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HIKIMDAR VS JELLABA: THE IMPACT OF THE
TURKIYYA ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY SUDAN:
1821-1881

By
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A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

1984

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ABSTRACT

HIKIMDAR VS JELLABA: THE IMPACT OF THE TURKIYYA ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY SUDAN: 1821-1881

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The object of this thesis is to examine the Turco-Egyptian invasion, occupation, and colonial administration of the Sudan from 1821-1881. The rise and subsequent success of Muhammad Ahmad ibn al-Saiyid Abd Allah al-Mahdi has long fascinated students of Sudanese history. The diverse and contradictory interpretations written to explain the career of the Mahdi have proven to be neither adequate nor convincing. The explanation for the dismal results attained thus far is the inadequate understanding of the events which led to the Mahdi's ascension to power. An understanding of the Turkiyya is an essential first step toward better understanding the Mahdist phenomenon and late nineteenth century Sudanese history. I believe, the success of the Mahdi was bound up with the rapid changes which occurred between 1821-1881. This thesis is a step toward understanding the changes which occurred during the Turkiyya and the subsequent rise of the Mahdi.

DEDICATION

For Peg

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Harold Marcus and Dr. David Robinson for their patience and help in the writing of this thesis.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The terminology used in the study of the eastern Sudan is viewed by many scholars, especially Ottomanists, as problematic.¹ Therefore, at the outset of this thesis it is necessary to explain how and why specific terms will be defined and used.

The word Turkiyya has been used to describe the post conquest administration of the Sudan which ruled from 1821-1881. This usage, while imperfect, will be employed in the place of the more cumbersome and equally inadequate Turco-Egyptian or Ottoman-Egyptian, to describe the colonial occupation of the Sudan initiated by Muhammad Ali. The word, however, will be rendered Turkiyya to more closely follow the Arabic nisba or relative adjective construction.

The term Turk has been used to describe all non-indigenous individuals and groups who worked or traveled in the Sudan regardless of linguistic, religious, cultural or ethnic heritage. To avoid confusion this term will not be used. Those individuals and groups mentioned in this study will be differentiated in as much as the source material allows complete identification.

The word jallab (plural jellaba) will be used to indicate merchants who, in the case of the nineteenth century Sudan, were not always foreigners but often strangers in the areas of their commercial operations. The distinction which must be made is between the native Sudanese jallaba and those of Eastern Mediterranean,

Southern or Northern European origin. These men were poor to moderately wealthy and usually worked for, or in combination with, rich and powerful merchants.

The term khabir (plural khabara) will be used to indicate rich merchants who welded considerable power, initially economic and later political, within the Sudan. The khabara are the employers of the majority of jellaba who traded and raided in the Southern Regions of The Sudan.

The array of administrative titles and their various spellings in Ottoman and Arabic are also troublesome. In order to make the reading of this thesis simpler and at the same time avoid oversimplification which would destroy important distinctions within the administrative, commercial and social system dealt with in this study the following glossary is provided.²

GLOSSARY

Baqqara	cattlemen; people living south of the 12th parallel where camels do not flourish
Bashi-buzuk	Ottoman irregular troops, also loosely used in the Sudan or various irregular military units
Bazinger	armed negro employees, watchmen, porters, messengers and soldiers; often freed slaves
Bey	civil and military title immediately below Pasha
Dongolawi, pl. Danaqla	inhabitant of Dongola riverain-area
Dura	millet, sorghum
Hotteria	possibly corrupted from awturiya, a militiaman, it was applied in the Bhar al-Ghazal to irregular soldiers and Danaqla tax-collectors

Jebel	hill, mountain
Hikimdar	commissioner, commonly translated governor-general
Kantar	100 rotl = 99.09 lb. = 44.93 kilogrammes
Kashif	military officer responsible for security and tax collecting in a district
Khedive	title used informally by the viceroy of Egypt since c. 1850, but officially recognized by the Porte in 1867
Mahdi	the divinely guided one
Mudir	Governor, loosely used also of a commander of a large district
Mudirieh	province
Pasha	the highest title in the Ottoman or Egyptian court hierarchy. In the Egyptian Sudan the recipients were mostly of the fourth, exceptionally of the third, grade.
Qadi	Islamic religious judge
Quintal	100 lb.
Rizzia	raid, or plundering expedition usually not associated with Egyptian military operations
Reth	divine king of the Shilluk
Rotl	0.99 lb.
Shaikh	tribal chief of notable; religious leader
Shaikh-al-Mashayikh	senior shaikh, charged with the administration of a large area or federation of conquered ethnic groups in the Sudan.
Sudd	papyrus swamps of the White Nile
Vakil	agent, deputy
Vali	Viceroy; the governor-general of a province of the Ottoman Empire

Zeriba thorn enclosure, used in the Southern Sudan as trading stations and collection points for ivory and slaves.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will examine the Turco-Egyptian invasion, occupation, and colonial administration of the Sudan from 1821-1881. Students of Sudanese history have long been fascinated by the rise and subsequent success of Muhammad Ahmad ibn al-Saiyid Abd Allah al-Mahdi (the Mahdi) and, have expended considerable time and energy attempting to explain it. The diverse and contradictory interpretations written to explicate the Mahdi and his legacy have proven to be neither adequate nor convincing. A review of the secondary literature on the nineteenth century Sudan indicates a lacuna in the historiography and hence the unsatisfactory explanations concerning the Mahdi. The inadequate understanding of the events which led to the Mahdi's ascension to power and, the condition of Sudanese society at the end of the nineteenth century have rendered impossible an accurate assessment of the events which occurred in the Sudan. Examining the Turkiyya is an essential first step towards better understanding the Mahdist phenomenon and late nineteenth century Sudanese history.

A perscrutation of the Turkiyya, however, forces the researcher to consider the more general question of long distance trade. On this subject Africanists center their debate on two separate yet related questions. First, did a causal relationship exist between the growth of long distance trade and the evolution of

states? Second, did long distance trade play a major role in the maintenance of elites in dominant positions within their respective communities.

In relation to the study of the Turkiyya the first question is of no relevance, in that the genesis and development of neither state structure nor long distance trade is being examined. The second question, however, is pertinent and requires further comment. The debate over long distance trade and its importance to elites has been discussed by the following writers: M. Godelier, C. Coquery-Vidrovitch and I. Person who argue that control over trade was important and E. Terray who asserts that slavery was of more importance than long distance trade and its control.³ In Sudanese studies the debate focuses on the narrower question of whether trade was or was not regulated by the state. Sean O'Fahey and Terance Waltz have argued against administered trade while Jay Spaulding and Lidwien Kapteijns support the theory of administered trade.⁴ A great deal of research remains to be done before the question concerning administered trade is resolved. My research on the Turkiyya, however, tends to support the argument that it did exist in the kingdoms of the eastern Sudan.

It is my contention that the introduction of a colonial administration by Muhammad Ali, the Turkiyya, did not, initially, alter the prevailing relationship between trade and authority. But, that the discontinuation of the government monopoly over trade marked the beginning of a significant change in the relationship between

the political/administrative and commercial groups in the Sudan. Moreover, I will show that change to have been characterized by the rapid accumulation of economic and political power by members of the commercial community at the expense of the colonial administration. Finally, the evidence indicates that after 1869 the efforts of Cairo and Khartoum were directed less towards suppressing the slave trade and more towards breaking the power of the commercial community.

In order to facilitate the presentation of the material in this thesis I will use the following chronological framework. The sixty years of the Turkiyya will be divided into three sub-periods; 1821-1843, 1843-1869 and 1869-1881. Chapter two will cover the years 1821-1843 and provide an outline of the political and commercial situation as it existed prior to the suspension of the state monopoly over trade. Chapter three will deal with the years from 1843-1869 and trace the rise of the merchant community as it took advantage of the free trade conditions created by the ending of administered trade. The efforts of the central administration in Khartoum to stem the rapid accumulation of power by the commercial community and the results of these actions will also be examined. Chapter four will focus on the years from 1869-1881 and examine the actions (and results) of Cairo and Khartoum to break the power of the commercial community under the guise of suppressing the slave trade and the results of these actions.

Historical Synopsis

Egypt's involvement in the Sudan began in 1821 when the armies of Muhammad Ali marched southward and conquered the northern vassal states of the kingdom of Sinnar and finally Sinnar itself. The Kingdom of Kordofan, to the west of Sinnar, was also subjugated; only the Sultanate of Dar Fur escaped invasion owing more to logistical problems within the Turco-Egyptian Army and the outbreak of renewed fighting in the Nile valley than to its martial prowess.⁵

The conquest of Sinnar and Kordofan by the forces of Muhammad Ali inaugurated non-indigenous administration within the Nile valley and its hinterlands. The invaders constructed an administrative structure which included co-opted elements of the pre-conquest feudal government system and effectively destroyed opposition to the new regime.⁶ While the Turkiyya was a clear departure from the older established state structure, in many respects it did not, until 1848, fundamentally alter the prevailing relationship between trade and central authority.

The Turkiyya, after consolidation of its control along the central Nile and in Kordofan, followed an expansionary policy which added large areas of new territory. The first areas to be added were in the east, through Taka to the Red Sea, and south along the Blue Nile and into the Nuba hills. The more distant southern regions of Equatoria and the Bhar al-Ghazal were annexed in the late 1860s and the western territory of Dar Fur was added to the control of the Egyptian state in 1874. The expansionary policies

of the central administration combined with the increasing extension of the commercial activities opened a vast area which could be exploited for tax revenues and economic profits. Khartoum, in the name of Egypt, claimed in the late 1870s sovereignty over the territory which stretched from the Red Sea to present day Chad and from Aswan to the Equatorial lakes.⁷ By 1881, however, the inability of the Turkiyya to crush the Mahdist movement led to its expulsion from all of its possessions south of Aswan.⁸

Literature Review

The Turkiyya dominated the life of the Sudan from 1821-1881, yet it has received less attention than the periods immediately before or after it. The following is a review of the secondary literature on the nineteenth century Sudan. Some literature is available on the eastern Sudanic kingdoms which existed from 1500-1800. R. S. O'Fahey and J. L. Spaulding's Kingdoms of the Sudan (1974) make excellent use of the original sources to provide a clear description of life in the region prior to the early nineteenth century.⁹ These works discuss the political structure as well as the role of inter- and intra-regional trade. These authors, along with Yusuf Fadl Hasan's, "Some Aspects of the Arab Slave Trade from the Sudan 7th-19th century," Sudan Notes and Records (1977) and H. A. MacMicheael's translation of the "Fung Chronicle" in A History of the Arabs in the Sudan (1967) provide the reader with a valid and insightful background for comparative purposes.¹⁰

The period beginning with the "Egyptian" invasion of the Nile Valley in 1821, however, has not benefited from the same quality or quantity of research. R. L. Hill's Egypt in the Sudan (1959) is the only modern published treatment specifically concerned with the Turkiyya. It deals exclusively with the development of the central ruling elite and does not address the question of the social consequences of the regime's policies. Hill's contribution to the literature is important, a natural starting point, but remains nonetheless a narrow view of Sudanese society.¹¹

Richard Gray's A History of the Southern Sudan, 1838-1889 (1969) and "Some Aspects of Islam in the Southern Sudan During the Turkiyya," Northern Africa; Islam and Modernization (1973) are examples of the type of work which concern the time period under question but are narrowly constructed and do not treat the Turkiyya as a complete entity. The same can be said for P. Mercer's "Shilluk Trade and Politics from the Mid-seventeenth Century to 1861," Journal of African History (1971) and R. L. Hill's and Elias Toniolo's The opening of the Nile Basin: Writings by the members of the Catholic Mission to Central Africa of the Geography and Ethnography of the Sudan, 1842-1881 (1976).¹²

The literature on the Sudan's history after 1881 (The Mahdist period) is voluminous in comparison to that of the Turkiyya. This historiography can be broken down into three basic categories: They are religious/mystical, Soviet marxist and British colonial.¹³

L. E. M. Kapteijns' "The Religious Background of the Mahdi and his Movement", African Perspectives (1976), Derek Hopwood's "The Mahdiyya in the Context of Islamic Revival Movements," (1981)* and Ahmad Uthman Ibrahim's "Some Aspects of the Ideology of the Mahdiyya" (1981)* exemplify an approach which contends that the rise of the Mahdi and Mahdiyya were the result of the following religious factors.¹⁴ The end of a Muslim century was near; an Islamic revival was occurring in the nineteenth century; and the Mahdi molded his actions in an imitation of the life of the prophet Muhammad. The basic flaw in this approach is its failure to take into consideration the vast amounts of non-ideological evidence available to the historian.

The second category is composed of work done by Marxist writers. S. R. Smirnov's "Africa as a Soviet Social Scientist Sees It," (1974) and A. R. C. Bolton's "The Sudan," (1959) characteristically see the Mahdist episode as illustrating the actions of a man compelled by economic forces to save his people from Ottoman imperialist encroachments.¹⁵ Marxist writers, with little concern for evidence, construct a history of the Sudan that will fit neatly into their historical paradigm. The propaganda and correspondence of the Mahdi, however, does not support this interpretation of history. Further, it does not allow for the breakdown of the Turkiyya prior to the rise of the Mahdi.

*These works are unpublished papers presented at The International Conference on the Mahdiyya held in Khartoum in 1981.

F. R. Wingate's Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan (1891) and "The Siege and fall of Khartoum" (1930) and A. B. Theobald's The Mahdiya (1951) represent the British colonial approach. This literature deals exclusively with the Mahdi and Mahdiyya, and was constructed to maintain the positive image of the Mahdi while at the same time condemning the regime of his successor, Abd Allahi Muhammad Turshain. This interpretation allowed the British to placate the Sudanese people and at the same time justify their reconquest of, and colonial hold over, the region in conjunction with the Egyptian government.¹⁶

Aside from the subject matter they have in common all three interpretations share a single fundamental assumption: each views the Mahdi as THE main phenomenon of nineteenth century Sudanese history. Owing to the teleological orientation of their approach they have attempted to gain a complete understanding of the Mahdi and his followers. They believe that full comprehension of the Mahdi allows them to extrapolate backwards from that point and thus understand the previous history of the region. The unfortunate result of this type of reductionism has been the neglect of the period from 1821-1881.

Recent studies reveal that the period witnessed a significant struggle between the central administration and rising merchant elite over control of trade within the Nile Valley and its hinterlands. The failure of previous studies fully to appreciate the conflict between merchant and government has distorted the understanding of

nineteenth-century Sudanese history. The changes in the economic policy of the turkiyya were significant and an understanding of their ramifications is crucial to understanding nineteenth century Sudanese history. The Turkiyya was not merely a preliminary set of events as suggested in the works published to date.

The Spatial Dimensions of this Thesis

In overall size, the nineteenth-century Sudan was roughly 1,500 miles from north to south and at some points as much as 1,200 miles from east to west. The northern region initially occupied by Ottoman troops was composed of an area 700 miles from north to south and 600 miles east to west. The conquest of Dar Fur, in 1874, enlarged the east to west dimension to 1,200 miles. The southern region, during most of the period, maintained a constant size of 900 miles from east to west and 700 miles north to south.

The Sudan comprises three ecological zones. The first zone extends roughly from just north of the second cataract south to the sixth cataract and is primarily desert or semi-desert. The people of this region are primarily camel herding nomads such as the Kabaish on the western side of the Nile and Bishariyin to the east. The banks of the Nile offer the only opportunity for agriculture. The more sedentary riverine people are the Danagla, Shayqiyya and Ja'lliyin.

The second zone extends south from the sixth cataract to a line running from just south of Lake Tana through Fazughli across the White Nile to the Nuba Hills. This area is much more conducive to agriculture than the region to the north, especially the fertile

land between the two Niles starting at the confluence and extending south to Fazughli, the Gerira. Animal husbandry is also an important occupation in the second zone, it is especially prominent to the west of the White Nile and to the east of the Blue Nile.

The Gezira and the immediately adjacent lands formed the core area of the old kingdom of Sinnar, and the region west of the White Nile comprised what was known as Kordofan.¹⁷ The major groups of the second zone are the Shukriga to the east of the Blue Nile; Rufa'a along the Blue Nile; Abu Ruf in the southern Gezira; Hassaniy along the White Nile; and Baqqara west of the White Nile.

The third zone extends south from the line formed by Lake Tana, Fazughli, and Nuba Hills and ends at the northern most of the Equatorial lakes. This zone is much wetter than those to its north. Subsistence agriculture and herding are the two primary occupations. The region's population is extremely diverse. The Nuer, Dinka, Baqqara, Shilluk, and Latuka are the major ethnic groups in the third zone.¹⁸

Historians, however, commonly divide the Sudan into the north and the south. The two most northerly ecological zones are considered to constitute the north because the people practice similar religions and share common ethnic identities. Most would also agree that the Turkiyya was centered in the north and had its most profound effects there. Further, they would generally concede that the south, as a result of the changes in northern social,

economic and political structures, suffered exploitation on a scale never before experienced.

The Turkiyya followed a pattern of rule which closely paralleled that of Sinnar, the last major independent kingdom in the Nile Valley. Jay Spaulding in his "Taxation in Sinnar c. 1700" describes the reasons for the two part division used in Sinnar and later by the Turkiyya.¹⁹ The southern region of Sinnar held non-agricultural resources which were of high value to the state, and was kept in a condition of "institutional instability" in order to most effectively exploit these resources.²⁰

The Turkiyya in its quest for export commodities viewed the southern regions of its domains in much the same way. The domestic stability of the south was always secondary to securing export commodities desired by northern merchants and administrators. The parallel is not perfect in that the entire Sudan, under the Turkiyya, was the possession of a larger power, Egypt. The north-south separation, however, is an effective means of dividing the territory controlled by the Turkiyya and providing a clearer picture of the events which occurred from 1821-1881.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

¹Eastern Sudan, in this thesis, refers to the area which now makes up The Republic of Sudan. The Eastern Sudan would be seen as a subdivision of the larger Sudanic region of Africa which stretches from Senegal to the Red Sea.

²The definitions for the terms in this glossary were taken from: Richard Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan 1830-1889 (London: Yale University Press, 1961), p. xi; Richard Hill, A Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. ix-xvi; and John Obert Voll, Historical Dictionary of the Sudan (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1978), pp.

³For an outline of The Theories of M. Godelier, C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, I. Person and S. Amin as well as a rebuttle to their work see Emanuel Terray, "Land-distance exchange and the formation of the State: The Case of the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman," in Economy & Society, III 1974, pp. 315-319, also see George Dalton, Primitive, Archaic and Modern Economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi (Garden City: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1968), p. 281.

⁴R. S. O'Fahey, State and Society in Dar Fur, (London, 1980) passim; T. Walz, Trade between Egypt and Bilad al-Sudan 1700-1800, (Cairo, 1978) passim; Lidwien Kapteijns and Jay Spaulding, "Pre-colonial Trade Between States In The Eastern Sudan. ca. 1700-ca. 1900," African Economic History 11 (1982): pp. 29-62.

⁵Richard Hill, Egypt in the Sudan 1820-1881 (London: Oxford Press, 1959), passim.

⁶For the "Feudal" character of Sinnar (and by implication of Kordofan and Dar Fur also), see: Jay Spaulding, "Toward a Demystification of the Funj: Some Perspectives on Society in Southern Sinnar, 1685-1900," Northeast African Studies II, 1 (1980): pp. 1-18.

⁷Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 8-13, 70-75, 134-141, 151-153; Robert O. Collins, The Southern Sudan, 1883-1898 a Struggle For Control (New Haven and New York: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 7-16; L. Kropacek, "The Confrontation of Dar Fur with the Turco-Egyptians," Asian and African Studies VI (1970): pp. 73-86.

⁸The only exception to the total success of the Mahdists was small area in the extreme southeast which was governed by Emin Pasha. The last foothold of Egypt was isolated and of no strategic value and also eventually abandoned.

⁹R. S. O'Fahey, State and Society in Dar Fur (London: C. Hurst, 1980); R. S. O'Fahey and J. L. Spaulding, Kingdoms of the Sudan (London: Methuen, 1974); J. L. Spaulding, "The Government of Sinnar," International Journal of African Historical Studies, VI, 1: (1973).

¹⁰Yusuf Fadl Hasan, "Some Aspects of the Arab Slave Trade From the Sudan 7th-9th Century," Sudan Notes and Records LVIII: (1977): 85-106; H. A. MacMicheal, "The Fung Chronical," in A History of the Arabs in the Sudan (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), pp. 354-430.

¹¹Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, passim.

¹²Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, passim; Richard Gray, "Some Aspects of Islam in the Southern Sudan During the Turkiya," Northern Africa; Islam and Modernization; P. Mercer, "Shilluk Trade and Politics From the Mid-Seventeenth Century to 1861," Journal of African History 12 (1971): passim; R. L. Hill and Elias Toniolo, The Opening of the Nile Basin (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975), passim; G. N. Sanderson, "The Modern Studies," Journal of African History IV (1962): passim.

¹³Peter M. Holt is the only historian who has proposed an explanation for the cause of the Mahdiyya which does not fit into the three categories outlined above. His interpretation on the rise of the Mahdiyya is centered on the slave trade and its "suppression." In his work The Mahhist State in the Sudan 1881-1898, he calls the years from 1869 onwards "the eve of the Mahdiyya." He argues that the sole cause of the Mahdiyya was the suppression of the slave trade.

¹⁴See: Saburi Biobaku and Muhammad al-Hajj, "The Sudanese Mahdiyya and the Niger Chad Region," in I. M. Lewis ed., Islam in Tropical Africa, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980): 226-239; L. E. M. Kaptijns, "The religious background of the Mahdi and his Followers," African Perspectives 2 (1976): 61-79; Ahmad Harran Taj, "The Idea of the Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism," (Paper delivered at the International Conference on the Mahdiyya, Khartoum 1981); Derek Hopwood, "The Mahdiyya in the Context of Islamic Revival Movements," (Paper delivered at the International Conference on the Mahdiyya, Khartoum, 1981); Ahmad Uthman Ibrahim "Some Aspects of the Ideology of the Mahdiyya," (Paper delivered at the International Conference on the Mahdiyya, Khartoum, 1981); John O. Voll, "Abu Jumayiza: the Mahdi's Musayliman," (Paper delivered at the International Conference on the Mahdiyya, Khartoum, 1981).

¹⁵See: S. R. Smirnov, Africa as a Soviet Social Scientist Sees It, (Moscow: NAUKA Publishing House, 1974); A. R. C. Bolton, "The Sudan," Soviet Middle East Studies VII 1 (1930): pp. 1-82
A. B. Theobald, The Mahdiya (London: Longman, Green, 1955).

¹⁷Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 10.

¹⁸Gray, A History of The Southern Sudan, passim.

¹⁹J. L. Spaulding, "Taxation in Sinnar, c.1700," (Paper delivered at the Conference on the Political Economy of Northeast Africa, Michigan State University, April 20, 1983) pp. 18-20.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 18.

CHAPTER TWO

1821-1843: PRELUDE TO CHANGE

The Administrative Structure of the Sudan: The Governor-Generalship

During this period, the Governor-General administration was composed of non-Egyptian Muslims drawn from the many nationalists of the Ottoman empire.¹ These men carried out their duties, using Ottoman as the official language. Likewise the regular units of the military also carried on its functions in Ottoman, even though the number of non-Ottoman-speaking soldiery was growing within its ranks. Clearly, during the first period, the official language internally, externally, and within the military was Ottoman.

The governor-generals of the first period were military officers who had campaigned in the armies of the Ottoman Sultan. The early administrators of the Sudan (1829-1835) were considered area military commanders.² The office of civil administrator was formally added to the military commander's post during the rule of Ali Khurshid Pasha. The upgrading of the administrative position is evidenced by the change of the governor's title in 1835, from mudir to hikimdar.³ The new designation, however, did not substantially change the pattern of administrator employed in the Sudan, since the primary mission of the governor-generalship during the first period was the subjugation and reorganization of the Sudan so as to make it a "profitable" addition to Egyptian territory.

The governor-generalship of the first period was an embodiment of the strong, centralized command structure required for conquest and reorganization. The men who held this post personally commanded military campaigns against any and all opposition to the new regime. They also honored and presented robes of office to important shaikhs (traditional leaders) who submitted to the new government and its taxation.⁴ The governor-generals were also ultimately responsible for the success of the state monopoly over trade instituted by Muhammad Ali.

The office of governor-general had no set tenure, and the holder served at the pleasure of the Vali of Egypt. Two out of eight men held the office of hikimdar for over half of the thirty years from 1820-1848. The two men, Ali Khurshid Pasha and Ahmad Pasha Abu Widan, brought a consistency of policy and control which was not equalled again in the administration of the Sudan. It should be noted, however, that the men had a distinct advantage over their successors. The period during which they ruled was not marked by a strong and increasingly powerful merchant class which had close ties to important persons in Cairo.

Mid-level Functionaries

Earlier in this section the upper administrative levels of the Turkiyya were briefly outlined. This non-Sudanese elite was incapable of ruling the Sudan successfully without a large number of mid-level functionaries to assist them. Two different groups of people were used to fill the positions of mid-level functionaries.

The first, and most numerous, were traditional nobility from pre-invasion feudal government systems.⁵ In almost all cases these individuals continued to carry out their pre-invasion functions. Sudanese notables who submitted were responsible to the new government for the actions and taxes of the people under their rule.⁶ The second and much smaller group of administrators were not connected to the traditional leadership structure. They were either Europeans or Ottoman subjects who possessed special skills. Unlike the first group these people were routinely quartered close to the seats of government (Khartoum or Mudirieh capitals such as Berber or Sinnar) and in positions with no direct authority over the Sudanese people.⁷

The relatively easy victory of Ismael Pasha's campaign and the success of the co-opting process was the result of political turmoil which had convulsed the Sudan prior to 1821. The invasion thus helped traditional leaders to artificially maintain positions of power or acquire new status in their particular regions. The Ottoman military became the weapon of individual groups against old enemies and dynastic rivals.⁸

The common people also suffered at the hands of men in high places who could count on government support to maintain them in office. Idris wad Adlan, Malik (king) of the Fung mountains in the upper valley of the Blue Nile, is an excellent example of this type of exploitation. He would set out on an annual expedition to collect tribute and demand three or four times the regular taxes. If he

encountered resistance, he would use regular government troops to extract his demands.⁹

Two basic rationales explain the new regime's use of cooption to augment its administration in the Sudan. The use of indigenous leaders was a cheaper method of governing: it would have been prohibitively expensive to bring a completely Ottoman or Egyptian bureaucracy into the Sudan. The literature makes it clear that Muhammad Ali was not interested in spending money on the Sudan but rather in acquiring money and goods from this colonial possession.¹⁰

The second reason for using local officials was that the indigenous leadership was able to influence the people and keep them on their lands. This became more important as the colonial state pressed its will on the Sudanese. The Sudanese often used passive resistance in the form of flight, to escape the oppressive actions of the central authorities and its local auxiliaries. When the people considered the demands of government to be unreasonable they would simply flee from the government's reach. The administration lost a source of tax revenue, and also the goods and services provided by the people. There were subsequent food shortages in the cities of the regions from which the people had fled.¹¹

Examples of this type of resistance are numerous in the primary literature.¹² Shaikh Ahmad el-Rayyah offers a striking example of the magnitude which these flights could take. He led 12,000 Arakiyin out of the reach of the tax collectors, and only the promise of amnesty and reduced taxation brought him and his

people back to their former lands in 1830, after an absence of almost ten years.¹³ In 1839, a European administrator noted that only one third of the pre-conquest population was still in the proximity of their original homes. The other two thirds had emigrated to Dar Fur, Ethiopia and other areas out of the reach of the authorities in Khartoum.¹⁴

In an attempt to curtail the flight of cultivators from the Nile Valley, the new regime advanced the co-opting process beyond simply cowing members of the nobility. The Fung Chronicle describes how a closer collaboration between traditional leaders and the colonial administration was accomplished. Khursid Pasha, hikimdar of the Sudan, gathered a large number of important shaikhs at Khartoum and ordered them to elect one of their number to become Shaikh al-Mashayikh, to mediate between the government and traditional notables. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir was chosen and served for the next thirty years with eleven different governor-generals. His "rule" extended from Hagar el Asal, near the sixth cataract to the end of the Jebel Nuba mountains, 600 miles south, the core of the colonial state.¹⁵

The Fung Chronicle makes it clear that his position was not ceremonial but one of considerable power. The governor-generals often listened to the advice offered by Adb al-Qadir, especially on taxation policy. The writers of the Fung Chronicle record the following account;

Then Sheikh Abd al-Kadir advised him (the governor-general) to exempt the chief men among the people from taxation in order to obtain their goodwill in

the development of the country. And he did so, and the result of this policy was apparent, for, as an example, if he exempted one of the fakis or chiefs from payment of ten kada'as, the man so exempted at once reassured the people and persuaded them to return to their lands, so that Khursid Agha obtained from them (the taxes on) one or two hundred kada'as or more: thus owing to his wisdom and the farsightedness of his advisers the development of the country progressed and the population increased.¹⁶

One further observation should be made about the mid-level functionaries in the Sudan. The shaikhs who held positions of authority did not identify their office with any other profession or occupation other than that of local authority. Specifically, a notable did not participate personally in trade and never considered it a necessity to fulfill the dual role of shaikh and jellaba. As a nobleman the shaikh would have someone carry out and meet his needs in the commercial realm but would not be a direct participant in the process. He saw the providing of effective leadership over a given area and/or number of people as his primary function. The importance of this distinction will be evident when a comparison between mid-level functionaries of the first and second period is made.

The Merchant Community and Organization of Trade

The initial conquest of 1821 and the subsequent Sudanese revolts of 1822-1824 had disrupted trade in the Sudan. Thereafter, the new government established a state-run trading monopoly over the Sudan. In 1824, a letter to Governor-General Uthman Bey Jarkas from the viceroy Muhammad Ali declared the Sudan off limits to all trading concerns except those of the Egyptian state.¹⁷

The desire for gold and slaves to help fuel Muhammad Ali's expansionist policies had been a primary motivation for the invasion of the Sudan. The conquered region, however, also offered ostrich feathers, indigo, hides, camels, gum arabic, timber and ivory, all in demand outside the Sudan. The possibility of impressive profits was not overlooked by Muhammad Ali, and for twenty four years Cairo, against increasing European pressure to open trade, controlled commerce in these commodities from the Sudan.¹⁸

The government monopoly, which on the surface appeared to be a wise move, had one inherent weakness. The provincial government in the Sudan was unable to collect customs duties on the goods leaving the Sudan a privilege Cairo reserved for itself.* Thus, while Cairo sold commodities at a handsome profit, the hikimdars in the Sudan were constantly requesting funds to administer the province.¹⁹

The chronic lack of funds led to tax increases within the Sudan. In 1839, 9,000 Shayqiya, who occupied the lands between Shendi and Khartoum, left their homes when Ahmad Pasha ordered them to pay taxes. Prior to the governor-general's order, the Shayqiya had held their land tax free in return for service in irregular cavalry units.²⁰ In 1842, taxation again was the cause for a major rebellion against the central administration. The people under Abu Rish, who occupied the lands of Al-Atish on the Ethiopian border,

*The customs on slaves for example were collected at Aswan which was not considered apart of the Sudan. The protests of Governor-Generals who asked that these dues be collected in the Sudan for its Treasury were ignored by Cairo.

revolted when Ahmen Pasha demanded a doubling of their taxes. The 5th Battalion had to be called from Khartoum to put down the revolt.²¹

Slaves were the only commodity exempted from the monopoly.²² Muhammad Ali allowed the trade in humans to remain open in the hope of increasing the numbers of slaves being obtained. He was not only concerned with the profits of this particular trade but also the results. His expansionary policies demanded large numbers of slaves to fill the ranks of his armies. Later in his reign his decision to conscript Egyptian peasants created a further demand for slave labor to replenish the reduced supply of agricultural workers.²³

FOOTNOTES

Chapter Two

¹R. L. Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam; Two Manuscripts Concerning The Sudan Under Turco-Egyptian Rule (London: Clarendon, 1970), p. xv.

²Ibid., p. xvi.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., pp. xxii, xxiii; also see: G. A. Hoskins, Travels in Ethiopia Above the Second Cataract of the Nile, Exhibiting the State of that Country and its Various Inhabitants Under the Dominion of Muhammad Ali (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1968), pp. 56, 208.

⁵Hoskins, Travels in Ethiopia, pp. 52, 208; H. A. MacMicheael, trans., "Fung Chronicle," A History of the Arabs in the Sudan, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), pp. 386-400.

⁶Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp., xxiv, xxvii.

⁷MacMicheael, "Fung Chronicle," pp. 384-387.

⁸Ibid., pp. 386-387; Hoskins, Travels in Ethiopia, pp. 52, 163; for the semi-autonomous position of the northern region of Sinnar's territories see: R. S. O'Fahey and J. L. Spaulding, Kingdoms of the Sudan, (London: Methuen, 1974), pp. 96-104.

⁹Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰J. L. Spaulding, "Taxation, Land Tenure and Social Class in the Egyptian Turkish Sudan 1820-1881," (Mimeographed), p. 16 footnote #13; and Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, 1820-1881, (London: Oxford Press, 1959), p. 23.

¹¹MacMicheael, "Fung Chronicle," pp. 392-393; Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp. 69-70; this lack of grain also had an impact on the trading economy. The trading expeditions which moved up the river carried large stores of durra for trading and personal consumption.

¹²MacMicheael, "Fung Chronicle," pp. 392-399; Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp. 69-70.

¹³Ibid., p. 393; Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 41; Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, p. 24 footnote #2.

¹⁴Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, p. 48.

¹⁵MacMicheael, "Fung Chronicle: pp. 393-394; It should be noted that while the writer of the Fung Chronicle gives particular attention to Abd al-Qadir, which may have been the result of a personal bias, the validity of the chronicler should not be doubted. Abd al-Qadir. Moreover, it should be viewed as an example of how the Turkiyya was dealing with, and using, a nobility which could prove very troublesome in the administration of the Sudan.

¹⁶MacMicheael, "Fung Chronicle," p. 394, The Fung Chronicle is, according to MacMicheael, the only known attempt at a detailed historical account of the Fung and Turkish period of Sudanese history by a native writer. The question of authorship is still unresolved. It is, however, considered by past and present scholars of Sudanese history to be an accurate, simple and straightforward historical work which contains evidence important to the study of 18th and 19th century Sudan.

¹⁷Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, p. 13; Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 49.

¹⁸Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 51-57 passim; Hoskins, Travels in Ethiopia, pp. 54-88; The profits realized on various goods in the period immediately prior to the Egyptian invasion is also discussed in W. G. Brown, Travels in Egypt, Syria and Africa (London: 1806), pp. and J. L. Bruckhardt, Travels in Nubia (London: Gregg International Publishers, 1968), p. 294.

¹⁹Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 41-42.

²⁰Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp. 69-72, 191.

²¹Ibid., p. 109.

²²Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, pp. 32-33.

²³P. J. Vatikiotis, The History of Egypt: From Muhammad Ali to Sadat (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1969), pp. 59-61; Gabriel Baer, "Slavery in Nineteenth Century Egypt," Journal of African History VIII (1967): pp. 417-441; For the demand for Sudanese slaves outside Egypt primarily in the Ottoman Empire see: Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 9-12, 18-19, 32-34, 49-51, 56-58; Ehud Tolendone, The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression, 1840-1890 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 36-49, 81-91, 99.

CHAPTER THREE

1843-1869: THE RISE OF THE MERCHANT ELITE

The Administrative Structure of the Sudan: The Governor-Generalship

During the period from the 1840s to the 1860s, the government of the Sudan did not continue the strong centralizing tradition established in the preceding period. The second period was characterized by a decline in power and control over the old core area and the newly acquired territories in the far south. Several changes occurred during the second period which altered the office and mission of the governor-general.

The government of the Sudan was still controlled by a non-Sudanese elite drawn from the Ottoman empire. The official language of administration, however, had become Arabic, which had been gaining popularity in the Sudan for some time. By 1854 it was used in the central administration at all levels, and Ottoman was used only for correspondence with Istanbul, since Cairo had turned to Arabic in 1845.¹

The change in idiom was especially useful in the military. The irregular cavalry units (usually drawn from the native Arabic speakers in the region) had long used it. The officers of the regular infantry regiments welcomed the change because it allowed greater efficiency and command effectiveness in the field. The Ottoman officers commanded garrisons which were no longer drawn from the armies of the Ottoman Sultan. Most soldiers were slaves taken from

the southern Sudan who, while receiving military training, were schooled in the rudiments of Islam and Arabic.²

The pattern of using military men of diverse nationalities from within the Ottoman Empire was maintained during the second period. The primary role of these men, however, changed. The conquest and reordering of the colony was finished, and the hikimdars no longer were military field commanders but administrator/politicians. The temperament and military training of these men did not prepare them for the role of civil administrators. Further, appointment to the Sudan was usually considered a form of punishment for officers who had offended their superiors in Cairo. They therefore directed their efforts toward enriching themselves as quickly as possible and securing reassignment, preferably back to Egypt.³

The governor-generals were also constantly being harassed by the Egyptian government to make the Sudan more profitable.⁴ The colony was not fulfilling the grand expectations which Muhammad Ali had held for his new possession. In a move to better exploit the "riches" of the Sudan, the government monopoly on trade in the entire Nile Valley and adjacent hinterlands was lifted.⁵ The opening of the Sudan to free trade allowed the formation of a strong merchant class.

The governor-generals used the rising commercial elite for their own advantage as well as that of the government. Commercial and trading houses in search of export commodities opened up the unexplored regions of the south. The khabara were granted exclusive rights over large tracts of territory for an annual payment.⁶ In

this way the governor-generals added territory to Egypt's possessions in Africa and also kept expenditures down, greatly pleasing Cairo. The elimination of the government monopoly over trade was an important policy change, which was closely followed by an equally important change in the administrative structure of the Sudan.

Cairo decided that the centralized control of the Sudan from Khartoum was not the best method of administration, and completely decentralized all its southern possessions in Africa. The office of governor-general was abolished, from 1857-1862. During this period the Sudan was divided into four *mudirieh* directly accountable to Cairo: Taka, Kordofan, Dongola (consolidated with Berber), and a large area composed of Sinnar, Khartoum, and the White Nile possessions.⁷ Central administration was re-established in 1862 but only after the situation had reached the verge of total chaos and collapse owing to the lack of cooperation between the different *Mudirs* who looked only to the advancement of their own *mudirieh* and careers.⁸

The turnover of *hikimdars* who did serve in the Sudan was very rapid. During the twenty years of the second period, that the governor-generalship was in operation ten different men held the governor-generalship of the Sudan.⁹ The absence of consistent government policy and leadership worked together to weaken the office and allow the merchant community to increase its role in the political as well as economic life of the Sudan.

Mid-level Functionaries

The rise of a rich and powerful merchant class was relatively rapid. This expansion occurred after northern based traders overcame the initial resistance of the rulers of southern Sudanic societies who wished to administer the trading which occurred in their kingdom. The formation and existence of this commercial elite had a direct impact on the type of mid-level functionaries who administered the Sudan. Merchants who were successful and wealthy acquired positions of authority particularly in the administration of the southern Sudan. The nobility and traditional rulers who had ruled in the past were often replaced by, or made responsible to, the new "merchant princes" who had purchased their right to rule over a specific area.

The fusing of the commercial community with the administration of the Sudan had several related causes. The appointment of all mudirs, kashifs, shaikhs and other positions of authority were made by the hikimdar himself or on the recommendation of his immediate subordinates. The liberal bestowal of gifts to the hikimdar and his aides was often used by the jellaba and khabara to secure appointments to desired positions of authority. The successful and powerful merchant was in the most advantageous position to exploit this situation in order to assure both his prosperity and political control over southern territory. The governor-generals of the second period and individual mudirs during the five years of decentralized administration were open and perceptive to the advances of the merchant

seeking to solidify his political control over an area he already commercially dominated.¹⁰

The development of a combined political/commercial administration in the south has already been described above. The jellaba who paid the state for control of large tracts of land in the south were also allowed to appoint many of their own administrators.¹¹

In the northern Sudan, the reason for the introduction of active merchants into administrative positions or the entry of a traditional leader into the commercial realm stemmed from a change in the political economy of the region. The new regime had introduced a monetary economy and forced its use on the people of the northern Sudan.¹² The population of the region was confronted with the need for leaders who could help them meet the taxation demands made on them by the state.

During the first period, the traditional nobility had been able to mediate between the people and the state. The central administration's policy of imposing money taxes, however, altered perceptions towards local leaders.¹³ The population was increasingly forced to turn to the merchant/trader for aid in meeting the demands for taxes to be paid in specie rather than in kind.¹⁴ The merchant as an integrated participant in the money economy could exchange their goods and services into specie and ease their relations with the state. Members of traditional ruling families who did not adjust to the new situation, saw their states diminish or disappear. On the other hand, Zubair Rahma Mansur, Ghattas, and Muhammad Khair

al-Argawi are examples of men who did not belong to traditional ruling families, yet rose to power and position thanks to the new economic system which had developed.

Zubair Rahma Mansur was born on the island of Wawissi, near al-Jaili, to a Ja'liyin Arab family in 1830. After his early education in Khartoum he accompanied his uncle on a trading expedition to the southern Sudan in 1856. He spent several years trading for ivory and raiding for slaves in the Bhar al-Ghazal. His marriage to the daughter of a powerful Azande chief enabled him to become the "master of the Bhar al-Ghazal."¹⁵ Diem Zubair, which was surrounded by hundreds of farmsteads, was his largest zeriba and became the capital of his commercial empire.¹⁶

The power of Zubair can be gauged by the observations made by Schweinfurth while in the Bhar al-Ghazal. The German explorer placed himself under the protection of the powerful merchant and not a nearby government garrison. He believed that Khartoum's troops "were the less powerful element."¹⁷ The German doctor also reported Zubair's princely court, his fighting force of over 1,000 men, and treaty with the powerful Rizigat which opened the overland trade routes to the north to his caravans.¹⁸ Finally, Schweinfurth estimated that Zubair's trading stations were annually visited by 2,700 jellaba.¹⁹

Chattas, unlike Zubair, was neither a native Sudanese nor a Muslim. He was an Egyptian Copt who had been drawn to the Sudan in search of commercial success.²⁰ Once again the traveler Schweinfurth

offers a first hand account: Ghattas controlled the entire lower course of the Tong river, and maintained one large zeriba and five subsidiary trading stations. His six stations directly controlled an area of 200 square miles and 12,000 people, not including the slaves and jellaba who passed through his domains.²¹ The garrisons were composed mostly of men from Dongola with a few Sheigeah and Kordofanese.²² According to Gray, Ghattas was one of the merchants who had purchased from the government trading stations formerly held by Europeans.²³

Muhammad Khair al-Arqawi (al-Khairi) was a Dongolawi trader and freebooter who began his career trading in dates on the White Nile. After being looted by the Shilluk, (a people who had long been the target of slave raids) and unable to find redress from the government, he collected an army of 500 men and took Shilluk slaves. Khartoum provided a ready market for his captive merchandise as well as a source of additional arms and men to continue his operations. His constant attacks forced the Shilluk to propose that they be allowed to pay the government the amount it was receiving from Al-Khairi for the concession of operating in their region. Khartoum agreed and sent an armed force to capture Al-Khairi, who fled beyond its reach deep into the south. He reportedly met his end as a result of a deal between his pursuers and one of his relatives in the south. The exact circumstances of his death are not known, but his head was sent to Khartoum in 1862.²⁴

There are also examples of the old nobility who were able to maintain their positions in the north. The Mudirieh of Berber which included the important concession over the desert road between Korosko and Berber was held from 1840-1884 by two brothers. Hasan Khalifa was a notable of the Abbadi who in 1840, received from Muhammad Ali the position of governor of Berber. He was also made responsible for the important desert road which connected Egypt to the northern Sudan. In this position he was allowed to collect a tax on each camel load of merchandise using the route. The German archaeologist K. R. Kepsius recorded that he killed forty Bisharuyin who had murdered a detachment of Ottoman troops while on the desert road. In 1851 he was replaced by his brother Husain Pasha Khalifa as Shaikh of the desert road.²⁵

Hussain accompanied the viceroy Sa'id Pasha on his trip into the Sudan in 1856-57 and in recognition for his service to the Egyptian state was granted lands in Upper Egypt. He also served as governor of the combined provinces of Berber and Dongola from 1871-73.²⁶ Sir Samuel Baker was impressed with the way in which Husain controlled and administered the desert road, especially the handling of the steamers he was to use on the upper Nile.²⁷ Baker also makes note of Husain's appointment to the position of Mudir of Berber. He credited some of the improved conditions around Berber to the rule of the Abbadi notable.²⁸ Both Husain and his brother before him preserved the position of their family by rejecting the rigid distinctions between ruler and merchant/trader their forefathers had maintained.

The Merchant Community and Organization of Trade

The state did not control trade in the Sudan during the period from 1843-1869. The removal of the government trading monopoly which began in 1843 opened the Sudan to a period of "free enterprise."²⁹ The new group who controlled the trade network was collectively called khabbaran and included native Sudanese, Egyptians, and Europeans. Many of the initial explorations of the White Nile and trading companies established in the south were headed by Europeans. While European adventurers and entrepreneurs placed an important role in the opening of the south, the largest volume of trade was carried by jellaba working for large trading houses in Khartoum.³⁰ The Khartoum merchant houses were a part of a larger system of commercial activity in the Eastern Mediterranean and were backed by large sources of capital from outside the Sudan. The Sudanese merchant, and economy in general, was too short of capital to finance the costly expeditions which left Khartoum at the beginning of each trading season.³¹ While in general terms the source of the money which backed the Sudanese trade can be traced to Cairo and Alexandria, the specific details of the web of contacts and relationships between trading houses and government officials are as yet undetermined. The key role of the Viceroys and Khedives of Egypt is assumed but remains a topic to be clearly set forth by historians. In a similar way the exact interactions of the merchants in Khartoum and numerous traders of all sizes in the southern Sudan have not been carefully studied. Therefore the commercial system as it operated in the Sudan can only be outlined in general terms.

The traders who went south via the Nile were primarily concerned with procuring ivory, the price of which had more than doubled on the London market between the 1840s and the 1870s. The growing European middle classes increasingly wanted ivory commodities, and African ivory was especially sought because it was soft, opaque and easily worked.³² The dramatic increase in the amounts of ivory exported from the south is clearly indicated in the journals' of traders working there. Petherick, in a letter to Bruce, notes that in 1851, four hundred quintals of ivory had been shipped and in 1856, 1,400 quintals had been moved down the Nile. Further, he believed that the future output would continue to increase.³³

A large number of preparations were necessary before a merchant could travel up the Nile to trade. Boats had to be procured and provisions gathered and stored on board. The large amounts of glass beads traded for ivory were also bought and placed on the ships heading south. The most expensive aspect of outfitting a trading party, however, was the hiring of men to accompany the expedition as armed retainers. The merchant had to provide these men with arms and ammunition as well as train them in their use. The final cost was the hiring of sailors to handle the boats on the river. The services of a competent ships captain were often difficult to get because of the possibility of death during the course of the trading expedition. The danger was not only from the southern people but also from the Nile. The Sudd, a floating mass of vegetation on the upper Nile, was capable of trapping ships for months with the results that

the crews would die of disease. The promise of huge profits, however, continued to lure the trader into the south and along with him came the soldier and sailor.³⁴

Prior to 1854 the merchants had been forced to confine their activities to the areas immediately adjacent to the Nile and its major tributaries down river from the Sudd. Ivory was either brought to the trader by the local people or the merchant would venture away from the river to deal directly with the ruler of the area but only after securing permission and safe passage. Brun-Rollet gives a clear explanation of how the latter option operated. He noted in his journal that the merchants who came to Koroum or Taka in order to sell different objects or buy ivory are obliged to stop some distance from the country and send an envoy to the king with presents, in order to obtain permission to enter. When their request was received the king sent them a safe conduct which was respected until they reached Denab, where he lodged and fed them. The day after their arrival he made them display their goods. He then selected what he wanted and payed according to an estimate of the price made by the men of his court. The ruin or profit of the merchants therefore was completely dependent on the caprice of the king or the disposition of the men of his court towards the merchant. Under the conditions described by Brun-Rollet, merchants could not control the quantity, quality, or price they received for their goods.³⁵

On the commercial level, the increased numbers of ivory traders in the south caused economic stagnation there. The market

became glutted with the beads used as currency, lowering their value, and ivory reserves were rapidly depleted. To alleviate the twofold problem, merchants were forced to push even deeper into the southern Sudan in search of cheap and plentiful ivory.³⁶

The end of the state trading monopoly and reports of enormous profits drew large numbers of adventurers, merchants, and mercenaries to the southern Sudan. The "ivory rush" was intensified by economic deterioration in the northern riverine regions of the Sudan, where increased taxation had reduced productivity. The smaller merchants and retainers who actually lived and worked in the south trading for gum arabic, ivory, and slaves had traditionally included large numbers of Danaqla. In the districts of Damer and Shendi, for example, the people had become alarmed by the ever increasing emigration: unmarried men went to Khartoum to enlist in the ranks of the armed retainers hired by the merchants operating on the upper Nile.³⁷ In the eyes of the emigrants, the southern Sudan offered the chance at a new and perhaps better life. It was also seen by some northerners as a way of gaining the means by which they could pay off old debts, buy land and start over again in their northern homeland. Thus, any action by the indigenous population which hindered the merchant in the making of a profit evoked an immediate and hostile response from the northerners. The southern Sudanese in turn viewed the flood of northerners as a threat to their way of life.

Richard Gray outlines, at great length, the reasons for the souring of relations between the traders and people of the southern

regions.³⁸ He makes it clear that the southerners had the military power and the will to resist, compelling the northern merchants to import increasing numbers of retainers, armed with firearms, to safeguard and extend their operations. This infusion of armed men initiated a new system of exploitation. The permanent trading station (Zeriba) became the center of operations over specific territories held by individual merchants.

The zeriba system, like the river trade, started slowly but later expanded rapidly across the entire southern region. In 1854, Alphonse de Malzac, according to Gray, established the first station away from the river, at Rumbek in Dinka country. By 1865, two years after the station's founding, de Malzac owned a prosperous trading station which exploited the region eight-days march from the river. He employed interpreters for five different languages and five hundred porters to carry his ivory to the river. He soon became known as the "king of the White Nile" and his competitors soon copied his method. Unfortunately, de Malzac achieved his success by "deeds or widespread cruelty and injustice."³⁹ The entire zeriba system was based on exacerbating tensions between different ethnic groups. The merchant/commander of the zeriba would then interject his power on one side to upset the balance of power and create a situation advantageous to himself.⁴⁰

The numbers of non-southerners in the eastern and centro-western Bhar al-Ghazal, as well as in Equatoria, increased substantially after 1854. The influx strained the ability of the countryside

to provision the local population and the newcomers. The constant quest for ivory and supplies generated increasing tension between the indigenous people and merchant community.

The people of the south displayed their hostility in different ways. When possible, attacks were made on the merchant, his allies and their camps. In 1853, Alexander Vaudey, the Sardinian counsel in Khartoum, traveled South to Gondokoro and was overseeing the disembarkation of his goods when one of his men carelessly discharged his gun. A young man was wounded and the already suspicious people immediately retaliated. In the ensuing battle sixteen men were killed including Vaudey who was speared as he tried to reach his dahabyeh.⁴¹

In 1862, Petherick, the British counsel in Khartoum declared the impossibility of legal commerce between Khartoum and Gondokoro, where the people were always prepared for either fight or flight. When more than one vessel approached they would immediately retire into hiding, or, given one boat, they would attack and kill the crew.⁴² Petherick, while on an expedition up the Nile, recounts that when coming upon a Nuer village, the people refused to barter. Although possessing large herds, they flatly refused to sell one animal. They explained that during the last year, three of their chiefs had been killed when a trader had invited them on board.⁴³

Traders soon turned to robbery, using their own men or auxiliaries from an allied headman. The raiders stole the cattle and produce needed by the zaribas.⁴⁴ The following is Schweinfurth's

description of one raid. One hundred forty armed retainers accompanied by almost 100 other men set off across country and tried to appear like a convoy moving from one zeriba to another. Then, after observing a large herd of cattle, they carefully retraced their steps and waited until daybreak to attack the unsuspecting cattle herds. After surrounding the herd, the men began to fire their guns and run at the cattle beating their gongs. This was quite sufficient to drive off the owners and leave the animals to the attackers. The invaders soon made themselves masters of all the herds and hurried back to their zeriba covered by the protection of the soldiers.⁴⁵ Cattle booty would be traded directly for ivory or used to obtain articles needed to trade. The trader thus avoided the cost of purchasing and importing commodities from Khartoum.⁴⁶

The composition of most zeribas was generally the same throughout the southern region. One eyewitness described a large stockade with two enclosures, one a cattle kraal of large dimensions, and the other the zeriba proper. The inner area contained seventy or more tookuls (huts) and a well kept garden. The station was garrisoned by 112 men, including six elephant hunters, and commanded by an "Arab" named Ibrahim.⁴⁷

The commercial network which comprised the numerous zerbias grew rapidly after de Malzac's first station was founded and proved an outstanding success. The following is a chart put together by Schweinfurth which shows the large numbers of people directly involved in the Bhar al-Ghazal commercial system.

CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS

Proportions of the POPULATION in the District of the
KHARTOOMERS' SERIBAS on the Bahr-el-Ghazal

Consumers

Nubian soldiers, recruited in Khartoom and consisting of natives of Dongola, Sheygieh, Sennaar, Kordofan, various Bedouins, & c	5,000
Black slave troops (Farookh)*	5,000
Fellow-boarders with the Nubian idlers from the Soudan, living here in order to procure corn cheaply and without any trouble	1,000
Gellahbas settled in Dar Fertect, and agents in the Scribus, Fakin, & c.	2,000
Hinorant Gellahbas, who enter the country in the winter	2,000
Private slaves belonging to the colonised Mohmmmedan population	<u>40,000</u>
TOTAL	55,000

Producers

Bongo	100,000
Mittoo (including Loubah, Miuli, & c.)	50,000
Dynor	10,000
Golo	6,000
Schro	4,000
Kredy	20,000
Small tribes of natives belonging to the immediate environs of the Seribas, such as the Dembo, Bimberry, Manga, & c.	<u>20,000</u>
TOTAL	100,000

*I should point out that the total number of the soliders maintained in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district by the twelve great mercantile firms in Khartoom amounts to 11,000. I have here given the lowest computation.⁴⁸

Profits were the driving force behind the commercial interest in the southern Sudan. Those profits were drawn primarily from the gum and ivory trade. Slaves, while a standard trading commodity, were not the main source of profits in most commercial operations. Merchants in the Sudan had always dealt in slaves but found their best customer, the government, was a dangerous business partner. The administration's ability to juggle tax accounts and to manipulate the law to its advantage and to the detriment of the merchant made many merchants wary of doing business with Khartoum. A second reason for the preference of other commodities was the unpredictability of the market in slaves. The demand for gum and ivory was much steadier while slaves were a dangerous and speculative commodity.

A decline in the demand for gum caused ivory to become the major export product in the Sudan. A new increased demand for ivory, however, enabled the merchant houses and their agents in the south to continue their profitable operations. Within the ivory trade a trend toward consolidation took place. George Schweinfurth recorded that the entire ivory trade was in the hands of six large merchants associated with dozens of other much smaller jellaba who had business operations in the heart of ivory country.⁴⁹ But, as the supplies of ivory were exhausted and became more and more difficult to acquire, the slave trade became a way of making up for lost profits from decreased ivory shipments.

The step from stealing the cattle of the southerners and trading them for ivory to enslaving the people themselves was a

small one quickly taken to ensure continued profits. Very quickly the majority of the merchants in the south were involved heavily in the slave trade. The important change is not their dealing in slaves but that by the early 1860s the ivory trade had become secondary to the slave trade.⁵⁰ The result was an increase in anarchy and violence in the southern Sudan which even a hardened trader like Petherick acknowledged. He stated that "the negroes have been cruelly used, and the razzias upon them are numerous, and thousands have been carried into slavery. They now mistrust all, and in turn attack strangers no longer able to distinguish friend from foe."⁵¹

The southern region was transformed into an area characterized by savage rapine and plunder. The amount of ivory and slaves a merchant collected was determined by the number of armed retainers and alliances he controlled. The situation was further troubled by the increasing amounts of firearms which the native population were acquiring. Many jellaba disobeyed the major Khartoum trading houses' orders and sold guns, in exchange for slaves and ivory, by southerners. One southern headman, Mofio, had enough weapons to fully equip a force of three hundred warriors and seriously threaten any slaving expedition in his territories.⁵² Suspicion, treachery, and hostility dominated all aspects of life in the Southern Sudan.

The growing power of the merchant community in the Sudan was not completely unopposed or ignored by the central administration in Khartoum. The government, in the late 1850s and early 1860s, instituted a measure which resulted in the government owning the

trading operations of merchants (especially Europeans) in the south.⁵³ The government offered to buy the trading companies of the most powerful merchants operating in the south. The proposal was followed by the announcement that the tax rates for commercial operations was about to be reassessed. The majority of the merchants approached by the administration in Khartoum sold out rather than pay the threatened taxes.⁵⁴ Different explanations can be offered for this action by the government. The first, and weakest, posits that the government was under increasing pressure to curtail the slave trade in the Sudan. The continued existence, albeit in the hands of non-European merchants, of the slave trade casts doubt on this interpretation.⁵⁵ The size and targets of this buy out operation, however, suggests the active consent of the government in Cairo. If the merchants approached by the government had been moderately wealthy Sudanese, the entire affair could be explained as an extortion scheme run by officials in Khartoum for the sake of enriching themselves. The forced sale of businesses run by European traders with connections in Cairo and Alexandria suggests a very different interpretation. More likely, the government was attempting to place the trade of the south into the hands of new individuals and thus weaken older established merchants who might challenge the authority of Khartoum.

The efforts to control the merchant community, however, were negated by two separate yet related factors. The decision to abolish the governor-generalship which weakened the central administration

made possible the unification of the new trading company owners into a economic and politically potent force interested in protecting and furthering their own interests.

The Sudan as a free trade zone was no longer isolated from the commercial operations of Europe. Several European countries opened consulates in Khartoum.⁵⁶ Records indicate that many of the counsuls were also traders connected to Egyptian trading houses and pursued both occupations at the same time. The most well known example of this dual role was John Petherick, the British counsul. He was both Her Britanic Majesty's counsul and a merchant with extensive operations on the upper Nile from 1849-1863.⁵⁷ Competition from Northern European trading companies was not, however, a major concern of, or impediment to, the Khartoumers or their Levantine backers. The Suez canal had not yet been opened and the old trading houses were strong enough to maintain control of the Nile trade routes. In the future, however, the ability to bypass the entire Egyptian and Nile transit complex, which the canal presented, enabled the European trading houses to overcome these obstacles. The older Egyptian trading houses which had been intermediaries in the trading network connecting the African interior, the Levant, and Europe lost their dominant position in the Sudanese import export trading system.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter Three

¹Richard Hill, Egypt in the Sudan 1829-1881 (London: Oxford Press, 1959), p. 24; P. J. Batikiotis, The History of Egypt: From Muhammad Ali to Sadat (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 67.

²Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 47; Vatikiotis, The History of Egypt, pp. 61-62; Richard Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam (London: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 36, 41-42.

³Bayard Taylor, A Journey to Central Africa, (New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1854), p. 285; Alvan S. Southworth, Four Thousand Miles of African Travel (New York: Baker, Pratt & Co., 1875), p. 121; P. M. Holt, The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 13, 81-98.

⁴J. L. Spaulding, Slavery, Land Tenure and Social Class in The Egyptian Turkish Sudan 1820-1881 (Mimeographed, 1981), p. 13 footnote #13; Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 23.

⁵John Petherick, Egypt the Soudan and Central Africa, (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1861), p. 336.

⁶Georg Schweinfurth, The Heart of Africa, Trans., Elen F. Frewer (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low and Searle 1874), pp. 44-45; Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam, p. 77; H. C. Jackson, Trans., Black Ivory the Story of El-Zubier Pasha, Slaver and Sultan 1839-1889 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 84; Richard Hill, A Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. 274-275.

⁷Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 95-96; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 283-284.

⁸H. A. MacMicheael, A History of the Arabs in the Sudan (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), pp. 403-404.

⁹For biographical details and dates of rule for the governor-generals see: Hill, A Biographical Dictionary.

¹⁰Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 30-32; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 72, 84, 149.

¹¹Douglas T. Murry and Silva A. White, Sir Samuel Baker, A Memoir (London: Macmillian & Co., 1895), pp. 65-66, 72-73, 100.

¹²G. B. English, A Narrative of the Expedition to Dongola and Sennar (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1823), p. 12; George Waddington and Bernard Hanbury, Journal of a Visit to Some Parts of Ethiopia (London: John Murray, 1822), p. 53.

¹³Spaulding, "Slavery, Land Tenure and Social Class," p. 3; Ahmed, "The Turkish Taxation System," p. 104.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 3, 104.

¹⁵Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 71; Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 111-113; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 261, 290.

¹⁶Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 335.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 360.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 331, 361.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 356-361.

²⁰Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p.

²¹Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 174.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

²³Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 149.

²⁴Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 261.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁷Baker, Sir Samuel White, Ismailia: A Narrative of the Expedition to Central Africa for the Suppression of the Slave Trade (London: Macmillian & Co., 1890), p. 79.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 462.

²⁹Petherick, Egypt in the Soudan and Central Africa, p. 164; Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 73-74.

³⁰Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, pp. 44-45; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 46-73 *passim*; For details on the lives of the European traders see: Hill, A Biographical Dictionary.

³¹M. Brun-Rollet, Le Nil Blanc Et Le Soudan (Paris: Librairie De L. Miason, 1855), pp. 34-39; Southworth, Four Thousand Miles, p. 169; Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 8-26 passim; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 31, 51; H. A. A. Ahmed, "Aspects of Sudans Foreign Trade During the Nineteenth Century," Sudan Notes and Records 55 (1974): p. 113; for an insight into the financial world of Egypt at this time see: David Landes, Bankers and Pashas (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row Publishers, Harper Touchbooks, 1969).

³²Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 23.

³³Ibid., pp. 31-32.

³⁴Ibid., passim and Hill, Egypt in The Sudan.

³⁵Brun-Rollet, Le Nil Blanc, pp. 94-95.

³⁶Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 35; R. L. Hill and Elias Toniolo.

³⁷Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, pp. 41-42; Mekki Shibeika, The independent Sudan (New York: Robert Speller, & Sons, Publishers, Inc. 1959), p. 16.

³⁸Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 20-58.

³⁹Ibid., p. 47.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 48.

⁴¹Petherick, Egypt The Soudan and Central Africa, pp. 90-91, Elias Toniolo and R. Hill, eds., The Opening of the Nile Basin: writings of the Catholic Mission to Central Africa on the Geography and Ethnography of the Sudan (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1973), p. 182; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 372.

⁴²Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, and Explorations of the Western Nile Tributaries, (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1969), p. 142, The dahabych is a sailing vessel used on the Nile.

⁴³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴⁴Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 228.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 227-228.

⁴⁶Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, p. 234; Samuel White Baker, The Albert N'yanza Great Basin of the Nile and Explorations of the Nile Sources (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1962), p. 15.

⁴⁷Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, p. 224.

⁴⁸Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, p. 224.

⁴⁹Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 46.

⁵⁰Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, p. 229.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 71.

⁵²Schweinfurth, Heart of Africa, p. 417.

⁵³Abannik O. Hino, "The White Nile And Bhar El-Ghazal Trade: Its Development And Significance To The Rise Of The Sudanese Mahdist Revolution, 1839-1880," (mimeographed, 1983), p. 18; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 82, 84.

⁵⁴Gray, A History of The Southern Sudan, pp. 82-83.

⁵⁵Hino, "The White Nile And Bhar El-Ghazal Trade," p. 18.

⁵⁶Taylor, A Journey to Central Africa, pp. 270-308 passim; For details of the lives and actions of these officers see: Hill, A Biographical Dictionary.

⁵⁷Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p.

CHAPTER FOUR

1869-1881: THE SUPPRESSION OF THE COMMERCIAL ELITE

The Administrative Structure of the Sudan: The Governor-Generalship

Significant changes within the governor-generalship and administration of the Sudan took place during the third period of the Turkiyya. The use of non-Ottoman administrators introduced the use of European languages in the Sudan, especially after 1874 with the appointment of Charles Gordon and numerous other Europeans and Americans.¹ The government of the Sudan functioned using a mixture of Arabic, English, French, and Italian. The European languages were, however, usually confined to the uppermost levels of the administration, since the majority of middle level officials and military units communicated in Arabic.²

The office of hikimdar underwent changes designed to strengthen its control. The discontinuity of policy and weakness of the office between the 1840s and 1860s had been exploited by the merchant elite in order to take control of the economy. Officials in Cairo and Khartoum realized that the south was not only commercially independent but politically semi-autonomous as well. The merchants in the south controlled large standing armies equal to those of the state. The khabara and jellaba were fully aware of their new found power and refused to pay the taxes demanded by the state.³

To reverse this state of affairs Cairo expected the governor-generals to break the power of the merchant princes and gain political and economic control over the south. The administration in the Sudan sought to recreate the same degree of control which had existed during the first period of colonial rule. The move to restoration is reflected in the appointment of military men to the governor-generalship in much the same manner as during the first period. Finally, by 1869, the governor-generalship had been firmly reestablished as the method of administration in the Sudan.⁴ The impediments to this policy, however, were numerous.

The area that was being administered has grown to at least twice the size held prior to 1850. The problems of size was compounded by Cairo's inadequate expenditure for governing the Sudan.⁵ The size and finance problems were, however, not the most serious difficulties hindering the implementation of the new policy. The south could have been subdued if a completely loyal civil and military structure had existed to implement a coherent policy. None of these prerequisites, however, existed within the Sudan.

The mission of the governor-generals after 1869 was to regain control over trade and thereby control the economy of the entire region. The merchants who opposed the government's actions were equally devoted to retaining control of the primary commodity producing areas and the profits derived from trading these commodities. The policies of the government were almost always in direct opposition to the merchant princes and their associates, whose power and

position was based largely on the ivory and slave trade. The government therefore was often in the paradoxical position of fighting itself. To obtain troops and supplies it dealt with the very group it was trying to suppress and control. The opening of the Sudan to private merchants had gradually put the entire process for provisioning garrisons and government storehouses in the hands of private companies. The acquisition of troops to garrison the Sudan had also been made one of the reasons for slave trading operations. As early as the 1840s the majority of regular infantry units were composed of slaves taken in the south, trained, and then employed by the central administration.⁶

The disposition of civil and military officers in the Sudan was the final major block to the success of the new policy. Officers in the south were often involved in the slave trade for their own personal gain. Baker, Gordon, and Cessi, while traveling to their assignments in the south, constantly found consignments of slaves aboard nuggers (barges) being moved on the river. Upon investigation, the slaves were traced directly to the commanders of government stations which had been strategically placed to control trade routes.⁷ In Khartoum, the officials of the central administration were equally guilty of infractions of "laws" enacted to control the trade in slaves. Their connections were less obvious yet nonetheless real. The situation was best summed up by Baker in 1869, when he noted that the governors would not arrest the traders but only use the threat of arrest to enrich themselves. This system of extortion

would net them as much as £ 2 for each slave passing through the trading network.⁸

Cairo was also involved in a way which doomed all efforts to suppress the traffic. Once again Sir Samuel Baker put it into clear relief when he said, "the miserable difficulty lies in the fact that, if R. is a ruffian whom you hang, B. is a brute in Cairo who employs R.: Therefore, you should also hang B. But K. is the Khedive, who probably has had dealings with B. What, then, are you to do with K."⁹ Given these constraints, the governor-general was not in a position to easily accomplish the mission he had been given. A final constraint was the rapid turnover of men who held the post which, raised the old problem of inconsistent policy and administration. The average tenure of office was two years, somewhat longer than during the second period (1843-1869) but insufficient to deal with the many problems facing the head administrator of the Sudan.¹⁰

The fact remains, however, that the economic dominance and political power of the merchant princes had been destroyed by 1880. The political/administrative elite of Khartoum, under the direction of officials in Cairo, had eliminated the merchant elite as a threat to its control of the Sudan. Given the numerous obstacles to decisive and coordinated government action, as stated above, this success seems a paradox. A possible explanation is that high officials in Cairo and lower officials in the Sudan were motivated by fear to take action against the merchants and reduce the power of the commercial elite in the Sudan.

Officials in Cairo may have feared a political or commercial alliance between the most powerful of the merchant princes and a major European power. A commercial pact would have completely undercut the Egyptians who handled the goods which moved between Egyptian ports on the Mediterranean and the Sudan. A political alliance could have wrested control of the Sudan from the Khadive Ismail if one of the major European states had decided to support one of the merchant elite as the independent ruler of the Sudan. The idea of one of the merchant princes taking control of the Sudan was in fact forwarded in 187 by Charles Gordon.¹¹ He believed that Zubayr Pasha was the only man who had sufficient power and prestige to unify and control the Sudan.

The lower level officials who lived and worked in the Sudan also had reason to fear the commercial elite. The majority of the men, especially military officers, who operated the administrative apparatus of the Sudan were trained in Ottoman techniques of governing. A basic tenet of Ottoman administration is never to recruit the political leadership for a province from the indigenous population.¹² Increasingly during the period between 1843-1869, the political leadership, especially in the southern regions, was composed of merchant princes and their henchmen. At a second level, Ottoman trained administrators/military officers were trained in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Their study of the seventeenth century would have alerted them to the dangers which a powerful local elite could pose to non-indigenous administrators. During the late seventeenth

and early eighteenth centuries the Ayan (local notables) increasingly took control of provincial government to the detriment of the berlerbey (governor of a province) and sancakbeyis (sub-governors).¹³

In the Sudan of the nineteenth century, the course of events was parallel to that of the seventeenth century. The fear of losing control of their positions of authority, insignificant as they might have been, could explain why the central administration's orders to curb the power of the southern merchant elite were carried out.

The fear of losing the Sudan through a commercial and/or political alliance between the merchant princes and a European power, coupled with the fear of losing political control to the Sudanese at the local level, spurred the collective actions by various branches and levels of the government to bring the Sudan under closer and more direct control.

Mid-level Functionaries

The chaos and turmoil between 1869 and 1880, caused by the conflict between commercial officials in an especially delicate position. These men were often in remote areas far from their superiors in Khartoum. Moreover, most were a part of the commercial community as well as the administrative structure. This dual role was the result of close cooperation between the government and merchants which had existed during the 1850s and early 1860s. A system of tax-farming had been adopted which worked well given the conditions found in the southern Sudan. The government allowed merchants to

"purchase" the trading rights over specific territories for a fixed fee in taxes due each year.

In so doing the administration in Khartoum received revenue from the south at no expense to itself. Khartoum had not expended funds to occupy or garrison these regions nor paid the cost of using troops as was normally required for the collection of taxes. Moreover, by encouraging private commercial enterprise, the government was able to collect duties on the merchants' commodities as they passed through Khartoum in route to Egypt. It, at least until 1869, had allowed the south to be controlled by the merchant community which made new laws or adapted local codes to fit its needs.

Baker relates an example of merchant intervention in Equatoria. Kamrasi, the headman of a large district died in 1870, several agents under the employment of Aqqad & Co. entered the area and began to support different claimants to the throne. The various agents, constantly in touch with one another, coordinated their efforts so as to ruin and subject the entire area. After receiving ivory and slaves from each of the rivals as payment for support the agents placed a weak man on Kamrasi's throne.¹⁴ In this case and others of outright conquest, the merchants took to themselves the role of government-appointed individuals to carry out the duties of civil administration.¹⁵

Muhammad Wad-al-Mek and Suleiman the Kurd offer excellent examples of mid-level officials who had lived in the south for an extended period of time and tried to maintain their semi-independence

from outside interferences.¹⁶ Muhammad Wad-al-Mek was the son of an important Mek (King) of the upper Blue Nile in the region around Fazguli, and at one time had served in the Egyptian army.¹⁷ He was, by the early 1860s, A. Debono's most trusted wakil and had founded many zeribas in the deep south which he held against attacks by Aqqad & Co.¹⁸ When Debono's trading company was acquired by Aqqad & Co., however, he, Muhammad, took service with Abu Su'ud. With the arrival of the Baker expedition he was in another precarious position.

Baker considered him a threat and decided to buy him off by offering him a government command.¹⁹ Muhammad chose to remain with Aqqad & Co., and in 1872 he attacked Baker at Fatiko with a large force of bazingers. During the battle a well placed shot by Baker destroyed his rifle and severely wounded Muhammad. He was taken prisoner and Baker prepared his trial, but offered a pardon if he came over to the government.²⁰ Having no real choice, Muhammad acquiesced and on Baker's departure from the south, was placed in command until Gordon arrived.²¹ Gessi records meeting Wad-el-Mek during his explorations in Equatoria.²²

A second mid-level official Baker mentioned was Suleiman the Kurd. This man had been drawn to the southern Sudan by the promise of profits and had taken service with Aqqad & Co. in the mid-1860s.²³ In 1872 Baker offered him a command with the rank of major which he accepted although it meant a considerable reduction in pay.²⁴ He remained, however, in communication with Abu Su'ud and attempted to appease both Baker, his former employer, and his own private trading commitments. Baker wrote:

Suleiman was in a dilemma, as he had already promised alliance, and had received a quantity of ivory in payment for his services. He had accordingly made the following secret arrangement with Rahonka and Lokara: "Let the Pasha and his soldiers start for Masindi, and he will suppose [sic] that Suleiman will follow on the marrow; instead of which, he will at once join Kabba Rega's forces and attack Rionga when the Pasha shall be several days journey distant from the river."

On his return to Foweera from a successful invasion of Rionga's island, the commanders of the forces, Lokara and Rahonka, were at once to furnish carriers to transport Suleiman with all his people and ivory to Fabbo station, according to the instructions received from Abu Saood.²⁵

When Baker discovered Suleiman's duplicity he had him arrested and tried. Baker who acted as judge and jury, had him given 200 lashes and imprisoned at Fatiko.²⁶ Suleiman, however, was able to escape and hide at Fabbo station which was under the control of Abu Su'ud. Later that same year, he surrendered to Baker and, with the help of Wad-el-Mek, received a pardon, in return for which he took a government command under Wad-el-Mek.²⁷ The reason for this surrender is not clear but he may have been impressed by the authority that was given to Wad-el-Mek by Baker.

The central administration's decision to curb the power of the independent minded tax farmers placed many minor government officials between two powerful forces. A critical factor in this changing situation was the introduction of Europeans into command positions over government military forces.²⁸ Mid-level functionaries throughout the south were forced to deal with men who saw no room for compromise or negotiation. The official was either for the

government and supported its mission or for the slave traders it had been sent to destroy. The decision of mid-level officials was made no easier by the limited success of the government in previous attempts to break the powerful merchant community in the south. The official who sided with Khartoum could expect to suffer at the hands of the local merchant and his bazingers if the government failed once again in the south. Gordon, Gessi, Messedaglia, and Emiliani appointed and dismissed officials at will. The removal of an administrator often included his execution.²⁹ Appointments and executions were made in the heat of a campaign and with little time for careful consideration. The high handed policies of the government commanders and their hotteria quickly alienated many of the traditional and civil leaders in the south. The resulting confusion destroyed the existing southern administrative structure as well as the power of the merchant elite.³⁰

The government had broken the monopoly of the private merchants over the political and military structures of the south and placed commercial operations into the hands of merchants who the government could more effectively control. The entire Sudan, after 1880, was in theory under the control of the central administration in Khartoum. In reality, however, there were large areas controlled by dismissed mid-level office holders who had escaped the executioner.³¹ In the process of breaking the control of the merchant community and re-imposing direct control over the southern region the government disrupted the Southern Sudan. As a result the people

of the southern region were forced to accommodate themselves to the demands of an administration under orders from Khartoum.

The Merchant Community and Organization of Trade

Private merchants still organized and conducted trade at the beginning of the third period. An important change took place, however, within the merchant community itself. Powerful merchant princes had consolidated their control over all commercial operations in the south. After 1869, however, the role of powerful khagara in controlling the commercial and political life of the Southern Sudan was challenged and ultimately eliminated.

The consolidation of trading operations was the result of government action and competition between the different trading companies. The administration in Khartoum, as described earlier, forced a number of European merchants out of business in the early 1860s. As a result, these businesses were bought from the government by Coptic and Muslim merchant houses. Among the remaining firms there was an intense rivalry for the largest share of the profits to be made on commodities from the southern Sudan. Aqqad & Co. in the region east of the Bhar al-Jebel and Rahma Mansur Zubair's operations in the Bahr al-Ghazal, in particular, illustrate the competition and consolidation which took place in the southern Sudan. Each of these trading houses systematically eliminated organized control over its competitors and held monopolistic control over vast territories.

The Aqqad trading house was connected to the powerful Egyptian merchant family of the same name. Hill, in his biographical dictionary, mentions four members of his family who had commercial interests in the Sudan.³² Hasan Musa al-Aqqad was a wealthy merchant in Egypt whose participation in political intrigue there resulted in banishment to the Sudan on two different occasions. His involuntary visits, however, allowed him to discuss business matters with three other members of his family living in the Sudan.

Muhammad Ahmad al-Aqqad headed Aqqad & Co. of Khartoum along with his brother, Musa Bey al-Aqqad, who was a partner. The company had long been involved in the White Nile trade and enjoyed the personal patronage of the Khedive Isma'il. In 1865, upon the death of A. Debono, the firm of Aqqad & Co. absorbed Debono's company which had been its principal competitor in the White Nile and Equatoria regions.³³ Two years later Musa Bey al-Aqqad died leaving the firm to his brother, Muhammad Ahmed.³⁴ On Muhammad Ahmed's death in 1870, the company was taken over by his son-in-law, Muhammad Abu Su'ud al-Aqqad.³⁵

Abu Su'ud inherited a trading house with vast holdings in the south. The principal area of Aqqad & Co.'s operations was east of the White Nile and south to the Victoria Nile which Baker estimated at "ninety thousand square miles."³⁶ Abu Su'ud paid 3,000 annually to Khartoum for exclusive and unrestricted control over these territories.³⁷

Baker found that Abu Su'ud would go to great lengths to maintain his monopoly over trade and his personal control over the area. Baker blamed all of the difficulties he faced while in the Southern Sudan on the actions of Abu Su'ud.³⁸ Abu Su'ud's political acumen and influence kept him in a position to profit from the southern economy. Gordon made him lieutenant-governor for Gondokoro and a subsequent governor-general, Ra'uf Pasha, employed him on various missions for the administration.³⁹ Aqqad & Co. continued to control large areas of the south until the Mahdist took control of the Sudan.

Aqqad & Co. was not the only large firm to trade in the southern Sudan. Zubair Rahma Mansur, mentioned earlier, began his trading career in 1856 in the service of Ali Abu Amuri.⁴⁰ Zubair was not connected to any powerful trading house or family. His success was the result of his own abilities and genius at exploiting every situation to his best advantage. On his first trip south he was quickly introduced to the realities of commercial life there. He helped quell an attack on his trading party, during which he killed several attackers.⁴¹ His second trip, in 1858, netted him 1,000 which he used to buy a boat and to outfit another expedition to the south.⁴²

His commercial success allowed him to become an independent merchant. This freedom of operation gave him the opportunity to make an alliance with the ruler of Dar Timka which included his marriage to the ruler's daughter Rambu. He thus gained access to a large ivory and slave producing area on which he based his future operations.⁴³

Later, in 1865, he aided his father-in-law in taking control of the territories of Duweiya, and then the "country of Golo."⁴⁴ By 1865 he was master of the Bhar al-Ghazal and had established his capital at Diem Zubair.⁴⁵ His control over zeribas other than his own can be gauged from the results of an attempt by the government to gain a foothold in the area. In 1869, Muhammad al-Hilali, representing the governor-general, called together the agents in charge of all the zeribas in the Bhar al-Ghazal and ordered them to surrender their firearms and ivory to him. Most refused until they could discuss the matter with Zubair.⁴⁶ In 1872, Zubair killed his father-in-law, the ruler of Dar Timka, and thereby secured absolute control over all the territory west and southwest of the Bhar al-Ghazal. His final moves were to attack the Rizagat in 1873 and the neighboring Sultanate of Dar Fur in 1874.⁴⁷ The successful completion of these campaigns brought him recognition from the Egyptian Government: he was made governor of the territories he controlled and was awarded the rank of Bey.⁴⁸ Even his later quarrel with the government and exile from the Sudan did not diminish his status in the eyes of many, including Gordon, who believed Zubair was the only man capable of effectively ruling the Sudan.

Both of the trading companies described above enlarged their holdings and monopolistic control through the use of alliances with local rulers, politically expedient marriages, bribery, intrigue, and open violence. The result was the consolidation of commercial, political, and military power into the hands of a very small number

of kabara. This situation motivated the central administration's drive to retake control of the southern Sudan. The opportunity to benefit directly from the organization of the south's resources, which had been accomplished by the merchants, along with political considerations mentioned in an earlier section of this chapter prompted the governments actions.

In conjunction with Khartoum's changing attitude, the influence of European trading firms began to be felt. The subsequent dominance after 1869 of the large northern European trading houses resulted from two related yet separate factors: the Egyptian government's campaigns to re-control the south and the opening of the Suez canal, both of which occurred in 1869.

Administration attempts to break the control of private merchants in the south brought many of the indigenous traders into direct or indirect conflict with the government. To secure needed supplies and still break the southern traders, the government shifted its accounts to European trading companies and their agents located in the Sudan, an action which allowed the European-based trading firms to obtain a large share of the Sudanese market and profits derived from it. Government contracts were auctioned off between the various representatives of European trading houses. The competition for these contracts helped government officials maintain control over these new merchants.

The opening of the Suez canal aided the Europeans in keeping the prices of their goods consistently lower than those of the

traditional trading community. A. B. Wylde observed that the commerce in the Sudan was rapidly falling into the hands of Europeans. They shipped goods from London via the shorter canal route to Suakin and thence into the Sudan. The traditional Arba and Levantine merchants were still connected to the complicated route through Alexandria, Cairo, Suez, and Jedda, and they also continued to move goods to Berber and Khartoum on the old Nile routes.⁴⁹ In short, the once powerful traders of the Sudan and their backers in Egypt were squeezed out of their dominant position by the vakils of powerful European trading companies. Thus, while the southern Sudan came under the nominal political control of the Khartoum government, the overall commercial system continued to be in the hands of private, but not European, non-government trading companies.

The government policy to regain control of the southern regions of the Sudan was closely connected with the commercial life of the south. Three different attempts extending from 1869-1880 were made by the central administration to break the khabara/jellaba community of the southern Sudan. In all three instances the suppression of the slave trade was the reason given by the government for its incursions into the Equatorial provinces, Bhar al-Ghazal and, after 1874, Dar Fur.

The first of these campaigns began in 1869 and lasted until 1873. It was under the command of Sir Samuel White Baker. He was appointed by the Khedive Ishmael to suppress the slave trade and bring the Equatorial regions of the Sudan under the control of the

Egyptian government. The mission achieved few, if any, of its goals. Baker's inept and heavy handed style and the coordinated efforts of the southern merchants to foil him doomed his mission from the start.

As noted earlier, Muhammad Abu Su'ud al-Aqqad was instrumental in undermining Baker's efforts in Equatoria. The Englishman only became aware of Aqqad & Co.'s contract with the governor-general of the Sudan after he was already in Equatoria.⁵⁰ Even then, his woeful ignorance of other relationships there severely handicapped him. Baker's journals are full of accounts describing government officials in the south who refused, or were very slow, to aid him in his work.⁵¹ He did not seem to realize that the merchant house of Aqqad had been under the patronage of the Khedive Isma'il. Further, his journal clearly states that he was aware of a conspiracy between his second in command, Muhammad Ra'uf Bey, and Abu Su'ud to hinder or stop the successful completion of his mission. Baker suspected that the two men had become involved only on meeting earlier in Khartoum. There is no indication, however, that he knew the future governor-general Ra'uf and merchant Abu Su'ud had been schoolmates in Egypt.⁵² Baker's own words sum up his dilemma.

In spite of my positive orders, that none but the really sick should be sent to Khartoum, Raouf Bey had in my absence sent away great numbers of troops who were in sound health, thus reducing the entire force of the expedition to 502 officers and men, including buglers, drummers, clerks, & c., exclusive of fifty-two sailors.

Thus an expedition that should have comprised 1,645 men was reduced to so insignificant a force, that it appeared impossible to proceed into the interior. The Baris were at war with us; the

slave-hunters' companies were treacherous; and yet I was to suppress [sic] the slave trade, annex the equatorial districts with less than one-third the force required.⁵³

The second attempt to restore Khartoum's power coincided with Baker's movement into Equatoria. The governor-general Jafar Pasha Mazhar sent Muhammad al-Hilali, reinforced with irregulars under Kuchuk Ali, into the Bhar al-Ghazal, the stronghold of Kabair Rahma Mansur, to regain control of this region for Khartoum.⁵⁴ This mission achieved even less success than Baker's. Internal quarreling between the two government commanders, and the mysterious death of Kuchuk Ali weakened the expedition's overall position. The government's forces were completely routed by Zubair's bazingers in 1872, and Muhammad al-Hilali killed. The result was the strengthening of Zubair's hold over the Bhar al-Ghazal territories.⁵⁵

The third move by the government was initiated with the nomination of Charles Gordon to the post of Governor of the Equatorial province on the departure of Baker. Gordon's appointment to the Equatorial Governship was followed by a term as hakimdar of the entire Sudan. In all, he spent a total of almost six years in various posts within the Sudan and Egypt. Gordon's strategy and its execution by his three Italian generals Romolo Gessi, Bartolomeo Messedaglia and Francesco Emiliani were much more effective than his predecessors.⁵⁶ Gordon's operations in the south began in earnest in 1877 and ended in 1879. His stiffest opposition was centered in the Bhar al-Ghazal where Sulaiman Zubair's son commanded the bazingers of the merchants while his father languished

under "friendly" detention in Cairo. The execution of Sulaiman on 9 July 1879 by order of Fessi marked the end of serious armed resistance to government forces in the Bahr al-Ghazal and Dar Fur.

In each of the government attempts to regain control of trade in the south the same pattern was followed. The state representative would announce that he was under orders from the government to suppress the slave trade. He would then declare a government monopoly over commerce in the entire region and order all ivory to be surrendered to the government's representatives. Finally, he would order all zeribas to be abandoned and all private merchants to immediately evacuate the province. In an attempt to clear the Bahr-al-Ghazal of Jellaba, Gordon not only declared them persona-non-grata but also denied them government protection of any kind. The desired results of his order quickly came to pass. The inhabitants of the region murdered and plundered any and all private merchants they could find.⁵⁷

Through Gordon's actions, the sequence of violence had come full circle. The people of the south, long exploited, were given the opportunity to attack, with impunity, the source of their sufferings. The intervention of the government altered the balance of power which had been established by the merchant community through its disruption of the power balance it had encountered. Gordon and his associates used existing social instability to exacerbate an already chaotic situation. The southern Sudan was reduced to anarchy in order to suppress the merchant community residing there. The

suppression of the slave trade was clearly a pretense for the larger mission.

The government's primary goal was to place the export rich south in the hands of merchants loyal to, and supportive of, the central administration. It has been argued that strong government action and a monopoly over all commerce was a necessary corollary to stopping the flow of slaves. This explanation is, however, proven false by the events which took place in the south and in Dar Fur. Trading here continued, as before, in the same commodities but under the control of a new group of merchants. Export figures from the Sudan indicate a steady increase from 1872-1879. Total exports in 1872 were worth £ 500,000; yet in 1879 at the end of a year of heavy fighting between Gessi and Sulaiman, the figure was £ 1,993,968.⁵⁸ Finally, the way was opened for the resumption of the old trading system, albeit in new hands, with the resignation of Gordon in 1880 and the dismissal of Gessi in the same year.⁵⁹

FOOTNOTES

Chapter Four

¹R. L. Hill, A Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. 138-140.

²Rolomo Gessi, Seven Years in the Soudan (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., 1892), p. 6; Bernard M. Allen, Gordon and the Sudan (London: Macmillian & Co., 1931), pp. 14-16; R. L. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, (London: Oxford Press, 1959), p. 147; P. M. Holt, The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 39.

³Douglas T. Murry and Silva A. White, Sir Samuel Baker, A Memoir, (London: Macmillian & Co., 1895), p. 141; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 81-82, 86; H. C. Jackson, Trans. and ed., Black Ivory The Story of El-Zubier Pasha, Slaver and Pasha, as told by Himself (New York: Negro University Press, 1970), p. 51.

⁴Hill, Egypt in The Sudan, pp. 139, 155-156.

⁵The reasons for the lack of funds for the Sudan can be seen clearly in David S. Landes, Bankers and Pashas (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row Publishers, Harper Torchbooks, 1969), passim.

⁶H. A. MacMicheael, trans. "Fung Chronicle," A History of the Arabs in the Sudan (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), p. 396; Ferdinand Werne, African Wanderings, trans. J. R. Johnston (London: Brown, Greens, and Longmans, 1852), pp. 166-168; R. L. Hill, On the Frontiers of Islam (London: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 15, 19, 32, 36, 41.

⁷Sir Samuel White Baker, Ismailia: A Narrative of the Expedition to Central Africa for the Suppression of The Slave Trade (London: Macmillian & Co., 1890), pp. 61-62, 457, 461-462; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 189, 200; Allen, Gordon and the Sudan, p. 22.

⁸Murry and White, Sir Samuel Baker, pp. 141-142.

⁹Ibid., p. 142; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 193, 201, 281.

¹⁰Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, see: details under individual headings for each Governor-General.

- ¹¹Hill, A Biographical Dictionary. Jackson, Black Ivory, p.
- ¹²L. Carl Brown, Tunisia of Ahmed Bey 1837-1855, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 29.
- ¹³Halil Inalcik, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration," in Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History, Ed.'s Thomas Neff and Roger Owen (London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), pp. 27-52, passim.
- ¹⁴Baker, Ismailia, p. 284.
- ¹⁵Ibid., pp. 72-77 passim; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 54-55; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 84.
- ¹⁶These two men were mentioned in Baker's journals as well as Gessi's and Gordon's dispatches.
- ¹⁷Baker, Ismailia, p. 272; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan 1838-1839, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 57.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 272; Ibid., p. 83.
- ¹⁹Ibid., pp. 284, 340.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 411; Allen, Gordon and The Sudan, p. 36.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 455; Ibid., p. 42.
- ²²Gessi, Seven Years in the Sudan, pp. 119-123 passim.
- ²³Baker, Ismailia, pp. 283, 293.
- ²⁴Ibid., pp. 285-286.
- ²⁵Ibid., pp. 295-296.
- ²⁶Ibid., pp. 298, 302, 338.
- ²⁷Ibid., pp. 408, 425-426.
- ²⁸Shukry, The Khedive Ismail, p. 302; the following is a list of the men who held positions of provincial governor up to and including Governor-General and yielded considerable power; Baker, Gordon, Mason, Prout, Gessi, Messedaglia, Rigolet, Rosset, Schnitzer, Marno, and Luptin. It should also be noted that the Equatoria Province was governed exclusively by Europeans from 1869-1889. The source for the above list is Hill, A Biographical Dictionary.

²⁹For the delicate position of the Mid-level functionaries see: Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 34-37; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 137; for the actual accounts of executions see: Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 270-272, 282.

³⁰Holt, The Madhist State, p. 38.

³¹Ibid., p. 39.

³²Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 158, 246, 274, 283.

³³Ibid., p. 246.

³⁴Ibid., p. 283.

³⁵Ibid., p. 246; the name generally used to identify this merchant in the primary literature, especially Baker's journals, is Abu Saoud or a derivation of Abu Su'ud.

³⁶Baker, Ismailia, p. 72.

³⁷Ibid., p. 73.

³⁸Ibid., p. 192.

³⁹Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 275; Allen, Gordon and The Sudan, p. 16.

⁴⁰Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 4-5.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁴²Ibid., p. 12.

⁴³Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 391; Jackson, Black Ivory, p. 16.

⁴⁴Jackson, Black Ivory, p. 27.

⁴⁵Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, p. 69; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 390.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 121; Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 121.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 121-123.

⁴⁹A. B. Wylde, '83-'87 in the Soudan (London: Remington, 1888) p. 280.

⁵⁰Baker, Ismailia, p. 72.

⁵¹Baker, Ismailia, pp. 192, 421, 458; also see: Muhammad Fulad Shukry, The Khedive Ismail and Slavery in the Sudan (Cairo: Cairo University Press, 1938), pp. 175, 179; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 2-3.

⁵²Baker, Ismailia, pp. 138-139, 263; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 274-275.

⁵³Ibid., p. 192.

⁵⁴Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 247-248; Jackson, Black Ivory, p. 33; Robert O. Collins, The Southern Sudan, 1883-1898 a Struggle for control (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 15.

⁵⁵Gessi, Seven Years, p. 248; Jackson, Black Ivory, pp. 34, 47; Collins, The Southern Sudan, p. 15.

⁵⁶Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, p. 157; Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 125, 134; Collins, The Southern Sudan, p. 15.

⁵⁷For the establishment of the government monopoly see: Baker, Ismailia, p. 122; Allen, Gordon and the Sudan, pp. 17, 94; Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 36, 349-344; Jackson, Black Ivory, p. 34-37; for the actions of Gordon against the jellaba in the south see: Gessi, Seven Years, p. 270; Holt, The Mahdist State, p. 31.

⁵⁸H. A. A. Ahmed, "Aspects of Sudanese Foreign Trade During The Nineteenth Century," Sudan Notes and Records 55 (1974): p. 17.

⁵⁹Gessi, Seven Years, pp. 353, 363, 370, 386; Hill, A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 133-134, 139.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

It has been the intent of this study to examine the Turkiyya from the perspective of administered trade and the relationship to change within Sudanese society. It has not followed the pattern of previous studies on this topic which emphasized the political/administrative structure of the region during its occupation by Egypt. An essential consideration of this has been the conflict which arose between the colonial administration and a rising merchant elite over control of trade in the Sudan. The entire population--nobleman, freeman, and slave--felt the impact of the Turkiyya on the social, political and economic life of the Sudan. The establishment of the Turkiyya initiated the beginning of a fundamental change in the Sudanese economic system. Administered trade which had been in existence for at least one hundred and fifty years, with its specific patterns, rules, and hierarchy, was replaced by an alien system. The extensive reordering of the political-economy of the northern Sudan had a profound impact on the southern Sudan as well.

For over forty years, the southern Sudanese people were subjected to previously unknown onslaughts from the north. The shilluk who held the northern frontier against the merchants until the mid 1850s, were eventually bypassed and later decimated.¹ In wave after wave northern merchants and their armed retainers drove deeper and

deeper into the southern Sudan in search of commodities for the export trade. The result was the disintegration of the social organization of the peoples who lived on the upper Blue and White Niles.

Part of the reason for the disastrous relationship between the northerners and southern population was the attitude of superiority maintained by merchants and government authorities. The southern population was considered to be uncivilized naked abids (slaves) whose social institutions deserved no consideration whatsoever. The jellaba and their retainers were, in large part, northerners who wanted to remain northerners.² The people of the southern Sudan were the means by which mercantile advancement was attained. The jellaba saw no reason not to use violence to secure profits, especially when dealing with people who they considered socially, if not racially, inferior to themselves. The incorporation of southerners into the operations of northern merchants did not alter the situation. Southerners, who were employed by the khabara and jellaba, viewed their attacks on other southern Sudanese people as the only means available to avoid their own annihilation.

The continual assault by the northern based commercial community, and the southern reaction, led to increased violence on both sides. Neither group would or could reduce its efforts, which would have meant its own extinction, to destroy the other. The escalation of violence created an environment where fear, suspicion, and cruelty

thrived. Brutality, moreover, became an expected and socially acceptable reaction to any outside threat.

The central administration's attack on the merchant community was, in one respect, like the merchant's assault on the southern regions. In both cases the people of the southern Sudan were the principal victims. Initially, prior to 1869, the southern Sudanese were forced to surrender their cattle and grain to merchants. After 1869 the southerners lost cattle and grain to the armies of the government and merchant alike. The men of the south were pressed into the service of merchants as porters and later by the commanders on both sides of a conflict which gained the southerner nothing.

The flow of export commodities also continued unabated. Baker, writing about Equatoria, stated that he had established a trade which netted "a minimum profit for the government of 1500 percent."³ On other occasions ivory was purchased at a 2000 percent profit.⁴ In 1880, moreover, the Austrian, Rudolf Slatin, mudir of Dar Fur, requested and received permission to take slaves as payment for taxes owed to the government.⁵ After the power struggle between the merchant elite and central administration had been decided, the southern Sudan continued to be exploited as before.

Muhammad Ahmad b. Abdallah proclaimed himself as the Mahdi in 1881.⁶ The support he received, at least initially, by southerners, indicates the degree to which these people had rejected the government in Khartoum as the legitimate authority in the region. The society in which the southerner lived was characterized by

discontent, fear, confusion, and alienation. The Mahdi promised peace, order, brotherhood, and salvation. Throughout the Sudan, both north and south elements within the population supported the Mahdi, others were violently opposed to him.⁷ An examination of the Mahdi, his supporters, and those who wished to destroy him is beyond the scope of this paper and can not be dealt with here. L. Carl Brown, however, has made a very important statement on the rise of the Mahdi. He says, "no monocausal theory will adequately reflect the complex totality out of which the Mahdiya arose."⁸

This thesis has examined one aspect of the complex totality described by Brown. In the thesis I pursued two objectives. The first was to show that the years of the Turkiyya were a period of change in Sudanese society. My investigation has shown the period from 1821-1881 to have been characterized by extensive changes in the political economy of the eastern Sudan. The relatively rapid destruction of a feudal system of economics and politics and its replacement by merchant capitalism had a deep impact on the Sudanese people, northern and southern alike.

The second objective is to show that the Turkiyya was a significant, and not a purely preliminary, set of events which occurred prior to the mahdiyya. The absence of profound change, like that experienced from 1821-1881, may have contributed to the unsuccessful attempts of other would-be Mahdis to survive in the Sudan. The success of Muhammad Ahmad b. Abdallah on the other hand may be less

a product of his message and more a result of the political, economic, and social circumstances in which he delivered his message.

A wealth of information remains to be gleaned from the sixty years of the Turkiyya. The challenge of redefining and understanding the relationship of the Turkiyya and Mahdiyya still lies ahead for the historian.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter Five

¹Richard Gray, A History of The Southern Sudan 1830-1889, (London: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 33-34, 77-78.

²Gustau Nachtigal, Sahara and Sudan Vol IV Wadai and Dar Fur, A. G. B. Fisher and H. J. Fisher, with R. S. O'Fahey, (London: C. Hurst and Trans. Co., 1971).

³Samuel Baker, Ismailia: A narrative of the Expedition to Central Africa for the Suppression of the Slave Trade, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1890), p. 340.

⁴Ibid., p. 341.

⁵Rudolf Slatin, Fire and Sword in the Sudan, (New York: John Lane, 1899), pp. 32-33.

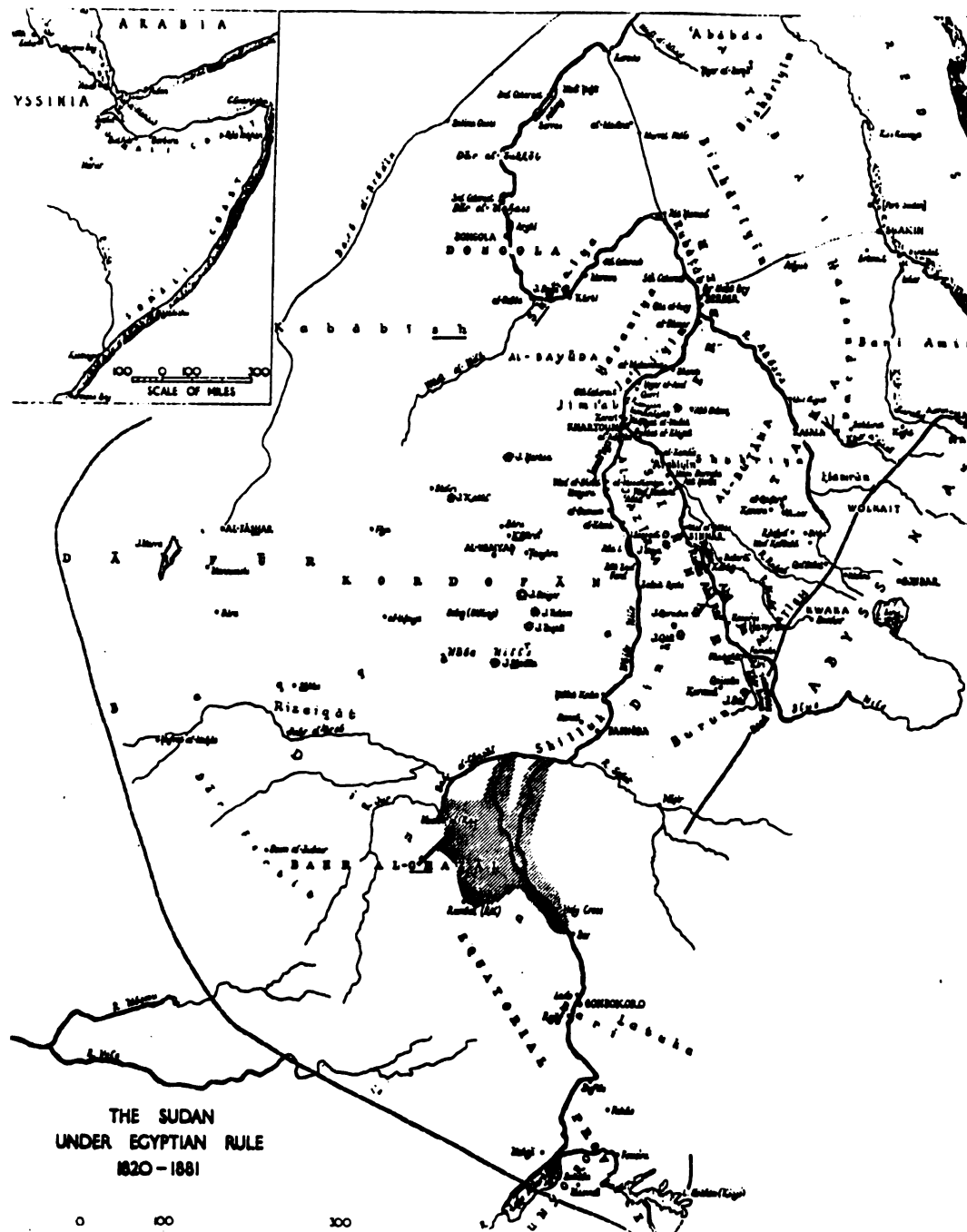
⁶Richard Hill, A Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. 247-248.

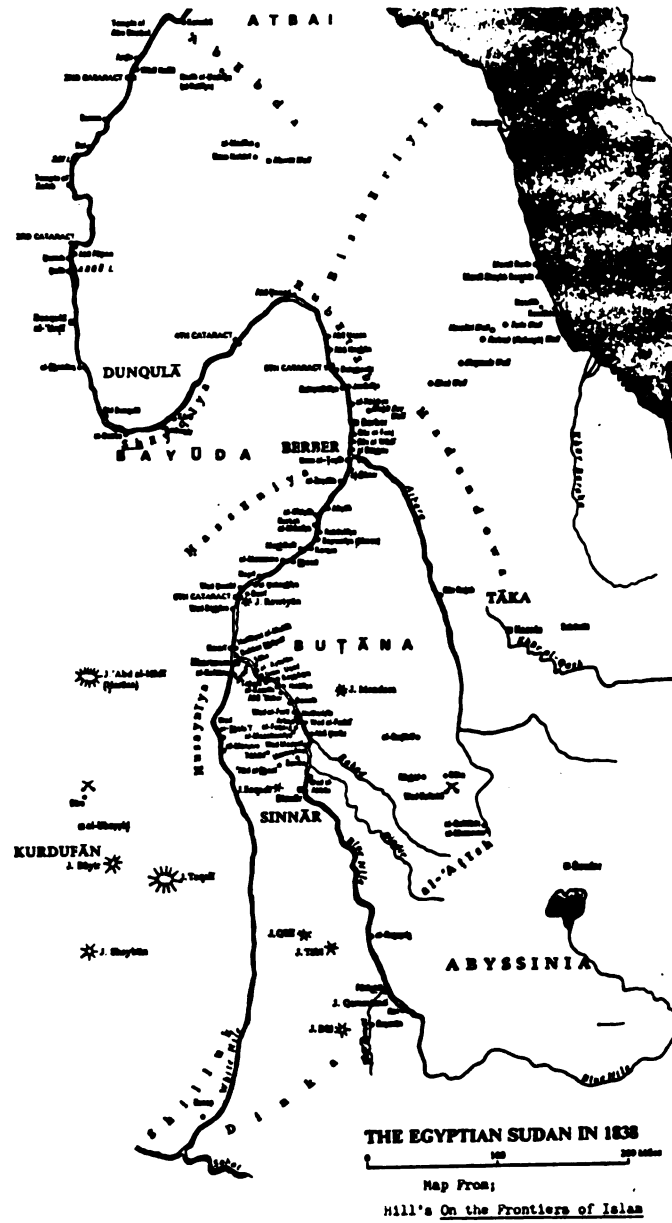
⁷Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan, pp. 152-153.

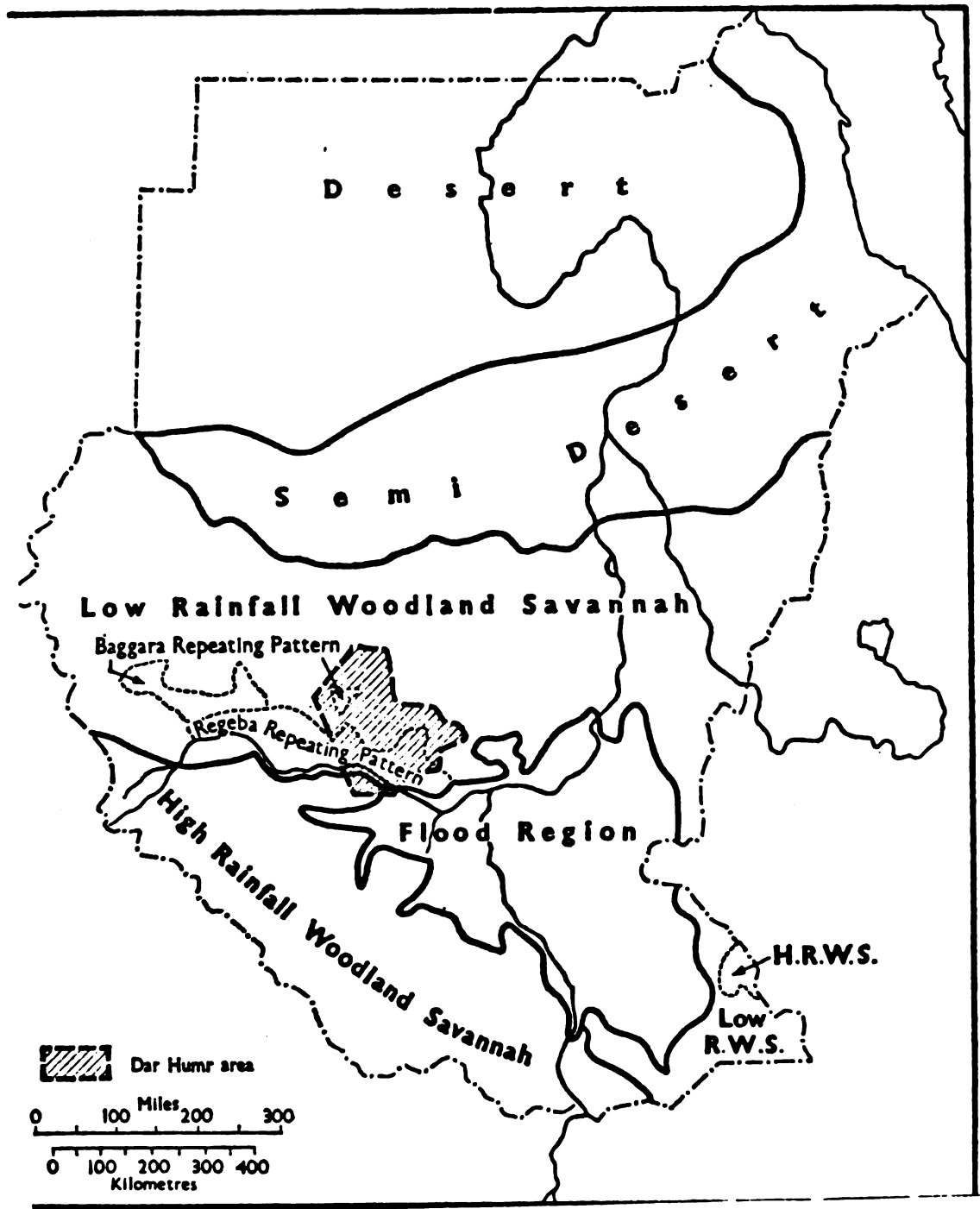
⁸L. Carl Brown, "The Sudanese Mahdiya," in Rotberg ed., Rebellion in Black Africa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 14-15.

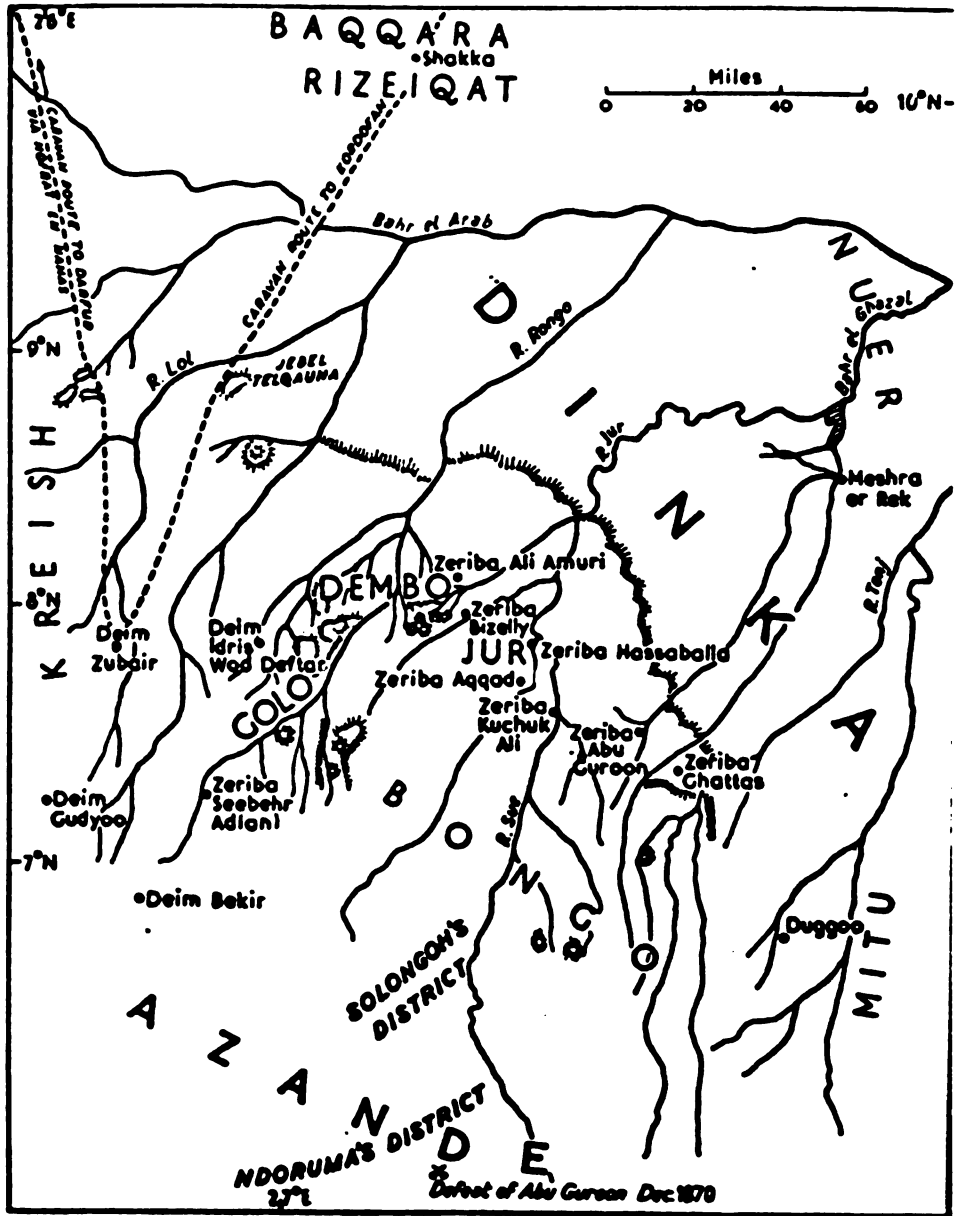
APPENDIX

Maps









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