a joint household of the spouses. Every accepted member of the local community has usufruct rights to land, which is administered on behalf of the community by the local headman. Because of soil exhaustion, fields are not cultivated continuously but will be left fallow. Rights to fallow land revert to the village community and the headman will allocate a new plot to the cultivator. Land is thus allocated administratively and cannot be transacted

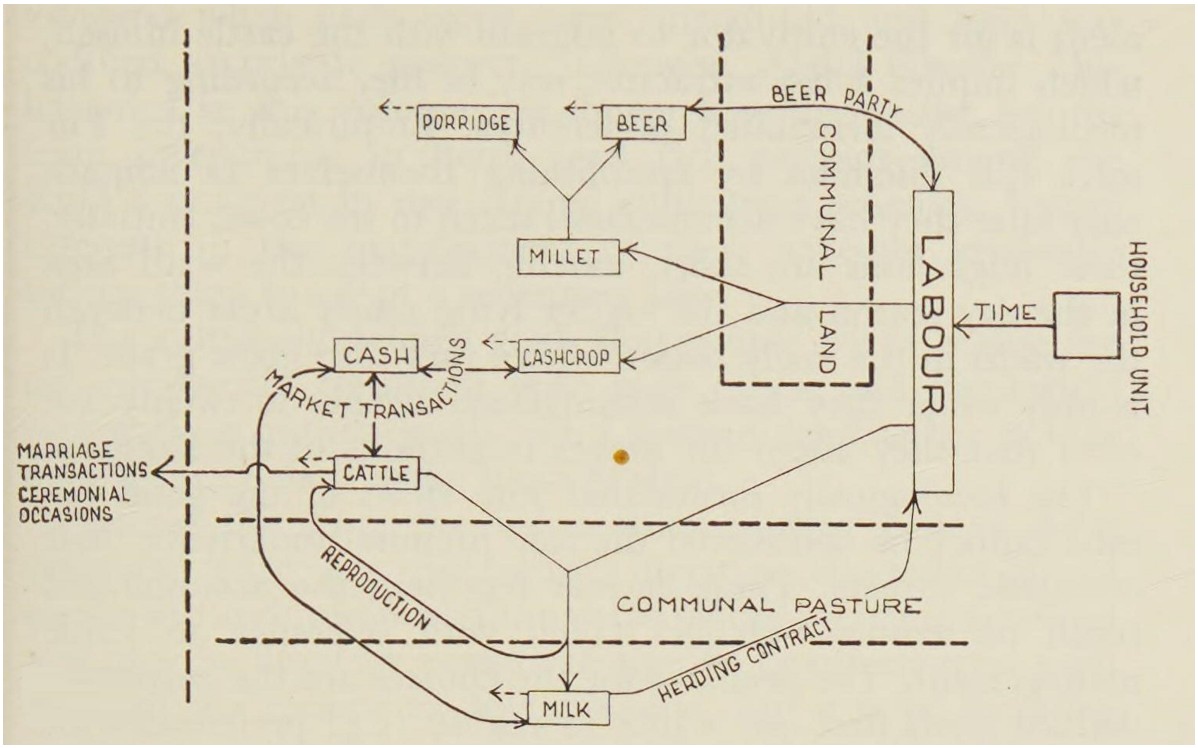
[5] G. Haaland, 'Economic determinants in ethnic processes', in F. Barth (ed.). *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Oslo University Press, 1969.

for any other form of value. Transactions over labour are likewise restricted because wage labour is codified as shameful; beer is the only appropriate counter-prestation for labour and the transaction is mediated in the communal spirit of the beer party.

Every adult member of the community thus has the basic resources—land and his own time—by which he can satisfy his subsistence needs. His primary concern is to acquire self-sufficiency in production of the staple crop, millet, which he consumes as porridge and beer; secondly, to grow some vegetables (onion, chilli, okra, tomatoes, sesame) for consumption or sale. The important fact here is that the profit a cultivator may make on his agricultural enterprise can only to a very limited extent be reinvested in the factors of agricultural production. The only investment objects arc livestock and, most importantly, cattle. The major alternatives available to the management units among the Fur can dia-grammatically be described in a flow-chart (Fig. 1) where the boxes indicate form of value, and the arrows indicate transformations of value mediated by production and exchange mechanisms, or consumption of value (dotted).

Within such a structure, any person, whether his ideological preferences are for cattle or for cultivation, will be stimulated to invest in cattle. Cattle produce more value in the form of milk and calves; they can be consumed directly, they can be exchanged for money or other goods in the market place. Traditionally, they were a necessary prestation at the establishment of marriage, and they can give esteem when slaughtered on ritual or ceremonial occasions. In other words, cattle are the most liquid and the most productive major form of value among the Fur, and that is the reason why the cultivators try to channel their profit into the cattle sector. The profitability of this investment is, however, restricted by ecological conditions. Amballa is situated on the alluvial bank of Wadi ‘Azum. During the rainy season diseases caused by insects and muddy soil make it a great risk to keep cattle there. This problem is solved by leaving the cows in the care of the Baggara, who take the herd to a more favourable area in this season. The owner gets the calves and the Baggara get the milk. An important factor concerning this contract is that the Baggara are not held responsible if a cow is killed by wild animals or disease. This poses a dilemma for the farmer, as it is difficult for him to get information about the causes of the death of his cow: the Baggara may just as well have sold it or consumed it. Cows are thus the farmer’s most important wealth, and the more he has, the greater his concern for their welfare, and the more will the risky contract with the Baggara worry him.

The alternative way to solve this problem of value managemerit is for the cultivator to migrate with the cattle himself, which implies a less attractive way of life, according to his ideologically formulated preferences. Empirically, the Fur solve this dilemma by establishing themselves as nomads only after they have accumulated seven to ten cows. Initially, these migrations are short, moving between the wadi area in the dry season and the higher lying sandy areas between the wadis in the rainy season where they also grow grain. It is only when they have accumulated twenty to twenty-five cows that they adopt the longer migrations of the Baggara.



The ideologically formulated Fur views of the good life thus cannot be considered the sole premise underlying their economic careers. These careers represent the accumulated result of strategic choices taken with reference to value management. The premises for the choices are the culturally defined goals that one wants to realise (e.g. preferences for special consumption patterns, style of life, prestige, wealth) and the institutional and ecological factors which constitute strategic limitations on the realisation of these goals. The ideology obviously says something about the goals people want to realise, but just how these goals are made relevant to behaviour cannot be stated in an unambiguous way.

As I have tried to show, a pastoral ideology is not a necessary condition for the emergence of nomadic households. Nor is such an ideology a sufficient condition for the maintenance of nomadic careers, as comparative materials show. Barth demonstrates in his analysis of the Basseri of South Persia[6] how vested interests in capital management lead wealthy herd owners to settle despite their preferences for a nomadic life. For the Kipsigis of Kenya, Manners[7] has described how they changed their way of life from pastoralism to cultivation within a surprisingly short time and he argues that this was

[6] F. Barth, 'Capital, investment and the social structure of a pastoral nomad group in south Persia', in R. Firth and B. S. Yamey (eds.). *Capital, Saving and Credit in Peasant Societies,* London, Allen and Unwin, 1964.

[7] R. A. Manners, 'The Kipsigis—change with alacrity', in P. Bohannan and G. Dalton (eds.), *Markets in Africa.* New York, Doubleday, 1965.

related to the new opportunities for value management that followed when cash crops were introduced and land was codified as private property. Likewise, Abdel Ghaffar Mohammed in this volume has shown how decreasing returns from investments in herds lead rich nomads among the Rula'a to invest in mechanised cultivation schemes. Vested interests in the management of these schemes gradually induce them to adopt a sedentary life.

The culturally defined goals that people try to realise are not necessarily consistent with each other, and ideological elaborations of these goals will, I assume, tend rather to hide discrepancies than make them explicit.

Among the Fur, the value discrepancies I have been discussing here (e.g. discrepancy between the value placed on the Fur style of life and the value placed on being wealthy) will only be faced by persons in specific circumstances: most Fur will not experience this dilemma. But it is by focussing on the strategies that lead persons into these circumstances that one may discover how the Fur themselves evaluate these goals relative to each other.

The hypothesis that the strategy of cattle accumulation and nomadisation is a result of the economic structure and ecological conditions can be tested by comparison of communities exhibiting variations in these factors. I have not made detailed studies of other villages of the lower wadis, but I have travelled along the major wadis, 'Azum, Debarei, and Salih, and interviews in villages have confirmed that nomadisation occurs there too. I will consequently assume this to be the case in every village having the same constellation of economic and ecological factors as Amballa. In the following I shall try to show some implications of ecological variations within the Fur area.

Between the wadis lie areas which are less muddy, and less infected with insects, especially if the soil is sandy. In such areas it is possible to keep the cattle in the village the whole year, but here also one will find that a man having a herd of about ten head is faced with the dilemma of choosing the economically more rewarding migratory life or to stay in the more comfortable village. This is also the pattern in the western foothills of Jebel Marra.

On Jebel Marra itself, however, the situation is different. I have no cases of nomadisation there, and according to

Barth[8] the mountain people do not keep cows there but invest in oxen. Native informants state that they do so because cows become infertile under mountain conditions, a statement that I am unable to verify. The profitability of this investment depends on external sources of supply and demand. Baggara groups who camp in the foothills of Jebel Marra during the dry season are the suppliers of ox calves, while travelling Arab cattle traders buy the grown oxen and sell them in larger demand centres, mainly Khartoum. In the mountains there is thus no reason for a man to become a nomad.

[8] F. Barth, 'The Fur of Jebcl Marra' in 'Outline of Society' series, Dept, of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Khartoum. Mimeo.

Agriculture and this specific form of animal husbandry can be combined. Investment in the cattle sector will therefore not lead the cultivator into a position where the way of life he prefers is inconsistent with the actions he has to perform for optimal management of his capital.

The northern parts of the Fur area, Jebel Si and Dar Furnung, offer still other variations.

I am here mainly referring to Fur population settled on the hills and mountain slopes of this area. The mountains of Dar Furnung constitute the northern boundary of the Fur; the plains and hills north of them are inhabited by the Zaghawa; the goz plains between these mountains, however, are settled by people who identify themselves as Fur-Tungur. They speak the Fur language and intermarry with the mountain Fur, but in other respects they differ in certain cultural features; they practise female circumcision while the mountain Fur do not.

Among the mountain Fur of Jebcl Si and Dar Furnung, agricultural profits are also invested in cattle. In this area, cattle owners keep the cattle close to the villages during the rainy season. Because of lack of water in the dry season the herd-owners move their herds into the plains where there are springs and wells which keep enough water through the whole year.

In the Jebcl Si area investment in cattle leads to migratory movements between the rainy season village and dry season camp in the plains. Informants state that some herd-owners leave their mountain villages and settle in villages in the plains. The reasons given are that conditions for cattle are better there in the rainy season also. Migrations practised by cattle owners in this area are very short, the camp is seldom further away from the village than a day's march. However, I have no census data from this area that can document the extent to which this is done.

Having been only a few days in Dar Furnung, I have to rely completely on a few interviews. The patterns seem to be similar to those of Jebel Si, but with fewer herd-owners leaving their home villages to settle on the northern plains although many may have relatively large herds, of twenty to thirty head.

The conditions for animal husbandry are said to be better on the plains. In order to understand why herd-owners are apparently reluctant to leave their home villages, we have to consider another ecological factor, namely competition with other groups. There are two aspects involved here, an economic and a political one. Cultural skills and preferences provide the basis for the way the economic units manage their resources. Units of different ethnic origin may therefore not be equally effective in exploiting joint resources. Where pressure on resources increases this may lead to a systematic selection of units with reference to ethnic background. Undoubtedly, there are differences in expertise between nomadic households whose personnel originated in sedentary Fur villages and those originating from nomadic Baggara or Zaghawa communities. Such cultural differences, although they may lead to a high frequency of sedentarisation of nomadised Fur households, are not however an insurmountable barrier preventing the success of a Fur farmer shifting to a nomadic enterprise.

This success is, however, also dependent on political factors. In the Sudan grazing territories are not monopolised by political groups as they are many places in the Middle East. The maintenance of a herd does not only depend on access to grazing areas, but also on ability to protect it from thieves and raiders. The less an area is under the control of the government's administration, the greater the need for herdowners to mobilise local support for the protection of their livestock. Northern Darfur is probably the part of the province where government control is least effective, and the Zaghawa also have a reputation as livestock thieves.

Although, for the welfare of the cattle, it might be preferable for a herd-owner in Dar Furnung to leave his village and move in the Zaghawa area the whole year, this is a more risky venture politically, unless he has established relationships to groups that he can trust for support. Marriage with a Zaghawa girl and uxorilocal residence is a mechanism for establishing such relations.

Bridewealth among the Zaghawa is said to be substantially higher than among the Fur (20–30 as compared to 3–5 head of cattle) but not all of it need be transferred at the establishment of marriage. For a Fur herd-owner the economic cost of marrying a Zaghawa girl can be seen as an investment because the political support he thereby gets gives the opportunity for a faster growth of the cattle capital. The occurrence of such marriages is widely recognised; thus the population just north of Dar Furnung is called Fora-Mcrita by the Fur and Kora-Berri by the Zaghawa, both terms meaning Fur-Zaghawa and referring to intermarriage as well as to the mixed origin of the population there. As an ethnic group they may be identified as Zaghawa, since it is according to the standards of this culture that performance is judged and sanctioned. Social life is thus structured with reference to Zaghawa standards and the idioms of Zaghawa culture are used for signalling identity.

This comparison of communities in different ecological circumstances seems to validate the hypothesis that these circumstances affect the occurrence and character of nomadic careers.

The effect of economic structure can be tested by comparison with the villages Nycrtcte and lour in the western foothills of Jebel Marra. In these villages there arc perennial streams and springs. For thirty years this water has been used for irrigation of orchards (mainly mango, guava, citrus). The introduction of these trees and the demand for the fruits stimulated cultivators to reorganise their economic activities, specialising in fruit production for sale and buying grain for consumption. Trees arc private property and they can be bought and sold. In these villages there is thus an alternative to cattle as a way of investing agricultural profits. According to Fur cultivator preferences, investing in orchards is more attractive than investing in cattle; the trees are productive capital and their value is comparable to cattle since both can be exchanged for money; until the time of fieldwork the price situation had been such that capital invested in trees gave a higher return than capital invested in cattle, and this investment makes it possible to continue as a villager. From these two villages I have no record of nomadisation, but I have two cases of sedentarisation in Tour: in

one the man identified himself as Fur-Tungur and he claimed that he sold his cattle in order to invest in trees and labour; in the other, a Terjam Baggari had managed to be accepted as member of the village and had thus been allotted land. The reason he gave for settling was that he had too few animals to continue as a nomad. He planted mango trees in his field and grew vegetables for sale when the trees were small. Now the trees are yielding and by selling them he would get the capital necessary for a nomadic life which he claims is a better way of living. His present enterprise is, however, so profitable that he prefers to stay in the village.

Tendencies towards nomadic careers are thus generated in Fur communities in various parts of the area. If this depends on the factors I have mentioned, one would also expect this process to have a considerable time depth. In my material I have people who claim that their grandparents lived as nomads, which would bring the historical documented cases back to the beginning of this century.

With this background one might expect the emergence of a nomadic Fur section. This is not the case. In Dar Furnung and Jebel Si one sees the development of a mixed economy which is not considered categorically different from subsistence grain farming. Those who really specialise in animal husbandry will prefer, for economic reasons, to move into the northern plains, and for political reasons, to be assimilated into a Zaghawa group. Nomadic careers emerge gradually, and for the few really successful herd-owners political circumstances induce them to change ethnic identity by inclusion in a Zaghawa local community.

In the lower wadi area, grain cultivation and cattle husbandry can hardly be combined. The change from one subsistence activity to the other is therefore drastic, implying a radical change in a person's career and a reorganisation of style of life from village to camp. Political support from nomadic groups is not a crucial factor for the establishment of nomadic careers in such areas. The practice of nomadic cattle husbandry therefore does not depend on assimilation into a Baggara local community. Usually, the nomadic novice joins some other nomadised Fur in a camp community. It is thus not a political necessity for a nomad to change his identity. Still, identity is in fact changed when persons establish themselves as nomads. In a previous article[9] I have argued that this is a consequence of the way the Fur-Baggara dichotomy is categorised. The style of life associated with cultivation is categorised as Fur, the pastoral way of life as Baggara. By practising nomadism persons perform an activity that identifies them as Baggara. A Fur is thus categorised by others as a Baggari the day he leaves the village and migrates with his cattle. Since his performance in various roles is evaluated with reference to the standards of Baggara culture, he will be strongly encouraged to learn this culture because he is systematically sanctioned with reference to his command of it. In other words, he is ascribed Baggara identity the day he goes to camp. Although other Baggara look on him as inferior or abnormal, he is

[9] Haaland, 'Economic determinants...

in a position where, by competent management of capital and ability to learn to act as a Baggari, he can be accepted as an equal.

In the lower wadis the nomadised Fur thus adopts a whole syndrome of idioms identifying him as a Baggari: house type, lay-out of camp, equipment, and the use of oxen for the transport of people and equipment. Language is of course not as easily changed, especially if he stays in a camp where the rest of the members originate from Fur communities. A most significant aspect of the identity change concerns milking. Among the Fur milking is codified as female work and it is considered shameful (ora) for men to perform this task. In the camps of the lower wadis, however, both men and women milk, as do the Baggara. A Fur from the village does not consider it shameful for a nomadised Fur to milk because the nomad is considered to be in a category to which Fur standards are not applied. The ease of identity switching is demonstrated by the fact that a nomadised Fur who has resettled in a village readily admits that as a member of the camp he milked cows although in the village he will not, and no stigma accrues to him because of these acts in the camp.

It might be argued that the changes of cultural features I have mentioned here are functional requirements in a nomadic adaptation. That this is not the case may easily be demonstrated with comparison with Jebel Si and Dar Furnung. Fur herd-owners who live in camp in the dry season practise the same division of labour between the sexes with reference to milking as Fur in villages do. Furthermore, among the Zaghawa, milking is also codified as female work.

The use of oxen for transport is one of the most important idioms of Baggara identity, and it is not practised by the Zaghawa or the Fur. As for house type, the nomadised Fur of the lower wadis use the Baggara tent, a hemispherical construction of straw mats on a frame of branches; the houses in the Fur camps of Jebel Si are cylindrical constructions of intertwined branches fastened to P/2-metre poles arranged in a circle; the dry-season dwellings of the Zaghawa consist of a square structure within which a straw fence demarcates a smaller room containing a bed.

The current nomadisation process thus does not lead to the emergence of a nomadic Fur section but to the inclusion of the nomadised Fur into the adjoining ethnic category. As I have tried to show, these processes have a different character and frequency on the various boundaries of the Fur.

These micro-processes on the level of individual careers are intimately related to the macro-level of regional ecological balance. To simplify my argument let us concentrate on the Fur-Baggara relation and the two main resources they exploit: cultivated land and grazing land. As I have said, these resources are communal resources exploited by a multitude of individual householders typically basing their economy on one of these resources either as grain cultivators or cattle husbanders. My argument is illustrated in Fig. 2.

I have described a process whereby some households change their economy from one based on grain to one based on cattle. A condition for this is the possibility of accumulating a surplus in cultivation. Among other things, this depends on the

pressure on land. Since land is cultivated on a shifting basis, and rights in fallow revert to the local community, all land resources will be reallocated according to need among all the members of the community. Population pressure in such a system will imply that everybody gets a smaller or less productive share.

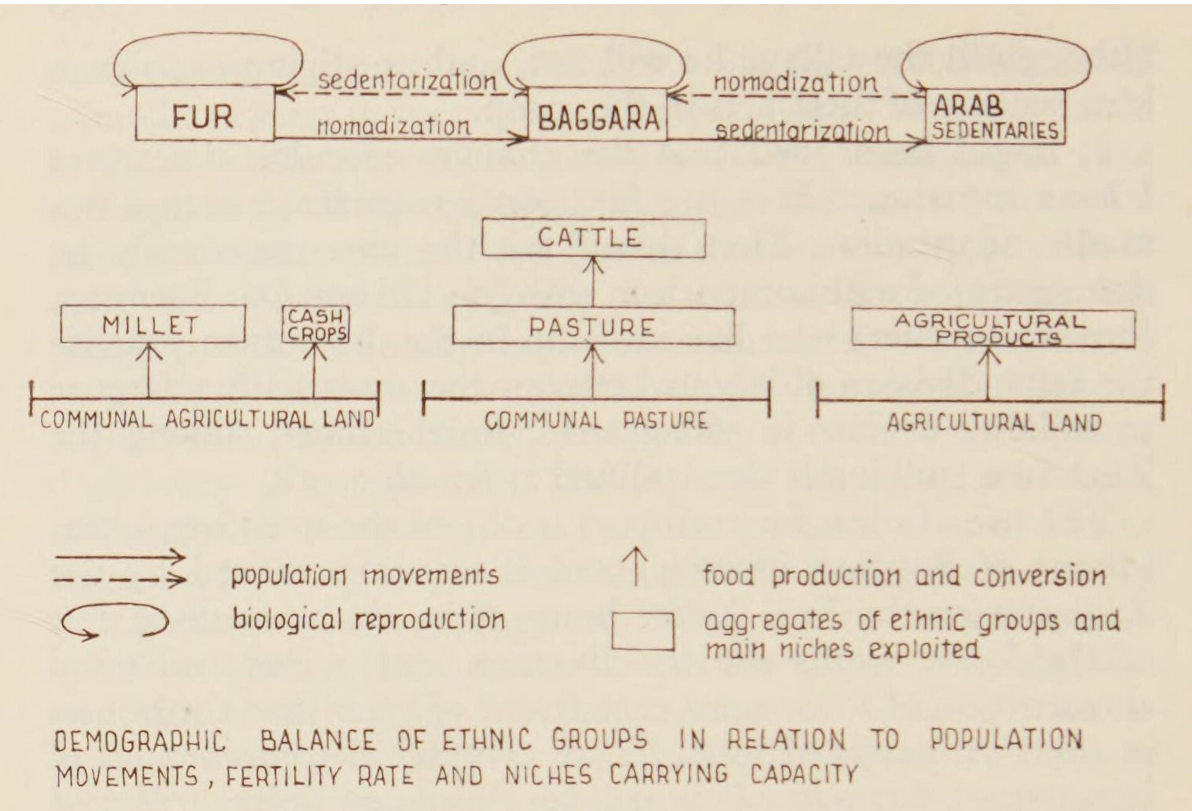


Fig. 2. Demographic balance of ethnic groups in relation to population movements, fertility rate and niches carrying capacity

The household units will experience the macro-relation between population and land as it affects the returns on labour input in production. Population pressure thus leads to diminishing returns in agricultural production which again leads to a decreasing possibility of creating a surplus that can be invested in cattle. This will reduce the frequency with which nomadic careers occur among the sedentary population. The macro-balance is thus hardly adaptive: higher population pressure will result in a lower rate of relief through nomadisation. In order to demonstrate these intricate balances one ought to have extensive data on land resources, population growth, nomadisation and other career possibilities for relieving population pressure (e.g. labour migration).

Data on population growth arc scarce and difficult to evaluate. A sample of 148 women past the menopause in the Amballa area gives the following figures: in total they have given birth to 838 children of which 299 died before they reached the age

of 8–10, i.e. the age when boys go to the Koranic school. The average number of children born alive to these women is 5.7 and the average number of children surviving childhood is 3.7. Twelve of the women in the sample had not given birth. These figures are not sufficient for realistic calculations of growth rate but I use them as a basis for estimating the yearly growth rate to be of the order of 1 1/2-2 %, i.e. a rate slightly higher than the rate of exclusion through nomadisation and inclusion in the Baggara population. Although this indicates a slowly growing population, the stage where pressure on land reduces the nomadisation rate has not been reached yet.

The number of cattle which the grazing area can carry is limited and this restricts the number of households that can subsist as pastoral nomads. Nomadisation of sedentary Fur increases this pastoral population and is only possible as long as other processes serve to keep the pastoral population down. These processes are of two kinds: a low fertility rate among the Baggara as documented by R. A. Henin[10], and sedentarisation. Henin gives the figure 4.6 as the average number of children born alive to women past menopause for the Humr and Rizeigat Baggara. Pressure on grazing leads to decreasing returns on cattle which implies that the minimal number of cattle necessary for a pastoral household would have to be higher. This argument holds even if marginal households may be able to substitute their reduced income by some grain cultivation, because such cultivation usually further reduces the householder's ability to care for cattle and therefore increases the chance of loss by disease or predatory animals.

Those who are not able to subsist as pastoralists will have to find other resources on which to base their livelihood either as wage labourers or as farmers if they have access to land. Baggara who came originally from a Fur community and therefore know Fur culture, will usually be accepted as members of a Fur local community and will thereby get land. Nomadised Fur thus have a cultural resource that they can make relevant if they do not succeed as nomads. It is difficult to assess the rate of sedentarisation among nomadised Fur, but the presence of a large number of people in the village who claim that they have been members of nomadic camps for a part of their life shows that the elimination of personnel through nomadisation is to some extent counterbalanced by inclusion of personnel through sedentarisation. Disappearing lines in local genealogies indicate, however, that there are nomadised Fur who never return to the Fur community and that the rate of exclusion therefore is higher. This is also related to the fact that Baggara who do not know the Fur culture tend to settle among Arab farmers in the southern Darfur and Kordofan.

Typical career patterns thus emerge in Fur communities as a result of the restricting influence of factors of various orders.

I have tried to show how careers of nomadisation have important aggregate effects in terms of pressure on resources and how the state of this pressure in turn influences individual careers. The system I have described here is in a precarious balance; to

[10] R. A. Henin, 'Fertility differences in the Sudan', *Population Studies,* xxii, 1, 1968.

establish the quantitative conditions for this balance would, however, require macro-level data that is not available.

Fur-Zaghawa relations differ in important respects from those of the Fur-Baggara. Fur and Baggara exploit different niches in the Fur area and in some respects they benefit mutually from each other; the cattle may feed on millet canes left on the farmers' harvested fields, while the farmers' fields will be fertilised by the dung that is deposited around the nomads' camps. Furthermore, the rainy season area of the Baggara is not an attractive area of expansion for Fur farmers. Competition for resources between Fur and Baggara is therefore limited. Since nomadised Fur are categorised as Baggara, they do not emerge as a competing group to the Baggara, but they add to the number of competing households among the Baggara.

In Dar Furnung the Fur exploit resources more or less in the same way as do the Zaghawa. Since both of them grow grain and keep cattle they compete for territory. This competition mainly arises because larger herd-owners among the Fur are interested in utilising the grazing possibilities of the northern plains. Since the practice of cattle husbandry does not automatically define a Fur herd-owner as a Zaghawa, competition in this area is interpreted in ethnic terms: Fur versus Zaghawa. Despite this, cases oi assimilation of Fur into Zaghawa groups do occur. Another important aspect in this comparison would be the demographic situation. The Baggara's willingness to allow nomads of Fur origin to join their camps could probably not be maintained over time if it had not been for their low reproductive capacity. As far as I know demographic data on the Zaghawa is lacking, but on the basis of conversations with Zaghawa on this topic I gained the impression that their fertility is higher than that of the Baggara. A household's loss of economic viability among the Zaghawa furthermore does not necessarily lead to emigration to other parts of the country, because it is possible to subsist on grain cultivation in their area. Both of these factors would produce greater pressure on resources in Zaghawa country and therefore it is reasonable to assume a greater unwillingness to allow households of different ethnic identity to utilise these resources.

Conclusion

In this article I have said that a pastoral ideology is neither a necessary condition for the emergence of nomadic careers, nor a sufficient condition for maintenance of such enterprises. Instead I have emphasised how the actors' decisions to become nomads or farmers are conditioned by factors determining the profitability of alternative ways of value management.

This does not imply economic reductionism where cultural factors are given little or no explanatory value. Ideological statements obviously communicate something about the goals people pursue. These goals constitute the fundamental cultural basis for how people evaluate the desirability of alternative courses of action. In the savannah belt

there are differences among groups concerning the style of life they emphasise in ritual, myth and other forms of ideological expression. Different groups thus have different preferences with reference to a sedentary or a nomadic life and this is made relevant for behaviour. How it is made relevant can be found out, I think, by comparing what opportunity costs people of various groups are willing to carry in order to realise the style of life they prefer.

People everywhere are faced with problems of value management. I have here discussed how courses of action which

are advantageous in terms of value accumulation lead to disadvantages with reference to the style of life they imply. There would thus be differences, I assume, between the perspective an impoverished sedentarised Baggari has on his economic enterprise and that of a Fur. Nomadisation is probably never considered an attractive goal by a Fur; it is an end-product of a series of decisions that he considered optimal at various stages in his economic career. The sedentarised Baggari on the other hand would more systematically gear his economic activities towards accumulation of the capital necessary to return to a pastoral life. The same argument as I applied to nomadisation of the Fur can also be applied to sedentarisation of wealthy nomads. There are limits to how far a Baggari is willing to go in order to continue as a nomad if this costs him increasing disadvantage in his value management. He would, however, probably be willing to carry greater opportunity costs in these respects than a nomadised Fur.

Natural conditions will largely determine the profitability of different subsistence activities in various areas of the Sudan savannah belt. Typically, ethnic groups specialise in one of these activities, e.g. in West Africa the Fulani arc cattle nomads, Tuareg are camel nomads and sedentary cultivators belong to various othei' ethnic categories. This corresponds closely to the situation in Sudan with Baggara cattle nomads, Arab camel nomads, and various sedentary ethnic groups. In some localities combinations of these activities are possible, and one thus finds ethnic groups where the economic units combine various subsistence activities as they do among the Nuer, the Zaghawa and Northern Fur, but where they have preference for the style of life associated with one of them and only pursue other activities because of the economic advantages to which they lead.

I have shown how these economic advantages lead Fur o

cultivators to invest in cattle and establish themselves as nomads. If my hypothesis is correct, one would expect nomadisation to occur among sedentary cultivators elsewhere in the savannah belt where economic units are subject to similar sets of restrictions as those of the Fur.

As I have already mentioned, nomadisation does in fact occur also among the Masalit and the Daju; and from interviews I know that this is also the case among the Tama, and this leads to the same kind of identity change as it does for Fur nomads. Both economic structure and ecological conditions are similar to those of the Fur and

this should confirm my hypothesis. In fact I think the main structure of Fur economy is common to large parts of Africa.

Under similar ecological conditions in the Sudan savannah, one should thus expect nomadisation to occur in other parts as well. Whether this is so or not, I am not able to demonstrate, but I think the two other variables I mentioned, technological differences and political mechanisms for excluding people from the use of resources have a more restricting effect in the western savannah. The Fulani are probably more of a proper cattle-people than the Baggara. They are for example able to control their large herds by verbal commands in such ways that the Baggara of Darfur think they use magical means. The Fulani standard of hospitality requires a lower level of consumption than Baggara standards do, and the Fulani are generally willing to take greater reductions in consumption in order to build up their herd than are the Baggara. Both Fur and Baggara thus ridicule the Fulani for their poor standard of living. This poor standard does not reflect poverty in cattle, it reflects the cultural preferences of the Fulani which make them allocate their income in such a way that a minimum goes to consumption and as much as possible to investment in cattle. Measured in cattle they are therefore usually rich. These cultural factors probably imply that it would be much more difficult for cultivators to establish themselves as nomads in areas where the Fulani are the dominating cattle owning population because competition for grazing would systematically favour households of Fulani origin. Furthermore Fulani preferences for endogamous marriage and their unwillingness to mix with people of different background would make it difficult for nomadised cultivators to be assimilated in Fulani local groups. On the demographic side, their reproductive capacity is probably high as indicated in their expansion from the Atlantic Ocean and into the Sudan, although it is a question whether this could be possible without inclusion of personnel from other groups.

Although sedentary groups in the western savannah may have similar incentives to accumulate cattle and become

nomads as the Fur have, they are faced with more difficult problems in terms of ability to compete economically and be assimilated politically, in the nomadic Fulani community. If nomadisation and inclusion in Fulani groups does occur, I would hypothesise that it is dependent on the consent of the Fulani, probably based on political considerations.

Farmers in the savannah thus have incentives to invest in cattle whether they have a cattle complex like the Nuer or preferences for a sedentary life like the Fur. Variations in natural conditions and relations to other ethnic groups will determine the rate and the aggregate consequences of nomadisation in various areas.

IX. The Rufa'a Al-hoj Economy

Abdel Ghaffar Mohammed Ahmed

In discussions about sedentarisation of nomads it is often argued that a nomad will only engage in agricultural activities in order to accumulate a profit that he can invest in livestock in order to resume his nomadic life. In a discussion at the Sudan Philosophical Society Conference of 1962, Cunnison was asked if cultivation of cotton would induce the nomads (Humr) to have permanent settlement. He answered that "profits from cotton are either used to buy more cattle or to provide the nomads with necessities which would otherwise make the selling of cattle inevitable. Cultivation of cotton therefore does not automatically lead to settlement."[1] Behind this argument lies the assumption that people are nomads because they have cultural preferences for this way of life. That is of course true, but I shall here argue that these cultural preferences do not constitute a sufficient set of conditions for predicting the investment policies that a nomad may follow, since he engages in management of other resources existing in his environment. On the basis of material from the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads (introduced below) I shall try to show that generalisations about investment policies and sedentarisation have to be based on an analysis of the total set of opportunities for value management. Thus, generalisation about profits going back to build up cattle herds or to pay for necessities cannot be sound unless it is shown who of the nomads go to cultivate in relation to the number of animals they have and what kind of principles govern the decision to cultivate land. There is excess labour force in nomad camps which is used less profitably in the traditional sector and can be channelled in such a way that it produces more profit in the cultivation sector. It cannot be argued that profits always go back to be invested in cattle because this field of investment may show more profitability to the individuals involved than that of cattle.

Looking at the economy of the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads we find that a nomad strives for the best allocation of all possible resources his environment provides. This leads to a mixed economy. Although the values of nomadic life (preference for cattle as wealth, seasonal migration, etc.) are dominant a balance has to be maintained in distributing time between all fields of possible investment. Fields of greater profit are looked at with care and time is given to them. At the extremes, that is to say with the very wealthy and the very poor, a slow process of sedentarisation is apparent. The present state of affairs in the area, especially with the growth of large cultivation schemes

[1] Philosophical Society of the Sudan, *The Effect of Nomadism on the Economic and Social Development of the People of the Sudan* (Proceedings of the X Annual Conference), 1962, p. 116.

leading to a reduction of the grazing areas, together with the increased competition due to the invasion of the Pastoral Fulani, leads to the belief that the Rufa'a al-Hoj are increasingly adopting the tendency to find new profitable fields of investment. This may lead to another way of life, totally different from the present one of pastoral nomadism.

My intention in this paper is to give a description of the Rufa'a al-Hoj economy with reference to the way they allocate time to their different resources, and to offer remarks on the possible alternatives that they can choose between, in the situation of rapid change in the area.[2]

The tribe and its seasonal migration

The term "Rufa'a al-Hoj" refers to a nomadic Arab tribe of the Juhayna, the second largest group in the Sudan. They reside in the southern part of the Gezira in the Blue Nile Province. The area utilised by the Rufa'a al-Hoj in their seasonal movement is limited by latitude 13'40' N; in the south-east they go as far as Khor Yabus and even slightly south of it towards the Ethiopian border; to the south-west they reach the swampy area of the Upper Nile Province.

In the north of their area the Rufa'a al-Hoj come into contact with the Kenana Arabs—who share with them the same grazing area and also the same Rural Council—as well as the Baggara of the White Nile who move in the western part of the Gezira. The Rural Council is Abu Hujar which consists of the Nazirates[3] of the Rufa'a al-Hoj including 26,890 nomads and 28,051 sedentaries under four Omdas, all of them being the Nazir's brothers. There is also the population of the Kenana Nazirate including 5,108 nomads and 14,804 sedentaries under three Omdas.[4] The sedentaries in in the Rufa'a al-Hoj Nazirate are not Rufa'a. Most of them originate from western Sudan and Nigeria having settled during and after the Mahdist Rule.

In the southern part of their area the Muslim Rufa'a came into contact with many pagan tribes who have varied cultures and different languages. Of these the Ingessana, Berta, and "Burun" may be mentioned. Recently nomadic Fulani came to the area. Their invasion and their use of the same grazing area as the Rufa'a has led to many problems both on tribal and administrative levels.

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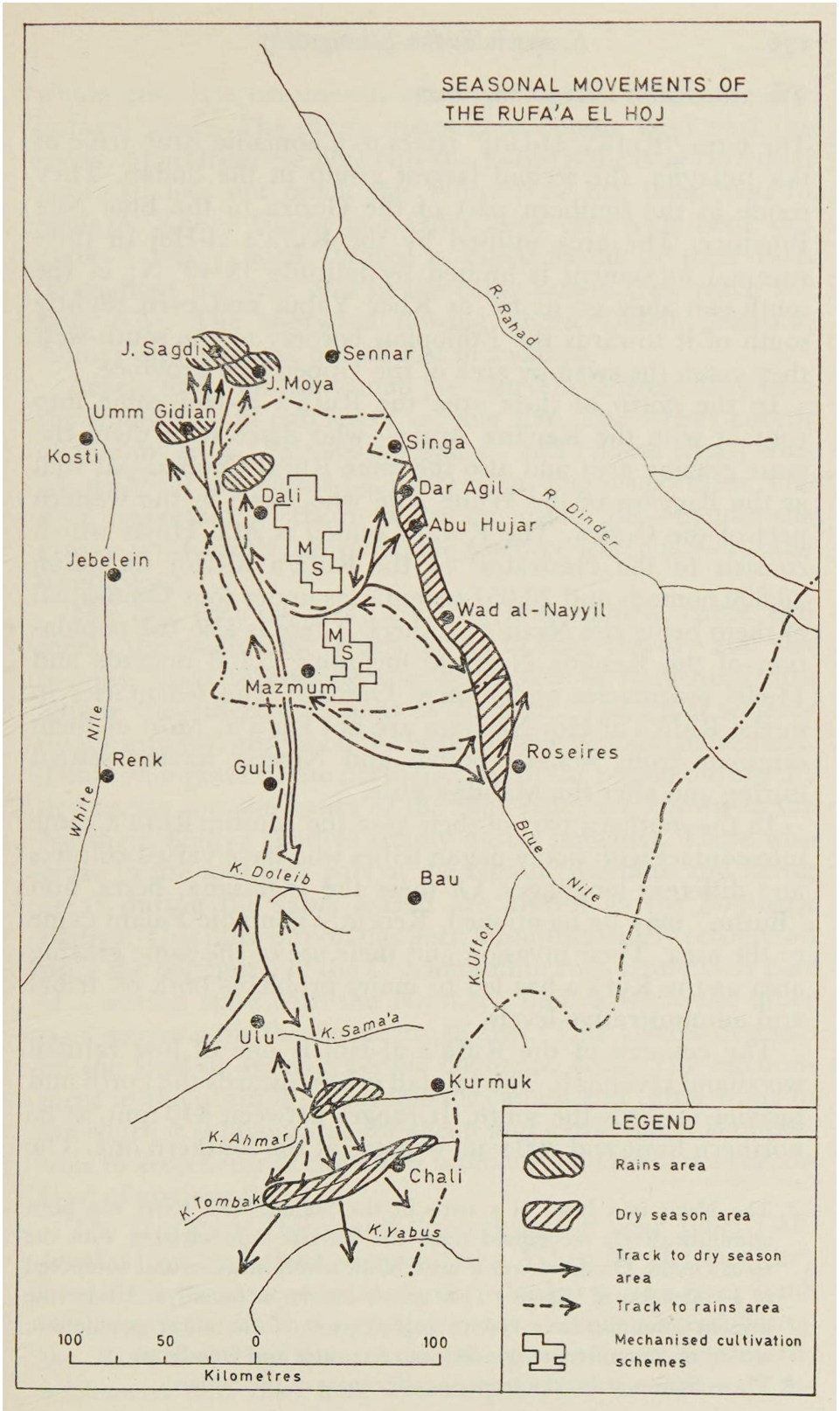
[2] This paper is based on part of the material collected during two periods of field work among the Ruf a'a al-Hoj nomads of four and two months respectively in 1969. I am grateful to the Research Committee of Khartoum University for financing the fieldwork, and to the Norwegian Agency for Development for a Fellowship at Bergen University, during which this paper was written.

[3] The Nazir is a head of a tribe in the Sudan. This term has been administratively recognised since the Turkish rule together with the term Omda. Omda means a head of an administrative unit composed of a collection of villages. This unit is known as omodiya. Under the present administrative system (1969) most of the rural population, settled or nomadic, are divided into nazirates and omodiyas.

[4] These figures are taken from 1955/6 census of the Sudan.


SEASONAL MOVEMENTS OF
THE RUFA'A EL HOJ
R. Rahad
J. Sagdi
Sennar
J. Moya
Umm Gidian
Kosti
Singa
Dali
Dar Agil
R. Dinder
Abu Hujar
M
S
Jebelein
Wad al-Nayyil
M
S
Mazmum
White Nile
Renk
Guli
Roseires
Blue Nile
K. Doleib
Bau
K. Uffot
Ulu
K. Sama'a
Kurmuk
K. Ahmar
Chali
K. Tombak
K. Yabus
100
50
0
100
Kilometres
LEGEND
Rains area
Dry season area
Track to dry season area
Track to rains area
Mechanised cultivation schemes

The country of the Rufa'a al-Hoj is one of low rainfall woodland savannah. The rainfall is less towards the north and heavier towards the south. It ranges between 440 mm. at its o

northern limit and 700 mm. or more at the southern one. The whole area is a continuous cotton soil plain carrying a few isolated jebels. The plains merge into sloping land near the rivers. Apart from the Blue Nile the Yabus is the only perennial river. It does not reach the White Nile but loses itself in swamps. Khors Tumat and Offat have very wide beds and carry a heavy flood. Water is easily found in their beds throughout the year and in the rainy season they reach the Blue Nile. The westward flowing khors, Doleib, Sama'a, Ahmar and Tombak are all lost in swamps.

Acacia forest and savannah are distributed irregularly over the whole area in patches of varying size. The forests consist of mainly *hejllj (Balanites aegyptiaca), talk (Acacia seyal), kittir (A. mellifera)* and *hashab (A. verek)* in varying proportions. The most important of them to Rufa'a al-Hoj life—besides the grass—is the *hashab,* an economic resource which is politically significant.

The fact that the Rufa'a al-Hoj keep camels, cattle and sheep, the pasture for which differs in both the dry and wet seasons, leads to considerable dispersion of residential sites among the different sections of the tribe. The tribal sections divide into two groups on the basis of their seasonal movement. Those who graze in the northern part of the region during the dry season (on the banks of the Blue Nile) are known as the Northern Badiya (Badiya simply means nomads). Those who graze in the southern part of the region (Kurmuk and Boing area) during the same season are known as the Southern Badiya. This distribution has been administratively recognised since the beginning of the Condominium rule. Sometimes part of a section stays with the Northern Badiya while the other part moves with the Southern Badiya. This always depends on the kind of animals people choose to keep. The environment in the north is favourable for camels and cattle while in the south it is favourable for sheep and cattle but it is impossible to keep herds of camels: it is too wet and there is a certain kind of noxious fly.

The Rufa'a al-Hoj spend the wet season near Jebel Dali, Jebel Moya and their surroundings. When in October they start their movement southwards, whether to the river bank or towards the southern grazing areas of Kurmuk and Boing, the Rufa'a al-Hoj move in small groups consisting of the settlement unit that may be composed of the head of the family, his wife (or wives), his children and married sons and their wives and children. The distance between these settlement units may be five to eight miles or a day's walk. They follow each other in a stream. Southwards, the herds go first and the households follow since there is always adequate water and grass. But in their movement north, which starts about April, the households move first together with the *rabob*—that is the sheep, goats and cows kept with the household to provide milk, and also those animals which are for one reason or another unable to keep up with the movement of the main herd. During these movements if water is not found in running khors or pools, it can be dug from the beds of the sandy khors. The herds

join households and *rabob* near Mazmum, where both Badiyas meet and thence move together to the rains grazing area. The movements north and south take three months each and the map shows the routes of the migration.

The economic unit, resources and division of labour

The Rufa'a al-Hoj practise a subsistence economy which is based on three kinds of asset. Traditionally their major assets have been herds of camels, cattle or sheep together with a few goats, and grazing rights, but recently they have developed an interest in gum tapping as a source of cash income. Their economic resources— like those of most nomadic groups arc very simple. Animals are individually owned as private property and a household makes its livelihood from the production of animals owned by its members. The land is free or sometimes looked at as government property and every individual has equal access to it and can graze where he wants. Only when it comes to gum gardens is the position different. These are given by the government on contract terms to the leaders of the tribe, who are supposed to distribute them to their tribesmen, but on certain bases.

The smallest economic unit, which I shall term a household, consists of a man, his wife and his children. A number of households, generally less than fifteen, makes a settlement. Also one or a number of settlements, not more than four, will make *zferig* with a man as its head known as a sheikh. He is responsible for the collection of taxes. Together with the

elders of the *ferig* he settles disputes between members of the settlement and represents *the ferig* to the rest of the tribe.

Settlement groups keep their herds of sheep, cattle or camels together. The young men of the settlement follow the herds to the grazing areas which are usually far from the place where the tents are pitched. For the Northern Badiya when settlements are on the west bank the herds may be on the east bank or near the Dinder river. In the case of the Southern Badiya when the settlements are on Khors Tombak, Ahmar and Babarus, the herds are usually grazed far south of Khor Yabus. The young men will spend approximately two months with the herds before being replaced by others. Not all the young men of the settlement will be with the herds all the time. Some will be in the settlement looking after the children and old men, while others get equipment such as saddles and ropes ready for the annual movement. Above all young men staying in the settlement will look after the weak animals which cannot cope with the herd movement and are kept behind as part of the *rabob.* Together with these there are the camels used for carrying baggage during the seasonal movement. With the Southern Badiya whose conditions are not favourable for camels, those used for carrying baggage have to be given especial care. Some of the weak animals can be sent back to the herd when they are well enough to move with the rest. Milk animals will be replaced when

they have ceased giving milk. Some of the sheep or goats from the *rabbb* might be killed from time to time for important guests.

The women remain in the settlement all the time. They do all the domestic work and in their spare time they make *semn* (liquid butter), and *birth.* and other mats. They are also fond of making decorations for their howdahs, the tent-like beds made specially to be put on the camel's back where women can sit during migrations. This takes a considerable proportion of their time. The young girls help their mothers, and might help, together with young boys, in looking after the *rabob.* They and the young boys are sometimes responsible for bringing water to the settlement. Water is drawn from the Blue Nile in the case of the Northern Badiya and this may be sometimes more than three or four miles from the settlement, or from nearby khors in the case of Southern Badiya.

The old men spend most of their time in the *khalwa,* which is a *birsh* tent, a *rakuba* (shelter built from wood and straw), or a big tree some distance from the settlement tents where guests arc received. They may sometimes help the young men in making ropes or saddles. In the *khalwas* which act as meeting places for the men of the settlements, they discuss the daily situation of their herds, the grazing and water places, the price of dura and market goods, as well as settling minor disputes between the members of the settlement. Old men from different settlements visit each other from time to time and spend hours discussing grazing prospects and local political problems.

Building of capital and allocation of time

The material property of a household includes a tent, bedding, saddle bags, ropes and leather sacks for milk and water. All these are produced by the members of the household. Clothes, shoes, cooking and eating utensils are obtained from the small towns they pass. There is a tendency to abandon *birsh* tents for cloth ones obtained from markets as well as buying bedding made of cotton instead of making beds from strong *birsh* or skin. The value of such household equipment is slight compared to that represented by the animals they own.

For the Rufa'a al-Hoj it is essential that all productive capital with the exception of gum trees is in consumable form. Their main productive assets—the animals—can be slaughtered at any time and thus be consumed directly.

As I have indicated the economic resources for a Rufa'a al-Hoj nomadic household are animals, lands and gum trees. A household does not need to own land or gum trees but must o

have enough animals to enable it to solve the main economic problem of getting market goods and dura. The minimum requirements for a household to live on are about 10–15 cows, more than 30 sheep, and at least two camels to carry tents and other baggage. With any number less than this it is difficult to practise an adequate

nomadic life. Depleted nomadic households therefore switch to sedentary life until they build such minimum capital that they can rejoin the nomadic life once more.

The household capital is formed by a well established process. A child is given a cow or a sheep by his father. From this basic gift, the number increases every year. On the occasion of circumcision he is given some more by his father and other relatives as well. After this he will start accumulating his own capital. He may, if he is not very much needed by his household, go to tap gum and will get an income of about LS 70 or more for the dry-season work on the gum garden. Or he may join much richer households who are short of herders. Here he gets a job which is worth about LS 60 a year, but the payment is always in kind, in the shape of fifteen or more sheep. Some also get work in cultivation schemes during the harvest season which pays a similar amount of money. If a young man stays all the time with his own household then his father will be responsible for the expenses of his marriage and for helping him to get the minimum capital required to start his own household. The father can distribute his wealth among his sons and daughters as he likes while he is alive. After his death they inherit the wealth and it is distributed according to Islamic principles. That is to say a son takes twice a daughter's share.

Women can have a considerable number of animals through inheritance. Also divorced women get animals from their ex-husbands in order to help in bringing up the children, if they have any. During a girl's childhood, or at circumcision, she is expected to get gifts from relatives. These animals are cared for by the males of her household.

From his animals the nomad gets milk which is an important item in his diet. Some of the milk is consumed and the rest is made into liquid butter. This is also either consumed or sold to the sedentary population when the nomads are camping near a village or a small town. Sometimes milk can be sold in such places but this can only be done by poor households.

All households need dura for their own consumption as this is the major staple of the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads beside milk. The Rufa'a al-Hoj used to cultivate small fields, which covered their needs, in the Dali—Mazmum area. But with the growth of their herds and the need to move south before the harvest, together with the increase in the late 1950s of mechanised cultivation schemes in the area, and with the establishment of villages, they had to abandon cultivation. Now they depend for their supplies of dura on villages of Hill Burun, Uduk, Jum

Jum and Meban in the southern part of their region, which they get through barter for meat, salt or beads. The Northern Badiya may obtain dura from merchants in the villages on the bank of the Blue Nile.

Selling animals is the usual way of getting cash income to buy dura and other market goods. The Rufa'a al-Hoj call their sale of animals *gelba.* In the *gelba* the nomads select some male animals together with the old female ones and take them to markets such as Sinja, Sennar, and Wad Medani. The minimum number of the animals taken for the *gelba* is about five oxen, which can be sold for LS 15 each, and fifteen sheep, which can be sold for LS 4 each. This gives a total of LS 135. The average

annual rate of consumption in dura and other market goods is of a value of nearly LS 200 per household of about six or seven persons. To cover the deficit, the excess labour in the household—those who are not needed to manage herds—will be transferred to gum tapping in order to generate increased cash income and to avoid selling animals. Such a member can get a cash income of more than LS 70 in the gum tapping season. Also they can join rich households as herders as mentioned above. In this way they can balance the budget of the household.

A significant fraction of income is in the form of animal increase. Some animals must be set aside each year to ensure replacement of stock. Even the surplus money left after buying dura and market goods and other expenses is invested in animals. Sheep give birth to young once every six months and cows every year. The Rufa'a al-Hoj will try to make this increase balance the reduction resulting from theg«ZZ>a. Having their capital in this form which can be directly consumed the only way to maintain it is by a systematic policy of reserving the young animals for the replacement. There is always a continual risk of total or partial loss of capital through famine, drought or an epidemic.

Those with large herds arc forced to employ herders from other households that have labour to spare. The employment of such herders may lead to diminishing returns. A hired herder may not pay the same attention to the herds as the owner would. Also the fact that herders must be paid a certain amount at the end of the year reduces the ability of the owner of the herd to maintain sufficient replacement for the stock.

There is another means for providing sheep herders for the Southern Badiya. That is by employing the Burun, the Uduk or the Jum Jum who may be paid LS 2 a year; but these people have no experience in herding.

Among the Southern Badiya camels cannot survive for more than two years and always an allowance for a new camel is included as part of a household annual budget. The cash left over after these necessary expenses is used on items of conspicuous consumption. It is used for bridewealth, where a householder can take a second, third or fourth wife or marry off his sons. This feeds back into the system by creating new labour, or even forming a new unit. It can be spent in going on the pilgrimage to Mecca, which gives the individual status which can be used to exercise authority, from which he can derive more income. It can also be used for building political support. This comes through hospitality which is a major item of expenditure among the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads, for it is a highly valued virtue. The hospitable man is admired and people think highly of him whether he be present or absent from the place where they are sitting. Men seek his company and come to the *khalwa* where he sits, or even to his tent. Members of his settlement help him in receiving guests and they will share his good reputation and high status. This reputation is necessary for that political support which can lead to positions of power and authority such as sheikh of a *ferig,* or *wakil* (Nazir's deputy). Being in one of these positions he can get most of the things he wants done—such as having gum gardens or reducing taxes levied on the members of his *ferig*—through maintaining good relations with the Rural Council officials or

even bribing them. Cash is also used for paying taxes levied by the Council on the herds.

Flow chart of value

The chart gives here[5] the major economic strategies available to the Rufa'a al-Hoj households. The dotted lines attempt to mark the boundaries between the three possible alternatives for management of values. These boundaries are marked on the basis of the principles that give nomads access to resources in each and the sanctions involved in their transaction. The major forms of values are shown as boxes and their transformation as arrows. Disappearing arrows indicate consumption.

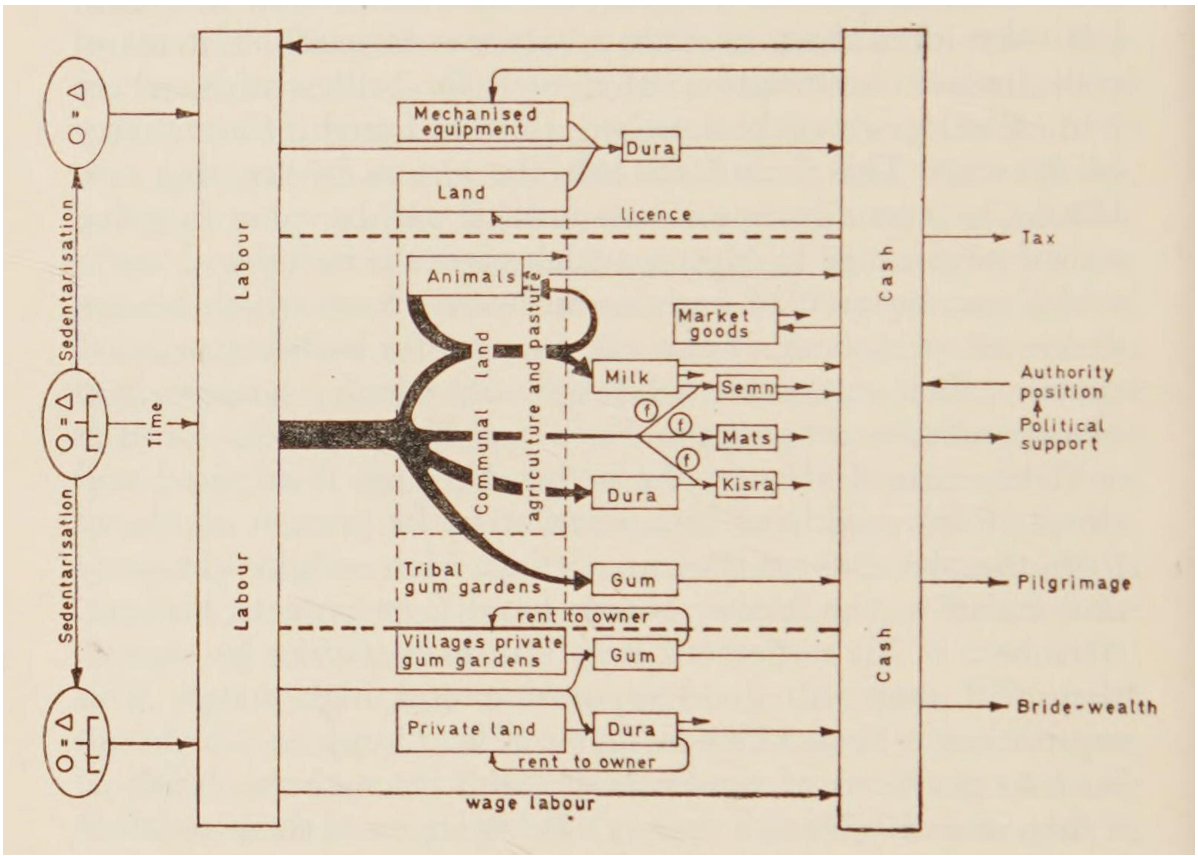


Chart showing the major forms of value (boxes) and transformation of value (arrows), 'f' indicates female labour.

Let us take first the central section of the chart where the household is nomadic with some animals and access to grazing land and also, if it has enough labour, can

[5] Cf. F. Barth, "Economic spheres in Darfur", in R. Firth (ed.), *Themes in Economic Anthropology,*

cultivate dura on the same land. Here all households have equal rights to the use of land and their property as a whole can be converted into cash and *vice versa.* But when it comes to gum gardens, it is not all households that can obtain them. The right to distribute gum gardens is laid (by the government) in the hands of a certain group of people in the tribe. These are the Nazir, his deputies and Omdas who allocate them to those from whom they need effective support on certain tribal political issues. This is why they are treated differently from the communal land. Also gum gardens are divided between those for the nomads and those for villagers, among whom the Omdas are supposed to allocate them on similar principles.

I have mentioned above that some nomads are forced by certain circumstances to become sedentary until they can build sufficient capital to return to nomadic life. They cultivate land or tap gum in order to get additional income. Principles for obtaining land here are different from when they are moving as nomads. The land they use is on the bank of the river which is the private property of settled village people. The Rufa'a have a contract relationship here and are required to pay a certain agreed portion of their crop to the sedentary landowner. Also when a villager gets a gum garden allotted to him by the Omdas he can share it with individual Rufa'a by similar contracts. This is why the "land" box appears in this part of the chart. This situation can lead, and has led, to a slow process of sedentarisation of some nomads. Some fail for a long time to accumulate enough capital to build a herd and thus decide to settle. Others having practised cultivation and the sedentary life for a long time start to compare the gains they get while settled to those they gain moving and on the basis of this decide to stay; but only few individuals have done this.

There is also the case of some rich household heads. They have realised the diminishing returns they get after a certain stage of investing in animals. They also see the sedentary population (especially merchants) starting mechanised cultivation schemes and profiting from them in a short time; and they decide to enter this new field. Neither merchants nor rich nomads have experience in land cultivation but they depend on the large amounts of capital they use. They pay the Rural Council for a licence for the scheme, which implies that the land is now privately controlled.

In such a case only the head of the rich household and his wife and children, if any, join the sedentary life sharing a cultivation scheme with a merchant or having one of their own. But from time to time the rich nomad will join the rest of his family who continue to practise a nomadic life and are taking care of his herds. In the schemes the rich man depends mainly on hired labour and from time to time those of his household who are free may join him for a short period. The leaders of the tribe (the Nazir, his deputies and Omdas) are settled and have been involved in these schemes for a long time now. They have known how profitable these schemes are and have learned how to compete with settled people.

The individuals within each household divide their time economically in management of alternative resources, that is to say, animals, land to be cultivated for dura, and

gum gardens. Animals are the most important item and the most time-consuming, but in seeking to balance his economy the nomad must follow a certain rhythmic pattern. He must sell animals to get consumption goods, and if he continues to sell animals all the time he will end up with nothing. Thus there is always a need to cultivate if he has small herds in order to save selling animals for dura. The table shows how the time of the household can be distributed between the different resources. The most significant features of the table are that of the twelve months of the year the busiest are December and January when the members of the household have reached their dry-season grazing area. Some of them have to come back to the area they cultivated, if they have one, so as to harvest the crop. Others go gum tapping for it is the beginning of the gum season. This is in addition to those who stay to manage the herds. In April and May the only job the nomads do is the management of herds when they are moving to the rains grazing area. August, September and October are free months compared to the rest of the year. In the first two the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads only manage their herds which are in the rains grazing area, not far from the settlement. At the same time they are getting themselves ready for the southward move. In October they start moving south. This table is in contrast to any similar table that can be drawn for households in the mechanised cultivation schemes or those settled in villages on the bank of the Blue Nile. Those in villages on the mechanised schemes are busy for seven months a year starting from June and ending in January, while those on the bank of the Blue Nile can make themselves busy all the year round. Households here have different economic resources.

TABLE 1: *Seasonal Activities of Rufd'a al-Hoj*

London, Tavistock (A.S.A. Monograph 6), 1967, P-58.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Movement:—												
South										x	x	x
North				x	x	x						
Cultivation						x	x					
Harvesting	x											x
Gum tapping	x	x	x								x	x
Herding:—												
Dry season	x	x	x									
Wet season							x	x	x			

Conclusion

I have not discussed the ideological preference of the nomads for the way of life they lead. I agree with the argument presented by Haaland in this volume, that this is not the only premise for determining the way they go about manipulating other possibilities of profit within their environment. Strategic choices can be made between different resources at the time of allocation of labour. When it comes to sedentarisation it is not a matter of accepting the ideology of the sedentary population, as many central authorities dealing with nomads put it. It is a matter of measuring the profitability of the new way of investment, as with those rich households where decreasing return on capital (animals) leads to investment elsewhere— mechanised cultivation schemes— which in turn leads to gradual sedentarisation. But for those who are not able to maintain a minimum capital requirement to practise nomadism sedentarisation is an obligation.

Recently competition for the use of grazing lands has increased especially after the invasion of the Pastoral Fulani and the rapid growth of the mechanised schemes in 1969. There is a growing necessity to reduce the size of the herds, but it is not yet acute. Talks about investment in new schemes have started to dominate discussion in the Rufa'a al-Hoj nomads' *khalwas.* The next few vears will reflect the result of these discussions.

X. A Rotating Credit Association in the Three Towns

F. Rehfisch

In this essay I propose to describe the institution of the *sandug* especially as it operates in the Three Towns.[1] In the course of this exposition I will answer in terms of Sudanese material some of the questions put by Shirley Ardener in a stimulating-paper on rotating credit associations.[2] According to her definition, an association of this kind is "formed upon a core of participants who agree to make regular contributions to a fund which is given, in whole or in part, to each contributor in rotation."[3]

The Arabic term *sandug* has as its primary meaning "box", but Sudanese apply it by extension to a type of rotating credit association. Several informants told me that the term *sandug* is used because the contribution is kept in a box before being distributed.

The information given here was acquired in two ways, the first by direct interviews of members of such groups, the second from a number of essays written by Khartoum University students who were asked to describe a *sandug* to which they had belonged, or about which they could readily obtain information.

The Three Towns, of Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman, make up a conurbation at the junction of the Blue and White Niles. The census taken in 1955/6 gave the total population as 245,735, while a later sample count in 1964/5 estimated it to have reached about 438,000.[4] The population is of rather heterogeneous origin though the majority originates from tribes located in the Northern Sudan. The *lingua franca* is Arabic and most residents with other mother tongues speak it adequately. There are no statistics available on religious affiliations, but it is clear that the great majority are Muslims. Although the inhabitants come originally from distinct tribal groupings, there is a common tradition and culture stemming largely from a shared language and religion. Interaction between members of different groups is thus facilitated.

The *sandug* is commonly thought of as a women's institution and some male informants claimed that they knew nothing about it. In fact however associations include

[1] I wish to record my thanks to the Ford Foundation and to the University of Khartoum for financial and other help in carrying out the research on which this study is based.

[2] S. Ardener, "The comparative study of rotating credit associations", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* xciv, 2, 1964, pp. 201–29.

[3] Ardener, p. 201.

[4] First Population Census of the Sudan 1955–6, Town Planners' Supplement, Vol. I, Table 9.1 and Population and Housing Survey 1964–5.

male members, and there are even some exclusively male groups. Ardener wrote in 1964 that "rotating credit associations seem to have been introduced into the Sudan about fifteen to twenty years ago" and was informed that they were started by middle-aged women who wanted to collect money to buy gold ornaments for their daughters' weddings.[5] Informants stated to me that they were introduced during the early nineteen-forties by women, but that the aim in the first phase was not so much to obtain gold ornaments, as to obtain scarce goods, sugar, tea and others, which were at that time severely rationed. Tea and sugar play an important part in the social life of the Sudan, both urban and rural, where a guest coming for a visit, however brief, is offered as a minimum a glass of highly sweetened tea. In the case of the original *sandug* each member would put aside a small portion of her ration and at the meetings, usually held weekly or fortnightly, would hand it to the member whose turn it was to receive the contribution. The meeting would be held in the home of the recipient and she would provide tea and sugar and perhaps other refreshments for the members. It is clear that the members did not as a result receive any more of the scarce commodities than they would had they not belonged; indeed as they had to entertain their fellow members, in a real sense they gained little. But they saw a benefit since at regular intervals they would acquire an amount which would allow them to be somewhat lavish in their entertainment. The groups were made up of friends, and the offering of refreshments was seen as a normal obligation of relations of friendship. Several informants stated that membership had another advantage in that if one of the group should need large amounts of tea and sugar, owing perhaps to heavy obligations of hospitality at a wedding, funeral, circumcision or other occasion, she might be allowed to take the contribution even though it was not her regular turn. It can readily be seen that the institution was a means to introduce forced savings as well as insurance.

Rotating credit associations sprang up rapidly among Sudanese women in the Three Towns at this time. As far as I could determine, at the outset there were no male members. Two informants said their mothers had learned about the institution from Egyptian women living in Omdurman among whom the associations had been common for some time.[6] With the lifting of rationing, after the war, many of these groups melted away. In some cases, payments in cash replaced payments in commodities.

I shall now give details of a few rotating credit associations.

The first example was founded in 1960 by a group of eight girls who had been sent to the Three Towns for their secondary schooling. They came from the same area and had been classmates at an Intermediate School. My informant had taken the lead in this project and suggested it to the others, who all agreed. They were to pay one piastre (about a penny), at that time. The founder decided on the rotation order, that is the order in which members would collect the contributions. The meetings were to be held fortnightly. It soon became the custom that the recipient would use the amount to buy

[5] Ardener, pp. 207–8.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 208.

sweets which would be shared out equally among the members. Quite soon girls from other areas showed an interest in joining but were refused membership; it was felt that they could not be trusted. After several months the founder suggested that one of her best friends, from another part of

the Sudan, be allowed to join and this was agreed. Soon others were included and at its largest the group numbered seventeen girls. Four months after the foundation of the association the contribution was raised to 3 piastres. During the first two years membership numbers fluctuated as some girls left the school and others quarrelled and resigned.

The first crisis occurred when one of the founding members asked permission of the group to be allowed to keep the contributions when her turn came rather than buying sweets with it. She came from a poor family and wished to buy sugar and tea to take to her mother at the end of term. After considerable debate the group agreed, though not unanimously. At the very next meeting a member, not one of the founders, made the same request, for the same reason as the first, but was refused. The founders voted *en bloc* against her while the others were divided. Nonetheless she insisted upon her rights, was given the contribution and then expelled from the group. Some members resigned there and then but the association limped on until the end of the school year. After the summer holidays the founder made an unsuccessful attempt to start up the group again.

When the group was founded originally, the girl who had put forward the idea was named *sheikha* or female head. Her responsibilities were to call meetings, take care of any money not immediately paid out and act as chairman. Outside these very limited spheres she had no authority.

An interesting feature of this group is that it was first formed on the basis of home tics and foreigners wishing to join were rejected, but later as individual girls became friendly with schoolmates from other areas the barrier was breached. The girls widened their social horizons. However when the time ofcrisis came it is clear that home ties were overriding. Thus the sponsor of the member who brought the crisis to a head voted against her, although they had been fast friends. Also, the founding members voted together when one of their number petitioned for this favour. The group had no sanctions to enforce its will. The *sandug* was not considered by its members to be an economic institution; no one gained financially in any way from membership, since each member paid in a certain amount at each meeting and in return received a roughly equivalent amount of sweets. Rather it was a social institution founded to maintain the solidarity of girls from one area, and later expanded to include other friends. The fact that the group dissolved after an existence of two years would seem to indicate that the girls had become less provincial and interacted more freely with persons from other areas; nevertheless shortly before its disappearance home ties had overridden other links.

Another more characteristic type of association will now be described. This group was founded in 1940 or 1941. The founding core consisted of a number of women all living on the same street in Omdurman. At the outset there were fifteen members. Twelve of these lived in the same area, many in adjoining houses. One lived about four hundred yards away from this group but was a sister of one of the core. The sister of another, living a mile or more away, was also allowed to join as well as the brother's wife of one of the core, who lived half a mile away. The core was essentially a neighbourhood group even though some of the members were related to each other. Some were long-term residents of the town, having been born there, while others had come there recently. Ages ranged roughly from twenty to fifty and all were married or had been at one time. No detailed information on the economic status of the women or their husbands' occupation was obtained; some were quite well off, others were poor. Finally a number of different northern tribes were represented in the group.

The group met weekly and the contribution was a cup of sugar and a small amount of tea. The meetings were always held in the core area, at the home of the person whose turn it was to receive the donations except at the turns of those living outside, when the group would meet at the house of their relative in the neighbourhood. The members were each served with sugared tea and biscuits or sweets. At the outset the order of rotation was set by lot, but it could be altered in special circumstances. Attendance at the meetings was not mandatory, but members were expected to come. In case of absence contributions should be taken beforehand or sent through another member. If a member could not make her contribution at any time she was expected to give the reason, and no more would be said. She might make a double contribution at a later date, which would be given to the person

whose turn it was to receive it at the time that she defaulted.

With the lifting of rationing payment began to be made in cash, the amount at first being three piastres a week and later five. Some members might save the payment to buy gold ornaments, but it often went to purchase small luxuries and in some cases simply was used to cover household expenses. Again members might apply to have their turn brought forward; no case of refusal was recorded. Immediately after rationing was abolished the membership shrank, but by 1966 when the investigation was carried out it had grown to include seventeen women, and five men whom I prefer to call associate members, for they did not attend meetings, but sent their contributions through their wives or sisters. They received their shares in the same way. Twelve of the women came from the core area. All were married except for one, a widow. The ages ranged from about thirty-five to about sixty. Husbands' occupations were very varied. There were two government messengers and two government clerks; two had stalls in the fruit and vegetable market; one worked in the same area, probably as a porter. Two were labourers and two were elementary school teachers. Of the five women living outside the area, two were married to labourers, one to a goldsmith, one to a man working in the market and one to a high-ranking civil servant. Three of these were sisters,

one a mother-in-law, and one a husband's sister, of members in the core area. The two male teachers, the goldsmith, a marketstall holder and a labourer were associate members. The amount paid in weekly in 1966 was six piastres. Seven of the women were Ja^{c}aliyin, two were Nubians, three Shaigiya and three Juhayna; the remaining two were not identified.

Again we find that this group is based on locality and that members from outside were allowed in because of kinship ties. It is hardly surprising that locality plays such an important role in view of Sudanese urban customs. Women in towns were not expected to wander about freely unless accompanied by a male guardian. They were allowed to visit close neighbours, as long as they used back alleys and so limited chance encounters with strangers. While this tradition is slowly breaking down, it still holds among the more conservative, and of course held when this group was first organised. The fact that the group can be said to have no tribal basis reflects the structure of neighbourhoods. The vast majority contain a tribally heterogenous population. Again the neighbourhood structure is reflected in the economic status of the members, for most neighbourhoods in Omdurman include people from widely differing economic strata. Houses of red brick or stone are found side by side with others of mud or mud brick. The economically successful for the most part do not move out of their districts, but instead improve their housing. In the case of this association no income figures were collected but it can be safely assumed that the range was wide, from labourers earning from 25 to 30 piastres a day to the higher civil servants whose income would be well above LSI,000 a year. Close social interaction between persons in quite different social strata is a common feature of Sudan urban life.

The association described above can hardly be said to have a formal authority structure. One woman was the informal leader; she had a dominant personality and was one of the founding members. Moreover, her family were less strict than others and she could visit those members outside the core area more frequently. Her duties were to chair meetings and to be a link between members. She should be told if a member could not attend a scheduled gathering or pay her subscription. No sanctions were levied against those unable to pay their subscriptions and there is no evidence that any serious disputes arose when defaults occurred. A member unable to pay informed the group, although she might be expected to compensate later.

Considerable data on other rotating credit associations of the above type were collected, but they were all broadly similar. Membership of some was restricted to small neighbourhoods. Quite a number had no male affiliates. None had either tribe or kinship as an exclusive basis for membership.

The third *sandug* to be discussed is one founded by a group of recent graduates of the University of Khartoum and now employed in the civil service. They had been close friends at the university and wished to maintain this contact, which they feared might be lost by their dispersion in different ministries. Shortly after taking up their employment five of them met by chance at a wedding. They regretted having drifted

apart over the past few months and decided to do something about it. One suggested that they form a *sandug* and the rest agreed.

It was also agreed that three other friends be invited to join. A meeting was held a week later to discuss arrangements. The one who had originally suggested the idea was chosen as leader. He had long been one of the most popular members of the group and, at his suggestion, the first meeting was held at his house. The group unanimously agreed to fixing the contributions at a pound each month, salaried officials being paid monthly. The original order of payments was determined by lot, as is customary. Sometimes a meeting would be held at the home of the recipient, but if his house was unsuitable it was held at a cafe. At home, a host supplied his guests with soft drinks. A problem arose at cafes when a member ordered beer, which is much more expensive. The group agreed that this was permissible, the argument being that the meetings were primarily social and not money-making events and hence the host should supply his guests with what they wished. When the group met at a cafe, the host was responsible for paying only for the first round of drinks. Some who held the entertainment at home introduced beer but not all. Shortly aftei' the group's formation the contribution was raised to two pounds a month, although some members were against this as they feared that if the financial aspect was enhanced it might override the social. A further increase to three pounds took place about a year later, when one of the members announced that he was to get married and needed money. As all had just received their annual increment it was agreed. Also the order of rotation was altered so that the bridegroom would receive the contribution in the week preceding his marriage. The members were interviewed two years after the founding. All agreed that its primary function was social, but four hastened to add that it was an efficient means of saving money. One stated that when his turn came to receive the contribution, he immediately banked it as he was saving money to buy furniture in view of marriage. Another was saving to buy a car, and a third to get married, itself an expensive proposition in the urban Sudan. A fourth also deposited his money in the bank but had no specific savings goal. Others said that the amount was added to their cash in hand and treated no differently from their ordinary income.

In this case all of the members had the same educational and economic characteristics. They came from various parts of the northern riverain Sudan and only two were distantly related. Most lived in Khartoum, but they were not confined to a single neighbourhood. There had been no defaults of payment but it was agreed that one who was in difficulties would be excused, although when his turn came to receive the contributions he should make compensation. No fine would be levied. The group showed no signs of breaking up nor had any attempt been made to recruit new members. One informant said that when one of the meetings was held at his house his wife asked to be allowed to join, but the request was not taken seriously.

I turn now to a more general discussion and to some of the questions posed by Ardener in what she calls her "fieldguide" to these associations. I shall refer to a general

survey of rotating credit associations undertaken in Omdurman in 1961–2. Table 1 gives the size of the groups studied at that time.

TABLE 1

No. of members	No. of associations
6	3
8	6
9	4
10	2
13	2
14	I
17	I
22	I
not known	I
	Total 21
Mean 11 members	

The majority of these associations were made up of women or of a female core with associated male members, as can be seen from Table 2.

TABLE 2

Membership	Number
Women only	10
Female core with male associates	4
Males only	7
	21

Probably if all of the associations in the Three Towns had been investigated, less than a third of them would be found to be male groupings.

All women's *sandugs* except one had a neighbourhood base, although some of them included some members living outside. The exception was a group of midwives who had formed one of these associations. Midwives are of necessity more mobile than most women and it was easy for them to form such a group. One male group was also neighbourhood based, all members living within about two hundred yards of each other. The nine members met almost every night at a club in the locality. Five of the men's groups were composed of fellow employees.

Occupational or economic or social status seems to play very little part in the organisation of these groups. Even in the case of those restricted to persons working for one employer, one finds members at varying levels of the occupational hierarchy. For

example one included the assistant manager, and a number of clerks and messengers. None had either a kinship or a tribal basis.

None of the groups investigated had a formal constitution. There were no rules specifically setting out who might be eligible for membership. There was little formal organisation: no rigid structure, no proliferation of offices; written records were not kept. Most of them had a nominal head, the most popular or the oldest member, or sometimes the originator. However it is the group which makes decisions and in only one case did the head have a casting vote, this being the third group described above. In no case were fines or other penalties inflicted upon defaulters, the rationale being that the *sandug* was a group of friends, none of whom would willingly act to the detriment of his or her fellows. Such defaults as occurred were regarded as unavoidable, and in most cases tacitly ignored, although occasionally the defaulter was expected to compensate the group at some future date.

With the earliest associations contributions were usually in sugar and tea. When rationing was lifted a shift was made to cash. The amount ofcash varied considerably. The lowest amount I have recorded recently is three piastres a week, and the largest five pounds a month. The groups might meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Those who meet monthly are groups made up of civil servants receiving a monthly salary. Two of the twenty-one groups paid six piastres or less per month. Nine groups collected from 6 to 50 piastres a month per member, five from 50 piastres to a pound, and five over a pound. All those with fees of over a pound were male groups except the midwives' association. One informant told me of a *sandug* in one of the ministries where the members paid LS 25 a month, but this is unusual.

Ardener has criticised Geertz for arguing that rotating credit associations should be seen as a product of a shift from traditional peasant societies to a commercial one, or as an educational mechanism whereby peasants learn to be traders.[7] The Sudanese material would seem to confirm this criticism. Firstly it is primarily a women's institution and (in contrast to certain parts of West Africa) most urban Sudanese women are not traders, indeed the majority have no remunerative occupation. Equally it would be difficult to argue that most inhabitants of the Three Towns were peasants learning to be traders. The majority were born in the towns and have never been a part of a peasant economy. And as for men members, most are not traders, but civil servants and other types of salaried or wage-earning workers.

Again Ardener criticises Geertz for arguing that there is a continuous ranging from "traditionalistic associations" which lay stress on "ritualistic, solidarity-strengthening elements," to associations which are more "rationally oriented", being increasingly concerned with the financial probity of members, the legal enforceability of obligations and with complex organisation and commercial calculations.[8] It has been seen that the latter concerns hardly enter at all into the *sandug.* Since defaulters are not penalised

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 221.
[8] *Ibid.*

it would appear as if social factors override the economic. In the association a member has two roles which analytically can be separated. The first is that of giver and receiver, which can be called economic, the second that of friend, neighbour or kinsman, and members see the second as being more important. Ultimately the members do not derive a benefit from membership in purely economic terms, since part of each payment they receive must be returned to the givers in terms of refreshment. It might be argued that the economic rationale was in introducing forced savings and this is true, but the cost, especially in the cases where payments are small, is extremely high.

Hence I would argue that the majority of these associations in the Sudan can best be classified as social institutions binding together people with already existing social ties by the addition of what might be termed an economic link. However one must not ignore the fact that some appear to be "pure" economic institutions, that is those few where the element of entertainment is absent. Hence under the rubric of *sandug* is to be found one general type of institution whose function lies along a continuum ranging from social to economic with the majority falling more closely towards the social end.

XI. Social Characteristics Of Big Merchants and Businessmen in El Obeid

Taj al-Anbia Ali al-Dawi

This paper is concerned with El Obeid, one of the leading towns in the Sudan.[1] More specifically, it deals with the social characteristics of the big merchants and businessmen in the town. The material relevant for this purpose is primarily derived from interviews with twenty-eight out of ninety-two wealthy merchants in El Obeid.[2] But before discussing the results of the interviews, it is necessary to present a brief description of the town itself in order to help the reader to place the merchants in their environment.

El Obeid has a population of well over sixty thousand. For centuries it has served as a commercial centre for Kordofan, a tributary area extending from 10° to 16° N and from 27° to 32° E, which forms one of the largest administrative divisions of the country. In the second half of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, the town furnished an important link for the traffic between Kordofan and the adjoining regions particularly Darfur and the Nile. In 1912, the railway line reached El Obeid, and so Kordofan and indeed the whole of western Sudan became open to the outside world. The train had the effect on the town of promoting and building up an export trade notably in gum arabic, livestock, ground-nuts and sesame, as well as an import trade in manufactured goods. Recently, the town became the scene for small industries including oil mills, soap factories, repair workshops, and the like.

Besides being a focal point for commerce, El Obeid is also an important administrative centre. At the provincial level, the town is the residence of the *mudir* (province governor) and other senior civil servants while, at the local level, it is the seat of two

[1] The material presented in this paper was collected as part of a study of El Obeid, the chief town in Kordofan Province, carried out between April 1967 and June 1968. This study was made possible by the Ford Foundation through grants to the University of Khartoum. An early version of the paper was read at the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, in Khartoum, and the author wishes to acknowledge the value of criticisms made by colleagues there. The author also wishes to express his thanks to Dr. P. Baxter of Manchester University for reading drafts of this paper and making helpful suggestions.

[2] The list of the ninety-two merchants was compiled from the official records and it contained all those merchants and businessmen who were liable to business profits tax for the year 1967 and whose annual assessable profits exceed LS 800.

local councils, its own town council and that of the Bidayriya rural council, the district immediately surrounding it.[3]

These commercial and administrative facts largely determine the kinds of economic activities in which the residents of El Obeid are involved. Briefly, the majority of the town's inhabitants earn their livelihood as traders of one sort oi' another. Apart from these self-employed persons, a sizeable number of El Obeid's population work as government employees, ranging from senior civil servants to unskilled workers. Moreover, many' of the town's residents obtain their living as craftsmen.

Culturally, the inhabitants of El Obeid fall into the following categories and subcategories: the Arabs:[4] the Darfurians; the Nuba; the Nubians; the Southerners; the *Muwalladin*;[5] the Fellata (Muslim immigrants from West Africa and their descendants); and some other groups representing at least four national cultures, namely, the Egyptians; the Greeks; the Syrians; and the Indians. The cultural principles which mark off, or conversely provide links between these categories are varied. They include national origin, language, and religion. In terms of national origin, the town's population can be divided into two broad groups: the one containing cultural categories stemming from the Sudan and the other comprising cultural categories stemming from other countries, that is, Egypt, Greece, Syria, India, Nigeria, Chad, etc. This simple dichotomy is, of course, complicated by the fact that in El Obeid many of the representatives of the categories originating from outside the country are of Sudanese birth and nationality. Language is, perhaps, a primary index of differentiation in the town. In general, each of the town's cultural categories has a language or a group of languages associated with it. Furthermore, even within each of the major categories finer distinctions can be made on the basis of linguistic origin. For example, the Arabs use different dialects or forms of Arabic, the Fellata speak a variety of languages, the Darfurians have various tongues, and so on. However, by cross-cutting ethnic and other cultural divisions, language provides a crucial link between the different residents of El Obeid. In the town, Arabic is the principal language that has come to perform this unifying role. Religion, too, is an important diversifying and, conversely, unifying factor in El Obeid. The adherents of the two main religions found in the town, that is, Islam and Christianity, are set apart by their respective faiths. Thus, the Muslims have their mosques whereas the Christians have their churches. Nevertheless, since Islam has representation in all the broad cultural streams in El Obeid, save those of the Greeks and the Indians, it tends to intersect ethnic and other cultural differences to furnish a common tie between the various segments of the town's population. Likewise, as Christianity has adherents

[3] This district covers an area of about 7,000 square kilometres and it is named after the dominant tribe living in it, the Bidayriya.

[4] The Arabs in El Obeid do not form a homogeneous group. They fall into numerous 'tribes' (or tribal categories) including such riverain 'tribes' as the Ja'aliyin and the Shaigiya as well as such Kordofan 'tribes' as the Bidayriya and the Jawama'a.

[5] The Muwalladin (singular, Muwallad) are the offspring of the unions of Sudanese women with Egyptians, and with l urks and other Asians who came to El Obeid during the Turkish period (1821–81).

among the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Syrians, the Nuba, and the Southerners, it tends to produce a unifying effect.

In the context of these main features of El Obeid's social organisation, some background information will now be presented relating to the town's merchants and businessmen. To begin with, the merchants are engaged in numerous economic activities. However, in the kinds of occupations in which they are involved, one finds certain clusterings. For example, of the twenty-eight persons studied, the largest number arc engaged in the import trade. There are fifteen such men in the sample. Seven of these arc primarily involved in general imports, four in fabrics, two in spare-parts, and two others in household goods. Comparatively large industrial and commercial undertakings are represented by the next largest number, namely, nine merchants. Three of these are owners of repair workshops, three others are owners of bakeries, two are owners of oil mills, and one is the owner of a restaurant. Gum and seed merchants are represented in the sample by three persons. The one remaining person in the sample of twenty-eight merchants is a rich butcher and livestock trader. Since El Obeid had been described as a commercial centre serving a wide agricultural hinterland, these clusterings are not surprising. However, it is necessary to stress that nearly all the merchants included in the sample have one or more subsidiary occupations besides the main activities in which they are involved. From these activities the merchants not only earn their living, but also provide work and money for a considerable number of the wage earners in the town. Moreover, the occupations which the merchants pursue tend, for better ox' worse, to dominate the economic scene in El Obeid. They provide these merchants with large sums of money and certainly make them the largest tax payers in the town.

With regard to the ethnic and cultural background of the businessmen, the following points need to be emphasised. First, of the dozen or so ethnic categories met with in El Obcid, the presence of the Arabs, especially members of such 'tribes' as the Ja'aliyin and the Shaigiya as well as the Bidayriya is well marked in the business community. Fox' instance, according to the sample about 46 per cent out of twenty-eight of the businessmen are Arabs. Secondly, the Muwalladin arc fairly represented among the merchants, constituting 14 per cent (foui' out of twenty-eight). Thirdly, apart from the riverain Arab 'tribes', the Bidayriya, and the Muwalladin, a sizeable number of the businessmen (nine out of twenty-eight or about 32 per cent) come from among members of the minority groups, that is, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Indians. Finally, while the Nubians and the

Darfurians are represented by a few individuals (about 4 per cent in each case), other cultural categories and sub-categories, namely, the Kordofanian Arab 'tribes', the Nuba, the Southerners, and the Fellata are virtually not present in the town's business group.

The merchants of El Obeid have a somewhat varied geographical background. Of the twenty-eight merchants studied, eleven were born in the town and seventeen were born elsewhere. Twelve of the latter came from five of the administrative divisions of

the Sudan, namely, Northern Province (four merchants), Kordofan (3), Khartoum (2), Blue Nile (2), and Kassala (1). The remaining five came from outside the country; two from Egypt, two from India, and one from Syria. Four out of the nine merchants who belong to the minority groups were born in El Obeid. Moreover, a fairly large number of the merchants who were born outside the town have had a long period of residence there.

In order to have full background information about the merchants and businessmen, it is important to give some data relating to their work records. The descriptions presented here are drawn from material given by the merchants in interviews, from things said about them by other people, and from personal observations. As might be expected, individually all the merchants are different. Nevertheless, when two or more of them reveal similar work experience, they are considered under the same description. Those who were born outside El Obeid are twelve Sudanese, two Egyptians, two Indians, and one Syrian. Four of the twelve Sudanese have inherited business and/or money from their fathers. Two of them, one Arab of thirty-one years of age and the other Nubian of forty years, have continued business more or less along their fathers' lines as a wholesaler in general imports and an owner of oil mills respectively. The other two, an Arab of thirty-five years of age and a Muwallad of forty-one years, have invested the money they inherited in economic enterprises that differ from those of their fathers. The former, a son of a wealthy general merchant, became specialised in the trade of spare-parts while the latter, a son of a rich livestock trader, became involved in trade in general imports. The remaining eight Sudanese merchants, unlike the previous ones, began their careers as owners of small businesses. Three of them, all

Arabs with an average age of fifty-five years, started as shopkeepers and during the 1940s turned into general wholesalers. At the present, in addition to their wholesale activities they invested the money they managed to accumulate in such enterprises as bakeries, ownership of estates, etc. Two other businessmen, both of whom are Arabs, began as butchers. The elder—sixty-five years of age—continued as a butcher and in addition became involved in livestock trade, whereas the younger—forty-eight years—became the owner of a restaurant and a bakery. Two other merchants, both of whom are Arabs of about forty years of age, came to El Obeid with some knowledge of trade in produce. In the town, they continued as small traders along the same line and little by little their businesses began to grow. At the present, they have established themselves as successful produce and storage merchants. The last of those Sudanese businessmen who were born outside El Obeid is a Muwallad of forty-two years of age. He began as an apprentice in a workshop. He then managed to acquire a small workshop of his own which began gradually to expand.

Of the five non-Sudanese merchants who were born outside the town, four—two Egyptians and two Indians—have somewhat similar work records. All of them started as salesmen in shops owned by members of their respective nationality groups and eventually they succeeded in establishing their own independent businesses as whole-

salers in import trade, particularly in fabrics. The last of those businessmen who were born outside El Obeid is a Syrian who started as a draper, but had to desert this business when he went bankrupt. He then began once more as a trader in spareparts and continued in this line until, in the late 1950s, he joined with a partner to set up one of the largest companies in the town specialising in spare-parts and machinery equipment.

As mentioned earlier, the eleven businessmen who were born in El Obcid include one Syrian, three Greeks, and seven Sudanese. The Syrian is forty-two years of age and his business is a commercial enterprise connected with the distribution of imported fabrics. It was left to him by his father. In addition, he works as a commission agent. Two of the Greeks worked as wage earners after they finished their secondary education[6]. However the elder of the two, who is forty-four, worked with his father for some time and on the latter's death fell heir to the business. He is now ownei' of a large provision store and a contractor. The younger, who is thirty-eight, left his work to assume his father's business after the latter's death in the middle of the 1950s. He is now owner of a bakery.

Two of the seven Sudanese merchants who were born in El Obeid have inherited their fathers' wealth. One of them, a Muwallad of forty-two years of age, continued in his father's line and established himself as a leading produce merchant as well as an owner of oil mills. The other, an Arab of thirtyeight, invested the money he inherited in the trade of electrical appliances. Of the remaining five Sudanese businessmen who were born in El Obeid two started as apprentices in repair workshops. The older of the two, a Muwallad of forty-six years of age, managed to establish his own workshop in the early 1950s. At the present, besides running his workshop, he is also involved in seed-oil production and trade in crops. The younger, a Darfurian of thirty-six, had his own workshop by the middle of the 1950s. In addition, he is now investing the money he saved in a number of economic activities including flour-mills. The three remaining businessmen, all Arabs, have somewhat different backgrounds. The first, who is forty-eight, began as a messenger in the 1930s, then joined the trade in produce and in the middle of the 1940s he became an owner of a bakery. From that time onwards his business began to expand rapidly and he is now an owner of flour-mills, buses, etc., as well as a contractor. The second, who is forty-two, started by working with his father who was a general merchant. In the later 1940s he was able to save sufficient money to set up a soap factory. Now he is also involved in trade in crops. The third and the last merchant, who is thirty-two, also started by working with his father, a retailer. He then got a loan from his father which enabled him to establish his own independent retail business. Towards the early 1960s he became specialised in the trade of imported household utensils.

[6] One of the Greek merchants asked to fill in the interview schedule by himself—apparently to save time—and did not answer the set of questions relating to work record. Consequently, there is only information about the other two Greeks.

The above descriptions show that nine out of the twentyseven merchants who answered the questions relating to their work experience fell heir to their fathers' businesses and/or wealth while eighteen did not. In other words, the minority came from families already well-established economically whereas the majority came from humble homes. Thus, it is important to ask the question: what is the reason behind the business success of the latter? A partial answer to this question can be given by considering some of the factors which seem to have facilitated the success of a considerable number of these merchants and businessmen. As can be seen from their work records, the 1940s were a turning-point in the development of the businesses of a number of them. These were the years of the war-time rationing rendered necessary by the rise in the demand and the fall in the supply of consumer goods. It is thus possible to infer that many of the present-day merchants of the town had benefited from the rationing years and that their businesses expanded accordingly. Furthermore, the mid-1950s marked an important phase in the development of the businesses of many of El Obeid's merchants, especially the Sudanese ones. This period witnessed the departure from the town of a very large number of non-Sudanese businessmen, either to their respective countries or to Khartoum. As these businessmen used to dominate business in the town, the implications of their absence for the success of Sudanese merchants hardly need to be stressed. Thus, it is not surprising that the businesses of many of the merchants in El Obeid have prospered over the last two decades or so.

The above descriptions also underline another point—one which has been already mentioned—that is, with almost no exception, the merchants are engaged in more than one occupation or economic activity. This tendency can be traced to what is called 'demonstration effect' in that the success of a merchant in a certain economic field is likelv to induce others to invest in the same field. As will be shown below, this tendency for emulation extends beyond the economic activities of the merchants to embrace other aspects of their social behaviour.

Having dealt with the social background of the different merchants and businessmen in El Obeid, it is relevant to examine their social traits. In particular, stress will be put on those characteristics which seem to mark them off from the othei' economic and social categories met with in the town. At the outset, the big merchants have little education. For example, according to the sample, of the 28 merchants interviewed nine had never attended school, eleven attended the elementary school, two had completed their intermediate education, and six had joined the secondary school. It is worth mentioning that five of the six businessmen who had secondary education belong to the category of merchants who inherited wealth from their fathers, a fact which further illustrates the favourable economic background to which they belong. Of prime importance, however, is the fact that the general lack of education characteristic of the merchants tends to set them apart from the senior civil servants and the professionals, as well as from a fairly large number of others, notably the semiprofessionals and even some of the skilled workers. On the whole, the educational attainment of these salary and wage earners accords them much status and prestige which the merchants do not

enjoy. On the other hand, although the latter are less educated, yet they are aware of education as a status symbol. This is reflected in a variety of situations. First, the merchants strive to educate and to increase the educational qualifications of their children. Thus some of these, particularly those who fail to attain post-secondary education, are sent abroad at the expense of their fathers. Secondly, in the feasts and parties which the merchants often give, they like to invite members of the educated group but, it may be noted, this is largely not reciprocated. Thirdly, a few of the unschooled merchants are honorary members of social and cultural associations that belong to the professionals. Finally, at least three of the businessmen studied have wives with better education. Thus, in their attempt to secure more education for their sons and in their attempt to associate with the educated, the merchants tend to underline the importance of education as a mark of status.

It must however be pointed out that, although the fact that the majority of the businessmen have little education tends to mark them off from the relatively small group of the educated, yet it brings them closer to the bulk of the inhabitants of El Obeid, so many of whom are unschooled.

But the merchants are set apart from these by their possession of wealth. With this important resource in their hands, they are able to enjoy a high standard of living which many of El Obeid's citizens cannot afford. For example, this is seen in the merchants' tendency to move into better residential areas in the town. For full appreciation of this, it is desirable to give some material relating to the spatial pattern of El Obeid. Briefly, prior to the 1940s, the town consisted of two broad parts: the built-up area or the 'town proper', and the grass-built settlements, generally known as the Native Lodging Areas. The rapid increase in the town's population, especially during the last three decades, transformed the landscape of the town greatly. As the increase led to overcrowding and congestion in different parts of El Obeid, it obliged the town's authorities to embark on a process of upgrading[7] Native Lodging Areas as well as of extending the built-up area by utilising open spaces within and around it. This process resulted in the upgrading of some but not all of the town's Native Areas and the emergence of what came to be known as the New Areas. These include residential areas for all classes, that is, New First, Second, and Third Class Areas. Thus, El Obeid came to consist of three main sections: New Areas; Old Town, including the former built-up area and the upgraded Native Areas; and Native Lodging Areas. The critical differences which obtain among these sections relate to three factor: (i) general layout, (ii) range and type of services, and (iii) status and prestige. Broadly speaking, with regard to these factors the three main sections of the town form a gradient with the New Areas at one end and the Native Lodging Areas at the other. The New Areas are neatly laid out, provided with more varied and better services and enjoy high prestige whereas the Native Areas are haphazardly arranged, enjoy virtually no services and are mostly occupied by the poor

[7] Upgrading of Native Lodging Areas—essentially squatter areas— involves recognition from the town's authorities, surveying, planning, the gradual extension of services, etc.

residents of El Obeid. The Old Town occupies an intermediary position between these two extremes. To a large extent, competition for land and better areas is determined by wealth. In this competition the merchants are better equipped than the majority of the town's inhabitants.

In consequence, many of them moved into the New Areas particularly the First and Second Class Areas. For instance, eleven out of the twenty-eight merchants studied live in these areas. The remaining seventeen merchants are found in the better areas of the Old Town. Some of the reasons why many of the businessmen live in the Old Town will be given later. For the moment, it is important to stress that irrespective of where they reside, the businessmen tend, on the whole, to enjoy better housing conditions and to own more material possessions. The following data drawn from observations as well as from interviews throw light on this. First, with a few exceptions (notably among members of the minority groups), most of the merchants own the houses in which they live. Secondly, the majority of them live in houses built in durable material such as red brick, with better roofs and better design. Thirdly, a fairly large number of them have varied and expensive furniture. Finally, all the merchants have radios; all save one have refrigerators; all except three have cars; and all except four have telephones at home. Now, all this is beyond the reach of the generality of El Obeid's inhabitants.

As might be expected, there is much variation in the wealth of merchants and businessmen. Thus, although most of them own houses, yet the size of their plots varies from 300 to 3,400 square metres. Again, nearly every merchant has a car but some have two or more cars. In short, differences in the merchants' material possessions largely reflect differences in their wealth.

Other social characteristics of the merchants relate to their family life. Generally speaking, the big merchants and businessmen in El Obeid are family-oriented. Thus according to the main sample, 27 of the 28 merchants have at some time been married. However, marked differences occur among the businessmen who are currently married as far as the number of their wives is concerned. Nineteen of these are monogamous while seven are polygynous. Of the polygynous merchants four have two wives each, one has three wives, and two have four wives each. With a few exceptions, most of these wives are unschooled and virtually all of them are housewives. Besides their wives, the merchants support other dependants including sons, daughters, relatives and sometimes resident domestic servants. According to the sample, the average number of persons per household for all the merchants is seven. It is important to point out that there is a difference between the Sudanese businessmen who live in the New Residential Areas and those who live in the Old Town with regard to the average number of persons who depend on and live with them. Thus, the nine Sudanese merchants who reside in the New Areas support on average six persons per household whereas the ten who live in the various parts of the Old Town support on average ten persons per household. It is this fact which seems to discourage many of the latter from moving into the New Areas where they come into contact with the senior civil servants and the professional workers who are either monogamous or unmarried. Therefore, although some of these

merchants do own houses in the New Residential Areas, yet they prefer to let them rather than to leave their homes or compounds in the Old Town. In other words, even though these merchants can afford to live in the New Areas, it is largely because of their kinship as well as neighbourhood and friendship ties that they prefer to stay in the Old Town. It can be seen that, on the whole, many of the merchants in El Obeid especially the Sudanese ones remain traditional in their outlook. While stressing this, it is important to note that some of these merchants, notably the relatively young and those who live in the New Residential Areas, have become affected by the civil servants and the professionals with whom they frequently come into contact. Thus, instead of wearing the traditional dress, they tend to wear suits or shirts and trousers and, moreover, they tend to join the cliques of the educated group.

The merchants and businessmen in El Obeid arc active in politics. The extent to which they participate in the political life of the town can best be seen in their struggle to control the Town Council. This is a local council consisting of twenty-two elected members and seven appointed ones. It has nine committees, that is, for Finance, Personnel, Public Works, Town Planning, Health, Commerce, Education, General Purposes, and Social Services. Although the legal powers of the Town Council arc circumscribed by those of the Central as well as the Provincial Government, it came to assume much authority and to have a wide range of services greatly affecting the day-to-day life of El Obeid's citizens. For instance, it has the power to levy certain types of taxes and rates, to issue trading licences, to supervise street construction and maintenance, and many other similar powers and functions. In other words, the Town Council is the place for those who wish to dominate the affairs of the town.

Now, persons seeking to control the Town Council need to have following, prestige, and electoral support. In meeting these three requirements, the merchants in El Obeid are better equipped than most of the town's residents. No pretence is made, of course, that the businessmen represent the totality of leadership in the town, nor that the strategies which they adopt are the only roads that lead to power and influence.

The merchants and businessmen, as owners of relatively large commercial and industrial undertakings, have come to gain control over numerous persons. Some of these, notably their employees, depend directly on the merchants for their livelihood. This relationship does not necessarily imply that the employee should give the businessman his political support. However, since the employee obtains work and money from the businessman, the power of expulsion certainly gives the latter a hold on the former. In other words, it is likely to turn the employee into a follower. Like the wage earners, the retailers and other small traders enter with the merchants and businessmen into a similar relationship. The merchants supply them with goods and services which include sometimes credit facilities. The threat to withdraw such services no doubt gives the merchants a hold on the retailer, that is, it turns him into a follower. It is true that the merchant depends on the retailer for extending his market. But if the latter wished to withdraw the services he makes to a particular businessman, the only alternative for him would be to place himself under the control of another. Moreover, the retailer has

to accept the rules of the game in the hope that he might one day be able to become a businessman himself and be in a position to influence small traders.

The merchants, however, must have prestige and must gain the support of a wider following if they are to succeed in achieving their political aims. Here, their strategy calls for generosity. This appears in several ways. For instance, the merchants are very much concerned with feasts and parties— which form an important feature of social life in El Obeid— and many of them spend a great deal on them. Such lavish feast-giving and hospitality accords them merit and prestige. Moreover, the merchants use their financial resources to make contributions to build mosques, schools, etc., as well as to help the poor and the needy. In short, they manipulate their wealth in several ways in order to win gratitude and popularity and to assure themselves a following.

Perhaps in a more direct manner the merchants need to organise themselves if they are to achieve power and prestige. Here, their effort is directed towards dominating the political parties found in the town. Briefly, at the time of the study, there were two leading parties in El Obeid, namely, the Unionist Democratic Party (U.D.P.), which was a merger of the National Unionist Party (N. U.P.) and the Peoples' Democratic Party (P.D.P.), and the Umma Party; and there were other less popular parties notably the Communist Party and the Islamic Front.[8] For reasons which fall beyond the scope of the present article, the two leading parties came to depend heavily on the merchants' donations and contributions and, consequently, the merchants came to prevail on them. Political parties in the town, as elsewhere in the country, used to be characterised by an elaborate system of offices. For example, the committee members of the U.D.P. (the party in power at the time of the study), as distinct from the ordinary or rank-and-file members, numbered 156, of whom 109 were advisory or general committee members and forty-seven were executive members; of these forty-seven, nineteen held offices. The presence of the big merchants and businessmen (with the exception of members of the minority groups) was conspicuously marked at all the levels of this elaborate committee. Perhaps more important is that the top offices of the chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, treasurer, deputy treasurer, etc. were all in the hands of some of the leading merchants in the town. In short, the merchants used their resources to monopolise leadership in the political parties.

Finally, the merchants had to gain electoral support if they were to reach the Town Council. Here, they used their resources to cover the cost of campaigns. Thus candidates and party members were expected to contribute heavily to these campaigns and, furthermore, many of the businessmen who were, strictly speaking, not party members were also expected to help parties that represented their interests. A great deal of the contributions that the parties received during campaigns went to the quarter leaders and similar functionaries to encourage them to rally more people for the support of a certain candidate.

[8] The various political parties were banned after the Revolution of May, 1969-

The above instances clearly indicate that the effort to assume control over the Town Council entails a cost which not everybody can afford. Other things being equal, those who have, that is, the big merchants, are better equipped for this struggle than those who have not, that is, the remainder of El Obeid's inhabitants. So it is not surprising that the merchants (or the party leaders) were also the leaders of the Town Council. Material from the last elections (1967) throws light on this. To begin with, the battle for these elections was fought along party lines. The list of the candidates included the following: o

U.D.P.	32 candidates (N.U. P. 26 and P. D.P. 6)
Umma Party	25 candidates
Communist Party	5 candidates
Independents	3 candidates
Islamic Front	1 candidate

The result was: the U.D.P. got twelve seats (N.U.P. eleven, P.D.P. one), and the Umma Party ten seats. The distribution of the appointed members closely followed this pattern. It was as follows: the U.D.P. had four members (three from the N.U.P. and one from the P.D.P.), and the Umma Party had three members. Now, nine of all the winning candidates (six from the U.D.P. and three from the Umma Party) were businessmen as distinct from the other candidates of whom fourteen were small traders; four were wage earners (including two workers and two professionals); and two were professional politicians. Of prime importance is the fact that the most influential offices of the council, that of the chairman and the deputy chairman, and, moreover, the chairmen of four out of its nine committees, were in the hands of the leading executive committee members of the winning party—the U.D. P.— or the big merchants and businessmen.

Thus, wealth is a primary source from which the merchants in El Obeid derive their power and influence. However, it is important to note that, viewed over a period of time, a fairly large number of these merchants had for long been active in the town's politics. Many of them had been elected more than once to the Town Council since its formation in the early 1940s. That the businesses of some of these merchants had grown over the last two decades or so—as already mentioned— is not unrelated to the fact that they came during this period to occupy key positions in the town. In other words, power is an avenue to wealth. This means that there is a close interdependence between wealth and power in that the possession of one leads to the other.

The object of this paper has been to show in what respects the big merchants and businessmen in El Obeid, a relatively small group, with better financial resources and income, are marked off from the rest of the town's residents, the great bulk of whom do not possess these advantages. In particular, it has shown that the merchants through the use of their wealth came to enjoy a comparatively high standard of living and to wield much power. They do not, however, form a corporate group. That they are

aware of some common interests is seen in the trade associations to which they belong, namely, the Kordofan Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' Union.[9] But the ties created by these associations are very far from counteracting the social, economic, and political differences that obtain among the merchants of which enough has been implicitly or explicitly said in this paper.

[9] These are two rival associations. At the time of the study, the Kordofan Chamber of Commerce was dominated by the U.D. P. whereas the Merchants' Union was dominated by a faction of the U.D.P. and the Umma Party.

XII. The Jamutya Development Scheme: An Essay on the Utility of 'Instant Anthropology'

Peter Harries-Jones

In recent years, the marrying of empirical social research through participant observation to the formulation of concepts and hypotheses—the 'anthropological method'—has acquired an enhanced utility in studies of social and economic development in the Third World. Whatever the views that may be held there about the subject matter of social anthropology, the virtues of anthropological method in defining varied problems of rapid social change are becoming more clearly recognised, both inside and outside the academic community. Social anthropology may be attacked for concentrating on aspects of social and political processes that are inimical to economic development and 'national integration'. Yet in the universities, there is a general move to persuade the political scientist and the economist to expose themselves to its methods in order to explain vital 'non-economic' factors in development, or to give substance to generalised notions of 'modernisation'.[1] The anthropologist may thus find himself described, in a derogatory manner, as focussing on 'the intensive study of backwardness in remote areas', but he is in demand as the person best equipped to advise on the collection of data in such areas and to explain their significance. Though the study of traditional social processes may be considered irrelevant, the study of the means by which they can be changed is regarded as being of crucial importance.

Even the critics grudgingly assent that the anthropologist can provide a conceptual understanding of social change unattainable elsewhere. But they complain that he takes too long to produce his results. Anthropological methods may be useful, but, says the critic, the anthropologist uses them to bolster his *curriculum vitae* rather than to supply information to planners, or to government ministries. Often indeed the results of an anthropological study emerge too late for planning purposes. Consequently planner and anthropologist indulge in mutual recrimination, the one wanting results quickly, the other responding that there must be an interval between gathering data and understanding it conceptually. The critic may retort that the long interval between gathering data and writing it up is itself an inherent limitation of the 'anthropological method'.

[1] See the discussion in Daryll Forde "Social Anthropology in African Studies." *African Affairs,*

This retort should be taken seriously. An anthropologist after a short time in the field ought to be able to give a planner an outline of social problems confronting a development programme. Yet no one knows better that simplification and generality can often distort the complexities which confront him. And it is the social complexities, not a travelogue of custom, that the anthropologist undertakes to explain. The marriage of concepts and empirical data does take time, and any shortening of this process is a compromise both with the subject matter of social relations and with the scholar's own expertise. 'Instant anthropology' is in several ways a violation of the anthropological method and this essay is about its utility. The question I have set myself here is, how useful is a deliberately conceived compromise with anthropological method? To what extent does the simplification and generalisation of 'instant anthropology' provide a useful resolution of problems for the planner and provide an explanation of social complexities for the anthropologist?[2]

The period I wish to consider is one of two to three months from the beginning of fieldwork to completion of a report. The data gathered and presented here on the Jamu'iya Development Scheme was completed in a slightly shorter time. Fieldwork began in the first week of April 1970 and the report was delivered in the third week of May. But the speed with which the investigation was carried out was helped since the Scheme is near Khartoum, and I could set up residence in a primary school on the first day of fieldwork. Usually the £ask of getting to a remote area and establishing a residence takes much longer.

'Instant anthropology' at once defines the limits of the data that can be collected and the priorities of investigation. We were not trying to carry out a social survey, or to conduct a questionnaire, but to gather information about the Development Scheme through participant observation. In this situation the best procedure seemed to be first to assume the role of ethnographer by investigating major social institutions and second to concentrate in depth on the socio-political effects of the Scheme: that is to say to provide a map of social relationships, while considering in more detail the effects, if any, the Scheme had had on the systems of authority and decision-making among Jamu'iya.

The Scheme in outline

The northern end of the Jamu'iya Development Scheme is about sixteen miles, by dirt road, from Omdurman. The Scheme runs southwards, parallel to the bank of the

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[2] I wish to thank Andrew Lochhead, Visiting Professor of Social Administration, University of Khartoum, for suggesting the topic of the Development scheme to me; Mansour Khalid, the Minister, and Mohammed Beshir and Osman Hassan, of the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs, for their support; and most particularly Omer Abdel Majid, Mohammed Beshir, Mohammed Musa, and Abdin Ahmed, students in the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Khartoum, for their unstinting help in collecting information in the field.

White Nile, for about eight miles to a pump station seven miles from Jebel Aulia Dam. At the time of writing the scheme embraces 10,000 feddans of which nine thousand are to be cultivated by those with registered land titles, and one thousand by the Government.[3] A proposed southward extension of the Scheme towards the dam will eventually double the amount of land under irrigation. Soil analysis has shown that the land on which the Scheme lies is among the best in Khartoum Province. The area is easily irrigated, and there is ready access to the White Nile at the pumping station (near the village of Sulcimaniya West), which needs only a short inlet for river water at low Nile, but which is also protected from flooding.

Proposals for an irrigation scheme in this area were first discussed during the 1930s. At the outset proposals concentrated on prospects of growing cotton, but closer investigation showed that the soil was infested. In the post-independence period, though there were further discussions, nothing definite came of these talks until June 1969. Then a capital loan was negotiated for the Scheme and an irrigation survey undertaken. By January 1970 the digging of canals had begun, and within three-and-a-half months the two major canals and their minor branches had been completed.

The objects of the Scheme, apart from the general socioeconomic development of the area, were twofold. First, irrigation would provide fruits and vegetables for Khartoum and Omdurman markets, and the production of vegetables would lead, in five to ten years, to a halving of market prices. Second, the Scheme would provide an alternative means of livelihood to those whose land was affected by the Jebel Aulia Dam. Since the dam was completed in 1937, this second objective would appear a somewhat tardy response to loss of livelihood. In fact, as early as 1938 the Condominium government had responded to the inundation of land caused by the building of the dam, by tacking an extra block onto the north-western end of the Gezira main canal. Tenants were then brought from the White Nile under their own headman. The whole ‘Abd al-Majid block, as it was called, was managed quite differently from the main Gezira enterprise, with indigenous authorities having much wider powers over cultivation.[4] The new population of the ‘Abd al-Majid block consisted mostly of tenants from villages to the south of the dam, particularly Hasaniya. But villages to the north of the dam which had land inundated were granted only a few *hawashas* in the area. It was these, mainly Jamu’iya, who were now to be given luller compensation through the Development Scheme.

As originally conceived, vegetable-growing on irrigated land would be managed through a large-scale production and marketing co-operative. But here planners’ hopes ran into immediate trouble. While the canals were under construction, the government announced, without prior consultation with the Jamu‘iya, that in future it would hold the title to the land. People would be leased tenancies and given shares in the Jamu‘iya Farming Co-operative. The method of dividing the shares was not clear. As a result,

[3] The government has made provision for the landless out of this 1,000 feddan area. This year only the government portion will be cultivated.

[4] A. Gaitskell, *Gezira: a Story of Development in the Sudan,* London, Faber and Faber, 1959, p. 209.

the views on the introduction of a co-operative were generally hostile. As the Jamu'iya saw it, the government proposed to give them water for their land with one hand, and take their land away with the other. It was an exchange that they could not accept. During the previous four years a drought had diminished their animal stock and food supplies to the limits of exhaustion; the villagers could not afford to exchange their sole hope of survival for shares—for bits of paper that would take a year to cash, as they put it.

As a co-operative enterprise, therefore, the Scheme began in a cloud of uncertainty and despair. A delegation of ministers and others from Khartoum who came on an official inspection was met by an angry crowd, some armed with swords and axes. An intended ceremonial greeting turned into a threatening situation. The demonstration had some effect. The government promised not to proceed with the distribution of tenancies before land had been registered. Yet even during the process of registration discontent with the prospect of a large-scale co-operative resulted in continuing threats to sabotage the main canal. At one point in April, while we were in the field, several lorry loads of soldiers descended on our camp site. They were moved in to ensure that the area was peaceful. Our last interview in the field was conducted in the presence of police officers, who came as a result of more rumours of unrest. Co-operatives, said informants, seemed to haunt the Jamu'iya like a 'hungry monster'.

Ecology

The central problem for the anthropologist in a discussion of ecology is the degree to which social relations are influenced or modified by environment. For the planners of a development project, the central ecological problems are similar: the extent to which a change in the mode of subsistence is likely to bring about a change in social relationships, and the extent to which changed social relationships will bring about increased individual efficiency and productive capacity. The JamuTya mode of subsistence is now mainly agricultural and a discussion of ecology is predominantly a discussion of people's relation to the land. But land is not their sole security. As in the past, herding plays a vital role in their subsistence economy, while more recently, they have been able to sell their labour for cash.[5]

The natural environment in which they live is influenced by two main features. The first of these is the closeness of their land to the White Nile; the second is the unreliability of the annual rainfall. In addition, the ecology' is modified by two man-made features, one the dam, the other the steadily growing city of Omdurman; both have affected the dependence on land and herds as sources of livelihood.

[5] 1'he Ministry of Agriculture census recorded that JamuTya had 330 camels; 1,300 donkeys; 2,000 cattle; 7,000 sheep, and 8,000 goats. This can only be an estimate, but the high proportion of goats is one indication of settlement.

In the recent past the Jamu‘iya were semi-nomads, stretching in a crescent from Karari, the site of the battle of Omdurman, in the north, to an area close to the site of the Jebel Aulia Dam in the south. This crescent is broadest where the boundaries of Khartoum Province meet the easternmost goz sands and wadis of Kordofan; it measures some twenty to thirty miles across and forty to fifty miles in length. Today, the heaviest concentration of population of Jamu'iya living outside Omdurman is found in the series of villages lying next to the Scheme. They are built within a few yards of high-water mark on the western bank of the White Nile. Together with these is another series of villages, two to three miles to the west, lying in a more scattered, but parallel line. Omdurman and its environs separates the northern area of Jamu'iya land from the riverbank villages of the south, but one community of Omdurman, Fiteihab, which lies within sight of Omdurman Bridge is regarded as being a village of Jamu‘iya. While most JamuTya live on the west bank of the Nile, one group, those living at Kalakla, have shifted to the eastern side and reside in an area of mixed tribal origins.

Away from the river, Jamu'iya remain semi-nomadic, residing in impermanent camps rather than villages. The movement from semi-nomadism to settled agriculture in the past sixty or seventy years has meant a major change in the ecology of the Jamu‘iya. It is a movement which has not yet ceased. Just to the north of the Scheme, in small clusters of cardboard or *karton* houses, as they are called, reside semi-nomadic relatives of the settled agriculturalists—the most recent arrivals of the steady drift away from the western grazing grounds to the river bank.

During the early years of the Condominium, Jamu‘iya used the present sites of river-bank villages as dry-season herding posts. One informant, a former sheikh of Suleimaniya, and among the oldest inhabitants of the village, said that in those days Jamu‘iya were noted for the size of their herds. He recalled his move from the west, near Jebel Hineik, to Suleimaniya in 1916. In that year he had married his first wife with six head of cattle, and many young men of the surrounding tribes envied him. The usual gift in those days, he said, was only two head. Suleimaniya was among the first of the villages to be converted from dry-season herding posts into a permanent residence. The establishment of other villages around Suleimaniya varied in time, one or two being formed as recently as twenty years ago.[6]

The reasons for this shift to permanent settlement on the riverbank are probably complex, but one reason certainly seems to have been the unreliability of annual rainfall during the last fifty years. While lack of rain would affect land cultivated for dura near the river as much as it would affect land away from the river, villagers near the river have a source of alternative grain supplies, the markets of Omdurman. In drought conditions, such as those apparent while we were in the field, villagers can sell animals

[6] The list of Omdas drawn from the 1956 Census described people of river-bank villages as semi-nomadic, lumping them together with more western Jamu'iya. Of the omodiyas in this area, only Mugdab was regarded as being settled. However, these ascriptions may not be reliable, for through reasons I have yet to discover, the omodiya of Mugdab was listed as being ethnically Berti'—people from western Darfur—not Jamu‘iya at all.

to secure grain. Transport by bus to and from Omdurman is always available, and relatively cheap.

The area along the Nile between the dam and the northernmost end of the Scheme is generally flat, but undulates to the extent that it is riven by khors and wadis and has some prominent dunes and goz sands. The gozes nearest the Nile have become sites for villages because of their satisfactory drainage during the wet season. In addition one small hill in the area, Jebel al-Teina, serves as a village site. The natural vegetation is mainly thorny bushes, with scattered acacia and other thorny trees. With the coming of rain, the area is covered by grasses able to support a mixed animal population of goats, sheep, cattle, donkeys and camels. The soil is a mediumtexture clay, interrupted by or mixed with sand, and with pockets of cotton soil. But its holding capacity foi' water is low, due to the presence of salt, and this limits the range of crops produced. Crops are sown in small parcels of land of about one to three feddans in two distinctive cultivable areas, the flood-plain and the rain-fed lands. In the flood plain cucurbits, vegetables and fodder crops are generally grown, together with okra. In the rain-fed land, these crops may again be grown, but the area is more generally dominated by dura. This is harvested and stored in large holes in the ground where it can be kept in good condition for two to three years.

On the whole, techniques of cultivation are rudimentary, with only a few pockets of land under the plough and even fewer being mechanically cultivated. Crops are planted directly into the ground after the first rains with the aid of a *saluka,* or digging stick. With little or no rain, yields in the rain-fed land are poor, unless villagers are able to plant in a wadi, which tends to hold moisture for a longer period. It is in this rain-fed land, which in many places begins only two hundred yards from the high water mark of the Nile, that the canals of the Development Scheme have been dug.

Supplies of water for human consumption arc obtained from wells, and not from the Nile. The amount and quality of the water is better close to the river bank. Until the recent building of water towers, two villages on the north-western edge of the Scheme, Kidci and Ghamarab, had to import their water from Omdurman; another, Al-Samra, still has to import some; while, in the southwestern area a further water tower is planned in the village of Mugdab. One or two of the wells in the southwestern villages have a quality of water which is poor in comparison with the area as a whole.

Natural drainage runs from the Kordofan Hills east to the river; transport routes on the other hand run north and south, between Omdurman and Jebel Aulia. The Development Scheme affects both. First, the Scheme has been built across one of the main wadis in the area, the Wadi Mansurab. If the Scheme's drainage system is successful in containing this wadi during the rainy season, then the wadi's outlet to the river, which was a prime grain-growing area, will become dry. Second, when the Scheme comes into full production the present dry-weather roads will have to be improved. During the wet weather, motorised transport at present has to make a detour of several miles westwards before continuing on a suitable track. The building

of a tarmac road on the west bank, or the construction of a ferry across to the existing tarmac road on the east bank of the Nile are both suitable alternatives.

I have mentioned that the ecology has been modified by the building of the Jebel Aulia Dam and by the growth of Omdurman, the one providing income through fishing, and the other through paid employment. Although I did not carry out a survey, it became clear that the pull of Omdurman affected villages at the northern end of the Scheme, the more so in that prevailing drought conditions had forced all able-bodied males to seek daily paid employment. In most of the villages at the centre of the Scheme young adult males sought work in Omdurman during the day and returned to their villages in the late afternoon. The number of males seeking paid employment diminished as the bus fare and the distance from Omdurman increased. For residents of villages around Jebel Aulia, a daily journey to work was impracticable.

Though the dam is now a source of livelihood, its initial effect was counter-productive to the Jamu'iya. It was built as a reservoir on the White Nile to offset water consumed by the Gezira Scheme on the Blue Nile, the balance between the amount of water flowing from both rivers being governed by an agreement with Egypt. Much good flood-plain land disappeared, as did the gardens on islands in the middle of the river. Villagers near the dam suffered most, and these have sought to make a living from the Gezira by taking up tenancies, diverting their herds to the Gezira away from traditional grazing grounds, and seeking seasonal employment there with their camels. Absence of young males in these southern villages was particularly noticeable.

While males from several villages have now adopted fishing as a source of livelihood, in the two villages Jebel al-Teina and Omorat fishing appears to be the major source of income. But returns from fishing are not lucrative. Sales are divided into 'shares', including portions for the lorry driver who drives the fish to market, and for the owners of the fishing boat and net. A boat owner, if he is also a net owner and the person responsible for bargaining with the lorry owner as to the cost of transport, may see a respectable profit from his catch. But there are only about thirty boats, while the number involved in fishing at .Jebel Aulia is several hundred. An ordinary fisherman has days when he works for eight hours for a net return of only 6 piastres. This rate of return may be judged against that from daily employment in Omdurman. Here a day's labour, if it is obtainable, may bring in 30–40 piastres. But transport to and from Omdurman will cost 15 piastres and, in addition, there is no guarantee of daily employment.

Of the other villages only one, Al-Tireis, has developed another source of income, that of capitalising on flood-plain land. However, this village is in a fortunate location next to the mouth of the Wadi Mansurab. This has made grain cultivation relatively easy and has encouraged the villagers to concentrate on mechanised farming on the flood-plain. The profit from marketing of vegetables has enabled a few of them to establish homes in Omdurman. In addition, they have drawn income from renting flood-plain land to families living in neighbouring villages. Thus, for Al-Tireis the De-

velopment Scheme will be an extension of current economic activity, and the problems of production and marketing of vegetables are to some degree already known.

Map 1 indicates the extent to which the sixteen Jamu'iya villages most closely associated with the Development Scheme have alternative sources of income. Villages that arc fully blocked on the Map, such as Al-Sainra, Al-Tireis and Kidci have a predominant proportion of resident males seeking daily employment in Omdurman. Villages horizontally blocked have some males going daily to Omdurman, while villages shown as vertically blocked have a high proportion of males gaining income from fishing. Those represented by a broken circle have shifted the ground of their traditional rural economy by sending their cattle away to the Gezira and taking up tenancies there.

The 1956 Census returns of those omodiyas that I believe to be Jamu'iya (though the ethnic ascriptions given and my own judgment on the matter vary at one or two points) are listed from north to south.

Karari	4,665
Al-Faragin	4,691
Al-Fiteihab	6,921
Al-Zanarkha	7,901
Al-Ghamarab	3,244... Kalakla (east bank) 4556
Jamu'iya Nomadic	12,956*
Kerriyat Nomadic	4,857*
Mugdab	6,602*
Total (ine. Kalakla)	56,393

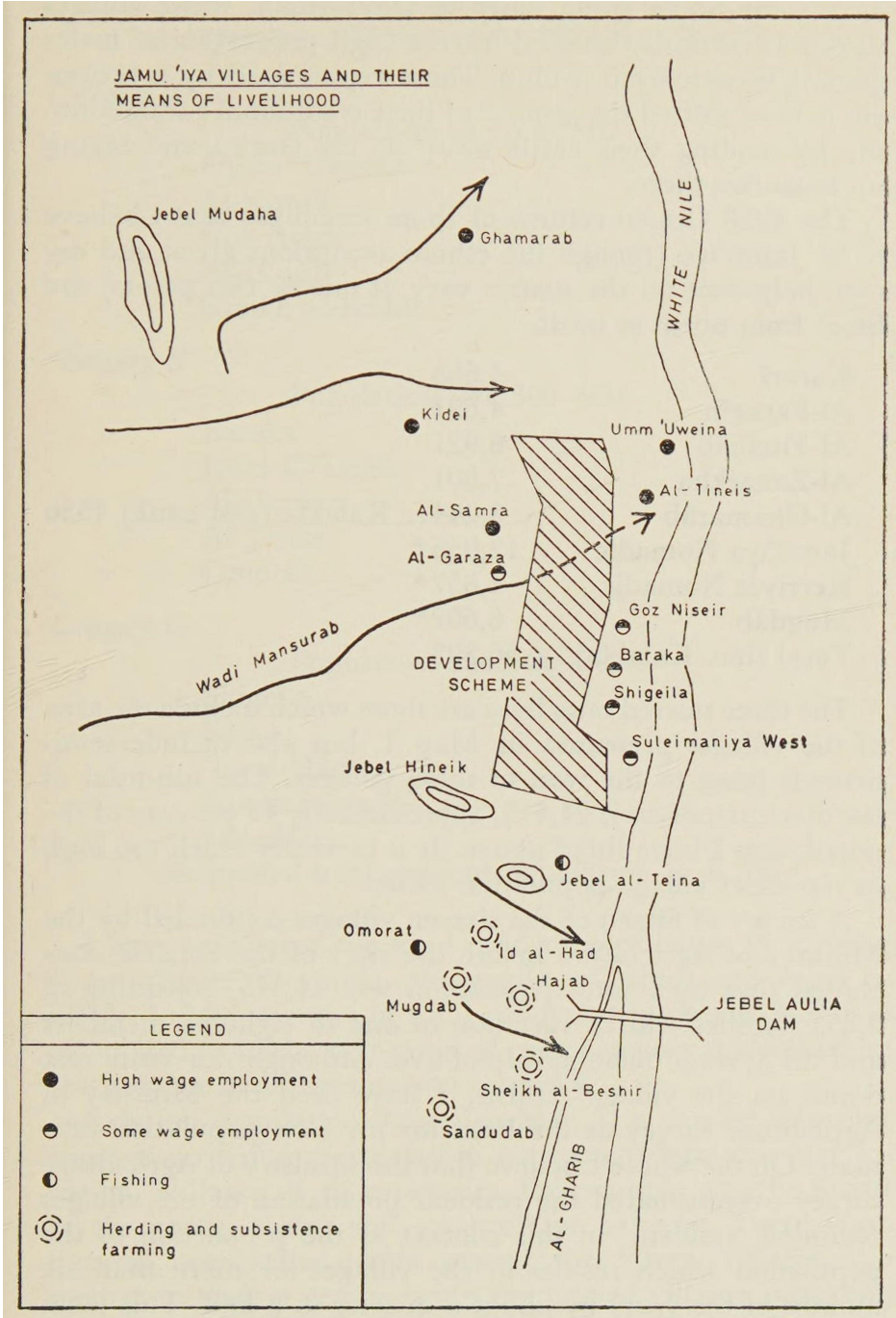
The three starred omodiyas are those which include the area of the villages presented in Map 1, but also include seminomads lying to the west of these villages. The sub-total of the three omodiyas is 24,415, approximately 47 per cent of the population I have listed above. It is certainly much too high to represent village population alone.

A survey of fifteen of the sixteen villages conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture before the start of the Scheme concluded that their total population was 14,415, consisting of 2,853 families with a variation of one to eighteen members and an average membership of five. Although our visits cast doubt on the village returns, 1 have used the Ministry of Agriculture survey as the basis for my own population estimate. On the whole I believe that the Ministry of Agriculture survey overestimated the resident population of the villages (defining 'resident' in this context as the proportion of the population which resides in the villages for more than six months of the year) by about a quarter to a half. This takes into account the bias of my own impressions of population in favour of a lower estimate because of the exodus of young males through drought conditions.

TABLE 1: *A Population Allocation of the Villages of Jamuiya*

Category A

Population of up to 300 Umm 'Uweina


JAMU 'IYA VILLAGES AND THEIR MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD
Jebel Mudaha
Ghamarab
WHITE NILE
Kidei
Umm 'Uweina
Al-Tineis
Al-Samra
Al-Garaza
Goz Niseir
Wadi Mansurab
DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
Baraka
Shigeila
Suleimaniya West
Jebel Hineik
Jebel al-Teina
Omorat
'Id al-Had
Hajab
Mugdab
JEBEL AULIA DAM
Sheikh al-Beshir
Sandudab
AL-GHARIB
LEGEND
High wage employment
Some wage employment
Fishing
Herding and subsistence farming

MAP 1

Al-Samra
Goz Niseir Al-Hajab Sheikh al-Beshir
Category B
Population size 300–600 Baraka
Jebel al-Teina Al-Garaza
Al-Tireis
Omorat
Category C
Population size 600–900
Shigeila
Kidei
'Id al-Had
Suleimaniya W.
Mugdab

Estimated total resident population = 6,750

I have calculated the total resident population by making a population allocation, the results of which are listed in Table 1. My estimate of total resident population, 6,750, is calculated from the mid-point of each category multiplied by the number of villages in that category.

Relating population figures to Map 1, it can be seen that there is no definite correlation between village size and location. Villages of all categories, for example, can be found in the north, centre and south of the Scheme. There is no natural population centre among the fifteen villages, the nearest to such a centre being the line of villages including Suleimaniya, Shigeila, Baraka and Goz Niseir. To some extent, this will make provision of social services and amenities, and attributes of 'development' such as schools, electric light,

water and drainage, more difficult. Yet without a build-up of population in the area, together with the provision of these amenities, the crucial demographic problem—the return of young males to residence in these villages—will be slow to resolve.

Agnatic kinship and village relations

Development Schemes to be successful require that the people affected take substantial decisions in the direction of social change. The anthropologist will normally study the course of decision-taking in rural areas through examination of kinship systems, since he holds that kinship is often the main idiom through which social relations are expressed. Kinship ties with their significance for leadership and authority, should be of interest to planners also. It is local leaders that the planners will first have to persuade to make decisions about the direction of social and economic change.

Category A

Population of up to 300

Umm 'Uweina
Al-Samra
Goz Niseir
Al-Ḥajāb
Sheikh al-Beshīr

Category B

Population size 300–600

Baraka
Jebel al-Teina
Al-Garaza
Al-Tireis
Omorāt

Category C

Population size 600–900

Shigeila
Kidei
'Id al-Hād
Suleimānīya W.
Mugdāb

Estimated total resident population = 6,750

The distinguishing feature of kinship relations among Jamu'iya, compared with their Kababish neighbours in the west and their Hasaniya neighbours to the south, is the importance they attach to the corporate kinship unit, the *khashm bayt.* Among the Hasaniya, for example, it is *clan* membership, linking those of the White Nile to their nomadic clansmen some hundreds of miles to the north, which is perhaps the most important social relationship.[7] As I will show, the diminished importance of clanship among Jamu'iya may be linked with their increasing sedentarisation; in other words, the *khashm bayt* has assumed greater significance with the move into permanent villages.

Like the Kababish, the Jamu'iya express agnatic kinship relations in two ways. The first is that any villager will view other members of his village as *awlad 'amm* (lit. father's brother's sons) signifying that they belong to the same kinship category. At a wider level, any villager will also view any other villages in the same way, i.e. as belonging to a homogeneous kinship category. "We arc all Jamu'iya" is the first response a field-worker will hear when questioning villagers about their relationship with other villages. At the same time most villagers when pressed on the point were willing to talk about themselves as differentiated bodies of kin, the differentiation arising from a series of agnatic lines extending over generations. The founders of these patrilineages were originally closely related kin, but today through increasing genealogical distance, some descent lines are no longer regarded as being particularly 'close' to other descent lines. Tables 2 and 3 represent founders of tribal sections who acknowledged the authority of the Mek of the Jamu'iya at about the beginning of the seventeenth century. Though these ancestors are regarded today as eponymous ancestors of villages, they do not represent 'village founders' in the more usual sense of this term.

N. B. The table does not purport to show exact seniority of sons.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, as the authority of the Mek increased, scattered settlement grew up here and there along the west bank of the Nile. But the Jamu'iya remained essentially herdsmen, practising some subsistence agriculture around Jebel al-Hineik and on the river bank.

The present array of villages between Jebel Aulia and Omdurman is a recent phenomenon. But despite the movement towards more permanent settlement, the agnatic closeness of various tribal sections is still an important concomitant of social interaction among Jamu'iya villagers. The concept of who is a 'villager' or who is an 'outsider' relates more to the closeness or otherwise of agnatic descent, than to the physical nearness of one village to another. Physical nearness is important however in those cases where one village acts as a religious centre for surrounding villages. The village of Sheikh al-Beshir, which acts as a religious centre for Mugdab, Hajab and Sandudab, is a case in point. As will be shown below, these villages recognised an identity of interest in several spheres of economic and social interaction.

[7] I wish to thank Abbas Ahmed Mohammed for discussion on this point.

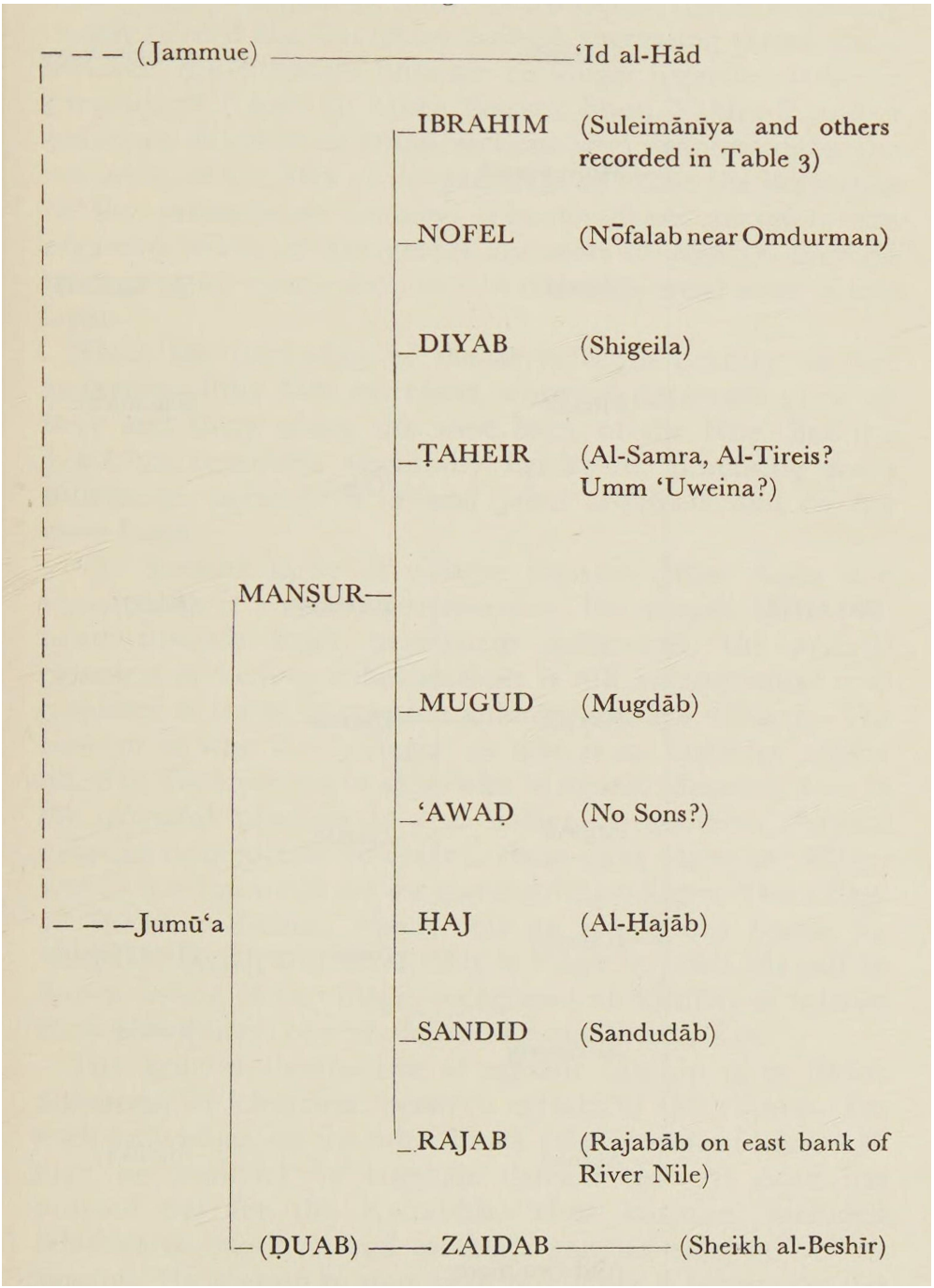


TABLE 2: *Genealogical Connections of Selected Villages of Jamu'iya through Founding Ancestors*

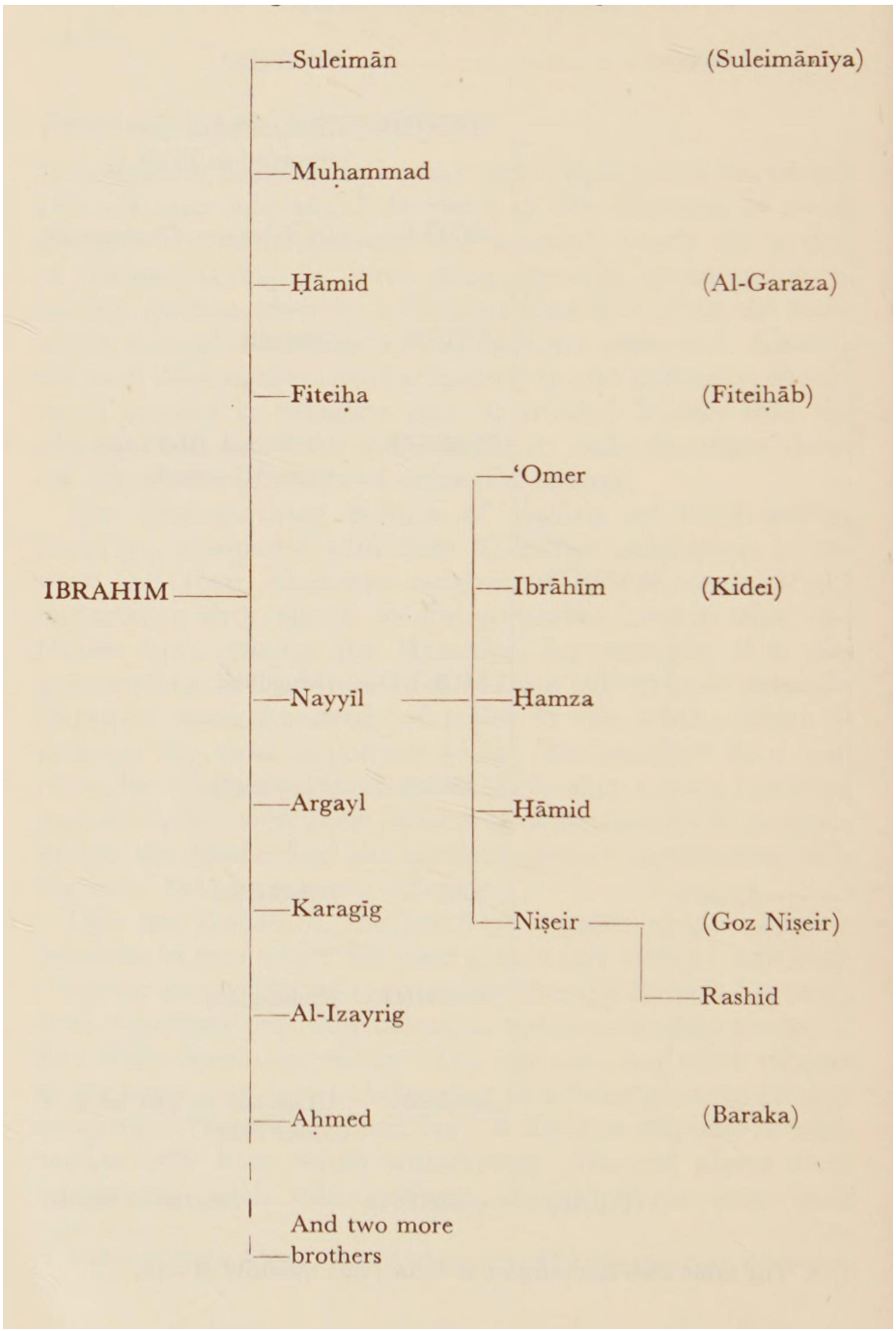


TABLE 3: Genealogical Connection of Selected Villages Tracing Descent to Ibrahim, Son of Mansur

The general significance of agnatic kinship is to define a concept of 'closeness' between certain of the villages. For each individual, on the other hand, this concept of 'closeness' may be modified by cognatic descent ties. As Asad has pointed out for the Kababish, 'close kinsmen' included relatives on mother's and mother's parents' side, as well as agnates. He goes on to state that in practice it is cognatic ties that are operative in defining mutual obligations between agnates since "distant agnates never exhibit active solidarity unless they are also close kin."[8] Among Jamu'iya cognatic ties would appear to influence inter-village relations, since some *khashm biyut* deliberately seek wives from the *khashm biyut* ol other villages. The time available did not enable me to investigate this point more thoroughly: here I can only note the omission while underlining the significance of agnatic ties in assessing inter-village relations.

Sheikhs and khashm biyut

I have already mentioned that *khashm biyut* may have assumed greater significance as corporate units as Jamu'iya moved from a semi-nomadic existence into permanent villages. At least, this is a useful hypothesis. Cunnison translates the term as 'lineages' among the Baggara; Asad, on the other hand, prefers 'sub-clan'. He reports that *khashm biyut* are widely distributed among the different dry-season camps around water holes. But they had no administrative significance, as the administrative unit was the 'section' administered by the sheikh. Nevertheless, often the administrative 'section' coincided with the boundaries of the *khashm bayt.*[9]

Among Baggara, the *khashm biyut* are divisions of an omodiya, and must, therefore, be taken to have some administrative functions. But the term, says Cunnison, can be used to describe groupings at various levels. *Khashm biyut* are subdivided two or three times, each subdivision also calling itself a *khashm bayt.* The smallest of these subdivisions is termed a *surra,* "a group of agnates whose common ancestor is said to have been five or six generations back from the living. The *surra* is also... the basis of a single camp."[10] Within the *surra* are extended families of one, two or three generations, termed *'iyal rajl,* children of a man.

Thus between the sectionalised *khashm biyut* of the Baggara, and those of the Kababish, whose members may undertake joint activity but which could not be considered corporate groups, lies a range of social forms subsumed under one Arabic term. Turning to Jamu'iya, we find again the organisation varies from the above. Members have a sense of corporateness and joint activity which exceeds that of the Kababish. Each *khashm bayt* has a 'spokesman' to represent its views, who is recognised as head and demands respect from its members. He is responsible for members' welfare and, most particularly, has a final say in their marriages. His house is the centre for rit-

[8] Talal z\sad, *The Kababish Arabs,* London, Hurst, 1970, p. 106.
[9] Ibid., pp. 142–4.
[10] I. Cunnison, *Baggara Arabs,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966, p. 9.

uals concerned with marriage and mourning; it used to be the centre for communal meals. Today, there is greater economic independence among the households though all households still share in the goods of the *khashm bayt.* A sense of common obligation between households is also defined through a sharing of common honour. An insult to one member is taken as being an insult to all. However, the precise relationships of one *bayt rijdl* (extended household) to another within the *khashm bayt* requires further research.

A *khashm bayt* may be confined to one village, but members may be found in several villages, while one village may also have several *khashm biyut.* A village with several has each spatially separate. In 'Id al-Had, for example, the spatial divisions make the place look like four small villages. In Suleimaniya, on the other hand, separation is less apparent to casual observation; but more intensive investigation reveals a definite clustering of members of *khashm biyut* in parts of the village.

The spatial separation is symbolic of the autonomy of the *khashm bayt.* Indeed, to judge by the language of dispute, defending this autonomy and canvassing interests was a major form of social competition among villagers. The younger and better educated men were impatient of such competitiveness, but they were either village members who had only lived there briefly, or they were 'outsiders' performing a technical service. Among the older and senior males of the village, the rights and wrongs in village issues were, in effect, straightforward contests between the interests of *khashm biyut.*

As among the Kababish, the *khashm bayt* is to be distinguished from administrative structures. Generally, the village is the administrative unit, and each village has a sheikh who is recognised as having administrative authority. Of the villages in Category A, one or two did not have their own sheikh, and the administrative authority resided in a neighbouring village. This was the case of Umm 'Uweina whose sheikh was the sheikh of Al-Tireis. Most sheikhs were resident in their own villages, but as can be seen from Table 4 the sheikh of Shigeila lives in Suleimaniya; the sheikh of Baraka lives in Shigeila, in an attempt to link up the two into a single village; while the sheikh of Goz Niscir lives in Al-Garaza, to the west of the Development Scheme.

Villages may have other people to whom they give the title 'sheikh', and who, in fact plays the role. In most cases these are the 'spokesmen' of *khashm biyut* in villages who have failed to agree upon an appointment of a single village sheikh. These 'spokesmen' then become sheikhs of sections of the village. A case of this sort is found in 'Id al-Had. Further, since *khashm biyut* do not necessarily correspond to village boundaries, the sheikh of such a village section may even live in another village. To complicate matters even more, the spokesman of a *khashm bayt* in a small village which has no administrative authority of its own, such as Umm 'Uweina, may be accorded the title of'sheikh'. Thus the title itself may designate a role, but is by no means a precise guide to the duly authorised administrator of the village.

In villages of multiple *khashm biyut,* the sheikh largely relies on the goodwill of the various spokesmen for the effective carrying out of his duties. The appointment of sheikhs may be authorised by the provincial administration, but if the spokesmen

cannot agree, administration of the village through the sheikh is no easy task. As Table 4 reveals, the presence of multiple *khashm biyut* in a village is correlated with population size. Nine of the sixteen villages listed in the Table have one or two *khashm biyut.* But of the five villages of population 600–900, Shigeila is the only one to have less than four. In this respect, both Jebel al-Teina and Omorat may be taken as special cases. We may speak of the seven *khashm biyut* of these villages as subdivisions of a Mahass clan, interspersed between the two.

Thus in the larger villages the major role of sheikh is to mediate between the divisive factions brought about by clashes among *khashm. biyut.* At the same time, his role as mediator is sometimes incongruent with his being an executive for the village. The sheikh's techniques of influence, therefore, include a constant weighing of information and support that he may have at his disposal, against that of the spokesmen. Decisions in the village are akin to bargains that satisfy some of the wishes of members of *khashm biyut* without undermining the sheikh's essential interests. Over the years a sheikh who is regarded as a 'strong man' is the one who is adept at striking such bargains.

TABLE 4: *Numbers of Sheikhs and Khashm Biyut in Jamu'iya*

Village	*Number of those termed 'sheikh'*	*Number of khashm biyūt*	*Comments*
Jebel al-Teina Omorāt	7	7	Spokesmen for *khashm biyūt*
'Id al-Hād	4	4	– do –
Suleimānīya	2	8	Sheikh of Shigeila resident
Shigeila	2	2	Sheikh of Baraka resident
Mugdāb	1	5	former 'omda' resident
Al-Garaza	at least one*	several*	Sheikh of Goz Nişeir resident
Al-Tireis	1	2	
Sandudāb	1	2	
Sheikh al-Beshīr	1	1	
Al-Samra	1	1	
Al-Ḥajāb	1	1	
Umm 'Uweina	1	1	spokesman for *khashm bayt*
Kidei	Nil	6	Al-Mek resident in Omdurman
Baraka	Nil	1	resident in Shigeila
Goz Nişeir	Nil	1	resident in Al-Garaza.

Village	*Number of those termed 'sheikh'*	*Number of khashm biyut*	*Comments*
Jebel al-Teina Omorat	7	7	Spokesmen for *khashm biyut*
'Id al-Had	4	8	— do —
Suleimaniya	2	8	Sheikh of Shigeila resident
Shigeila	2	2	Sheikh of Baraka resident
Mugdab	1	5	former 'omda' resident
Al-Garaza	at least one[1]	several[2]	Sheikh of Goz Niseir resident
Al-Tireis	1	2	
Sandudab	1	2	
Sheikh al-Beshir	1	1	
Al-Samra	1	1	
Al-Hajab	1	1	
Umm 'Uweina	1	1	spokesman for *khashm bayt*
Kidei	Nil	6	Al-Mek resident in Omdurman
Baraka	Nil	1	resident in Shigeila
Goz Niseir	Nil	1	resident in Al-Garaza.

From the standpoint of the sheikh, schemes of social development, like the building of schools, provision of clinics, opening of community centres and digging of boreholes, are two-edged weapons. Any such scheme will be a big issue in the village lor many months. If the sheikh can be seen to direct its course then the introduction of social services will increase his prestige throughout the village and among neighbouring villages. But if the spokesman of a *khashm bayt* can claim credit for the 'development', then he has a powerful lever through which to challenge the sheikh's position. In Suleimaniya, the sheikh had several notable successes in organising social and economic services for his village; indeed this was the best of the sixteen villages for existing social services.

[1] Informants unwilling to give information.
[1] Informants unwilling to give information.
[1] Informants unwilling to give information.
[2] Ibid.
[2] Ibid.
[2] Ibid.

Yet the spokesman of one *khashm bayt* alleged that in recent years the sheikh had tried to oppose 'improvements' because they would not give him personal profit.

The dispute between the spokesman and the sheikh is interesting on two counts. First, it substantiates how necessary it is for the sheikh to seek support from all *khashm biyut,* if he is to administer the village efficiently. Second, it shows that even if new channels of decision-taking are created to deal specifically with problems of social development, the bonds of agnatic kinship tend to re-impose themselves and to constrain decision-taking within a traditional pattern.

The events of the dispute are relatively uncomplicated. The sheikh and the spokesman were for many years good friends, 'like a man and his shadow', as one informant put it. Both were commercially successful, and they decided to pool some of their resources and form a bakery in the village. For a time the bakery went well, but then the one suspected the other of mishandling funds and the partnership broke up. The break resulted in recriminations throughout the village.

At about this time, under the stimulus of a community development programme, Village Development Committees began to be formed in the surrounding villages to aid local co-operatives, school feeding schemes and the like. The spokesman's nephew became Chairman of the Village Development Committee, while the sheikh avoided membership of the Committee entirely. At first the Committee seemed to work well, but then its Chairman put up a proposal for a dairy farm co-operative which in the long term would have benefited the village, but in the short term looked as if it would ensure a good profit for himself and other members of the Committee. For some time only those on the Village Development Committee knew about the proposal, but when the information got out villagers complained to the sheikh. The following year the sheikh and his supporters were elected to the Development Committee on the promise that the dairy farm would be thrown open to all villagers who could afford a one-pound share. The division within the Village Development Committee then reached breaking point. The sheikh and his supporters accused the Chairman of the Committee of being an 'outsider'. While it was true that the Chairman's mother came from Suleimaniya his father had come from another village, they alleged. Thus the Chairman's *khashm bayt* could not represent the interests of the village as a whole and, said the sheikh, the Chairman had proved this by not informing the whole village of his scheme. Work in the Committee came to a halt. Meanwhile the sheikh and his supporters managed to gather some LS.300 to back the cooperative dairy farm.

In the following year, 1969, Suleimaniya decided to disband the Village Development Committee as then constituted, and to elect a new Committee on the basis of two members from each *khashm bayt.* But among the older members of the Committee, the alignments of 'outsiders' and 'villagers' generated in the dispute over the dairy farm still persisted. As one younger and educated member of the newly elected Com mittee stated: "The new Village Development Committee is successful in that it satisfies the interests of each *khashm bayt.* But within the Committee, members scarcely can

agree with one another. The Committee may fragment at any time. It is a place where one *khashm bayt* tries to dominate the other."

The lack of progress of the Village Development Committee in Suleimaniya with its eight *khashm biyut* can be compared to the work of the Development Committee in Al-Tireis. Here there are only two *khashm biyilt,* both descendants of a common ancestor, 'Abd al-Gadir. This village grows grain in the Wadi Mansurab, and has easy access to Omdurman. But Al-Tireis has capitalised on its physical advantages. Villagers have brought in tractors from the Gezira, and the comparative wealth of vegetable marketing has resulted in the beginnings of a system of tenancy in which the title-holders of land are given a 50 per cent return, even though they may themselves never work the land.

The Village Development Committee keeps a check on vegetables grown in the flood plain to see that they are untouched by smut or disease. In the last few years it has helped build a mosque, collected funds for the building of a village club, and started a co-operative shop. The income from vegetables, which has brought the village a return of between four and five hundred pounds a year, made the Committee particularly sensitive to proposals for turning the Jamu'iya Project into a government co-operative. While the people of Suleimaniya were divided in their opinion about co-operatives according to whether they were 'outsiders' or supporters of the sheikh, the protests of the Village Development Committee in Al-Tireis were the most trenchant in the area.

The villagers and the Scheme

Despite opposition to the running of the Development Scheme as a government co-operative, village co-operatives are to be found in half the Jamu'iya villages in this area. The acceptance of village co-operatives indicates that they are not generally hostile to new techniques of economic association. But villagers had definite ideas about how innovation brought about by the Development Scheme ought to be managed.

To summarise from the field notes, Jamu'iya were concerned that the management should be left as far as possible in their hands. They were also adamant that all labour connected with the Scheme should be undertaken by themselves, and that there should be no 'alien labour'. The villagers of Suleimaniya, in particular, felt that innovation brought about by land registration and the allocation of *hawashas* on the Scheme should not upset the existing balance of interests among the *khashm biyut.* On the whole, therefore, villagers welcomed the Scheme for the advantages they were sure it would bring, but were anxious that it should not radically change the pattern of social relations.

The villagers' concern that the Development Scheme should maintain the existing balance of interests was a measure of their lack of concrete knowledge of the Scheme. They knew the government had taken 1,000 feddans and the villagers had 9,000 feddans

to cultivate, but no-one knew what was to be grown, or why each *hawasha* was 13 feddans.

To questions asked about the nature of the Scheme, the villagers, after an initial expression of uncertainty, replied that they thought it was to irrigate land for grain and fodder crops. After the drought of the last four years, they said grain was a necessity. If they also grew fodder crops, then they could bring back their depleted herds from the Gezira and Kordofan, and the area would grow wealthy again. In their opinion, 13 feddans made too large a unit for a plot since no single family could work it successfully. A better division, they suggested, would have been 6 1/2 feddans. Not only would such a plot be easier to work, but not many people in the area had more than 2 feddans registered to their names. Hence making up a list of people to share in a 13-feddan plot was a difficult business. Villagers expressed surprise when told that the planners had created a 13-feddan plot in order to grow vegetables and citrus intermixed with fodder crops. They expressed even more surprise when told that there was no provision for growing grain on the Scheme.[11] To their relief, this matter was raised with the provincial administration, and village sheikhs got an agreement that the government cultivated area would grow grain for the first year at least.

Given these uncertainties, the 'co-operative' aspect of the Scheme was looked upon in an entirely different way from the formation of local co-operatives. I have already shown how social alignments of agnates in the villages tended to constrain decision-making in Village Development Committees. The pattern of formation of village co-operatives also corresponded to the villagers' own definition of close agnatic ties, and to 'traditional' leadership. To cite one example, the secretary of the most successful co-operative in the area, consisting of villagers from Sandudab, Al-Hajab, Sheikh al-Beshir and Mugdab, was none other than the former Omda in the area, a resident of Mugdab.[12]

A list of co-operatives is contained in Table 5. The eleven in the list range from bakeries and shops, to buses and transport of water. The co-operatives are not confined to villages whose members are predominantly wage-earning, or predominantly subsistence cultivators; nor are they confined to any particular population category. Rather they appear to have been formed to solve particular local problems of economic organisation. Thus the bus co-operative takes daily paid workers to Omdurman; the water co-operative aided Kidei's lack of wells until their water tower was built; the flour mill and bakery solved problems of local supply.

The most profitable co-operative, run by the ex-Omda of Mugdab, has now banked over a thousand pounds and though it started as a flour mill, is hoping to open up as a bakery as well. Only the unsuccessful co-operatives have caused rumblings of discontent. Umm 'Uweina, after two attempts, has realised that it is too small to undertake a co-

[11] The precise division of each 13-feddan *hawasha* is as follows: 4 feddans alfalfa; 2 abu sab'in; 2 lubia; 2 1/2 citrus and fruit, with alfalfa and lubia undercover for the first six years; $2^x/_2$ vegetables.

[12] The post of Omda was abolished by the government in 1969.

Villages	*Co-operatives*	*Comments*
Jebel al-Teina Omorāt	Nil	Fishermen have a 'shares' system in catching & marketing
'Id al-Hād	Nil	
Suleimānīya Shigeila Baraka	Flour mill	Lack of dura has forced the flour mill to close
Suleimānīya	Bus	Co-operative failed
	Dairy farm	Co-operative failed
Mugdāb Sandudāb Sheikh al-Beshīr Al-Ḥajāb	Flour mill	Very successful, and balance now more than LS. 1,000
Al-Garaza	Nil	
Al-Samra	Nil	
Kidei	Bus	Co-op. brought water from Omdurman until water tower erected
Al-Tireis	Shop	
Umm 'Uweina	Water pump	Co-operative failed
	Shop	Co-operative failed
Goz Niṣeir	Nil	
Ghamarāb	Bus	Takes workers to Omdurman. Largest share owned by former Omda's brother's son.

operative on its own, while many of the villagers of Baraka, Shigeila, and Suleimaniya who had shares in the flour mill now doubt the usefulness of co-operatives at all.

Comparative studies carried out by the United Nations Research Institute have noted that rural co-operatives of this scale tend to adjust to, or even strengthen, the existing socioeconomic systems they were intended to change. Further, traditional relationships of patronage, authority, or paternalism tend to be transferred to the leader of a rural co-operative, even when the co-operative has been introduced by a governmental agency and the person brought in to run it is from outside the local area.[13] For Jamu'iya a co-operative is not so much an agency of change as a means through which a village or group of villages engages in a combined undertaking to generate wealth. It is the creation of more wealth, rather than the just distribution of wealth, that makes the local co-operative an appealing form of economic organisation. Villagers are less concerned with the fact that co-operatives can change an existing socio-economic system, since they have themselves so recently turned from semi-nomadism to more permanent settlement.

Planners might concede that these rural co-operatives have come to rely on traditional authorities for their leadership and traditional kinship ties for their partners in enterprise. This may reinforce a view that only large-scale co-operatives can induce social change. At the same time, the co-operative of the Omda of Mugdab should be set against the proposed large-scale Farming Co-operative and the question, which channel of authority has shown the most successful development so far, should be carefully considered.

Conclusion

"To avoid compromising scholarship anthropologists should eschew questions of policy," warns Evans-Pritchard.[14] He goes on to say that anthropology may occasionally resolve problems of administration, or provide facts useful to future historians. "I do not myself attach as much importance to any service it is or may be in these respects as to the general attitudes, or habits of mind, it forms in us by what it teaches us about the nature of social life." His warning raises three issues. First, any reluctance to aid policy-makers or to help in administrative decisions is, in effect, a comment on the morality and competence of administrators and government officials— not on the utility or non-utility of any work undertaken on their behalf. Recent revelations of how government may insinuate itself in social research and use research findings for ethically unsupportable aims, such as in the case of Project Camelot,[15] show that a

[13] United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, *Research Notes* No. 2, July 1969, pp. 38–47.

[14] Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology*, London, Cohen and West, 1951, pp. 120, 123.

[15] See I. L. Horowitz (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot,* Cambridge, Mass., M. I. T. Press, 1967.

personal assessment of the possible effects of policy recommendations should be made with care. At the same time, Project Camelot, in a backhanded way, underlines the potential importance of social research as a 'service' to government.

Second, while it is true that teaching the subject matter of social anthropology should be aimed at the creation of enlightened attitudes about the nature of social life as Evans-Pritchard points out, use of anthropological methods has a somewhat different aim. This is to describe and explain in any given social context the logic of social action; to show, in other words, how any social phenomenon is a scries of interrelated social regularities. It is this aspect of method, rather than the ethnographic subject matter of the discipline, that has proved so attractive to those engaged in planning in the countries of the Third World.

Third, there is the question of utility. Short term fact-finding is a compromise with scholarship. But docs this mean that short-term research has little utility? The view I have put forward in this essay is that if the research is deliberately matched to providing a low level of information, then it can be useful.

The biggest shortcoming of 'instant anthropology' is achieving accuracy at this comparatively low level of information. In presenting these field notes on Jamu'iya, I have been aware constantly that the evidence 1 have for my assertions is too thin, and requires double checking. The very fact that anthropological methods attempt to explain interrelations means that impressionistic evidence can be highly misleading. I have, for example, presented material about *khashm biyut* but left unassessed the precise relationship between *khashm bayt* membership and clan membership. Neither have I discussed possible conflicts between membership of a *khashm bayt* and the extended family. No doubt more research would modify the material presented here. Furthermore, there are several questions left unanswered. What is the extent today of seasonal transhumance? To what extent can the village rely on corporate activity of its members *vis-a-vis* other villages in the area? Is any material on the Jamu'iya worthwhile without an investigation of their communities within an urban area such as Fiteihab?

Yet I think that the short period in the field revealed a consistent logic in Jamu'iya social action. While they have undergone a change in their ecology in recent years, this has done little to alter the essential concepts of agnation prominent among more nomadic peoples, like the Kababish and Baggara. Agnatic descent ties among Jamu'iya, and not physical closeness of one village to another, provide a 'map' for the assessment of 'close' relationships. Within the villages, *khashm biyut* form the major units of social organisation, but several of them within a single village pose problems of leadership. Thus their spokesmen may refuse to accept the leadership of a single sheikh and, by assuming the role of sheikh themselves, split the village into semi-autonomous units. If, on the other hand, a single man is recognised as sheikh, then he is forced to be both a mediator among *khashm biyut* and an executive for the provincial administration—roles which often conflict with each other. The striking of bargains is the main means through which a sheikh, placed in this position, tries to ensure coherent decision-making. The

reaction of villagers to socioeconomic development, as the research showed, is related to patterns of bargaining and decision-making within the village. In the past few years, the effectiveness of Village Development Committees can be correlated with the willingness of 'spokesmen' of *khashm biyut* to work with one another. The pattern of the formation of village co-operatives also corresponds to the villagers' own definition of close agnatic ties. Both Development Committees and local co-operatives, therefore, have tended to strengthen the authority of those in the 'traditional' socio-economic system rather than to bring about a redistribution of wealth, and create new positions of influence and authority. Yet it can be said that Jamu'iya are not hostile to innovation as such. What they do have are definite ideas about how innovation ought to be managed. The most important of these is that the new pattern of productive relations should reflect existing social relations in the villages, and not distort them.

This exercise in 'instant anthropology' has been able to contribute to an explanation of social relationships among the Jamu'iya, even though it is evident that more ethnographic information is needed. At the same time, the discussion of the relationship between village organisation and leadership has highlighted several aspects of decision-making that have immediate relevance for planning purposes. Our report was also able to offer criticisms and evaluation of the Development Scheme. One or two of these criticisms stemmed directly from villagers' own observations. For example the siting of the Scheme has resulted in a need for adjustment in transport routes. Again, it was questionable whether the irrigation engineers have made adequate protection against a wash-out from the course of the powerful Wadi Mansurab. Other criticisms stemmed from our own observations, such as the lack of foresight about the necessity for grain cultivation on the Scheme, and the evident lack of communication between government officials and the people over the introduction of a large-scale co-operative. Finally, by matching population estimates to the number of *hawashas* and calculating a ratio between the number of people in each village, and the number of feddans allocated to each village, it was possible to show that the four villages which had suffered *most* through the inundation of their land had the *least* favourable pcople-to-feddan ratios on the Development Scheme.[16] In this one respect therefore, the Jamu'iya Development Scheme has so far failed to achieve its objective. One can only hope that recommendations on this point will bring forward the day when these villages will be able to share more fully in the Scheme's benefits.

[16] Thus calculating the ratio as an expression of the number of people to each feddan in all fifteen villages, seven of the low-ratio villages were all villages lying next to the Development Scheme. These had from 0.6 to 1.9 people per feddan. Seven of the high-ratio villages were those in the southern end of the project. These ranged from 3.5 to people per feddan.

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