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The Formation of Livelihood Strategies
in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan

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Household, Community, and Individual: The Formation of Livelihood Strategies in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan

By

Andrew Parks Davidson

Volume I

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
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1992

ABSTRACT

Household, Community, and Individual:
The Formation of Livelihood Strategies
in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan

By

Andrew Parks Davidson

This study explores the formation of various livelihood strategies advanced by households in three villages in the Nuba Mountains area of Western Sudan to ensure their survival in a rapidly changing socioeconomic environment. Five household types were constructed, each with differing access to and utilization of land, labor, and other means of production.

Households were differentiated on the basis of both capitalist and lineage modes of production, and through their degree and type of access to and utilization of land, labor, and other means of production. The forms of (re)production were capitalist agricultural producers with substantial non-agricultural business interests, petty commodity producers *not* able to withdraw from the market in times of adversity, lineage commodity producers able to withdraw from and enter the market at will, lineage non-commodity producers with minimal 'market' relations, and wage labor producers with supplemental agricultural production. The historical background of these villages was examined to clarify present conditions, particularly relations among and between the respective groups and the types of livelihood strategies they adopted in the past.

The unit of analysis assumed by this study was the household. In order to remain sensitive to the organizational imperatives and diverse forms that households assume in this region, various 'residential' units were recombined in the analysis to reflect their true measure of mutual consumption and/or production. These recombined households enabled a better understanding of seemingly incompatible 'livelihood' practices.

The research was carried out in three phases: 1) an initial survey of 12 villages which developed a profile of village types from which the three villages were selected; 2) a detailed household demographic and agricultural census survey was administered; and 3) a detailed study of select households through in-depth interviews. The first phase involved an interview schedule with village elders; the second a stratified random sample of 150 households; and the latter detailed histories of 20 households.

ANDREW PARKS DAVIDSON
1992

To Travis and Sarah, whose insights taught me the deeper meaning of compassion.

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My first few months were spent in Khartoum. At first I stayed in Michigan State University's 'rest house' thanks to Dr. Jeffrey Williams. Later I stayed with Khider Kadaki and his family and whenever I tired of rural life, I returned to Khider's home where I was always welcomed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1: OVERVIEW

The Nuba Mountains region of western Sudan, as elsewhere in the world, is undergoing enormously complex socioeconomic changes with far-reaching consequences to the well being of its people. Stimulated by a wide variety of forces, the processes of development are dramatically reshaping village life and connecting in ever more direct ways the 'life chances' of villagers to the burgeoning world economy. Of course, the Nuba Mountains has never been immune from external forces that have intruded into the Sudan and northeast Africa. The region's turbulent past is convincing evidence enough. Historically, the Nuba Mountains offered refuge to those displaced by episodic upheavals along the Nile river and elsewhere; this accounting in part for the diverse ethnic composition of its inhabitants. Interspersed on vast plains, the rugged mountain chains provided a natural haven from this or that empire or world-system. Despite the promise of sanctuary, the Nuba Mountains became a source of slaves and goods of local provenance as the strong preyed upon the weak, further unsettling the area. Later Anglo-Egyptian rule, bringing a halt to the internecine warfare, introduced cotton production to the fertile plains by relocating whole villages, frequently by force of arms, to the fertile plains below the mountain aeries. And now the steady encroachment of

mechanized agriculture and the spread of product and labor markets appears to press people either to expand the production of commodities or find alternatives outside of their villages.

Economic development of the Nuba Mountains, including the spread of capitalism, has been and continues to be uneven. One is immediately struck by the diversity of 'cultures' in the region, the varieties of settlements, and the wide array of economic activities. The unevenness is especially evident in the ways by which people are organized into work groups and living units. The division of labor within households varies markedly as do the techniques of production and the manner by which commodities are utilized and marketed. Questions immediately arise over how to effectively conceptualize and comprehend the variable nature of development that is quite clearly manifested in the disparate character of villages in the Nuba Mountain region.

Within this diverse milieu, Nuba Mountain villagers formulate livelihood strategies to maintain or enhance their welfare. Strategies, however, are not conceived at random, but reflect complex structural circumstances that are realized as opportunities or constraints at both the village and individual levels. Put another way, considerations arise over how to effectively draw together micro (individual agency) and macro (structured process) levels of analyses. Household, as

an intermediate construct, provides one means to integrate the two.

Essentially, a household may be defined as a group of individuals (seldom one) associated with a particular domicile whose livelihood efforts, in the broadest sense, are directed towards 'mutual' survival. The universal necessity of organizing 'domestic' activities, however, merely magnifies the multiplicity of ways these activities may be accomplished. Thus, we cannot expect households to necessarily exhibit similar organizational forms nor carry out the same activities to reproduce themselves over time.

The purpose of my research is two-fold: to recount the livelihood strategies advanced by individuals as members of households in this particular 'Third World' setting, and to better comprehend these strategies through the utilization of appropriate theoretical guidelines. This requires that we take account of the larger context and the forces that are shaping the region, and trace variant development processes through time and space. Three relatively specific research tasks are at hand: 1) categorizing households in ways that are appropriate to the range of domestic collectivities found in the Nuba Mountain region; 2) abstracting from observed behaviors the principle foci of social life and political economy in this region; and 3) furthering our understanding of the nature of agrarian transition and the extent of capitalist transformation in the Nuba Mountains.

My research attention will focus on three villages that more or less represent the variabilities of social life and economic activities in this diverse Nuba Mountain region of the Sudan.

1.2: THE PROBLEMATIC

Fieldwork is invariably preceded by the researcher's interest in specific theoretical issues. This account is no different; it reflects my own broad interests in the transformation of rural populations under wider economic pressures. The overarching concern of this study is with the effects of increased commodity production and a 'cash economy' on village life in the Nuba Mountains area of Western Sudan, or, more specifically, the expansion of capitalism into non-capitalist forms of production and social relations. The central aim is to analyze these changes through variations in livelihood strategies devised by households, and by examination of the structural factors affecting the form and function of households. Of course, a crucial element to understanding household livelihood strategies is the household's access to the means of production and its attendant organization. These serve as referents for the ensuing analysis. A guiding assumption, then, is that a household's access to and utilization of land, labor, technology, and other resources, such as off-farm employment, engenders specific sets of relations upon which the maintenance and reproduction of the household depends. This,

in turn, affords the basis, or normative framework, crucial to the formation of livelihood strategies and, in effect, determines their subsequent range of possibilities.

This study thus explores the various strategies set in motion by households in the Nuba Mountains to ensure their livelihoods in a rapidly changing socioeconomic environment. It would be a gross error, however, to assume that a household can and does make livelihood decisions; that a household is a conscious actor in its own right. On the other hand, the reification of household implies that it is a 'thing' and removes it from what it is--a particular set of structured social relationships which bind people. However, as soon as we mention individual in relation to household, we have forced a dichotomy. My sense of household precludes this because I am advancing household as a concept that joins individuals within a household unit such that the two are inextricably combined. Individuals form livelihood strategies and as members of households these strategies entail outcomes, favorable and otherwise, for other household members and the household as a whole.

The conceptualization of household is not without inherent difficulty, especially with regards to specifying membership, boundaries, and temporal development. How these issues are ultimately resolved holds great import for social analysis. The use of household as an organizing concept can provide a means to draw together two seemingly disparate

levels of analysis; society and the individual or, more reasonably, structure and actor. In other words, the actions of individuals are integrated into the broader underlying structural dynamics through the analysis of household as an important structural unit which mediates the two. After all, as Sorokin (1947: 40) so aptly wrote: "The most generic model of any sociocultural phenomenon is the meaningful interaction of two or more human individuals." The household, however, is but one sort of patterned relationship formed under the impress of the ongoing processes of wider social realities; other such structures include classes, political entities, ethnic groups, kinship collectivities, etc.

If we are to proceed constructively, we must arrive at a meaningful way of formulating a conception of household in reference to the wider economy while at the same time remaining sensitive to the dictates of the individual. A household should not be thought of as an aggregate of individuals, as the simple sum of its constituent members. While specified social relations are delineated as a condition of household membership, members are also bound up in social relationships outside of household affiliation, relations which may take precedence over those of the household. Household represents but one structural parameter; class, for example, presents another, and perhaps more commanding one. While Wallerstein (1981) claims that "Households are by definition one-class, since the component members of classes

are households and not individuals," to the contrary, individuals constitute classes although household members customarily also share the same class location. More importantly, individual members can also occupy more than one class position.[1]

In order to understand why households follow particular livelihood strategies, households need to be considered according to how they organize productive activities to ensure their reproduction. Of course this assumes that each household, through the class locations of its members, dictates of gender, possibilities of age, and responsibilities of kinship, has a certain set of material resources and, within these parameters, formulate livelihood strategies. The household filters the opportunities and constraints presented by the wider society, but always in conjunction with the needs, aspirations, and power of its respective members. How a household relates to that larger socioeconomic environment will affect the strategies its members can and do adopt. The strategies adopted will, in turn, equally affect the form and operation of the household--and ultimately its reproduction (or demise) over time.

A further consideration of this study revolves around the unevenness of the development process. Although this

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[1] Contrary to Wallerstein, households "can comprise members of different *classes*, as the (somewhat peculiar) cases of the Roman *familia* or the Greek *oikos* show, and as do more recent examples such as that of the American plantations" (Schiel 1984:105).

phenomenon is interpreted in many ways, social scientists remain perplexed over the continued presence, even resilience, of what is commonly termed the peasantry. Debates center around whether or not peasants are a result of capitalism or somehow remain apart. The point is some non-capitalist forms of production and social organization are seemingly able to withstand the pressures exerted by the wider capitalist economy, albeit in different ways and with different results, while others simply cannot. Over time significant and sometimes wrenching changes do occur which may expand or undermine the viability of both capitalist and non-capitalist forms of production. The theoretical issue which shapes the general orientation of this study is intended to specify the nature of rural transformation through an understanding of the forms of production of which households are a part. Yet while the primary unit of analysis is the household, broadly conceived, the research concerns must therefore also be addressed at the levels of individual, community, state, and even the world.

The complexities of such a project quickly become evident when confronted with the diverse household forms in the Nuba Mountains. Given this, the critical questions become: what are the conditions for their respective reproduction, on what dimensions do they intersect, and what consequences do they hold for class formation and subsequent livelihood strategies. In other words, what are the consequences of livelihood

strategies of participation by households in the capitalist economy through 1) commodity and non-commodity production; 2) formal and informal market activities; and 3) use of paid and unpaid labor. A central analytical challenge, then, is to identify the social and production relations in rural households and the structural 'logic' associated with their reproduction over time, not only with the structure of relations within households, but with the relationships between households and the wider socioeconomic environment as well. Optimally, of course, longitudinal data best coincide with this type of pursuit. Unfortunately, practicalities demanded a different course of action, namely cross-sectional research. In order to minimize the risks involved in drawing generalizations from this type of undertaking, sensitivity to variations in household livelihood strategies can be achieved through detailed comparative analysis.

1.3: REGIONAL CONTEXT

Though commodity production and participation in market activities are not new to the Nuba Mountains, in the past these were intermittent and sporadic at best. Regularized commodity production along with the routine sale of labor began in earnest only in the past few decades, especially after the early 1970s with the development of mechanized, rainfed farming under the auspices of the Mechanized Farming Corporation (MFC) and the Nuba Mountains Agricultural Production Corporation (NMAPC) (Mahmoud, 1984; Kursany, 1983;

Mohammed, 1982). These state-sponsored schemes were designed to modernize "traditional" agriculture. Earlier British colonial investment in Sudanese agriculture was primarily concentrated in the Gezira Scheme between the two Nile Rivers near Khartoum and was aimed at expanding cotton cultivation for export to Manchester textile mills (Barnett, 1977). In the main, the Nuba Mountains remained outside British economic interests, with the exception of limited attempts to promote cotton production through the distribution of seeds and collection of cotton (O'Brien, 1980). Presently, agricultural practices now include a complex pattern of production strategies, ranging from complete commercialization to household subsistence. Across the spectrum, however, farming has generally remained a small-scale enterprise.

The major crops of this area are sorghum (which is grown on 80 percent of the cultivated land), millet, sesame, groundnuts, cotton, and gum-Arabic (Mohammed, 1982). Although many basic agricultural activities have not changed, they have taken on added meaning within the context of a market economy. Sorghum and cotton serve as the main cash crops, while sesame and groundnuts primarily supply the local oil handicraft industry (Kursany, 1983). Sorghum is also important in the village exchange-barter system, is used for labor payments-in-kind, and is central to the *shayl* (money lending system).

Similarly, sesame has other "non-economic" functions and is used for such ceremonial purposes as dowry and brideprice (Badigian and Harlan, 1983). And, while ruminant production remains important, it is probably less so as a symbolic source of wealth and dietary supplement than as a marketable commodity in the regional markets and a hedge against the vagaries of the future.

Located in Southern Kordofan Province, the Nuba Mountains occupy an area about 250 km by 165 km. A plain of clay soil, broken by rugged granitic boulders (*jebels*) that vary in height and distribution, covers the region. The Nuba Mountains receive about 500 mm annual rainfall with the rainy season lasting from May to October (Mohammed, 1982). Although annual rainfall is not large and evaporation rates are high, water supply generally has been sufficient to supply crops to maturity (Badigian and Harlan, 1983). Nevertheless, the region is ecologically fragile, as recent drought conditions emphasize, thus requiring highly diversified agricultural practices to avoid disaster.

Recent studies have shown that the basic structure of agriculture is undergoing significant alteration. Traditionally, the most common form of land tenure was communal ownership with land distributed among village members, usually along lineage or kinship lines (Khalafalla, 1982; Hadari, 1974). Under this system, land is heritable but cannot be sold. Farmers usually cultivate two or three

non-adjacent plots, which combined are less than 10 feddans (1 feddan = 1.038 acres) (Mohammed, 1982). A small supplemental garden plot (*jubraka*) near the household compound is generally worked by women. During the past decade, state and private ownership of land have increased (Mahmoud, 1984; Kursany, 1983). In these forms, land usage is restricted to tenants of the MFC or NMAPC schemes or private owners. In addition, some private and, especially, state landholdings, which occupy thousands of feddans of arable land, are creating increasing conflict over access to land and have resulted in the displacement of numerous pastoralists and "peasant" agriculturalists (Shepard, 1983). In addition, the expansion of mechanized farming has "squeezed" resources, pushing small cultivators into areas that have become marginal as their natural fertility is sapped.

The composition of the labor force is also undergoing major changes. Although family labor is still the most important source, wage labor is slowly replacing the communal labor exchange system (*nafir*) (O'Brien, 1980). Increasingly, some household members are finding it necessary to devote more of their time to laboring off the farm In fact, according to Kursany (1983), over 50 percent of active family members sell their labor power at some point in the year, while over one-quarter resort to hiring outside wage labor for production activities. Reasons for this include the increasing nuclearization of the family household unit, competing

off-farm employment opportunities, and production of commodities for market. For example, the *nafir* is generally used only to assist in the production of subsistence crops and not crops for sale in the market, payment being in-kind. Moreover, the *nafir*, in the main, is limited to labor-intensive activities such as weeding and harvesting, while wage labor can be used for all activities. As a result, "push" factors are re-enforced while "pull" factors multiply.

Technological changes are also evidenced by the spread of both government-sponsored mechanization schemes and privately rented tractors directed at small farmers. This has altered the traditional division of labor, although its full implications have not been well documented (O'Brien, 1983). These changes--plus the spread of small village-based mechanized flour mills, relatively inexpensive consumer goods, the commercialized sale of water, and state taxation--have created a greater need for cash income (Khalafalla, 1982). In effect, this necessitates the sale of labor and/or commodities for cash. As a result of increased cash needs, many farm households find that even after a good harvest, seldom is there enough to see them through to the following year. Some households find that they must "mortgage" their crop for credit to the village merchant (*shayl*) at a price below market value (Kursany, 1983). In many instances, this practice leads to the merchant gaining control over the household's production and marketing decisions.

1.4: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The aim of my research is to analyze variations in household livelihood strategies through deriving household categories that are embedded within wider structural realities. Problems arise in the course of integrating theory with empirical observation, especially noticeable in explanations of agrarian transformations and its affects on rural differentiation. Just how do people cope? And what is the 'logic' behind these 'coping' strategies?

Scott (1976), forwarding the cause of moral economy, suggests, from his study of Southeast Asia, that the transition to a market-oriented economy further reduces the economic viability of the poorer families in a village, enhancing only the "life chances" of the wealthy. Popkin (1979), on the other hand, argues the case of rational economy and concludes from his study of Vietnam that the commercialization of agriculture increases opportunities for rural families to improve their welfare and security. I suspect that the answer is much more complex and cannot be easily reduced to questions of moral vs. rational economy.[2] As Cooper (1981:309) recognizes in the African context:

> It is...questionable to see 'proletarianization' as the last stage of a direct sequence: independent cultivator to peasant to impoverished cultivator to worker. Some peasants did not become workers; some cultivators became workers because they could not become peasants; some

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[2] This basic argument is hardly new, merely reformulated. It is possible to trace these back to Durkheim's social "solidarity" and Weber's "rationality."

> workers became peasants. Some areas that were the least connected to export markets before the colonial era became the leading suppliers of workers, while some of the most incorporated were the least 'proletarianized'.

Unfortunately, information on what is commonly termed "peasant" agriculture in the rainlands of Western Sudan and its dynamics of production is scanty, particularly for the Nuba Mountains. One of the goals of this research, then, is to help close a gap in the literature.

A major difficulty in understanding "Third World" economies, such as that in the Nuba Mountains, is the coexistence and combination of heterogeneous forms of production and exchange (e.g., see Goodman and Redcliff, 1981). Previous approaches to researching household as well as individual livelihood strategies have been inadequately conceptualized. Disagreements center around how these multiform economies are to be conceived, the choice of analytical tools, and the role of social structure on the formation of livelihood strategies. The way these conceptual problems are resolved, however, is critical to the understanding of livelihood strategies in the Nuba Mountains.

Sadly, the dominant trend in researching livelihood strategies focusses almost exclusively on agricultural production and its attendant decision-making process. Strategies are subsequently conceived of as rational conscious decisions by individuals. Whether or not decisions are rational is not the issue, rather the 'logic' underlying rationality must be opened to further consideration. Logic,

in this sense, is not cognitive but indelibly social, embedded within the wider 'society.' Decisions acquire meaning only in their social context. As Berthoud (1979: 131-132) explains, "Although individuals present behavioral variations, they are determined by their positions in the power structures (economic, political, and ideological), and their actions can be understood only within an analysis of *social relations* which should not be confused with interpersonal or intersubjective relations."

A more useful starting point is to consider how people secure their means of subsistence and, more generally, how they earn their livelihoods. In these terms, an individual's objective class position(s) compels him/her to labor or not to labor, to be a producer or a non-producer. Aside from this, those in dominant positions seek to maintain and even to expand their wealth and power, while those who must toil similarly attempt to do this, but within the confines of much more restricted 'opportunities.' Moreover, depending on an individual's specific class location, various class fractions emerge, initiating both inter- and intra-class struggle. Depending on the historical forms that class struggle assumes, different livelihood practices command different meanings and loyalties among their adherents. While recognizing that substantive inquiries do have certain inherent limitations, nevertheless, people do act according to different 'logics,'

though logics which are ineluctably grounded in the broader structural considerations.

Livelihood strategies are thus not always deliberate outcomes of conscious decisions; often they are the products of unintended consequences or arrived at by following the dictates of customary 'wisdom.' It is not uncommon to have someone respond, when asked why a particular activity is done: "We have always done it this way." The point is, individual action, concomitant with social structure, often preclude conscious purposive thought. Human agency is important but structural preponderates are equally important, and at times more so. It is difficult to swim against the tides of 'convention.'

Common misconceptions concerning livelihood strategies also stem, in part, from the exigencies extolled by the many varieties of modernization theory. Neoclassical paradigms characterize the agricultural sector of such economies in terms of a discrete dualism (Johnston and Kilby, 1975). "Traditional" practices are thus represented as a simplified version of a more complex system observed in a "modern" economy, the difference being attributed more to degree than to kind (Upton, 1973). Analysis is then brought to bear on such issues as profit maximization, productivity differentials, and technological application. These types of approaches, particularly farm management and farming systems research, then focus on individually guided subjective utility

(Johnson, 1981; Collinson, 1972). When applied to farm household production, they therefore fail to consider the wider socioeconomic relevance of these processes.

Other less conventional approaches which attempt to incorporate a broader sociological perspective into the analysis of household production strategies center on the individual within a system of arbitrarily ranked social strata (Barlett, 1980a; Gartrell, 1977; Garbett, 1975). While attention does shift from "individual economic motivation to the social organization" (Meyers, 1982), these studies tend to create models of hierarchical gradations rather than processural relations. Consequently, little consideration is given social and production relations outside of a static stratification analysis. They present production decisions, for example, solely as a function of economic position and "ability to adopt" in an otherwise undifferentiated environment. As such, these studies focus on the characteristics of the "innovator," such as education, age, sex, etc., in addition to basic household demographic features, without considering the basis of their social relevance (Barlett, 1980b, 1980c). This ignores the matrix of personal and social obligations and responsibilities as well as the relations of exploitation which also shape decisions.

These attempts to incorporate a broader sociological perspective into the analysis of decision making, nonetheless, still center on the individual, albeit within the parameters

of the household. What we see is the individual writ large, the household equated with the household head, which ultimately excludes the activities and contributions of other household members. "Decision making analysis," as Barry (1984: 7) succinctly notes, "tends to downplay, or ignore, relationships among economic actors--which may be crucial for understanding their behavior."

These approaches thus often fail to illustrate how rural households develop livelihood (as opposed to just production) strategies and how qualitatively different economic activities are combined. A more useful theory is afforded by the historical materialist perspective. The guiding concept of this perspective is "mode of production" (Binsbergen and Geschiere, 1986; Kahn and Llobera, 1981; Seddan, 1977).

A mode of production is an analytical construct that characterizes a society by its productive forces (i.e., labor, technique, and technology) and social relations of production; it is the latter which are considered to regulate the use of the former by specifying access to and control over them. In addition, the social relations shape the social form of product appropriation. By its very nature, a mode of production provides the logic, the organizing principle, for the subsequent formation of social life, from which develops a way of making sense of the world (ideology-culture) and a means for maintaining compliance (politico-juridical). Consequently, the structural dynamics which underlie both

household and individual livelihood decisions are emphasized. But, while recognizing that different modes manifest their own unique sets of social relations, this perspective runs the risk of considering livelihood strategies within non-capitalist modes as being formed solely in response to the historically determining role of capitalism by way of mechanically derived "laws of motion." Clarification of this is my main theoretical concern.

The analytical tools provided by a mode of production perspective will be used in this study, but consideration will be given to how modes interact and modify each other (Rey, 1982). Unquestionably, the concept of mode of production is difficult to operationalize as it can not be induced and constructed on the basis of empirical evidence alone; rather it is a complex that must also be constructed deductively along theoretical lines. For this reason, attention will be focused on the "form of production" as a central concept for the analysis of agrarian social relations (Friedmann, 1980; Bernstein, 1979). In advancing form of production, Friedmann maintains the integrity of the household by use of "double specification" of the internal characteristics of the household and the external characteristics of the "social formation." Her approach thus allows for heterogeneous household forms based on their internal relations while remaining sensitive to the overall conditioning pressures of the encompassing social formation.

Broadly, this approach is used to identify the critical technical and social variables operating within households. This way, even residence of household members, demographic composition, and kinship also become potential elements of strategies, not just what is planted and who engages in what type of labor. At the village level, this approach specifies the structural linkages which internally differentiate and externally connect variant households while within the larger society, it vertically positions these households.

The theoretical orientation advocated here should not be confused with that of Chayanov (1924), or its later developments, most notably Sahlins (1974). That perspective conflates mode of production with the unit of production, leading to a crude reductionism such that the household is assumed to be a microcosm of society and, hence, universally valid. However, as noted by Long (1984: 6), concentration solely on the internal dynamics of the household forces a homogeneous depiction of the "peasantry" and explains "changes in the composition and economic organization of the household mainly in terms of internal demographic and social processes," to the neglect of the "impact of forces external to the household itself."

This type of analysis, rather than considering agricultural production as separate from other livelihood considerations, explores it as an integral component of the household's maintenance and reproduction over time. Depending

upon circumstances, changes within the wider economy may broaden or limit opportunities for diversification of livelihood strategies, and may reinforce or weaken older forms of social organization. Each element of a household's strategy conditions and, in turn, is conditioned by the other. The mode/form of production, moreover, creates its own social and organizational constraints to the expansion or intensification of various economic activities. The presence of external opportunities, however, provides competing alternatives within which households may diversify, change, or abandon current strategies. The ability to alter present strategies is, nonetheless, shaped by strategies previously adopted in response to then-prevailing socioeconomic and physical conditions.

1.5: LOGIC OF INQUIRY

Methodological tools must take into account the situation at hand and yet remain compatible with theoretical objectives. Flexibility and consistency are no easy matters. But how we maintain a useful balance has great import for our research. At this juncture, the logic undergirding our method is all important, for it must be a logic consistent with our objectives and theoretical perspectives. Theory and method, after all, are indissolubly connected.

Possibly one of the most contentious issues to emerge from Marx's contributions to the social sciences is his

methodological logic--the dialectic.[3] The purpose of scientific inquiry is to produce knowledge of phenomenal existence, both as it 'appears' and as it 'really' is. That these are not identical is the reason for science because, as Marx (1959: 817) noted, "all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of a thing directly coincided." Investigation should involve uncovering the essential characteristics, structure, and history of an object of inquiry. Knowledge is concerned, therefore, with neither idealist philosophical speculation nor empiricist causal prediction. On the one hand, formal logic studies purely analytical relations, with the result that thought is concerned solely with itself (Lefebvre, 1968: 21). In a sense, formalism rids itself of content and achieves independence of form, which subsequently finds universal applicability. On the other hand, empiricism reveals a bias wherein all 'facts', in and of themselves, and regardless of the context, derive meaning from fragmented and momentary 'reality'. This results from the compulsion to reduce all phenomena to their quantitative form, and to express them solely as numerical relations. Both versions suffer serious shortcomings. After all, form devoid of content is meaningless, while content without form lacks identity. At

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[3] In his *Collected Works*, Lenin (1972:319) remarked that "if Marx did not leave behind him a *Logic*, he did leave behind the logic of *Capital*, and this ought to be utilized in full".

the heart of Marx's methodology, to the contrary, is a two-fold analysis which is at once "deductive and inductive--logical and historical" (Lenin, 1972: 329). This demands that we work back and forth between cause and effect, abstract and concrete, and above all, form and content.

Marx regarded the method of abstraction to be the correct form of inquiry, but where "the concrete was both the 'real starting point' and the final goal of knowledge" (Mandel, 1975: 14). In the Grundrisse, Marx (1973: 101) wrote that "the method of rising from the abstract to the concrete is the only way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproduces it as the concrete in the mind". But as Lenin further pointed out, thought progressing from the abstract to the concrete is preceded by its opposite; "from the concrete to the abstract" (Lenin, 1972: 323). This interplay between the abstract and the concrete lies at the heart of the categories we eventually construct, and is where most problems regarding their conceptualization and usage surface. Banaji (1977: 7), in a brilliantly conceived article, specifically draws attention to the conflation of levels of abstraction and to the ensuing "methodology of forced abstractions" which generalizes materialist concepts within an empiricist framework that carries essentialist implications. Banaji illustrates his argument by noting that when Marx uses *Productionsweise* (mode of production), he does so with different and distinct meanings, depending upon the level of

abstraction and point of reference. The failure to understand this, according to Banaji (1977: 6-7), led Dobb, by reason of "virtual identity", to erroneously equate forms of exploitation with mode of production, such that wage-labor denoted capitalism. Not only does this ignore the relational aspect (and thus contradiction) between wage-labor and capital, it also undercuts the importance of historical specificity.

Scientific investigation grounded in the dialectic proceeds by what Sweezy (1942: 11) termed "the method of 'successive approximations'" and consists "in moving from the more abstract to the more concrete in a step-by-step fashion," with increasing consideration paid to the historical situation in all its complexity.[4] By progressively detailing the essential characteristics of actual phenomena, we are able to retain insights gained at every previous step. In this way, "the concrete is the concrete because it is a synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unity of diverse aspects" (Marx, 1970: 206). Accordingly, simple or general categories give way to complex categories, which ultimately enable us to distinguish the decisive mediations between essence and phenomenal appearance. Mediation should not be

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[4] As Marx (1973:105) notes in his example of labor: this "shows strikingly how even the most abstract categories, despite their validity--precisely because of their abstractness--for all epochs, are nevertheless, in the specific character of this abstraction, themselves likewise a product of historic relations, and possess their full validity only for and within these relations."

confused with intermediate connection; the latter exists external to the object while the former is in the object itself (Adorno, cited in Jay, 1973: 333). Mediation, like change, is an emergent process and forms a unity with essence and appearance. Therefore, it is equally wrong to dismiss appearance as so much unnecessary 'baggage', because, as Adorno decisively points out, "appearances are dialectical: to reject all appearance is to fall completely under its sway" (*ibid*: 82). Appearance is an integral part of the essence, in the same way that price represents the phenomenal form of value. It is for us to discover the connection.

Operationally, the clearest expression of the dialectical practice is offered by Mandel (1975: 16-17) and is as follows:

1) comprehensive appropriation of empirical material,

2) separation of material into its abstract elements,

3) discernment of the general connections between elements in order to elucidate the abstract laws of motion,

4) determination of the decisive intermediate links affecting mediation between essence and surface phenomena,

5) practical empirical verification of steps 2, 3, and 4 in developing a dynamics of concrete history, and

6) application of the knowledge gained which leads to further discoveries of new and relevant empirical data.

Thus, the logic of the dialectic directly relates back to historical materialism.

1.6: FIELD RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The information gathering approaches chosen for this study were tailored to meet the specific requirements of doing research in the Nuba Mountains, about which there are very scanty data. Three basic procedures were adapted; survey techniques, focused interviews, and quasi-participant observation. Fieldwork was carried out over a period of 20 months (1986-87). There were four phases, though with many elements conducted concurrently as dictated by matters of convenience, necessity and time demands: 1) documentary research and interviews with relevant officials; 2) an initial survey of 12 villages to establish a profile of villages; 3) a detailed household survey administered to 150 respondents in three villages; and 4) in-depth, open-ended interviews with members of 22 of the 150 households within the three villages.

The information collected represents a rich blend of qualitative and quantitative information. Clear qualitative data help strengthen generalizations derived from quantitative data by fleshing out the analysis. While quantitative data lend themselves to uncovering patterns of structure, we run the risk of overrunning their deeper contextual meaning without collaborating qualitative information. The qualitative meaning can serve to verify the validity of quantitative data, as well as underscore the importance of human agency.

FIELD SITUATION

Needless to say, phase one continued throughout the research period, especially during those times when I was prevented by the authorities from leaving the confines of Kadugli, the provincial capital of Southern Kordofan. Movement within the province became increasingly difficult as the Civil War escalated and made its presence felt in the southern half of the region. Nonetheless, I was able to complete the necessary fieldwork though the delays forced me to innovate. For example, at one point, unable to go to the village of Shatt Damam, I located and interviewed seasonal migrants from that village on a *jebel* near Kadugli in order to gain a different understanding of the context of this type of migration. At another time, when traveling north to Dilling or El-Obeid was generally not hampered, I revised my schedule to interview officials in Agricultural Extension, Mechanized Farming Corporation, CARE, and OXFAM. Thus, while the not too infrequent delays in journeying south of Kadugli proved cumbersome, they were not insurmountable.

It would be nice to say that this was the only difficulty I encountered. But for those who know the Sudan, especially in these troubled time, that simply was not the case. Aside from the bouts of malaria which I endured, I had a tenuous relation with certain officials in the security branch of the police. They had a difficult time understanding what a lone American was doing in Southern Kordofan studying agriculture

and village life. While this seemed a plausible endeavor to them as long as activities were restricted to 'safe' areas like the Gezira, it simply was not done here. This was particularly true for those areas south of Kadugli where Islam looses its grip, Arabs and Arabized Nuba become outnumbered, and pork and *marissa* (beer made from *dura*) are routinely consumed. They were further confused by the fact that I was not connected to one of the *khawaaja* (foreigner) organizations such as UNICEF. Consequently, a frequent question put to me by the head of security for South Kordofan was: "What are you really doing here? You can tell me."

Food also presented a problem--not eating it, but finding it. At times it simply disappeared from the *suq* (market) in Kadugli, even such staples as bread. In many of the households of the villages where I was kindly offered living arrangements, we were often reduced to eating *baleela*, which is *dura* soaked in water to increase its bulk, as well as *moletta* (a common weed) in the absence of anything else. Nevertheless, the kindness and generosity accorded to me by my hosts in the villages (as well as Sudanese people in general) left an indelible impact on my life which can never be forgotten.

It is easy to understand how a 'hoarding mentality' takes shape under such conditions. If an item showed up in the *suq* it was bought if there were even the remotest possibility that it would be needed in the future. Of course the tendency to

"buy cheap and sell dear" also presented a recurring problem for future buyers. For example, motor oil went from 35£ Sudanese per gallon to 250£ over the span of 3 months. Even matches and soap went from 50 and 75 piasters to 1.00£ and 1.50£ Sudanese respectively during this same time. Shortages affected everyone but the most insulated.

INITIAL TWELVE VILLAGE SURVEY

The initial village survey phase began soon after my arrival in Kadugli. It was composed of a specified set of open-ended questions and administered informally to village elders *en masse*. Twelve villages were selected on the basis of preliminary research and extensive consultation with relevant individuals such as Ahmed Al-Dirdiri, Director of Sudan's Agricultural Extension; Mohammed Abu Sabah, chief sociologist at Western Sudan Agricultural Research Project (WSARP); and Sid Ahmed Beteik, agricultural economist at WSARP. These villages, located throughout the Nuba Mountains, captured various elements of Nuba 'society'; the 'sample' was **not** meant to be exhaustive or random. Specifically, the survey was intended to establish differences in village structures and social organization, including access to markets, water supply, land holding patterns, labor utilization, intensity of out-migration, religious affiliations, and presence of matrilinear and patrilinear institutions. Not only did this give me a better understanding of the Nuba Mountains, it also facilitated the

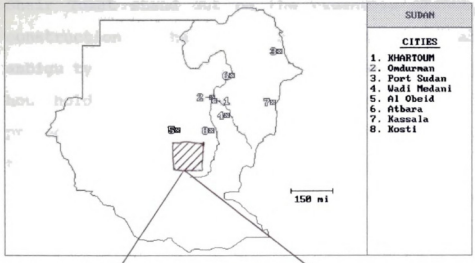
subsequent selection of three villages for further intensive study.

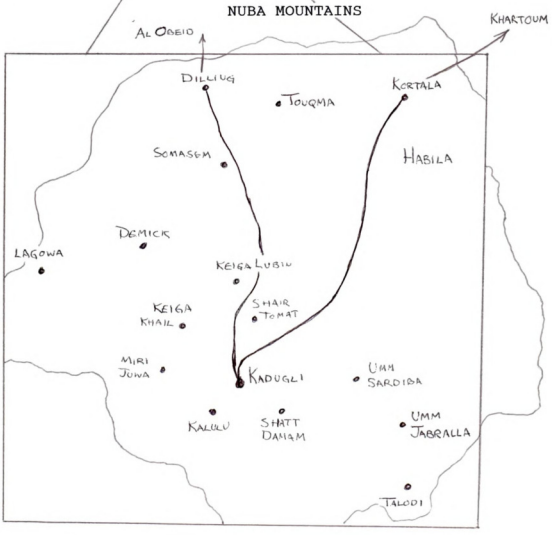
SELECTION OF THREE VILLAGES

In the course of fieldwork, the researcher is faced with a dilemma: when does the point of diminishing returns mitigate the benefits gained from enlarging the study area. In part, this rests on the types of questions the research seeks to answer. For me, one village, a case study, was not sufficient. While understanding household strategies in a single village, it was not possible to generalize outside of that context or to fully explore the significance of different household strategies. In drawing conclusions, two villages lend more confidence by enabling a deeper understanding of important structural variations. Still, there is insufficient variation to provide adequate insight into larger processes which shape strategies. This comes only with increased variation in structural conditions. And while four villages may have contributed to increased generalizability, advantages fell short of the additional 'headache' encountered in managing such a project, let alone in analyzing the data.

The three villages studied were Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam. The villages lie roughly on a north/south continuum extending from Dilling to Kadugli (see Figure 5.1, p. 32). To the casual visitor, the most visible differences among the villages have to do with their topography which partially tells the story of their settlement, of their

FIGURE 1.1: MAP OF THE NUBA MOUNTAINS





inhabitants departure from the mountain havens. Somasem and Shair Tomat stand out on the expansive plains, while the construction of Shatt Damam reflects its residents continued ambiguity towards the world outside. The majority of householders here reside on the rugged slopes of the protective *jebels*, with only a few living quarters erected on the plains floor near the market center. In part, the answer abides in the fact that the Shatt have few far farms to draw them further afield as did the Ghulfan of Somasem. Nor were they forcefully relocated as were the original inhabitants of Shair Tomat. Still, the Shatt remain leery of 'alien intrusion' and retain a high cultural attachment to their ancestral *dar* or homeland.

Upon careful observation, the routine of village life discloses the story of incorporation into the capitalist world system. Although not complete, capitalist social relations have established specific patterns of activities which the village inhabitants readily recognize as new ways of doing things; namely the regularized buying and selling of products, services, and labor-power. Tractors plough vast tracts of land which necessitates the hiring of labor; lorries haul commodities and villagers to market; tea is steeped for those too busy to do so themselves; brideprice increasingly requires the addition of store-bought goods; family, friends, and neighbors periodically or permanently leave the village confines in search of profit; and so on. All involve the

mediation of money and hence the need for it. Some people look contemptuously on these new social relations, fearful of the consequences on the old way of life. Others see them as wonderful new opportunities and avidly pursue them with the zeal of missionaries, labeling apostates as backwards. Still others feeling the squeeze from the encroachment of new economic realities find little alternative and reluctantly enter the labor and product markets. No one is without an opinion on the subject and few have escaped its effects altogether. Table 1.1 depicts the mechanisms of capitalist incorporation of the three villages, taking note of the primary types of labor-power extraction and the dominant source of capital penetration into the village economies.

TABLE 1.1: TYPOLOGY OF THE THREE VILLAGES

Village	Primary Mechanisms of Capitalist Incorporation
Somasem	semi-skilled labor & private individual capital
Shair Tomat	skilled labor & government capital (NMAC[5])
Shatt Damam	unskilled labor & merchant capital

The selection of the three villages centered primarily on the basis of differences in access to and utilization of land, labor, and technology. As agriculture is the dominant activity in this region, it was assumed that factors affecting its organization would exert the greatest impact on household livelihood strategies. Labor thus provides immediate insight

[5] Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation.

into the structuration of the village and indicates a household's general economic orientation. Table 1.2 displays percentages for types of labor used for main farm cropping activities and the mean size of the main farm. The **percentages in bold** indicate the dominant source of labor for the particular village. Family labor is always important and should be noted in relation to wage and *nafir*. Somasem farmers employing tractors do not perform a first weeding as plowing makes this task unnecessary. The three villages were matched in all other respects insofar as possible. Commonalities included approximate distance to regional markets (market and employment opportunities), agricultural services (such as extension), village services (education, flour mills, and water), and the presence of a general store (local merchants). Of the three villages, Shatt Damam appeared to be the least directly affected by the expansion of capitalism into the Nuba Mountains, while Somasem exhibited extensive capitalist social relations. Shair Tomat fit somewhere in between.

TABLE 1.2: SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR FOR MAIN FARM CROPPING ACTIVITIES BY VILLAGE. Percent of *feddans* cultivated and sacks of sorghum/millet threshed by type of labor.

	Somasem			Shair Tomat			Shatt Damam		
Activity	FL	WL	NL	FL	WL	NL	FL	WL	NL
clear	69.9	**29.3**	0.8	**91.1**	7.4	1.5	62.2	20.9	**16.9**
plow	8.6	**90.7**	0.7	**65.7**	34.3	0.0	78.8	12.9	**8.3**
1st weed	71.7	2.4	25.9	67.2	14.6	18.2	42.5	22.1	**35.4**
2nd weed	36.9	**53.6**	9.5	**82.4**	12.0	5.5	83.9	10.6	5.5
harvest	65.7	**61.0**	3.3	**82.1**	12.6	5.3	51.6	14.1	**34.3**
thresh	22.2	**74.2**	3.6	**67.1**	28.8	4.1	62.6	19.0	**18.4**

FL=family labor WL=wage labor NL=*nafir* labor

In summary form, the respective villages may be characterized accordingly.

1. **Somasem:** The inhabitants of Somasem are 'Arabized' Nuba and have lost much of their earlier 'Nuba' past. At 16.2 *feddans*, the mean size of main farms is the largest of the three villages. Not surprisingly, the use of tractors is widespread. Farmers generally rely on wage labor for most but the easiest agricultural tasks. By lorry, this village lies four hours north of Kadugli or one and a half south of Dilling, on the tarmac road connecting the two. Somasem is situated on the plains, though the majority of its settlers relocated here from surrounding *jebels* to be near their main farms. This occurred only after the cessation of violence permitted a degree of security for those opting to remain on the more fertile land.

2. **Shair Tomat:** Shair Tomat was established in 1932, approximately, when the British relocated a group of Hawazma Arabs residing in Daloka with instructions to 'take up farming'. The main farms' mean size is 13.2 *feddans* and are worked primarily with family labor. While the use of tractors is considerable, it remains limited to cotton fields plowed by the Nuba Mountains Agricultural Corporation (NMACP) at Kadugli. This village, one and a half hours north-northeast of Kadugli by lorry, is the most difficult to reach. While it is possible to get there by lorry during the dry season, generally one gets off at the tarmac road running between Kadugli and Dilling and walks in.

3. Shatt **Damam:** Although it is changing, Shatt Damam still retains strong vestiges of its matrilinear past and remains predominantly 'African' in its 'cultural' orientation. The mean size of main farms is the smallest of the three villages at 5.4 *feddans*, and is worked by hand with extensive use of *nafir* labor. This is a relatively old village, approximately one hour by lorry south of Kadugli, on a seasonal road.

THREE VILLAGE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

The third phase consisted of a household census survey administered to 150 householders and was based on a proportional stratified sample. The questionnaire items were designed to capture various aspects of household structures. Aside from composition, I was interested in such items as origin and migration experiences of the household head, access to and utilization of production resources, off-farm employment experiences, household-owned business enterprises, disposition of agricultural and non-agricultural products, overall composition of income, migration by type and duration, and inter-household relations.

A difficulty in analyzing household strategies is the confusion over unit of observation and unit of analysis. The residence unit is a unit of observation, while the unit of analysis is a household. What I am suggesting is that the residence unit is only the starting point for unraveling and constructing a household. Our ultimate goal, however, is not to dwell on residence *per se* but to deconstruct residence and reconstruct household as a meaningful unit of analysis. Residences are merely a physical boundary while household must allow us to explore the meaning of that boundary and

therefore, shift from physical proximity as the criteria of the household to the concept of membership itself as a foundation of the household. What this allows is going beyond an *a priori* construct of household to exploring the variability of that boundary.

Initially, each residential unit was questioned as to membership, age and sex of members, number of *feddans* farmed/owned, and number and types of ruminants.[6] In order to ensure accuracy of the enumeration of residential units, the results were checked against the village sugar rationing lists and any discrepancies discussed with the village *sheikhs*. At this time, I also separated male from female headed residences. Female headed residences included divorcees, widows, and females whose spouses either were long-term migrants or who had abandoned them. Following this, I stratified residential units by landholding size and/or by numbers of ruminants, as well as by those with substantial business interests. A purposive sample was thus possible for the selection of the respondents by sex of residential head and by the 'crude' wealth indicator.

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[6] This included pigs for the village of Shatt Damam. Getting an accurate number of animals, especially cows, can prove very difficult. In order to cross check this I frequently would go to the *seraf* (watering hole) and question the young men as to whose animals they were tending and then make a count. Other times it was possible to cross check this from information gained from other relatives or neighbors. Needless to say, sometimes I was left with deflated numbers.

During this phase I began to recompose residential units into households, moving beyond the requirement of physical residence to a criteria which reflected a certain regularized degree of consumption, production and reproduction, as well as a shared feeling of 'belongingness.' The major difficulty of such a task cannot be overstated because since the criteria themselves are also part of livelihood strategies, they do not remain constant. This necessitated careful questioning on both quantitative and qualitative dimensions with both residential heads and local village informants. In this manner, I picked up some migrants who otherwise might have been excluded, grouped together separate residences into single households, and split residences into separate households even though they were located within the same compound.[7] The recomposed households make the analysis of livelihood strategies more comprehensible and subsequent patterns of residence more reflective of the dynamic and fluid quality of households. Aside from the occasional migrant, the bulk of the recomposition of households was accomplished during the enumeration of residences. Table 1.3 illustrates the final sample drawn from the population of households.

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[7] This point cannot be overstated. In the Nuba Mountains, for example, many husbands are forced to seek their livelihoods in distant locations such as Khartoum. Due to the difficulty of domestic travel, travel to their home villages may be infrequent. Yet this should not automatically preclude household membership. Moreover, a migrant may maintain a household in his village and yet be part of a separate household in the capital.

TABLE 1.3: SAMPLING DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY VILLAGE AND SEX. (Population figures are in parenthesis.)

	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
Male	46 (128)	23 (32)	50 (187)	118 (348)
Female	14 (36)	7 (12)	10 (27)	32 (74)
TOTAL	60 (164)	30 (44)	60 (214)	150 (422)

The completion of the survey portion required six months, during which I moved back and forth between the villages. I rarely completed an interview in less than three sessions, in part to strengthen validity checks and also because the instrument was rather lengthy. The core of data collected throughout this phase provided a basis for establishing structures of social relations. Information was collected on individuals, but as members of households. Individuals or individual behavior per se, in and of themselves, reveal little of consequence for social analysis, rather my concern is with social relationships set against the backdrop of structure and process. In the end, the unit of study is social relationships, and not the individual.

CASE STUDIES WITHIN THE THREE VILLAGES

Lastly, a detailed analysis of 22 households provided an in-depth means to contextualize and interpret social relationships. Informal questions over the duration of the fieldwork guided this phase and covered household consumption, both monetary and non-monetary, authority relations, inheritance patterns, and so on. Obviously, this provided a

wealth of contextual information on the households and villages; as a source of verification, amplification, and explanation of the survey phase. Measurement errors were minimized by use of the "random visiting" technique; at times interviews were conducted while sipping tea in a *hosh* (domestic compound's 'courtyard'), accompanying people to their fields, or working alongside farmers. This broader comprehension of the structural parameters conditioning households allowed me to 1) understand variations in earlier household strategies, 2) explain variation in present household strategies, and 3) determine factors affecting shifts in household strategies over time.

1.7: THE PROBLEMATIC REVISITED

To resummarize the problematic, I am arguing that household, despite its conceptual vagaries, sustains sufficient commonality in usage to derive an effective unit of analysis. As a specific cluster of social relations, household assumes a universal presence, though not necessarily in its organizational forms nor the activities its members undertake in its name. Needless to say, households appear in a remarkable array of diversity across space and time. Consequently, we begin with household as a generalized notion rather than attempt a composite image that can account for all households, past, present, and future. In other words, although households may share certain basic similarities, they are not necessarily historically the same nor should we expect

them to be. At this level of abstraction, I propose that household be characterized as a site of biological and social reproduction. Beyond this, appropriation of empirical material enables us to discern specific types of households. Clarification of this comprises an important aim of this study.

Household presents one means by which individuals are grouped, although an especially important one where small-scale production predominates, reproducing the household as an effective site of both production and reproduction. In addition, by approaching household as a 'middle-level' construct, empirical variations can become more manageable and still accommodate theoretical exigencies. This requires that we understand the peoples who make up households, as well as the setting of their daily lives. In this way we expect to see different household forms and functions. Above all, household formation and dissolution is an active process that is identifiable through its constituent activities that are reflected in the livelihood strategies 'adopted' by the respective households.

The case of the Nuba Mountains also presents an opportunity to understand how, at least in this instance, capitalism penetrates non-capitalist production and social relations. And for our purposes, how individuals as members of households respond to the new opportunities and constraints presented by capitalist encroachment on everyday life is an

important line of inquiry. Accordingly, we will be able to shed light on the general process of rural transition and the notion of peasantry. I thus seek to illustrate a means for the deductive theorization of those who comprise small-scale household production, providing a way to conceptually differentiate simple commodity producers from so-called 'peasants.' This requires a greater understanding of articulation of modes of production, including the levels at which modes are to be conceptualized. And since my goal is to analyze the structural basis of the parameters regulating the conditions within which household livelihood strategies are formed, historical specificity demands the study of 'real' instances. Hence, the shift from mode to form of production necessitates a major shift in the level of abstraction, from conceptual to concrete analysis. My focus on household and mode/form of production generates a mechanism to interpret livelihood strategies without disregarding human agency.

1.8: ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The foremost task is to develop a broad understanding of what households look like and what its members do. Chapter II thus provides a theoretical discussion of household as well as initial empirical observations of surveyed households in the three villages. The historical description in Chapter III provides a basis to formulate a theoretical framework within which to locate our empirical starting-point by outlining the historical development and ecological context of the Nuba

Mountains. Chapters IV, V, and VI respectively deal with: 1) mode of production and social totality, as well as the concrete forms these structures assume; 2) the extent of capitalist penetration in the region through examination of twelve villages; and 3) construction of categories of household (re)production and class locations of individuals. The preceding chapters supply the grounding and categories of households necessary to effectively analyze livelihood strategies in Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam. The results are reported in Chapter VII, VIII, and IX. The concluding chapter is not really a conclusion in the sense of a perfunctory summation, but an effort to weave together the disparate threads of the various chapters so that important inferences can be drawn.

CHAPTER II

HOUSEHOLDS, ACTIVITIES, AND LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

At first glance, the identification of households in the Nuba Mountains seems to be a straight forward, if not perfunctory procedure. On the surface each domestic compound imparts the sense that they are easily isolable into household entities and hence understandable. Perhaps it is the repetitive, obvious appearance of 'domestic compounds' which renders their enumeration seemingly unproblematic. There are observable differences; in the number of sleeping quarters and granaries, composition, activities, and kinship networks. But on the whole, these seem to be minor variations that are secondary to the household itself. Closer inspection clearly reveals that this is wrong. What this assumes is that we are able to detach households from the wider empirical setting and still theorize their existence. In effect, by separating households from the environment to which they are adapted we lose perspective on the very meaning of household, and consequently on why households assume different forms and take on different functions.

In order to transcend this assumption, two interrelated approaches are necessary. The first requires the explication of household; i.e., a broad description of the organizational structure, including composition and boundary, and individual activities. The second, to be taken up in later chapters, entails a consideration of the larger structural forces which

impinge on each household, allowing greater understanding of the cumulative patterns of household forms and functions. What will lend coherence to these seemingly disparate tasks will be the analysis of the livelihood strategies advanced by these households, strategies manifested through household-based activities. In short, we must relate what households look like with what individual members do in order to gain insights into household as both an entity and a dynamic process.

2.1 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS: RETHINKING HOUSEHOLD

In recent years the analysis of 'livelihood strategies'[1] has received considerable attention from a diverse range of social scientists. Attempts to understand livelihood strategies, in turn, have led increasingly to a focus on the household as a meaningful unit of analysis. A review of the literature, however, quickly reveals that household is at once a multidimensional concept that seems to defy attempts to analytically fix its meaning, especially in such areas as the Nuba Mountains with its turbulent history and diverse social milieu. As an organizing concept, household nonetheless retains certain appeal. In part, it is assumed that the household bears some sort of universal presence, that it is "more cross-culturally comparable than many more frequently studied institutions" (McC.Netting et al. 1984: xxvi). But

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[1] These have alternately been termed subsistence, sustenance, survival, reproduction, and life strategies.

that is just the point. It is not necessary that we establish a rigid, universal definition of household, merely that we agree on a 'working' definition that takes into consideration its dynamic and fluid nature. And for us, household is characterized as a site of biological and social reproduction, whose members broadly attempt to ensure some sort of 'mutual' survival (at least in the short-run).

We expect variations in households according to what is popularly termed life cycle or life course. What is of even greater interest, however, is why some households evidence substantive differences in their life course experiences while others do so in anticipated chronological ways. Why, for example, is the hiring or selling of wage labor a condition of existence for some Nuba Mountain households, while others continue to meet their labor needs through *nafir*? This demands an understanding of its internal characteristics and activities in conjunction with the external pressures brought to bear on this unit. In other words, we must relate the internal organization of households with the 'resources' its members command, taking into consideration its structural underpinnings. Households, after all, are enmeshed in wider socioeconomic structures, structures which impart different consequences across time and space.

What must be continuously born in mind is that household is but one means to organize human relations. Class, kinship, gender, and age represent others; consequently, there is no

necessary uniformity of household interests. These other social relations exert strong pressures on households which are not realized by household members in the same way. In other words, the fate of individual members diverges since "imperatives and choices are shaped by their position in the family, by the economic and social structures in which the household is located, and by the processes of change which these structures are undergoing" (Tilly, 1975:138). How households are eventually situated in the wider environment, then, has much to do with principles of ownership, rules of inheritance, the sexual division of labor, and age-based seniority. These, in turn, provide a foundation for household norms and set parameters on the possible structural forms households may assume in addition to the types of activities its members may perform. The household, in effect, filters the opportunities and constraints in accordance with these wider 'parameters,' but always in conjunction with the needs, aspirations, and power of its respective members.

2.2: HOUSEHOLD REFORMULATED

Despite some calls for the abandonment of household as a conceptual construct, household can provide a useful entry point for social analysis (see Aijmer, n.d. and Guyer, 1981, 1984). In light of many criticisms which draw into question the usefulness of the household as a conceptual construct, the explication of household must begin with modest aims and requires that we exercise great caution, and some daring as

well. Throughout this discussion, the concept 'household' is understood to be a structured process and not a thing apart. Therefore, the question of invariable boundary is unconscionable; it remains a matter of logical and empirical credence. Boundaries in the quantitative sense can exist only as an existential moment in time; secure only at specified instances. "What the boundaries of any given unit of analysis are," comments Roxborough (1979:52), "is therefore an historical question and cannot be settled before hand by theoretical deliberation except in an abstract way."

In order to proceed to an understanding of the household that is discursive rather than intuitive, formal structure and rules give way to fluid, interactive sets of social relations. Households thus require investigation into the meaning of boundary, advancing from physical proximity to an understanding of membership itself as the basis of the household. What this means is that members do not have to be physically present to be part of a household, nor does an individual's membership in one household automatically preclude membership in another. On the other hand, individuals sharing a physical residence may not constitute a household. By transcending the arbitrary isolation of household it becomes possible to include such members as migrants, those with multiple residences, and individuals with

membership in more than one household.[2] Households, in other words, are expressed in social relationships (which are realized in activities), while residence units supply physical indicators.[3]

The universal necessity for organizing residence should merely underscore the sheer diversity in the ways this can be accomplished and not set an absolute limit through ideal types. By breaking out of the strict confines of physical residence, we will be able to grapple with the following concerns:

1: Under what conditions is household a useful entry point from which to proceed to understanding livelihood strategies?

2: What clustering of social relations does household encapsulate?

3: What are the conditions of existence for differing households and their affect on livelihood strategies?

4: How do various processes differentially incorporate households into the wider system and to what effect?

HOUSEHOLDS AND LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

The methodological procedure advanced here calls for the initial expansion of the theoretico-empirical field of

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[2]This point cannot be overstated. In the Nuba Mountains, for example, many husbands are forced to seek their livelihoods in distant locations such as Khartoum. Due to the difficulty of domestic travel, travel to their home villages may be infrequent. Yet this should not automatically preclude household membership. Moreover, a migrant may maintain a household in his village and yet be part of a separate household in the capital.

[3] By opening up residence, in all likelihood, the household member count will not equal the census count.

household, recognizing that households are expressed differently according to the level of analysis. At the middle-level, we are thus able to distinguish households on the basis of composition, structure, and activities and tie them into the historical processes affecting households.[4] Accordingly, we begin with households broadly conceived and by differentiating them according to their modes of integration into the larger system, we are able to systematically establish their criterion of existence. Throughout this process, it is incumbent upon the researcher to admit that the household may not be the essential category for particular lines of inquiry, such as the organization of agricultural production. This facet, for example, may require either an individual-level or community-level focus.

Confusion, in part, stems from the two-fold nature of level of analysis, resulting in the direct conflation of both theoretical (essence) and empirical (phenomenal) aspects.[5] To the contrary, depending upon the analytical level in which household is being conceptualized, the form that the categorical referent assumes changes. Thus, we can speak of different types of households, not only through empirical

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[4] Commoditization of material goods and labor power, as well as migration, are clearly the most important processes of the past few decades in the Nuba Mountains and holds great significance for household formation and operation.

[5] What the dialectic demands is the replacement of mutual discreetness with relational contradiction, simple identities with complex categories, and atomistic autonomy with structural unity.

construction but by systematically detailing the various contexts within which household arrangements occur without recourse to an ideal-type household as the primary category of analysis. Indeed, this frees us from preconceived definitions of household in the narrow sense and opens up the variability we seek to explain (Spiegel, 1986).

What must be born in mind is that we unravel phenomena in the forms in which they appear and then discover the mediations that join them within the essential whole, systematically detailing their interaction. Through the synthesis of mediations we are able to devise categories of households which move from the phenomenal to essential form. Failure to account for this results in incomplete and partial categories such that non-residence, for example, is taken prima facie as evidence of non-membership within a particular household. Even after establishing a relation, however, the precise nature of that mediated connection is not always immediately clear. Cash remittances by migrating members of 'split-labor households,' for example, may strengthen a household or signal its imminent break up. Or, the presence of wage labor on 'family farms' may signify the dominance of capital relations or simply an irregular means of exchange. Here historical movement based on empirical fact finding remains important for subsequent theoretical generalizations, fleshing out the logic of those connections. By this, disparate mediations permit us to isolate processes at various

analytical levels and differentiate them into increasingly more manageable units, thus expediting the construction of categories.

HOUSEHOLDS AND LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Individuals conceive strategies, but we are concerned with the effects of strategies on the household; not with individual psychological motivations, but on the immediate social consequences of particular actions on the household as a specific clustering of social relations. Individual actions may preserve the integrity of the household unit or lead to significant differences. These become evident in patterns of activity. But while thinking, struggling, active subjects shape their lives and the course of events, they do so within the 'boundaries' imposed by structures that emerge as sets of social relationships. Not all actors, however, perceive those boundaries in the same way or fully abide by the script at hand and thus there is no predetermined continuity of social action and unintended consequences abound. When these occur in a sustained pattern, it is invariably accompanied by important changes in the historical context.

Yet from this viewpoint, the exposition of household as the imbrication of individual and structure poses particular problems for social analysis; the processes which bind them are not always readily observable in the empirical world. Even when they are, the outcomes are not necessarily the same depending on past and present transformations that continue to

shape what we call households. And for us, how variations in class location, gender, generation, and kinship alter the basis of available options for household members serves as a central focal point. Some strategies may lead to deadends while others offer new opportunities. Yet once those doors are opened or shut, the possibilities for subsequent strategies are irrevocably altered.

It is primarily through the elucidation of livelihood strategies that the meaning of household membership becomes intelligible. As L. Tilly (1975:138) insightfully notes: "Analysis of strategy tries to uncover the principles which lead to observable regularities or patterns of behavior among households." By looking at livelihood strategies we are able to uncover the connection between residence and household, working from unit of observation to unit of analysis. Given activity groups of varying degrees and intensities, Wilk and McC.Netting (1984:5) claim that "we can begin to visualize households as groups in which there is a high density of activity." Not all of these activity spheres will necessarily be undertaken by a household; nonetheless some will be. This involves decomposing household activities into constituent elements. How these activities are accomplished and by whom--if indeed they are accomplished by individuals as members of households--unites the form the household actually assumes with the livelihood strategies followed in order to ensure its continuity (or affect its demise). The 'strategies' pursued

will, in turn, affect the form and operation of the household, and ultimately its reproduction over time.

2.3: INITIAL OBSERVATIONS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN SOMASEM, SHAIR TOMAT, AND SHATT DAMAM

Human responses to complex issues are seldom if ever crafted in isolation from life experiences. Most householders confront the social terrain from different perspectives and formulate livelihood strategies accordingly on the bases of past decisions, present needs, and future expectations. These decisions, needs, and expectations are usually in line with the individual actor's perception of the world (however defined) and his or her position in it. Moreover, received knowledge comes to people as 'tradition' which serves as a type of road map used to interpret every day occurrences and guide daily activities. This can help explain why some find comfort in tradition[6] because not every event must be processed and analyzed anew. This in no way diminishes the value of householders' responses, it merely underscores the fact of the actors limited knowledge of structural parameters at any given point in space and time. And if the subject is structure then these very parameters set limits, always reformulated, to the actors knowledge and actions.

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[6] Tradition is neither stagnant nor constant but always changes. The traditions of one generation, for example, may or may not be those of the preceding one. This in no way invalidates one or the other, or sets them at opposite ends of a 'development' pole, it merely underscores the fact that references change with the then realities.

The empirical description of the household begins with 'simple' residence, with the enumeration of the individuals physically dwelling there. Throughout this initial exercise, we must be sensitive to how the 'immediate household' secures its subsistence. In this manner, it is possible to detect individuals residing outside of the 'household' who, nevertheless, contribute on an ongoing basis. Depending on the degree, intensity, and impact of their participation, we can determine whether or not they should be included as household members.[7] Certainly we must also be sensitive to the household as a subjective reality, as a unit with which its members identify their interests. For example, by recognizing the differences between household responsibilities and kinship obligations, we can determine if we have an actual member of the household who has migrated and is sending remittances, or a former household member sending remittances under filial obligations. Or if we have a member who has left during the 'dry' season, not necessarily to send remittances, but to relieve the household of a resource consuming member during the 'hungry-season.' Admittedly, this is no easy task and entails qualitative assessment through informed judgement.

We are now in a position to begin to describe the household's basic characteristics, bearing in mind that

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[7] Needless to say, by the end of fieldwork some household members were deemed nonmembers while other individuals were added. The point is, identifying household members is an ongoing activity.

detailed analysis addressing the 'whys' requires locating households in the wider socioeconomic environment, a topic taken up in later chapters. Accordingly, the task at hand is to provide an overview of the households in Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam, considering such aspects as size, age and sex distribution, residency pattern, type of household heads, occupations of members, etc.

HOUSEHOLD: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Table 2.1 summarizes household sizes in the three villages. The majority of households in each village contain between two and nine members. In part this is attributable to the high infant mortality rate and low life expectancy in general (49 years for the Sudan as a whole), as well as the overall low level of productivity which tends to set the upper limits of demographic reproduction. Moreover, within each village the optimal situation is for newly married young men to begin their own households in the vicinity of their relatives.[8] The mean household size in each village is roughly similar although the mean size in Shatt Damam is slightly larger than the other two. Lastly, incidences of single individual households are absent in Shatt Damam which also contains more households of 10 or more members.

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[8] In Shatt Damam, for those enmeshed in matrilineal relations, the new household is established near the husband's mother's relatives. In patrilineal instances, it is with the husband's father's relatives. Somasem and Shair Tomat are both patrilineal.

TABLE 2.1: HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY VILLAGE

Household Size	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
1 Person	8.3%	3.3%	.0%	4.0%
2--5	36.7	33.3	36.7	36.0
6--9	38.3	50.0	41.6	42.0
10--13	15.0	10.0	15.0	14.0
14--18	1.7	3.3	6.7	4.0
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)
(MEAN)	(6.1)	(6.4)	(7.2)	(6.6)

Overall, the gender distribution is more or less equal but with important variations between age categories, as well as between the three villages (Table 2.2, p. 59). Not surprisingly, approximately 49 percent of household members in these villages are 15 years of age or less, while fewer than seven percent are 50 years or older.[9] Males, however, in the first two age categories outnumber females 28.0 percent to 21.2 percent. Certainly we can attribute some of these variations to the fact that the population of each village is relatively small yet the next two age categories reveals the opposite; females outnumber males 21 percent to 12 percent. Reversing the trend again, males 50 years or older account for 4.3 percent of the population while females amount to only 2.5 percent. Some of the reasons for this disparity include the

[9]Hadari (1974:161)) in a survey of 282 villages in the Nuba Mountains achieved similar results: "Children up to the age of 12 years comprise 43 percent of the total, while adults (19 years and over) comprise only about 45 percent of the total."

TABLE 2.2: AGE/SEX STRUCTURE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH VILLAGE

Age category by gender	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total	(N)
Male					
< 8	29.9%	28.0%	23.5%	26.7%	(132)
8--15	29.3	24.0	31.2	29.1	(144)
16--23	8.6	16.0	19.0	14.7	(73)
24--35	6.3	9.0	11.3	9.1	(45)
36--50	13.8	9.0	11.8	11.9	(59)
> 50	12.1	14.0	3.2	8.5	(42)
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
(n=)	(174)	(100)	(221)	(495)	
(Mean)	(21)	(22)	(18)	(20)	
Female					
< 8	19.9%	17.4%	24.5%	21.4%	(105)
8--15	23.6	21.7	18.8	21.2	(104)
16--23	17.3	21.7	23.1	20.6	(101)
24--35	16.2	15.2	20.2	17.7	(87)
36--50	16.2	20.7	9.1	14.1	(69)
> 50	6.8	3.3	4.3	5.1	(25)
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
(n=)	(191)	(92)	(208)	(491)	
(Mean)	(23)	(23)	(20)	(21)	
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
(GR N=)	(365)	(192)	(429)	(986)	
(GR Mean)	(22)	(22)	(19)	(21)	

'fostering' of children where, for example, female children join the household of a widowed grandmother or a newly married sister in order to assist in daily activities or help ease the transition to married life; early marriage age of most females (14 or 15 years); males migrating, usually to urban areas, to seek a 'better life'; and the lower life expectancy of women due to the rigors of 'domestic' activities coupled with the strains of child birth.

In most debates there is usually some individual(s) with the final word, or at least one individual(s) able to exert greater suasion by virtue of 'status.' Within the household this is no different. What is important, however is who this individual(s) is. At this point, it is worthwhile to consider the types of household head (Table 2.3), bearing in mind that there is a difference between de jure and de facto designations. Optimally, our task is made easier where the distinction is collapsed within a single individual; where it does not, our interest lies more with the enduring household head and less with temporary and perfunctory considerations. Identifying the household head is not always a straight forward matter and requires that we distinguish nuances of meaning between local categories. *Rab al-usra* refers to the head of family or lineage affairs, while *rab al-manzil* denotes the head of 'domestic' operations. The former designation carries more weight in household concerns. For our purposes then the specification of the household head is the

individual(s) whose 'word' sustains ultimate authority within the household and invariably involved careful assessment of those decisions affecting the household over time.

TABLE 2.3: TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY SEX AND VILLAGE

Type of Household Head	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
SINGLE	**95.0%**	**96.6%**	**78.4%**	**87.9%**
male	73.3	76.6	65.1	70.6
female	21.7	20.0	13.3	17.3
JOINT	**6.7**	**3.3**	**21.7**	**12.0**
female	1.7	3.3	3.3	2.7
male	3.3	.0	1.7	2.0
male/female	.0	.0	16.7	6.7
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(N=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

The majority of households evidence a single head (87.9 percent), although joint household heads comprise 21.7 percent in Shatt Damam and connotes a more consensual form of 'decision-making.' In addition, the predominant means of reckoning descent in Shatt Damam is through the mother's line (matrilineal); nonetheless 66.8 percent of household heads are male. It should be made clear from this that questions of female subordination cannot be traced directly to the form of inheritance nor is sexual egalitarianism assured within a matrilinear system. Somasem and Shair Tomat, however, are no less patriarchal, they merely have more household heads who are widows (13.3 and 20.0 percent respectively) than does Shatt Damam (5.0 percent). And since each village is male

dominated, we can expect the orientation of the household to be biased towards males at the expense of females. That is, household strategies will favor males over females, with females undertaking the bulk of the arduous 'domestic' chores.

Evaluation of households and consequently of their livelihood strategies must be considered, not within and hourly or annual period as is common among neoclassical economists, but over the household's life course. It is a matter of observation that individuals, as members of households, determine their activities by the then realities of their household situation. For this reason, the age of the household head is an important consideration (Table 2.4). As the data reveal, the majority of household heads are in the 36 to 50 age category; 45.8 percent male and 47.9 percent female. Moreover, 37.3 percent of male and 42.9 percent of female household heads in Shatt Damam are in the 42 to 35 age category, as opposed to 10.9 and 21.1 percent in Somasem and 17.4 and .0 percent in Shair Tomat.

Aside from indicating an earlier age of first marriage in Shatt Damam and the start of a new household, the absence of females in the 42 to 35 age category in Shair Tomat coincides with the fact that there are few households with female heads. And while household heads aged 50 years or more are 37.0 and 10.5 percent in Somasem, and 56.5 and 25.0 percent in Shair Tomat, they are only 7.8 and 9.5 percent in Shatt Damam. In part, this is due to the lower life expectancy in Shatt Damam

and the fact that a parent is more apt to live with an adult child and cede the mantle of authority. Shair Tomat, to the contrary, discloses its *Hawazma* Arab/Muslim heritage with its males holding firmly to the staff of power. Moreover, because they are Arabs more opportunities for young males await them outside of Shair Tomat. Interestingly, the mean age of male household heads is older in each village (50 years) and for all three villages is 45 as opposed to 39 years of age. In part this discrepancy is attributable to the fact that single female headed households is a relatively recent phenomenon.

TABLE 2.4: AGE OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY SEX AND VILLAGE

Age category of household head	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
Male				
16--23	2.2%	.0%	3.9%	2.5%
24--35	10.9	17.4	37.3	23.3
36--50	50.0	26.1	51.0	45.8
> 50	37.0	56.5	7.8	28.3
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(46)	(23)	(51)	(120)
(mean)	(49)	(53)	(38)	(45)
Female				
16--23	21.1	.0	9.5	12.5
24--35	21.1	.0	42.9	27.1
36--50	47.4	75.0	38.1	47.9
> 50	10.5	25.0	9.5	12.5
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(19)	(8)	(21)	(48)
(mean)	(39)	(50)	(34)	(39)
(N=)	(65)	(31)	(72)	(168)
(Grand Mean)	(46)	(52)	(37)	(43)

Since we are interested in the household as a collective unit, an additional step requires fixing its basis of membership and physical boundary. Moreover, while the mechanisms of kinship (or family) and propinquity appear typically to many households, the possibility of non-kinship bonds and spatial separation remains. With this in mind, further examination of households is accordingly: 1) basis of social organization within the household; 2) structural composition of households; and 3) spatial arrangement of household residences.

The language of lineage in the Nuba Mountains speaks loudly. Kinship remains an important means around which households are organized (Table 2.5). We should not assume, however, that it signifies the same thing for each village nor within each village, or that it necessarily supersedes economic considerations. On closer inspection the kinship criteria for membership reveals a rich assortment of relations. In Shatt Damam, evidence of its matrilinear background begins to surface as indicated by the number of non-nuclear family household members. What is notable is the number of siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins residing with the household head (13.3 percent), as well as the higher incidence of in-laws within the household (8.5 percent). Households in Somasem and Shair Tomat, on the other hand, contain primarily a spouses and their children (90.0 and 93.3 percent respectively).

TABLE 2.5: HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS RELATION TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD[10]

Member's relation	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
Spouse	18.8%	16.8%	17.3%	17.6%
Child	71.2 (1.0)	76.5 (2.5)	64.2 (0.5)	69.2 (1.1)
Parent	4.3	0.6 (0.6)	3.8	3.3 (0.1)
Grandchild	1.3	3.7	1.4	1.8
Sibling	3.1 (0.7)	1.2 (0.6)	7.0 (1.7)	4.5 (1.1)
Uncle/aunt	0.3	0	0	0.1
Nephew/niece	0.7	0.6	4.9 (4.9)	2.5 (2.2)
Cousin	0	0	1.4 (1.4)	0.6 (0.6)
Non-kin	0.3	0.6	0	0.2
TOTAL (N=)	100.0% (303)	100.0% (161)	100.0% (370)	100.0% (834)

Closely associated with membership characteristics are the types of household residential arrangements (Table 2.6). These range from single person units to complex households. While kinship remains central, it is not the sole basis of household organization. Of the sample, seven households were based on non-kinship ties for the simple fact that they were single member units while only one household, in Shair Tomat, was a complex (joint) household based on non-kin ties of friendship (although they were sister-in-laws, this was not a deciding factor in their decision to share household activities). In the main, the dominant type of household is the nuclear family, although in Shatt Damam the most common is the complex type (46.6 percent). Complex households include joint (adults of the same generation), extended (adults of different generations), and joint/extended.

[10] 1. Percentage in parenthesis indicates in-law status and child includes foster children.

Nuclear and complex households are further differentiated by polygamous marriage bonds.

TABLE 2.6: HOUSEHOLD RESIDENTIAL TYPES BY VILLAGE

Household Type	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total	(N)
Single adult	**(25.0%)**	**(13.2%)**	**(13.4%)**	**(18.0%)**	**(27)**
male	3.3%	.0	1.7	2.0	(3)
female	5.0	3.3	.0	2.7	(4)
male w/dependent(s)	1.7	3.3	1.7	2.0	(3)
female w/dependent(s)	15.0	6.6	10.0	11.4	(17)
Nuclear	**(53.3%)**	**(60.1%)**	**(40.0%)**	**(49.3%)**	**(74)**
no dependents	5.0	6.7	1.7	4.0	(6)
w/dependent(s)	28.3	36.7	31.6	31.3	(47)
polygamous w/dependent(s)	20.0	16.7	6.7	14.0	(21)
Complex	**(21.7%)**	**(26.7%)**	**(46.6%)**	**(32.7%)**	**(49)**
extended w/dependent(s)	11.7	20.0	13.4	14.0	(21)
ext. polygamous w/dep.(s)	1.7	.0	1.7	1.3	(2)
joint w/dependent(s)	3.3	6.7	10.0	6.7	(10)
joint poly. w/dep(s)	1.7	.0	8.3	4.0	(6)
extended-joint w/dep.(s)	3.3	.0	6.6	4.0	(6)
ext.-joint poly. w/dep(s)	.0	.0	6.6	2.7	(4)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
(N=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)	

We must further account for the ways actual residency patterns and households intersect (Table 2.7). Spatial arrangements consist of co-residence, dispersed residence, multi-residence, and dispersed/multi-residence. Except for Shatt Damam, co-residence with household members sharing a single common residence is the most frequent type of arrangement. In Shatt Damam, however, household members tend to be dispersed (53.3 percent) as a result of temporary

out-migration for employment or (less frequently) education, and age-grade rituals where young men live together apart from the village confines. In this case, one or more members reside 'temporarily' away from the household and secure separate 'shelter.' Multi-residence includes instances where one or more household members reside in an additional 'primary' residence. For example, Moustafa maintains two permanent residences; one in Shair Tomat for one wife and children and a second in Kadugli for another wife and children. Incidences of multi-residence are low in Somasem (5.0 percent) and Shair Tomat (6.7 percent) and absent in Shatt Damam. In each village 3.3 percent of the households are dispersed/multi-residence which combine elements of both types. In general, these latter two types of residential arrangement require large membership and, more importantly, ample resources. Nonetheless, they constitute an important minority forms.

TABLE 2.7: HOUSEHOLD SPATIAL RESIDENCY TYPES BY VILLAGE

Household Residency Pattern	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
co-residence	56.7%	53.3%	41.7%	50.0%
dispersed	26.7	33.3	53.3	38.7
multi-residence	5.0	6.7	.0	3.3
disp./multi-residence	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
single member	8.3	3.3	1.7	4.7
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(N=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS

We now turn to the basic assets owned and activities undertaken by household members in an attempt to shed light on how households are reproduced. It is essentially from these that we will develop an understanding of livelihood strategies. Needless to say, households are in many ways refractory to analysis, in much the same way as other structures because of their mutability, especially over time. Household has to do with rights, responsibilities, and obligations over such areas as marriage, parenting, transmission, residence, and labor--and subsequently with the constraints all these place on individuals.

Considerations over the creation, control, and allocation of resources within the household is equally important and highlights gender issues. We cannot assume, however, that resources are controlled and accumulated solely by males. But even in cases where men and women control their own incomes, their relative positions differ. What our analysis requires, then, is an understanding of household as sets of exchange relationships based on social power. Within the idiom of patriarchy, women are not effectively empowered making it difficult for them to accumulate wealth or acquire education. Differences also exist among women in their respective communities: Ghulfan women in Somasem have more power than *Hamar* women in Shair Tomat but less than Shatt women in Shatt Damam.

Nonetheless, patriarchy ensures that across the board men exercise greater market and non-market access to labor. Since a male's income is greater than a female's, for example, he enjoys better access to market and non-market sources of labor. As a result, the acreage cultivated by females remains smaller than her male counterpart.

Household assets

The routine of everyday village life centers around agriculture. Consequently, for most households land is everything. Although the meanings people attach to land may differ, overall it provides the means necessary for daily sustenance. Table 2.8 indicates the importance of land, with very few households having no main farm (6.0 percent). Most households in Somasem (43.3 percent) and Shair Tomat (76.7 percent) own between 10.1 and 40.0 *feddans*, while only 13.3 percent do in Shatt Damam. The size of landholdings is smaller in Shatt Damam with 80.0 percent of households owning ten *feddans* or less. On the other hand, 15.0 percent of households in Somasem own more than 100.0 *feddan* of land.[11] This fairly unequal distribution of land suggests that the households can be divided into distinct strata.

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[11] Household respectively own 100.8, 102.4, 108.8, 124.8, 126.4, and 185.6 *feddans*; with two households each owning 131.2.

TABLE 2.8: SIZE OF MAIN FARM OWNED BY HOUSEHOLDS

No. *feddans* owned	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
none	8.3%	.0%	6.7%	6.0%
.1------5.0	13.3	10.0	50.0	27.3
5.1----10.0	11.7	3.3	30.0	17.3
10.1---20.0	25.0	26.7	10.0	19.3
20.1---40.0	18.3	50.0	3.3	18.7
40.1---60.0	1.7	10.0	.0	2.7
60.1--100.0	6.7	.0	.0	2.7
over 100.0	15.0	.0	.0	6.0
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

Rarely do households cultivate every *feddan* at the disposal of its members. Aside from the need to periodically let land lay fallow, intermittent labor shortages, variable consumption requirements, market expectations, and variable weather patterns preclude its full usage. In this respect, land ownership merely represents a 'store of wealth,' claimed now but for future needs. Table 2.9 shows the number of *feddans* under cultivation. Few households cultivate no land although almost 40 percent of households in Shatt Damam cultivate five *feddans* or less. In fact, 90.0 percent of households in this village farm 10.0 *feddans* or less indicating its small-scale character. In contrast, 30 and 60 percent of households in Somasem and Shair Tomat cultivate between 10.1 and 40.0 *feddans*. As with landownership, the largest

cultivators reside in Somasem, with one household planting roughly 131 *feddans*.[12]

TABLE 2.9 NUMBER OF *FEDDANS* CULTIVATED BY HOUSEHOLDS

No. *feddans* cultivated	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
none	6.7%	3.3%	3.3%	4.7%
.1------5.0	31.7	13.3	60.0	39.3
5.1----10.0	20.0	23.3	30.0	24.7
10.1---20.0	18.3	36.7	5.0	16.7
20.1---40.0	11.7	23.3	1.7	10.0
40.1---60.0	3.3	.0	.0	1.3
60.1--100.0	6.7	.0	.0	2.7
over 100.0	1.7	.0	.0	.7
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

Moreover, with the exception of Somasem, the majority of households do not cultivate contiguous plots (Table 2.10). Essentially this represents a hedge against the vagaries of nature, including insects and extremely localized rainfall. The likelihood of simultaneous crop failure on separate plots is thus minimized. Specific crops also dictate certain types of soil and hence access to different fields. Groundnuts, for example, require *gardud* or sandy-clay soil while *dura* grows best in *hadaba* or cracking clay. As we shall see, however, mechanization of agriculture requires engrossment and the 'traditional'

[12] One household cultivates 60.8 *feddans* and another 72.8, while two households each farm 63.2 *feddans*.

landholding patterns can serve to retards its spread. Not surprisingly, then half of the households in Somasem rely solely on tractors for plowing their main fields, roughly 73 percent use tractors for cotton fields only in Shair Tomat, and over 98 percent employ only digging sticks in Shatt Damam (see Table 2.11).

TABLE 2.10: NUMBER OF PARCELS HOUSEHOLD CULTIVATES

No. parcels cultivates	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
one	62.4%	3.4%	19.0%	32.8%
two	30.4	41.4	43.1	37.8
three	3.6	37.8	25.8	19.6
four	3.6	17.2	12.1	9.8
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

TABLE 2.11: HOW HOUSEHOLD PLOWS MAIN FARM

How plow main farm	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
cultivates no land	6.7%	6.7%	.0%	4.0%
uses tractor	50.0	.0	.0	20.0
uses digging stick	3.3	13.3	98.3	43.3
mostly tractor	40.0	6.7	1.7	18.0
tractor for cotton only, digging stick for rest	.0	73.3	.0	14.7
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

A brief look at the number and types of animals owned by households reveals that most possess at least chickens (Table 2.12, p. 73). In general cattle, goats, and chickens

TABLE 2.12: NUMBER OF ANIMALS OWNED BY HOUSEHOLDS

No. owned	cattle	sheep	goat	camel	donkey	chicken	pigeon	pig	TOTAL
SOMASEM									100%
none	43.3%	100.0%	25.0%	93.3%	81.7%	13.3%	96.7%	100.0%	(n=60)
1-----5	16.7	.0	20.0	6.7	18.3	21.7	3.3	.0	
6----10	11.7	.0	20.0	.0	.0	31.7	.0	.0	
11---20	13.3	.0	21.7	.0	.0	25.0	.0	.0	
over 20	15.0	.0	13.3	.0	.0	8.3	.0	.0	
SHAIR TOMAT									
none	56.7	96.7	10.0	96.7	76.7	3.3	93.3	100.0	100%
1-----5	16.7	.0	23.3	3.3	23.3	33.3	6.7	.0	(n=30)
6----10	10.0	.0	26.7	.0	.0	33.3	.0	.0	
11---20	10.0	3.3	33.3	.0	.0	20.0	.0	.0	
over 20	6.7	.0	6.7	.0	.0	10.0	.0	.0	
SHATT DAMAM									100%
none	51.7	83.4	38.3	98.3	98.3	15.0	100.0	58.4	(n=60)
1-----5	30.0	5.0	30.0	.0	1.7	45.0	.0	38.3	
6----10	10.0	8.3	23.3	1.7	.0	28.3	.0	3.3	
11---20	3.3	3.3	8.3	.0	.0	10.0	.0	.0	
over 20	5.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.7	.0	.0	
TOTAL									100%
none	49.2	92.7	27.3	96.0	87.3	12.0	97.3	83.3	(N=150)
1-----5	22.0	2.0	24.7	3.3	12.7	33.3	2.7	15.4	
6----10	10.7	3.3	22.7	.7	.0	30.7	.0	1.3	
11---20	8.7	2.0	18.7	.0	.0	18.0	.0	.0	
over 20	9.4	.0	6.6	.0	.0	6.0	.0	.0	

comprise the more common farm animals with slightly more than half of sampled households owning cattle, nearly 73 percent have goats, and 88 percent keep chickens. The size of herds is small such that approximately 33 and 48 percent of households have between 1 and 10 cows and goats respectively. Larger herds of both are found in Somasem and Shair Tomat, although one household in Shatt Damam owned 99 cows.[13] As a source of meat or cash, sheep are of relatively little importance, primarily because goats require less attention and are better suited to local forage. Donkeys and camels provide important means of transport for people and goods. In addition, camels are also used to power oil presses. Householders in Shair Tomat possess more of these animals than the other two villages. Pigs remain prominent in Shatt Damam with nearly 42 percent of households keeping between 1 and 10. While respondents in Somasem admitted to keeping pigs in the past, the inhabitants of Shair Tomat emphatically asserted that they never did. As with land, the unequal distribution of animals supposes distinct categories of households.

Landholdings and animals, clearly important resources, by no means constitutes a households entire set of assets. Aside from these, 36 percent of households own one or more other business enterprises (Table 2.13). These enterprises

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[13] In Somasem, one household owned 50 goats and another 84 goats.

comprise a broad range of endeavors, from vending goods in the local shop to a tractor for hire, from cutting wood to collecting gum arabic, and from hauling water to providing tea and coffee. Non-agricultural businesses are most notable in Somasem with around 38 percent of households possessing at least one. Multiple enterprises account for 15 percent of households in Somasem and nearly 17 percent in Shair Tomat. Ownership of business enterprises is less significant in Shatt Damam with only 20.0 percent of households having one or more non-agricultural business enterprises.

TABLE 2.13: NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES HOUSEHOLD OWNS

No. of enterprises	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
none	46.7%	66.7%	80.0%	64.0%
1	38.3	16.7	13.3	24.0
2	8.3	13.3	1.7	6.7
3	5.0	3.3	3.3	4.0
4	1.7	.0	1.7	1.3
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

Arguably, formal education can be considered a household asset. With the expansion of a capitalist economy, the ability to read, write, and perform numerical computations is increasingly important. Table 2.14 (p.76) indicates the level of educational attainment for household members over the age of seven. Overall, the three villages

TABLE 2.14: EDUCATION OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY SEX (7 YEARS OLD OR GREATER)

Education	Somasem		Shair Tomat		Shatt Damam		Total
	male	female	male	female	male	female	
illiterate	48.8%	68.4%	39.7%	79.5%	75.1%	95.7%	70.8%
read/write	4.7	.0	9.6	1.2	3.4	.0	2.6
some elementary	30.2	20.9	30.1	10.8	15.3	1.9	17.0
completed elementary	7.0	3.2	8.2	6.0	2.8	1.9	4.2
some intermediate	2.3	4.4	5.5	2.4	2.3	.0	2.6
completed intermediate	1.6	.6	1.4	.0	.6	.6	.8
some high school	4.7	1.3	1.4	.0	.6	.0	1.3
completed high school	.0	.6	4.1	.0	.0	.0	.5
some college	.8	.6	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(129)	(158)	(73)	(83)	(177)	(162)	(782)

evidence a high degree of illiteracy (70.8 percent). Nonetheless, significant variations exist between villages as well as between males and females. In general, males tend to be better educated than their female counterparts, although females in Somasem have more education than those in the other two villages. The category of read/write (basic literacy) reflects greater male employment opportunities, especially in the military and police, where these skills are learned without formal schooling. Few individuals extend their education past elementary school, most noticeable in Shatt Damam where only 3.5 percent of males and 0.6 of females have more than elementary education. Only household members from Somasem have studied at the college level.

Household activities

The reproduction of households and their members is a complex undertaking, revealed in the diversity of the primary work statuses cited by household members (Table 2.15, p. 78). Bearing in mind the mean size of households and the increasing importance of education, it is not unexpected that 43.7 percent of the males and 27.7 percent of female respondents were not employed since they are children or in school.[14] Differences in the category of

[14] The age upper limit in the age of children varied since this is a cultural concept governing the commencement of work. In the main, however, child extended to the age of 8 years with few exceptions. Moreover, some children under the age of 8 worked.

TABLE 2.15: PRIMARY WORK STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBER BY SEX

Work status	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
Male				
NON-EMPLOYMENT				
retired	2.3%	3.0%	1.4%	2.0%
unemployed	.6	.0	.5	.4
student	21.3	25.0	10.0	17.0
child	31.0	27.0	23.1	26.7
SELF-EMPLOYMENT				
farmer	30.5	27.0	33.5	31.1
tend livestock	5.7	3.0	15.4	9.5
merchant	2.9	1.0	.9	1.6
free enterpriser	.0	.0	.5	.2
shop keeper	.6	1.0	.0	.4
HH operations	2.3	4.0	1.4	2.2
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT				
civil servant	.6	2.0	.0	.6
teacher	.6	.0	.0	.2
clinical tech.	.0	.0	.5	.2
army	.0	1.0	.0	.2
PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT				
menial laborer	1.1	3.0	12.7	6.7
run flour mill	.0	1.0	.0	.2
shop clerk	.0	.0	.5	.2
driver	.0	1.0	.0	.2
electrician	.6	.0	.0	.2
guard	.0	1.0	.0	.2
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(174)	(100)	(221)	(495)
Female				
NON-EMPLOYMENT				
retired	1.6	.0	1.9	1.4
student	17.3	9.8	1.4	9.2
child	16.8	13.0	22.6	18.5
SELF-EMPLOYMENT				
farmer	11.5	29.3	29.3	22.4
tend livestock	1.6	4.3	1.4	2.0
merchant	.0	4.3	.0	.8
tea stall	1.0	.0	.0	.4
shop clerk	.0	1.1	.0	.2
HH operations	49.7	37.0	43.3	44.6
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT				
teacher	.5	1.1	.0%	.4
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(191)	(92)	(208)	(491)
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(N=)	(365)	(192)	(429)	(986)

child by sex within each village is due to the fact that females customarily begin work at an earlier age than males, usually helping in household chores. In addition, the disparity in male and female students corresponds to the level of education of household members.

Given the prominence of agriculture, it is not surprising that approximately 31 percent of males and 22 percent of females are self-employed farmers. On the other hand, nearly 45 percent of females labor predominately in 'domestic' activities including food preparation, hauling water, and tending the *jubraka* or house garden. Few males or females engage primarily in private or public employment with the exception of Shatt Damam where 12.7 percent of males claim menial labor as their primary work status. The initial picture that emerges of village life then is one of relative independence from the 'outside world,' of self-sufficient family farmers. The ratio of productive to unproductive workers appears to underscore this, with an overall ratio of 1.6 : 1 (Table 2.16). Lastly, each village contains a full-time merchant provisioning manufactured goods; five in Somasem, one in Shatt Damam, and two in Shatt Damam.

TABLE 2.16: RATIO OF PRODUCTIVE TO UNPRODUCTIVE WORKERS

	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
ratio	1.2 : 1	1.5 : 1	2.2 : 1	1.6 : 1

Table 2.17 (p. 81) indicates greater participation in non-agricultural activities by household members reporting a secondary work status. Needless to say, these pursuits are less time consuming than primary work, yet they cannot be assumed to contribute less to the household's reproduction. In fact, secondary occupations are frequently important sources of cash income. Nevertheless, farming remains the dominant activity with 43.3 percent of males and 52.2 percent of females specifying this as their secondary occupation. In general, these individuals farm intermittently and provide labor during peak periods of the agricultural cycle. Tending livestock is also an important activity, occupying the spare time of roughly 20 percent of males and three percent of females. In addition, 7.8 percent of males in Somasem also operate mechanized farms in the nearby Habila mechanized scheme. Slightly more than six percent of males and 37 percent of females occasionally help in household operations, usually in carrying water, fetching wood, and watching children.

The number of household members engaged in secondary off-farm employment is considerably larger, accounting for roughly 26 percent of males and eight percent of females. In the villages of Somasem and Shair Tomat, self-employment comprises some 22 percent of males but less than three percent of females. Clearly, free enterprisers dominate this category and consists of collectors (gum, thatch, wood,

TABLE 2.17: SECONDARY WORK STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY SEX

Work status	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
male				
SELF-EMPLOYMENT				
farmer	31.2%	66.7%	44.8%	43.3%
tend livestock	28.6	8.3	15.5	19.9
merchant	2.6	5.6	.0	2.3
free enterpriser	15.6	13.9	8.6	12.9
smith	1.3	.0	.0	.6
carpenter	1.3	.0	1.7	1.2
run mech. farm	7.8	.0	.0	3.5
shop clerk	1.3	.0	.0	.6
HH operations	7.8	2.8	6.9	6.4
PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT				
menial laborer	1.3	2.8	18.9	7.0
run flour mill	1.3	.0	1.7	1.2
tailor	.0	.0	1.7	.6
TOTAL	100.0% (77)	100.0% (36)	100.0% (58)	100.0% (171)
Female				
SELF-EMPLOYMENT				
farmer	57.0	45.3	51.1	52.2
tend livestock	3.0	1.3	2.9	2.6
merchant	.7	.0	.0	.3
free enterpriser	1.5	.0	2.2	1.4
HH operations	30.4	49.3	37.2	37.2
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT				
teacher	.7	.0	.0	.3
nurse's aid	.0	1.3	.0	.3
PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT				
menial laborer	6.7	2.7	6.6	5.8
TOTAL	100.0% (135)	100.0% (75)	100.0% (137)	100.0% (347)
GRAND TOTAL (N=)	100.0% (212)	100.0% (111)	100.0% (195)	100.0% (518)

water) and artisans (saddles, grinding bowls, *marissa*, beds, gates). On the other hand, more than 22 percent of males in Shatt Damam seek private employment, with almost 19 percent working as menial laborers in their secondary occupations. Aside from farming and tending to household operations, females overall find themselves toiling as menial laborers. What Tables 2.15 and 2.17 also suggest is the gender bias in opportunities, such that 33.3 percent of males engage primarily in farming or household operations as opposed to 67.0 percent of females. This gap widens in secondary employment to 49.7 and 89.4 percent respectively.

As is becoming apparent, off-farm employment, whether working for oneself, the government, or another individual, is an important source of cash for many households. Table 2.18 (p. 83) refers to the general types of off-farm employment--*dahwa*[15], agricultural, and non-agricultural--and the number of household members engaged in each activity.

Off-farm agricultural labor applies to laborers working by the *feddan* and is more profitable than *dahwa*. Few individuals engage in this, although almost 17 percent of households in Shair Tomat have one or two members working periodically as agricultural laborers. Most villagers tend to look down on adult males working for cash on another

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[15] *Dahwa*, or day labor, is usually from 7:00 am to 2:00 pm, and is a common way weeders are hired and is by fixed wage. It is very low paying.

TABLE 2.18: NUMBER OF **HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WORKING OFF-FARM**

Number of workers	*Dahwa*	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	**TOTAL**
Somasem				
none	66.7%	96.7%	83.3%	**100%**
1	18.3	3.3	13.3	**(n=60)**
2	3.3	.0	1.7	
3	8.3	.0	1.7	
4	1.7	.0	.0	
5	1.7	.0	.0	
Shair Tomat				
none	93.3	83.3	63.4	**100%**
1	.0	10.0	33.3	**(n=30)**
2	3.3	6.7	3.3	
3	3.3	.0	.0	
4	.0	.0	.0	
5	.0	.0	.0	
Shatt Damam				
none	56.7	91.7	51.7	**100%**
1	16.7	8.3	33.3	**(n=60)**
2	11.7	.0	13.3	
3	8.3	.0	1.7	
4	3.3	.0	.0	
5	3.3	.0	.0	
Total				
none	68.0	92.0	66.7	**100%**
1	14.0	6.7	25.3	**(N=150)**
2	6.7	1.3	6.7	
3	7.3	.0	1.3	
4	2.0	.0	.0	
5	2.0	.0	.0	

farmer's field and believe they are neglecting their own. Interestingly, 33 and 34 percent of households in Somasem and Shatt Damam have at least one member working as a day agricultural laborer (*dahwa*), whereas only 6.6 percent of households in Shair Tomat do. This is due, in part, to the Arab background of Shair Tomat such that women are discouraged from working publicly. In general, employers prefer to hire adult males as agricultural laborers since they tend to work fastest, while *dahwa* is reserved for females, children, and the aged. Non-agricultural labor is the more popular pursuit for individuals in Shair Tomat and Shatt Damam with approximately 37 and 48 percent of households having one or more members employed in these activities.

An additional point regarding off-farm employment involves the number of labor days spent in each undertaking as an indication of their importance to the household (Table 2.19, p. 85). Time devoted to working in household-owned businesses is also considered since it, like the other activities, potentially diverts labor away from household agriculture. Most labor days are expended in non-agricultural employment and working in a household-owned business. The former accounts for most as it usually demands more of a long-term commitment. In fact, nearly 36 percent of temporary migrants reported that they either were working (33.5 percent) or seeking work (2.2 percent).

TABLE 2.19: NUMBER OF LABOR DAYS SPENT IN OFF-FARM ACTIVITIES

No. labor days	*dahwa*	ag.	non-ag.	business	TOTAL
Somasem					
none	66.7%	96.7%	86.5%	61.7%	**100.0%**
1------7	13.3	.0	.0	1.7	**(n=60)**
8-----30	11.7	.0	.0	.0	
31----90	8.3	1.7	1.7	11.7	
91---180	.0	1.7	.0	13.3	
181--300	.0	.0	1.7	8.3	
301--450	.0	.0	6.7	3.3	
451--660	.0	.0	1.7	.0	
over 660	.0	.0	1.7	.0	
Shair Tomat					
none	93.4	83.3	63.3	66.7	**100.0%**
1------7	3.3	.0	.0	.0	**(n=30)**
8-----30	3.3	10.0	.0	10.0	
31----90	.0	6.7	3.3	13.4	
91---180	.0	.0	.0	3.3	
181--300	.0	.0	10.0	3.3	
301--450	.0	.0	20.0	3.3	
451--660	.0	.0	.0	.0	
over 660	.0	.0	3.3	.0	
Shatt Damam					
none	56.7	91.7	51.7	80.0	**100.0%**
1------7	15.0	1.7	.0	.0	**(n=60)**
8-----30	28.3	3.3	.0	.0	
31----90	.0	1.7	.0	1.7	
91---180	.0	1.7	5.0	8.3	
181--300	.0	.0	10.0	3.3	
301--450	.0	.0	20.0	6.7	
451--660	.0	.0	8.3	.0	
over 660	.0	.0	5.0	.0	
Total					
none	68.0	92.0%	68.0	70.0	**100.0%**
1------7	12.0	.7	.0	.7	**(N=150)**
8-----30	16.7	3.3	.0	2.0	
31----90	3.3	2.7	1.3	8.0	
91---180	.0	1.3	2.0	9.3	
181--300	.0	.0	6.7	5.3	
301--450	.0	.0	14.7	4.7	
451--660	.0	.0	4.0	.0	
over 660	.0	.0	3.4	.0	

Agricultural employment and especially *dahwa*, on the other hand, allow a measure of flexibility, although these are limited by their seasonal nature. Roughly 30 percent of households in Shair Tomat and Shatt Damam report that non-agricultural labor accounts for between 181 to 450 labor days per year, while over 33 percent of households in Somasem devote between 31 to 300 labor days to household businesses. Only four percent of households spent more than 30 labor days in agricultural labor, with Somasem and Shair Tomat responsible for most of these.

Household income

Most would agree that autarky has seldom, if ever, been a dominant feature of any household in securing its reproduction requirements. Some of those needs are met through trade. The expansion of capitalism into the Nuba Mountains has been accompanied by the increase of cash money as the preferred medium of exchange. Therefore, even in households that provide for most of their subsistence needs through their own efforts, the need arises for cash, even if only occasionally. Furthermore, household-based agricultural activities frequently do not satisfy income needs, requiring a strategy of multiple income streams. Only 22 percent of households acquire cash solely through the sale of crops and/or livestock. And besides, not every household member remains satisfied with farming, while some hopeful farmers need to first acquire sufficient resources.

The point is, the majority of sampled households have at least two or three means to obtain cash income, with 60.0 percent of households in Shair Tomat having three or more, 56.7 percent in Somasem, and 51.7 percent in Shatt Damam (Table 2.20). In fact, only 22.0 and 40.7 percent of households received no income from crop sales and animal sales respectively.

TABLE 2.20: NUMBER OF SOURCES[16] OF HOUSEHOLD CASH INCOME

No. sources	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	TOTAL
one	13.3%	13.3%	11.7%	12.7%
two	30.0	26.7	36.7	32.0
three	35.0	30.0	30.0	32.0
four	16.7	26.7	15.0	18.0
five	5.0	3.3	6.7	5.3
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

A final point concerns household income (Table 2.21). The table reveals the unequal distribution of cash incomes within and between the three villages. By far, Shatt Damam is the poorest village with nearly 62 percent of households earning £500 or less per annum, while significantly fewer do in Somasem (38.3 percent) and Shair Tomat (33.3 percent). Moreover, roughly 87 percent of households in Shatt Damam

[16] Sources include crop sales, animal sales, household businesses, agricultural labor, *dahwa*, non-agricultural labor, and remittances.

make £1500 or less. On the other end of the scale, some 17 percent of households in Somasem and Shair Tomat enjoy annual incomes of between £3,001 to £10,000, a mere 3.3 percent of households in Shatt Damam boast similar incomes. Lastly, 3.3 percent of household in Somasem and Shatt Damam earn in excess of £10,000 per year, although none do in Shair Tomat. What the data suggest is that social differentiation and capitalist class formation is on-going with the creation of an economic elite dominating the benefits.

TABLE 2.21: HOUSEHOLD NET INCOME IN SUDANESE POUNDS

Net income	Somasem	Shair Tomat	Shatt Damam	Total
under 100	13.3%	.0%	15.0%	11.3%
100------500	25.0	33.3	46.7	35.3
501-----1500	23.3	46.7	25.0	28.7
1501----3000	18.3	3.3	6.7	10.7
3001--10,000	16.7	16.7	3.3	11.3
over 10,000	3.3	.0	3.3	2.7
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(n=)	(60)	(30)	(60)	(150)

2.5 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Once revealed, households seem to emerge as relatively unequivocal units of analysis whose livelihood strategies merely await precise delineation. One can already begin to question the merits of such an approach. Although we now have a better understanding of what households look like and what their members do, our initial observations have been

necessarily schematic. However, it points to the need to look more closely at the wider socioeconomic environment in which households are located. From this perspective, various opportunities and constraints figure differently for households. We could simply stop at variations in land size, animals owned, agricultural and non-agricultural occupations, and household size and composition, yet still fall short of our goal. Simple stratification and demographic analysis fails to adequately explain variations in livelihood strategies because these approaches under-emphasize the variability of social formations in other than capitalist terms and homogenize household interests outside of life cycle.

The analysis of household livelihood strategies thus requires careful consideration of more than just the household as an independent inclusive entity, it forces us to investigate the significance of different combinations of household resources in conjunction with opportunities and constraints presented by the wider economy. Moreover, we must also admit that members may be involved in social relations at odds with each other, relations which may ultimately lead to the demise of a particular household.

If we are to proceed constructively, we must achieve a purposeful way of formulating a conception of the household in reference to the wider economy, while at the same time remaining sensitive to individual agency. To the degree

that we can distill the structural essence of the household, we will have helped fix the logic of individual rationality. But the backdrop of this is nothing less than the structural logic of the wider system. Capitalist and non-capitalist economic forces account for contradictions which exert powerful effects on household formation. When viewed in combination with non-economic forces such as kinship (patrilinear and matrilinear) and religion (Islam, Christianity, and animism), significant variations in households abound. After all, "The need to take seriously both the specificity of the levels and the relations between them within the same totality forbids us to analyze them in such a way that one level can be *reduced* to another, or *deduced* from it" (Godelier, 1978:57).

Yet the explication of 'logic' remains problematic: If, as previously argued, a mode of production provides the organizing logic of households, why do some members exhibit diverse responses to similarly structured processes. An appreciation of this need not force the reintroduction of individual voluntarism, rendering structural constraints irrelevant. Human rationality, after all, does not exist outside of its context. But as we enlarge the theoretico-empirical context, different aspects of that encompassing logic (structural conditions) become evident. In other words, the articulation of analytical levels presupposes a "hierarchy of structures" such that depending on the

particular level, **different** aspects of logic come into play **and with frequently contradictory results (Godelier, 1972). Here we must emphatically reject dualism, the supposition of multiple closed systems externally connected (if at all). Depending on an individual's structural location, different aspects of that logic come into play. Household represents one element of that structural logic, though for us it remains intimately connected to others such as class, gender, generation, and kinship.**

If the goal is to understand household livelihood strategies--not the household as individual actors but as a coherent set of social relations--we need to connect changes in households to the larger ongoing processes at work within that society. What we term the **formation** of household livelihood strategies, then, is more reasonably the transformation in the range and structure of available options.

CHAPTER III

THE NUBA MOUNTAINS IN SPACE AND TIME

Questions concerning human interaction are never easily resolved. This is especially true with regards to both its proper spatial and temporal context. Contributions within the development debate over the past twenty years--most notably the dependency, world system, and articulation of modes of production literature--have impelled social scientists to reconsider the broader macro-level issues in an effort to refine their theoretical and methodological approaches. No longer is it possible (or plausible) to examine local 'reality' outside of the larger context in which it is embedded. Macro-economic and political forces can and do exert enormous pressures which activate variant responses at the micro-level. Moreover, wider environmental trends also work to influence the course of events influencing the lives of a local populace. On the other hand, case studies are essential in order to elucidate the diverse range of responses and initiatives found at the local level, to forge the "necessary link between personal experience and the flow of history" (Tilly, 1984: 64). Thus, while this research is concerned with the formation of livelihood strategies in three particular villages in the Nuba Maintains, it cannot be conceived of in isolation to wider events--present and past. After all, the unfolding past has left an indelible impression

on present conditions which act to place parameters on future alternatives.

3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING AND ETHNOGRAPHIC ORIGINS

Located near the geographical center of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan lies an area covering approximately 30,000 square miles.[1] In the southeastern area of Kordofan Province, situated between 29° and 31° E. and 10° and 12° 30' N, this region is called the Nuba Mountains, though from common convention rather than geolitic accuracy. Geographically, this region presents a diverse range of geomorphic conditions. The Nuba Mountains lies on the semi-arid summer-rain savannah belt some 2,000 feet above sea level and its plains are broken by residual massifs (such as Heiban group in the center, Nyima in the northwest, and Otoro in the southeast) as well as by a number of isolated obtruding outlies scattered intermittently across the region. The highest elevations extend some 3,000 feet above the floor at Jebel Temading and Jebel Dair. Most of these mountains, however, are little more than multiple hills and isolated granitic or diorite boulders which arise abruptly from the plain's floor with little apparent systematic grouping except for the large masses at Tegali and Miri. Many of the mountains are pocketed with caves connected by precipitous footpaths and thus historically afforded welcomed protection

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[1] The Nuba Mountains occupies an area approximately the size of South Carolina or Scotland.

from hostile aggressors. A number of the intermontane basins are deeply incised by *khors* (seasonal riverbeds), a few of which continue to trickle throughout the dry season, while in others water is usually obtainable by digging holes in the bed (March, 1948:834).

The population of the Nuba Mountains is approximately 1.2 million people, of which 800,000 or two-thirds are classified as Nuba. [2] If the use of 'mountain' to describe the topography is questionable, the appellation of Nuba to denote its inhabitants is a misnomer. Both the origins of the people and etymology of the word to describe them are unclear and usually brings forth a cry of consternation from ethnographers and historians alike. Unfortunately, the state of Nuba historiography is more tentative than established, consisting of tangential statements, conjecture, and assumptions (e.g., Seligman, 1932; Nadel, 1947; Stevenson, 1984; and, Spaulding, 1985a). In general, scholarly inquiry remains confined to anthropological inquiry[3] describing certain aspects of particular groups without attempting to grapple with the knottier historical issues. In part, this is due to the

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[2] The demographic data on the region, like most of Sudan, are sparse and their reliability is open to question. These figures are taken from the 1983 *Census*.

[3] One of the dilemmas of anthropology is an ethereal sense of timelessness imparted to the subject of inquiry. In the case of the Nuba Mountains, little (if any) attempt is made to draw a particular village into the orbit of greater historical conditions that indelibly affix the organization of life at a give time and place in that social formation.

necessity of piecing together the history of the Nuba Mountains from the records of Sinnar, separated from Kordofan by the Blue Nile, and Darfur, lying to the west, as well as from the respective oral histories of the area (MacMichael: 1967:4). This latter activity can prove especially difficult. As stressed by S.F. Nadel (1947:5):

> It often seems as if historical traditions had been cut short by the overpowering experience of the Mahdist regime (1881-1898), which must have severed all links with a more distant--and possibly less disturbed--past. In some tribes the tradition of past movements or previous places of settlement are summarized in one sentence: 'We have always lived here.'

Although the Nuba exhibit distinctiveness in relation to Nilotic and Arab cultural traditions that dominate the surrounding countryside on all sides, they also demonstrate great discrepancies among themselves. Aside from the "bewildering complexity" of languages (Nadel, 1947:2) which Stevenson (1984: 8-9) classified as ten along with upwards of fifty linguistic subgroups and dialects, Nadel (1947:1) claimed "over fifty different ethnic groups."[4] Part of this ethnographic quandary resulted from the promise of sanctuary, albeit only partially realized, offered by the Nuba Mountains' terrain. The very problem thus lies in the tumultuous history of the Kordofan plains as witnessed by the many incursions which succeeded over the centuries in rolling back various

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[4] A common phrase in the Nuba Mountains is that there are ninety-nine hills and ninety-nine languages. This has also been used to describe specific ranges such as Tegali and merely connotes an unspecified number of each.

plains communities to what is now commonly known as the Nuba Mountains. As noted by MacMichael (1967:1):

> In the earliest days and for thousands of subsequent years the ancestors of the Nuba probably held the greater part of this country (Kordofan), excepting the northernmost deserts. Beaten back by other races that ruled the Nile banks in successive generations, or by tribes from the interior, and finally by the nomad Arabs, the Nuba have now retired to the mountains of Southern Kordofan (Nuba Mountains).

The history of the Nuba, then, is a chronicle of alien intrusion, enslavement, and impoverishment.

Various theories abound on the origin of the present-day inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains. Suffice it to say "that the 'ethnic type' presented by many of the Nuba today was formerly more widespread in the Sudan" (Stevenson, 1984:32). Most agree that many of the Nuba groups are descendants of Nubians pushed south[5] by the incoming penetration of Muslim groups claiming Arab ancestry but the exact relationship between these homonymous groups remains a matter of controversy. Others like the Shatt are purportedly a branch of the Daju who migrated from Darfur before reaching their present locations by way of the Nile valley near Malakal. What is at stake, however, is whether "there exists something like a 'Nuba culture', a cultural make-up common to all the various groups," notwithstanding the "diversity of the Nuba hill tribes" (Nadel, 1947:3). Or is this perceived

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[5] In fact, Kordofan is a Nubian word and initially was the name given to a *jebel* ten miles southeast of El-Obeid (Lloyd, 1910; MacMichael, 1967; and, Stevenson, 1894).

commonality merely a kind of "regional stamp or cachet" (Stevenson, 1984:11) forged in historical exigencies.

Without question, the name Nuba gained popularity as a pejorative label affixed by Arabic speakers to all black Africans from the Sudanic belt. Burckhardt (1822:279), from his travels in the early 1800s, informs us that "The name Nouba is given to all Blacks coming from the slave countries south of Sennar." Other accounts indicate that Arab sources from the ninth century A.D. used the words Nuba and Sudan (literally meaning Blacks) interchangeably and that the "term *al-Nuba* became almost synonymous with 'black slaves'" (Hassan, 1967:8-45). The term Nuba, then, did not originate among the various Nuba groups but is an alien conception derived externally. Nuba "commonality", in all probability, arose in necessary contradistinction to Arabs and any feeling of 'Nubahood' assumes a response to mutual understandings acquired vis-à-vis Sudanese Arabs of the region and not from any strongly held traits among Nuba groups.[6]

Further difficulties arise when attaching tribal labels to specific Nuba groups. One of the difficulties in the concept of tribe stems from the use of tribal names as if they retained a meaning constant through time (O'Fahey and Spaulding, 1972;318). Tribe, in and of itself, is essentially a product of European colonialism which brought with it

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[6] Stevenson (1984:11) argues that some of the shared traits invoked by Nadel "are not particularly common to the Nuba over against other peoples."

"certain ways of reconstructing the African reality" (Mafeji, 1971:253). This poses a sense of ambiguity because while the concept may be fixed, that which it intends to demarcate is fluid and dynamic. In light of this, throughout my discussion I will use the Arabic word for tribe. The Arabic word *gabila* is usually translated as tribe but as Ahmed (1976) points out, affinity offers a closer approximation. This way the phrasing of tribal meaning shifts from the ideological mechanisms of 'natural' or immutable statements to socially constructed facts.[7]

Contemporary names of various *gabila* usually reflect place location such as Ghulfan, Miri, or Dilling. The names may also merely mean people as Shatt (saat in the local language) or the Nyima's name for themselves, *ama mede kolat*, people of the seven hills. Currently, when a Nuba is asked about his ethnicity the response will vary according to whom asks the question. An Arab, for example, will elicit the response of Nuba while a Nuba will respond to another Nuba with the *jebel* they are from. The point being, *gabila* (as with ethnicity, race, etc.) must be tied into larger historical trends in order to comprehend its saliency. And in the case of the Nuba, "It is only very recently.....that some

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[7] In terms of a biological basis to tribe (or race), Bayoumi (1985:368), in a study of genetic characteristics of the Fur and Baggara, indicates a large degree of "admixture" that is part of a "larger process...taking place between the Baggara, other western Africans, and the rest of the Sudanese population," thus derailing the myth of the presumed primordial purity of so-called tribes.

sense of a common 'Nuba-ness' has developed" or that specific *gabila* names have emerged (Stevenson, 1984:11).

Aside from the respective Nuba groups which inhabit the region are a number of important Arab groups. In many respects, the categories '*Arab* and Nuba are generic terms used to designate inhabitants of what is now called the Nuba Mountains and their respective homelands such as Dar Hamar (plains area) and Dar Nuba (mountains area). Beginning in the sixteenth century the region witnessed the southward expansion of the Baggara cattle nomads, Hamar and Messiriya camel nomads, and others such as the Hawazma associated with the expansion of the Funj. Later incursions by Baggara horsemen from the west and northern *jallaba* (merchants) in the nineteenth century saw the influx of even more groups. In addition, Arab also embraces northern and western administrative officials and military personnel appearing first with the arrival of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, including the Shaigiyya and Shendi. It is important to remember that many Arabs, such as the Baggara, did not always fare well as is evident during Turkish rule throughout much of the 1800s. They too have been victims of historical forces which served to divide Arab from Nuba in the dictates of enmity, giving 'cultural' meaning to the distinction of tribe

(and ethnicity). Lastly, other groups such as the *fellata* and *khawajat* also played significant roles in the area.[a]

3.2 TRIBUTARY STATUS AND INSTITUTIONALIZED INSECURITY

The history of the Nuba Mountains is essentially the history of a buffer territory and labor reserve; first the prey of its eastern, then of its western, and finally of its northern neighbors. Debate centers around the existence of a "state form of government among the Nuba in precolonial times" (Spaulding, n.d.:1). The majority opinion argues against any form of state in its entirety, pointing to "the great lack of firm tribal traditions of history, origins, migrations, etc" (Stevenson, 1984:31; also Seligman, 1932; Nadel, 1947; and, Baumann, 1987). Against this interpretation, a second view contends the Nuba Mountains was appended to one or another of the pre-Islamic monarchies of the northern Nile or, more specifically, to the Funj kingdom of Sinnar via the provincial governate of Kordofan and the tributary fiefdom of Tegali (Spaulding, 1985a). As Spaulding demonstrates employing documents from eighteenth-century Sinnar, the Nuba operated under some form of state hegemony and that they have for a long time been forced to operate within the context of a "law-abiding, tax-paying society" (Spaulding, 1985b).

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[a] The term *fellata* is a denigrative term used to label people who originated from west Africa, while *khawaja* (sing.) specifies pale complexion and foreign origin such as Europeans.

It is the nature of that contact, however, which is of interest and more importantly, the effect that contact exerted on the consequent economic organization of respective Nuba groups. Where Spaulding is correct in his major assertion, doubts cloud the matter of degree of incorporation into the formal administrative structure of the state. In the main, the Nuba Mountains was never directly incorporated into a state structure in terms of direct rule but served as an adjunct in multifarious tributary systems.[9] The Funj governor of Kordofan, for example, received tribute from and conferred investiture upon rulers of various Nuba groups.[10] The kingdom of Tegali did, however, extend direct rule over a wide number of Nuba communities but the extent of that dominance as well as its quality remain problematic[11]. Moreover, Tegali was not always able to retain its independence, but found itself appended periodically to Sinnar in the east. With the usurpation of Kordofan by the Sultanate of Darfur in 1790,

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[9] The general absence of specific treatments of the Nuba, except their primary role as a source of slaves suggests the peripheral nature of the Nuba Mountains to the various kingdoms and that it probably remained outside of the direct rule and institutional incorporation into their state structures (with the exception of Tegali of course).

[10] The Ghudiyat comprised the last dynasty of Funj rulers in Kordofan. Nadel (1947:360-362) further establishes that the Ghudiyat (Ghadayat) received tribute from the Nuba groups of Ghulfan, Nyima, Tabaq, and Kadero.

[11] Spaulding (1985a, 1985b, and n.d.) locates an extensive boundary to the Tegali kingdom while Ewald (1982) contends that Tegali's size was delimited to it capital and immediate surrounding environs. This second interpretation lends itself to a more indirect rule of the Nuba Mountains.

that hold became even more precarious with a number of Nuba communities rebelling against a weakened Sinnar and a besieged Tegali.

Popular legend has it that Tegali, in the extreme northeast of the Nuba Mountains, was founded by a migrating holy man of the *ja'alyyin* by the name of Mohammed al-Ja'ali, who came preaching Islam around the year 1530. The chief of Tegali, impressed by the stranger's piety and wisdom, granted him the right to settle there and eventually he married the chief's daughter and thereupon established the dynasty of Tegali kings known as Jaili (Elles, 1935:7-8). The tradition of the coming of a 'Wise Stranger' who founds a dynasty, however, is not unknown to Sudanic Africa and is the basis for a number of such occurrences.[12] Though the initial chronicle of the origins of the Tegali kings may lodge in folklore, there is no doubt that the royal lineage of Ja'ali existed for at least twelve generations and that Islam was introduced into Tegali some three to four hundred years ago (Stevenson, 1963:10). At this time, Islam made important inroads into the Nuba Mountains, especially with the arrival of Islamic teachers as visitors or settlers to Tegali (Stevenson, 1963:10).

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[12] For example, the 'Wise Stranger' legend lies behind the founding of the "Kara" dynasty by a "Hilali or Abbasi" in Darfur and Wadai by a Ja'ali from Shendi (Hasan, 1967:154). Other instances are recounted by Trimingham (1959) for West Africa.

The wealth of the Tegali kings, as with the Funj kings and Darfur sultans, depended, in part, on apportioning trade concessions or trading zones to select individuals in return for a share of the profits[13], and from the exaction of tribute from communities in their domain (Stevenson,1984; Spaulding, 1985; and, Kapteijns and Spaulding[14], 1988). Kapteijns (1984), writing on the organization of trade in precolonial western Sudan, distinguishes three levels of exchange: local barter or face-to-face interactions based on reciprocity in goods or services; regional trade partially employing limited-purpose currencies and exerting greater state control; and foreign or international commerce stringently controlled by the suzerain. International trade was inevitably restricted to royally sanctioned bearers of license in return for first right of refusal and a monopoly of certain goods like firearms (Kapteijns and Spaulding, 1988). Transactions were conducted in kind and consisted primarily of

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[13] One extreme characterized by Coqery-Vidrovitch (1978:266) argues in favor of an African mode of production characterized by the "combination of patriarchal agricultural economy with a low internal surplus at the village level and of the great international...trade at the State level" upon which the state is based. Terray (1974), to the contrary, asserts that only through control of productive slavery was trade possible in the first place by providing the necessary commodities with which to attract traders.

[14] Kapteijns and Spaulding (1988) assert that although significant differences between state systems did exist (as well as regional variations within them) it is possible, when approached with caution, to draw meaningful generalizations about them with regards to the mechanisms of tribute extractions and the institutional organization of trade.

luxury items of local provenance, including gold, ivory, iron, leather, civet, and above all slaves. In the regional spheres of exchange, nobleman assessed market user fees in concordance with established convention, part of which passed upward to the king as tribute. Trade practices generally excluded commoners, in part by strictly enforced sumptuary laws,[15] but also because of the danger inherent in travel. Commoners who left the comforting confines and security of the community frequently found themselves "subject to robbery and enslavement" (Kapteijns and Spaulding, 1988:61).[16]

The general stipulation governing tribute commanded payment in locally available goods suitable for export, although cattle and slaves were of primary importance from the dominated areas within the Nuba Mountains.[17] In addition, tribute in the form of labor obligations was not unknown. For

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[15]In a passage worth quoting at length describing sumptuary law in the Funj kingdom, Spaulding (1985:78-79) writes:

> To Southern subjects, their rulers were "cloths wearing people"...When a nobleman traveled through the countryside, people should "rejoice at his passing as if it were the greatest of feast days for them" and expose their bodies according to custom. The attempt to rise above one's status, for example, through the acquisition of sewn garments or other objects of conspicuous value, was a crime called *sibla*, and such illegitimate social climbing was severely punished.

[16] In fact, this is what made banishment from a village particularly onerous and helped assure compliance with 'the law of the land.'

[17] Once again a more critical analysis is delimited by the paucity of available information. Either tribute is referred to in a brief cursory comment or in a generalized account of a wider geographical area.

example, *nafir* labor could be mobilized to fulfill labor obligations which the subjects owed their rulers as in the case of gold mining at Tira Mandi (Dunn, 1921). The cooptation of this type of communal labor for labor projects resulted in the Sudan Arabic proverb: "The *nafir* without a master accomplishes nothing" (Spaulding, 1985b). A proverb like this would not have been coined in the strict sense of *nafir* as communal reciprocity and therefore points to this second function. Tribute was not always delivered regularly (Stevenson, 1984:41) but as Spaulding (1984:98) points out, recalcitrant individuals were subject to immediate enslavement while uncooperative groups attempting to avoid submission were hunted down until they sought protection from the lord.

Within any type of tributary system the ruling class must be able to assert its authority over its subjects, preferably through non-violent institutions but certainly by force if required, and to protect its domain from external aggressors. Once the power to enforce its rule is found deficient, the procurement of tribute (as well as the protection of trade) becomes problematical. This is particularly true for many of the Nuba groups whose position within the orbit of various tributary kingdoms proved intractable at best. Historical accounts reveal many attempts to evade payment, either through direct confrontation or escapement to the *jebels*. In order to safeguard their interests then, the kingdoms depended upon their armies, armies inevitably comprised of slaves

(*jihadiyya*).[18] According to MacMichael (1967:8), Sinnar captured many of its slaves in southern Kordofan, especially from Dair and Tegali and "almost entirely recruited its army therefrom." While the truth of this is difficult to ascertain, the traveler Bruce (1873:317) describes the sight of Nuba soldiers ringing Sinnar city: "These are all Nuba soldiers of the Mek of Sinnar; and the villages which they occupy at a distance of four or five miles." He further states that "settlements and provisions (are) given to them." Slaves were also important for other activities, primarily domestic activities in royal houses and, to a more limited degree, in production (usually agricultural estates).

A climate of institutionalized insecurity[19] blanketed the Nuba Mountains as a result of slave raids. Not only were slaves hunted by the government[20], but also by the Nuba

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[18] Scholars of precolonial Sudanese history share a common problem in the limited nature of available sources to the effect that subsequent analyses tend to be static. Commenting on the institution of slavery, Kapteijns (1985:5) laments: "Although one may query the relevance of generalizations on this level and of this ahistorical, functionalist type, for the time being they might be the only generalizations about African slavery possible."

[19] Spaulding (1985a:98) asserts that in order "To secure the labor of their subjects the southern (Sinnar) nobleman imposed a condition which may be called 'institutionalized insecurity'."

[20] As the size of standing armies increased the responsibility for provisioning the became increasingly intolerable to their retainers so that they were expected to be self-sustaining (Spaulding, 1985a:207). Military excursions thus became profit-seeking ventures and thus had to be regular and successful as they functioned as pay checks. A favorite area for these activities was the Nuba Mountains.

themselves. Government policy directly facilitated this latter activity by allowing, even encouraging, payment of taxes in the form of slaves and cattle, most easily, if not exclusively, obtained by raiding one's neighbors. Consequently, many Nuba communities engaged in low-grade internecine warfare. Not only did this have the effect of demographic dislocation but also fractured the Nuba, further impeding regional political organization. Hence it is not surprising for travelers of the day to describe the Nuba as living in isolated communities distrustful of all from the 'outside world.' Moreover, agricultural and pastoral production declined among particularly hard-hit communities, instigating even more raids. Nevertheless, the presence of "vast piles of simsim" stored "some 10 miles north of Jebel Ghulfan" indicates that at least some Nuba groups "could cultivate at such a distance from their own homes" (Sagar, 1922:140; also Stevens, 1912). Further deprivations and discontinuities awaited the irruption of the Turkiyya and the onrush of colonialism.

3.3 THE RISE OF SLAVERY AND INSTITUTIONALIZED TERROR

Essentially, these pre-colonial kingdoms were feudal-based social formations which augmented their treasuries through trade and taxation in the form of tribute. Trade, and the tribute which helped enable it, allowed nobility to wallow in conspicuous consumption, redistribute goods to favored

vassals[21], and/or engage in yet more trade. Darfur, like the other kingdoms, also participated in trade and in many ways this (as with the others) served to undergird its sense of social superiority and moral rectitude in the conduct of its affairs. Of interest for the Nuba Mountains, however, was the rising importance of a certain item necessary to Darfur's economy; namely slaves. For this reason, Darfur impinged on the Nuba Mountains and by 1790 supplanted the Funj as the predominant power within the region. As previously mentioned, slavery existed in Tegali and the Funj but its use in production remained minimal and was largely confined to an area surrounding their respective capital cities. In the northern stretches of the Funj there was only "about 4,500 slaves between Wadi Halfa and the Fourth Cataract, amounting to approximately 4 percent of the total population" (Spaulding, 1982:9).

The expansion of the estate system within Darfur greatly added to the demand for slaves. For example, "Sultans Tayrab (1751-85) and Abd al-Rahman (1785-1801) settled slaves on agricultural estates near their capitals, at Dar Fongoro, and on Jabal Marra and its foothills" (Lovejoy, 1983:113-114). Estates were also allotted to court officials, wealthy *jellaba*, military commanders, and important religious leaders.

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[21] Redistribution of subsistence goods to commoners was also necessary during hard times as part of the sovereign's responsibilities. Failure to fulfill these obligations cast a pallor over the sanctity of that rule.

The need for slaves proved great, especially among the hereditary royalty: "Sultan Ali Dinar is said to have employed five hundred women (slaves) simply to bring water to his palace" (O'Fahey, 1985:88-89). In addition, the ruling elite of Darfur were firmly entrenched as suppliers of slaves to merchants with one result being that Darfur became a major supplier of slaves to the Egyptian market.

All of these developments boded poorly for the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains. The primary hunting grounds for slaves lay on a path which traversed the Nuba Mountains. Slave raids were conducted with military precision by horse-mounted calvary sweeping in across the plains, striking fear into the hearts of the unfortunate victims. Over time, as O'Fahey (1985:85) notes, "Within this inner arc relations between raided and raiders were to become in some cases stabilized and formalized into tributary status." Once again, various Nuba communities warred on weaker neighbors in order to meet demands derived externally. They were also the object to seizure by various Baggara groups who had begun drifting into the area from the 1800s onward in search of suitable grazing lands and security. Although references to slaves captured in the Nuba Mountains are rather scanty in earlier times, accounts of incidences increase during this and later colonial periods. The real extent of geographic and demographic dislocation associated with slavery, however, was to await the period called the Turkiyya.

This period of "Oriental mercantilism" operated in much the same way as its European counterpart during its period of primitive accumulation (Amin, 1976:322). It helped lay the ground work for capitalism by minimizing trade restrictions, popularizing the use of currency, privatizing land (though not in all areas), and expanding production for the market. This brand of mercantilism, nonetheless, failed to fully foment capitalism because control of production through the direct subsumption of labor to capital never materialized on a general scale. And besides, the real intent of Turkish rule remained the crude extraction of resources in the most expeditious way. As a result, the merchant (*jallaba*) ascended to the helm of the Sudanese economy and cared little how that wealth was forthcoming as long as they were not fettered in its pursuit. As Spaulding (1982:18) correctly points out, the *jallaba* did not venture south out of some innate desire for trade, but from the very objective socioeconomic conditions set in motion by the Mohammed 'Ali and the Turko-Egyptian empire in 1821.

The resources of eastern Sudan were certainly not unknown to Mohammed 'Ali's Egypt as the Mediterranean trade had been ongoing periodically for centuries. An image of the superabundance of gold and slaves drove 'Ali to invade the Sudan in his desire to attain a measurable degree of independence from the Ottoman suzerain in Istanbul (Hill,

1959:7-8; Holt and Daly, 1988:47-49).[22] One set of resources was to provide the requisite finances, the other to man his army. Ultimately, the abundance of wealth proved somewhat disappointing as did his ambition to create a large standing army in Egypt comprised of foreign-born, Egyptian-trained Nilotic Sudanese. Still, Mohammed 'Ali managed to unleash a reign of terror throughout the Sudan, but a reign especially brutal in the Nuba Mountains (and southern regions).

The slave trade dramatically expanded during the first twenty years of Mohammed 'Ali's rule. Pursuant to the Viceroy's desire to create a *jihadiyya*, large numbers of slaves were captured through regularized raids by government forces and later in the southern zones through the services of Sudanese, European, and Turkish concessionaires. Additional slaves were also collected through a heavy tax burden levied by the Turkish administration which commissioned taxes in slaves due to the absolute paucity of specie.[23] Pallme

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[22] In 1811 Mohammed Ali managed to break the power of the Mamluks in Egypt. Ali believed that the wealth of the Sudan would ensure his uncontested power as viceroy of the region and further establish the independence of the sultan.

[23] According to Spaulding (1985:142), for example, at the dawn of the Heroic Age of Sinnar the "use of specie in exchange was almost exclusively confined to those involved in the sultanic caravan trade to the outside world...". By 1836 Holyroyd (1836:176) observed a wide variety of specie in use in El-Obeid, including "Pasha's money, Spanish dollars, and English gold." The wide variety of coinage reveals that it was not a standardized medium of exchange. In all probability it remained limited to major market towns under the Viceroy's sovereignty and certainly was not prevalent in the Nuba Mountains to the degree where taxation in this form could proceed.

(1844:39), in his Travels to Kordofan, describes the results of this practice:

> When a village has nothing left wherewith to pay its taxes, it is obliged to find a certain number of slaves, who are drafted as recruits into the various regiments, or publicly sold;...the government receives these slaves at a value of 150 to 300 piasters...a head; children at 30 piasters, or more; but always below the market price, in order that Mehemed Ali, the great slave merchant, may gain something by the bargain, at the expense of his oppressed subjects.

Such procedures magnified feelings of resentment towards the foreign intruders and eventually undermined its rule.

After securing northern Sudan 'Ali sent his son-in-law, Mohammed Bey Khusraw the *Defterdar*[24], south to conquer Kordofan and the sultanate of Darfur. A contingent of "4000 cavalry and infantry, ten pieces of artillery, and about 1000 Bedouins" accompanied the *Defterdar* and enabled him to sack El-Obeid and bring all of Kordofan under his heel, with the exception of the Nuba Mountains (MacMichael, 1967:19; also see Petherick, 1861:272-275). Initially, the southern most administrative boundary extended to Jebel Kadiro, approximately due east of Dilling (MacMichael, 1967; Stevenson, 1984). Turkish expeditions met intense resistance from Tegali and Dair, nonetheless Turkish force managed to capture a number of slaves. Irruptions into the *jebels* were no longer an intermittent occurrence and came as no surprise. Both Petherick (1861) and MacMichael (1967:24) report that

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[24] *Defterdar* literally meant keeper of the register of the lands and was the most important fiscal officer.

Dair "was never subdued though assaulted time and time again" and that its inhabitants "lived by robbery and raided successfully as far north as Melbis (near El-Obeid)." Holroyd (1837) spoke of Tegali as independent but by 1863 Petherick (1869) says that Tegali had succumbed to a loose tributary status paid in gold and slaves. The Turks were thus able to effect a tributary relation with Tegali but the latter resisted payment whenever the opportunity arose and eventually ceased altogether. The establishment of tributary systems in the Nuba Mountains as elsewhere was never given priority; confiscation rather than revenue marked the true intent and this could be accomplished through more direct means (Holt and Daly, 1988). From the outset the unrelenting acquisition of slaves assumed primary importance as witnessed by a letter from 'Ali to the *Defterdar* in September of 1825: "You are aware that the end of all our effort and this expense is to procure negroes. Please show zeal in carrying out our wishes in this capital matter" (Holt and Daly, 1988:45). The Nuba Mountains was thus steadily drawn into the ambit of an externally located power whose insatiable demand for slaves seemed unlimited (see Bjorkelo, 1989).

The Turkish government's ability to amass slaves was remarkably successful but created unforeseen difficulties in the coordination of slave hunting with the government's ability to create new regiments. Consequently, redundant

honey, ivory, and civet. Cattle were obtained to augment Egyptian herds that had been depleted by epizootics and warfare, for leather, and to provision the occupying troops. Gold deposits, on the other hand, at Jebel Sheibun (and Fazughli) showed to be more fable than fact, a point made evident by European experts urged on by 'Ali. Iron prospects fared slightly better and by 1829 was used to make nails for the government shipyard at Manjara on the White Nile. An attempt to improve its exploitation with the aid of English iron founders was short lived as six of eight died within two months of reaching Kordofan (Hill, 1959:56).

The Baggara also raided for slaves, partly for personal use but primarily to replenish stock paid to the government in tax, a practice in which they were given a free hand to raid in the Nuba Mountains.[27] These activities initiated certain changes in the socioeconomic organization of the Baggara. Territorial claims (*dar*) in the Nuba Mountains were quickly established demarcating various Baggara enterprise zones under the leadership of a type of warrior aristocracy (Amin, 1976:323). Within these respective domains many Nuba communities paid in slaves for protection, leaving the Baggara to raid other areas. Making matters worse, the raiders not

[27] This ploy was also adapted by the Khartoum-based traders and used against the Dinka after the bead market had been satiated and the Dinka refused to trade or exert themselves on behalf of the traders. The traders then resorted to wide-spread cattle theft in order to create a demand for which the Dinka would exert themselves (Mire, 1985:107).

only seized members of Nuba communities, but inevitably burned crops and frequently the village too. Accounts by Stevens (1912) and McLoughlan (1962:365) claim that the Nuba, in their misery, were even forced to sometimes "sell on the open market their own unprotected people such as orphans, widows, and other destitutes."

As previously mentioned, the Nuba prior to this time could be found cultivating the plains and grazing their livestock, albeit increasingly closer to the *jebels* as the pace of slave raids quickened. A further development was also evident in the reorganization of Nuba agriculture into 'ribbon farms', elongated plots arranged side by side. This afforded better protection as the farmers could present a relatively compact line posed between any raiding party and the village. Weapons and hoes could be used interchangeably according to the prevailing conditions. It was also at this time that the conventional image of Nuba agricultural holdings into far farms, near farms, and house gardens apparently developed. Slave raids also increased the power of male elders since it fell under their purview to coordinate protection as well as organize their own raiding parties, especially after the shift from small-scale intermittent raids to well-organized regularized raids. In terms of this latter activity, the more important elders certainly received a larger share of any plunder. In addition, elders could always deepen their

dominance by selling recalcitrant juniors to passing *jallaba* or Baggara.

Nadel (1947;55-56) discusses the incorporation of captives into respective Nuba kinship groups and states that "In most groups slaves, whether they had been captured or purchased, were readily adopted into the family and became fully fledged members of the kinship group." He does note that other groups such as the Nyima and Dilling did acquire slaves as a 'capital investment'; i.e., "wealth as potential labour." The truth of these claims is difficult to assess. Meillassoux (1983;51) points out that since the law of large numbers does not operate within small 'domestic' groups, sex and age ratios must be balanced through conscious policy. These may include circulation of women between allied groups or through raiding, incorporation of sons-in-law without bride-price, and the introduction or prisoners or captives (p.51). Baumann (1987;77) also suggests the integration of slaves into kinship networks in his study of Miri Bara but clearly understood the difficulty in obtaining useful information: "Geneological enquiries often had to be abandoned for a respectful acceptance of people's sensitivities, when the questions asked would have led to admission of unfree descent." This in itself reveals more by omission, the opprobriousness of slave ancestry. One informant quietly told me of instances of marriage to captives in his village but when pressed to discuss his own family, loudly complained of

a bout of rheumatism, demanded aspirin to supplicate his pain, and promptly feigned sleep. He never talked about it again.

Outside of the confines of the Nuba Mountains in northern Sudan the issue is much more straight forward. Questions of labor need is not confused with kinship, gainsaying those who wish to paint a more benign image of African slavery (see Kopytoff and Meirs; 1977). Meillassoux (1986) argues that this confuses rhetoric with reality, labor exploitation with its rationalization[28], and that slaves were systematically non-kin. For example, in order to ideologically reenforce their subordinant class location, slave names were frequently derogatory; Good Morning and Leather Sack (Burckhardt, 1822;293) or Sea of Lusts, Patience is a Blessing, and Increase in Wealth (Spaulding, 1982;12).

Initial Turkish efforts directed slaves towards external markets, most notably Egypt and Arabia. Events further a field also strengthened the demand for slave labor within Egypt, such as the global cotton boom lasting through the American Civil War. With the injection of substantial numbers of slaves into the Sudanese market and consequent to the government's removal of restrictions on slave owning after 1840, most slaves were retained for internal use. Coupled with the privatization of agricultural lands, most pronounced in the riverain areas and Gezira (though not in the Nuba

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[28] This is also what occurs in the phrase 'free labor' under capitalism; free labor has the choice of laboring for wages or starving.

Mountains), a rapid upsurge in agricultural slavery occurred.[29] By the close of the nineteenth century McLoughlan (1962:361) suggests that slaves performed the bulk of all agricultural activities in the north and comprised one third of the population. Clarifying the central importance of slavery to the Sudanese economy, Spaulding (1982:13) draws attention to speculators who played the slave market in hopes of turning a profit. This would hardly have transpired in times past.

If slavery helped create a new order, it also facilitated the meteoric rise of an indigenous merchant class, the *jallaba*. The migration of northern merchants to the southern slave-catchment zones was a direct outgrowth of the socioeconomic changes effecting the north. These individuals came to places like the Nuba Mountains in hope of securing a fortune with which to return to their homes and resume their lives.[30] Many, to be sure, remained in the south having

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[29] Only along the Blue Nile did agricultural slaves come to replace free labor to any degree before the arrival of the Turks (Spaulding, 1985a;209).

[30] Describing the merchant systems which developed O'Fahey (1973;33) writes:

> A credit system operated whereby the traders would supply the slavers with goods...in exchange for slaves to be captured. A slaver with good reputation could obtain goods on credit worth as much as five to six hundred slaves. But the traders covered their risks by a system of differential payments; thus if they accompanied the raid to the south and took payment there, they received five of six slaves for goods worth one slave in the al-Fashir market. If they were content to wait until the slaves returned, they received only two or three slaves. These transactions were confirmed in writing.

established profitable trading concerns, though certainly al-Zubayr Pasha Rahma Mansur (a Ja'li from the north) best exemplifies this. Ten years after beginning slave trading in Bahr al-Ghazal, he became virtual ruler of the province. Concomitant to the weakening of Turkish governance and its usurpation in Sudan by Europeans[31], pressures were brought for 'free trade' and by the mid 1840s various state monopolies had been abolished further encouraging the flow of potential traders south.

The *jallaba* also functioned as conduits of 'manufactured' goods to Nuba communities, primarily iron blades for axes and hoes, beads, knives, spear tips, and rifles. The Nuba's need and ability to trade was inexorably connected to the incessant warfare enveloping the *jebels*. Weapons were essential for village defence; protection from Turkish or Baggara raiding parties and from other Nuba groups as well. The dominant 'currency' of this trade involved slaves and cattle. Some Nuba groups like the Kadugli, Miri, Moro, and Nyima redoubled and regularized their raids on weaker neighbors in order to maintain an adequate supply of weapons to avoid being enslaved

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[31] "The Englishman Samuel Baker was granted the administration of Equatoria province and soon controlled the lucrative ivory trade. He was succeeded by General Gordon, who was appointed Governor-General of the Sudan by the Khedive in 1877, and soon after appointed his European collaborators as governors of other Sudanese provinces. An Italian ruled Kordofan, an Austrian administered parts of Darfur, and an Englishman, Bahr al-Ghazal, Swiss and Danish adventurer-merchants fought in the Khedive's Ethiopian campaigns" (Collins, 1976;4).

themselves. In fact, Nadel (1947;393) characterized the Nyima slave raids as very efficient and ruthless. Trade with the *jallaba* also expedited the extension of the infamous *shayl* system, a practice which exists to this day. The point is, the slave trade effected everyone, but certainly none had as great a economic stake in it as the *jallaba* or, though certainly to a lessor degree, the war-leaders, Nuba and Baggara, whose power developed in response to exigencies of turbulent times. So when the Turkish administration, acting under British pressure, attempted to suppress the slave trade, the time was ripe for a 'deliver.'

The Mahdist uprising began in 1881 and "was particularly appropriate for 'the oppressed' for situations in which they have not only become conscious of oppression but are willing to respond to a movement which seems to offer a way out" (Hodgkins, 1971:110). Many reasons are offered for this phenomenon but essentially concern the undermining of Turkish authority by powerful slave interests like al-Zubayr which created a power vacuum, dependency on foreign creditors such as the British and French in financing the Suez Canal, and the superexploitation of the Sudanese themselves. The movement was led by a certain Mohammed Ahmed ibn 'Abdullah who in 1881 proclaimed himself the Expected Mahdi, the divine leader chosen by god at the end of time to bring justice and equity to humankind. He largely drew his followers (*ansar*) from three disgruntled sections of the population: 1) religious and

pious men who largely believed in the eschatological purpose of the Mahdi's mission; 2) those harboring "practical grievances" such as the "Ja'aliyyin and Danaqla of the dispersion" who had been pushed south to the fringe of Arab Sudan and came to depend, directly or indirectly, on the slave trade; and, 3) Baggara nomads who neither claimed religious piety nor held political grievances but merely distrusted all forms of centralized government which may be summed up simply as "Kill the Turks and cease to pay taxes" (Holt, 1961:79). The Baggara, however, formed the backbone of the Mahdi's army under their able leader 'Abdallahi ibn Mohammed who later ruled as the supreme Khalifa upon Mahdi's death from typhus in 1885 until the successful reconquest in 1898. But if the Mahdist rebellion began as a nationalist movement, under Khalifa 'Adballahi it reverted to the quest for sectarian interests; the rise of the Baggara aristocracy.

As Stevenson (1984;56) appropriately notes, "The Mahdist rising meant new problems and troubles for the Nuba, new decisions for some tribes as to allegiance, and in many cases attacks by Mahdist forces." The Mahdi began his long march towards Khartoum by way of jebel Gadir, located in the remote periphery of southeast Nuba Mountains. There he gathered his forces and drove towards El-Obeid, the premier city of Kordofan. The Mahdi managed to strike an uneasy truce with King Adam Dabbalu of Tegali who swore an oath not to hinder his efforts in return for a pledge to leave Tegali unmolested

and proceeded north to attack El-Obeid. Following King Adam's detention by Khalifa 'Abdallahi and his death in El-Obeid in 1884, however, *jebels* Tegali and Dair came under assault by Mahdist forces in their constant pursuit of slaves, both for the *jihadiyya* as well as other uses. Although slaves comprised only 15 to 18 percent of the army during the Mahdiyya, the dependence of the local population on slaves increased as 'free men' responded to the Mahdi's call of *jihad* and formed the bulk of labor in agriculture, herding, and domestic work (Nakash, 1988:52).

The legitimacy of the institution of slavery was never an issue during the Mahdiyya, although the enslavement and export of slaves failed to be renewed on the scale it had previously assumed under the Turkish regime (Warburg, 1981:253). Internal demand for slaves remained strong, especially by the military, but constant wars with foreign enemies inhibited the Mahdist regime's ability to acquire them.

> (The Mahdist state) fought the Turko-Egyptian army in 1885-86 and again in 1891 along the Red Sea coast; the Ethiopians and the Darfur Sultan between 1887-89; rebellions in Kordofan and Darfur in 1891; the British-supported Italians from Ethiopia in 1893-94; and the Belgians in the southern region in 1894...By 1896, the British and French governments both dispatched expeditions to seize control of the Nile headwaters (Collins, 1976:5).

Consequently, slave procurement languished in Equatoria and Bahr al-Gazal, important catchment zones in the South, as well as in other areas. In addition, the Mahdist government maintained rigid control over the slave trade and imposed a

strict trade embargo on the transportation of slaves to Egypt, in part to prevent their military usage there.

Mahdist forces did manage to enslave many Nuba, causing further socioeconomic disruption and driving the remaining inhabitants deeper into the *jebels*. The Nuba were not acquiescent, however, and instances of fierce resistance, though often futile, color the literature. In 1885, *jihadiyya* troops primarily from Jebel Dair mutinied in El-Obeid, killing the deputy governor and looting the town before fleeing south to Jebel Nimma (a Ghulfan redoubt). Their success proved short lived. After beating off two attempts to subdue them, the mutineers and their protectors were brutally defeated with the survivors enslaved or dispersed. Meanwhile, unable to storm Jebel Dair, Mahdist forces traveled south to Talodi where they conducted "extensive raids on the surrounding neighborhood and captured large numbers of slaves which (were) sent in convoys to Omdurman" (Wingate, 1968:291). These actions, ironically, stirred the Baggara to revolt due to the perceived infringement on their rights by interlopers over slaving in the area. The Baggara were defeated in a "terrible slaughter" with a loss of approximately 10,000 men (Wingate, 1968;291). The real devastation to the Nuba Mountains occurred in 1896 when the Khalifa summoned the bulk of his army to Omdurman. The army slowly made its way, gathering all who lay in its path, "driving men, women, and children before the extended detachments of (the) army, who, to render

desertion impossible, destroyed every village and settlement as they passed and left a wake of utter destruction in their train" (Kordofan Handbook, 1912:89, quoted in Stevenson, 1984:60). Whole areas were decimated and peoples scattered in all directions. Particularly hard hit were Ghulfan, Namma, Miri, and Debri. This final assault was to leave an indelible impression. The release of slaves and disbandment of the *jihadiyya* upon the fall of Omdurman by the reoccupation forces in 1898, nonetheless, proved an important element in the spread of Islam to certain regions of the Nuba Mountains.[32]

3.4 THE RISE OF CAPITALISM AND INSTITUTIONALIZED SECURITY

Foremost among British intentions for reoccupying the Sudan was the need to forestall French designs in extending its own empire from the Atlantic coast to the Indian Ocean. French occupation of the upper Nile waters would have severely handicapped British interests in Egypt, principally in cotton production. In a clever ruse, the British claimed they were merely acting on the Khedive's behalf, thus mollifying French, Belgian, and Italian suspicions over Britain's true territorial interests in conquering the Sudan. This whiff of legality provided all the necessary pretext the British government needed and was further reinforced by the subsequent Condominium Agreement which, theoretically, formed the basis

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[32] A number of informants in Somasem also stressed this to me when I asked when the people adopted Islam: they all declared that when relatives fought with the Mahdi they became Muslim.

of joint Anglo-Egyptian sovereignty. In reality, the more important administrative positions such as Governor-General[33], Provincial Governors, and District Commissioners were held by British subjects. Egypt, on the other hand, was forced to absorb the lion's share of the financial burden in meeting Sudan's budget deficits prior to 1913 and loaned money, without interest, to cover development projects (predominately railroad construction). The costs of maintaining the Egyptian army, however, remained Egypt's responsibility until 1924-25 when they rebelled and the British forcefully evacuated the last tangible vestiges of Egyptian rule.[34] Previous to this time, junior-level Egyptian administrators had been interposed between the British rulers and Sudanese masses, but now were replaced with educated Sudanese, primarily from the north. This legacy was to have a lasting impact on the composition and quality of Sudanese governance.

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[33] And as Holt and Daly (1988:118) emphasize, "Supreme military and civil authority in the Sudan was vested in the governor-general, who could rule by decree." In theory accountable to the other co-domini, the governor-general in fact reported to the Foreign Office in London through the British representative in Cairo, allowing far more independence of action than accorded to other such individuals (pp. 120-121).

[34] After this date, the only remaining tie Sudan maintained with Egypt was the Sudan Defence Force, an all Sudanese force financed through Egyptian funds but under a British commander. By this time, Britain's presence in the Sudan was a *fait accompli* to other European powers.

In the years that immediately followed reoccupation, the extraction of Sudanese resources became a pressing colonial priority. The consolidation of Condominium rule required the restoration of Sudan's population and economy to provide goods necessary to Britain's expanding global empire. To this end, Britain developed a rail network[35] to connect important regional centers, initiated new tax regimes, and laid the foundation for the dependency on cotton monoculture (Collins, 1976). Fear over the ready supply of Egyptian long-staple cotton led Lancashire textile manufacturers to found the British Cotton Growers Association (BCGA) with the expressed purpose of promoting cotton production in the Gezira.[36] Concurrent with the Condominium government's need to create an economic basis within the Sudan in order that its administration become self-supporting, a lasting union was formed whereby both the interest's of British capital

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[35] The rail network connected Khartoum with Atbara to the North, Port Sudan to the east, Sinnar to the south, and El-Obeid to the west. Southern Sudan and Darfur, aside from taxes and limited attempts to promote cotton production in the former, functioned as buffer zones between the Belgians and French

[36] Essentially, Egyptian over-taxation drove many *fellahin* from their lands, reducing the cultivation of long-staple cotton. At the same time, American textile industries absorbed their own domestic supplies. All of this added to an astronomical rise in the price of raw cotton. The BCGA thus realized the paramount importance in establishing a reliable source of cotton, a source that they would be able to control. By securing a monopoly in cotton, the Lancashire industry remained viable for a few more decades (see Barnett, 1977 and Tait, 1988).

(spearheaded by the BCGA) and Condominium government could be satisfied.

The viability of cotton plantations had already been established by an American millionaire entrepreneur, Leigh Hunt, and by 1914, under the aegis of the Sudan Planter's Syndicate (SPS), work was begun to dam the Blue Nile at Sinnar. The project was completed in 1925, creating the world's largest gravity-irrigated cotton plantation--the Gezira Scheme.[37] The Gezira Land Ordinance of 1921 empowered the government to turn proprietors into tenants, whose management came under the SPS. But in order to keep 'wages' down, it was mandatory that a portion of the tenancy be set aside for sorghum cultivation, ensuring that tenants would meet their own basic food requirements. Nonetheless, as the Gezira Scheme expanded, a secure supply of seasonal labor (to the Gezira and elsewhere) became a chronic problem. This was partially alleviated through British policy which loosened immigration laws to allow a large influx of West Africans, including Hausas, pushed out by the British conquest of northern Nigeria and the subsequent breakup of the Fulani sultanates, and others such as Chadians. As a Sudanese notable remarked to Wingate: "Allah took away our slaves, but

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[37] "A gross area of 240 000 feddans was irrigated in the Gezira in 1925, rising to 300 000 in 1926, 667 000 in 1931, 852 000 in 1938, and almost one million in 1956" (Niblock, 1987:14).

sent us the Fellata" (Annual Sudan Reports, 1909:55 quoted in Warburg, 1981:266).

The development of Britain's extractive capacities were delimited by the wide variety of production forms found in divergent parts of the Sudan. Hence, solutions in one area were not always amenable to others, including the Nuba Mountains.[38] Labor acquisition and its control proved a formidable task, rendered more so if slave labor was to be eschewed in the immediate future. Sudan, after all, was not India where labor was abundant and land scarce but the opposite, multiplying the difficulty in creating labor in its commodity form.[39] The various land ordinances (1899, 1905, and 1921) both reinforced rights of private ownership (a trend begun earlier) and accorded legal authorization to state expropriation, but still failed to create sufficient labor

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[38] According to O'Brien (1980:81-2): "The government was able to amass a cumulative surplus of over £16 million on its direct Gezira share after debt service by 1950. Moreover from 1925 to 1956 cotton exports represented about 70% of Sudan's export earnings, over 80% of which came from Gezira. The total profits to the SPS by 1950 also exceeded £16 million, with average annual dividends to its shareholders of 15% plus a capital profit of 25 shillings on every 20 invested upon liquidation and distribution of reserves." All in all a very tidy profit indeed.

[39] Needless to say this is a simplistic interpretation and is not meant to account for other factors such as time and type of incorporation into British capitalism, different social formations and their components (e.g., feudal, slave, and lineage), and pace of proletarianization.

supplies.[40] Other strategies remained to be devised. Moreover, dependence on West Africans was not always judicious policy because as 'outsiders', they posed additional sources of ethnic and nationalist unrest.[41] 'Free' labor had to be coerced by other means.

The downfall of the Mahdist State thus posed a particular problem for the British; how to balance the abolition of slavery with an acute labor shortage. Population estimates in 1903 show that in Kordofan alone (north and south), the population during Mahdist rule decreased from 1.8 million to 550,000 with 600,000 succumbing to disease and 650,000 to warfare (McLoughlin, 1962:387).[42] In addition, "Before the Condominium," writes Daly (1986:231), "the economy of the Sudan was based upon slavery." Slavery was of critical importance along the Niles and for tending the herds and growing food for the nomads (Daly, 1986). O'Fahey (1985:95) alleges that "it is possible that the cattle and camel herders of Dar Fur and Kordofan were more nomadic in the 19th century and before than in recent years and that slavery was a crucial

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[40] Sudan's area is 596.6 million *feddans* and, except for six million privately owned *feddans*, is owned by the state. Private landholdings a primarily restricted to the main Nile and some of its tributaries (Awad,1987:39).

[41] A similar solution had been devised within other British colonies; e.g., Tamil 'coolies' were brought to Malaysian rubber plantations and to Ceylon's tea estates.

[42] The British Consul-General in Egypt in 1903 estimated that Sudan's population during the Mahdiyya shrank from 8.5 to 1.9 million (Nakash, 1988:53-54).

factor in this change". The solution advanced by the British thus reflected a strong sense of pragmatism and a complete disregard for their own moral pronouncements.[43] Formal policy "decried slavery, took some steps to root out the trade, but simultaneously upheld and even enforced the continuation of domestic slavery" (Daly, 1986:231; also see Khalafalla, 1982).[44]

Initially, then, Condominium rule accommodated slavery, preferring to regard slaves as "Sudanese servants."[45] Above all else, reopening the Sudan to investment suffused its policies which, in turn, necessitated minimizing internal turbulence. To this end, British machinations focused on institutionalizing 'security' to provide a stable context for capital accumulation. In this light, the immediate abolition of slavery proved impractical.[46] In the Nuba Mountains,

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[43] In fact, Gordon advocated bringing Zubair back to the Sudan as Governor-General, believing him to be the only man who could save Sudan from the Mahdi. Strange bed-fellows, Gordon an avowed abolitionist, Zubair an inveterate slaver.

[44] Runaway slaves, for example, during the first two decades of the Condominium, were routinely returned to their 'masters.'

[45] In order to appease public opinion in Britain, Arabs in general and Islam in particular were isolated as the culprit in the perpetuation of slavery in the Sudan (and elsewhere). This cynical manipulation has helped to perpetuate many stereotypes regarding both Arabs and Islam.

[46] Britain needed to make the Sudan self-supporting as quickly as possible. Besides, the Sudan was not among the more important colonies. After all, when the British colonized Sudan, its power was ebbing, increasingly apparent after WW I. There would be no Delhi Durbar in Sudan.

British administrators were confronted with the twin dilemmas of facilitating surplus extraction with the abolition of the slave trade.[47] Table 3.1 gives some indication of the ambivalent nature of British attempts to suppress the slave trade.

TABLE 3.1: NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED AND CONVICTED IN SLAVE CASES IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS, 1905-1913.

	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	TOTAL
Arrested	17	18	6	--	10	22	23	8	8	112
Convicted	16	5	4	--	6	15	16	8	6	76

source: compiled from McLoughlan (1962:388).

This ambivalency probably stemmed, in part, from the fact that it was difficult to retain Nuba and Baggara participation in a commercial market, however limited, when an important medium of exchange--slaves--was no longer accepted. In addition, isolation from being remanded to the *jebels* eroded social relations between various Nuba Mountain communities and led to a continued pattern of communal warfare whose intent lay with settling disputes and enrichment in both animals and people. According to Ibrahim (1985:12), the government tended to avoid interfering in "inter-tribal quarrels", unless they

[47] A 1902 report characterizes the situation in the Nuba Mountains: "...a deplorable state of internecine conflict between the Nuba Meks of the various mountain districts has been revealed, whilst these unfortunate blacks are in turn the object of constant raids on the part of Nomad Arabs, who carry off their women and children into slavery" (McLoughlin, 1962:364).

directly posed a threat to governmental authority in the region.[48] This divisive policy helped preclude a united front against the Condominium government. Subsequently, initial government policies chose to ignore slavery while stepping up the exaction of taxes.

Certainly too, British racism cannot be discounted. Perhaps Jackson (1953;94), a political officer during the Condominium, best sums up British attitudes: "to have freed all slaves would have meant letting loose upon society thousands of men and women with no sense of social responsibility who would have been a menace to public security and morals."[49] Similar accounts reflect British perceptions of the Nuba Mountains, particularly Savage Life in Black Sudan where the Nuba are characterized as "these queer people" or "(I) came face to face with not only one but a small group of the most repulsive-looking and completely naked savages" (Fife, 1927:55-56 and 218). Or Mann's (1954: 39) depiction of the Nuba Mountains, in Where God Laughed: The Sudan To-day, as the most primitive area of Sudan and probably of Africa as a

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[48] Quite simply, the Condominium government did not have the manpower to subdue the Nuba Mountains at this time. Moreover, various Nuba were now well armed with rifles gotten from Baggara in trade for cattle and from the deserting troops of the Mahdiyya.

[49] Examples of racism abound. In more general remarks, Slatin Pasha, inspector-general of the Sudan, wrote that "by nature all blacks are lazy", while the Governor of Kordofan states "personally I am not a great admirer of the black man at his home and am certain that you see him best as a slave or a soldier" (Warburg, 1981:260-262).

whole. Racism's corollary, paternalism, is equally evident in a colonial administrator's role in containing an outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis:

> The Nuba behaved like badly frightened animals and huddled together around each new victim, the most dangerous thing they could do. In extreme cases we had to resort to burning their huts to get them into the open...At that moment I think I realized more clearly than ever before what a worth-while job was ours. At least it steadied my hand to set light to the thatched roof and destroy the home of a poor savage in the interest of his future welfare (Strachan, 1951:267).

Together, racism and paternalism shaped the ideological carapace rationalizing British exploitation.

The ability to collect taxes is a reflection of the extension of a government's rule. Taxation and 'law and order' were thus two sides of the same coin. In the eyes of the assessed, both Nuba and Baggara, taxes were perceived as tribute and, except for the absence of enslavement, were collected in much the same way as had been done in the past. At first, taxes were collected from weaker communities in the Nuba Mountains, those primarily associated with accessible *jebels*. Ironically, those able to resist paying tribute increased their attacks on other communities with contrived impunity.[50] By 1910, however, British troops were positioned to bring 'security' to the Nuba Mountains, a fact made necessary by the intransigence of many Nuba Mountain

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[50] Major O'Connell in 1902 described a series of raids in the Nuba Mountains in which Hawazma (Baggara) and Nuba alternately raided several Nuba Villages and, in most cases, burned the crops and village structures (Jackson, 1955: 172).

communities in meeting their imposed tax obligations. For example, after the British succeeded in interdicting Baggara raids on the Nuba, the latter ceased to pay tribute because for them, it constituted protection money and safeguarding from the Baggara was no longer needed. The Nuba had to be taught the meaning of 'civilization' and, as such, the British responded with 'measured punitive reprisals.' To this end, the British utilized "fiercely repressive means of pacification", freely employing machine guns and artillery, before burning crops and villages (Daly, 1986:129).

Following government military actions, whole villages were forcefully relocated from their aeries to the plains below and their rifles confiscated, either forcefully or through fines imposed for raiding.[51] In this way, agriculture could be made over into the image of the English yeoman farmer, of small independent farmers selling part of their crops on the market in order to secure those items they were unable to produce themselves. But in the case of the Nuba Mountains, that item increasingly became cotton[52] and there was no

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[51] As summarized by the Governor of Kordofan in 1926: "I feel most strongly that nothing can be done in the way of administering these communities (the Nuba) as long as they are allowed to remain on the tops of their hills, not only does this render them immune from all Government authority, but the very fact of their position tends to produce in them a rebellious and independent spirit" cited in Ibrahim, 1985:45).

[52] To a lesser degree in this area, gum arabic was an important product sought by the British, as it was by regimes antedating them. In 1926-29, Sudan exported 79.2 percent of the world's gum supplies and by 1954-57, its share increased to 85.0 percent.

corresponding 'free' market. Farmers had to contend with either government monopolies, as with cotton, or with the *jellaba* and his *shayl* system. As for independent farmers, they were at once subject to the reformulation of political authority which envisaged a multi-tiered system of a *Mek* as a paramount chief, an *Omda* as an intermediate chief in larger villages, and a *Sheikh* in each settlement (Baumann, 1987). *Meks* were allowed considerable leeway in the conduct of their affairs, so long as they acquiesced to the demands placed on them by the Condominium government. The first was to pay the yearly tribute which they were entrusted to collect (as well as fines), and the second was to cease raiding for slaves and cattle. In many instances, new patterns of dominance were fashioned and older ones abraded.

Major outbursts of armed resistance to government authority during the first three decades precluded the systematic extension of cotton production into the Nuba Mountains. The first serious challenge to Condominium rule came at Tegali in 1903, followed by other uprisings at Talodi in 1906[53], Miri in 1915, Nyima in 1917, and *jebels* Julud, Timayan and Tullishi in 1926 (see Ibrahim, 1985; Jackson, 1955; and, Daly, 1986). The institutionalization of security was complete by the end of the 1920s, although isolated

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[53] The truculence of the 'Talodi Arabs', runaway slaves who had begun a community at Talodi, was blamed for the incident. Essentially, they continued to vigorously engage in the trafficking of slaves much to British chagrin.

instances of banditry continued to plague governmental authorities. In many Nuba communities, banditry became ritualized as a 'rite of passage'. Among the Tira, for example, usual proof of a youth's manhood and marriage eligibility was success in cattle raiding (Ibrahim, 1985:50). Informants in other communities such as Kalulu related a similar basis for cattle raiding to me. These goods could best be readily obtained by raiding. In addition, spears, guns, and cattle increasingly comprised a large part of the bride price, a necessity which further extended elders power as recipients of valued possessions. Other artifacts of importance included tobacco, salt, sugar, and tea, also indicative of the growing nexus with the *jellaba* as well as out migration for wage labor. Finally, any act of successful banditry construed a source of village pride, especially since part of the spoilage was distributed among fellow villagers.[54]

With the cessation of truculence, the government, in conjunction with Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, British Cotton Growing Association, and a groups of Lancashire textile manufactures, conspired to extend cotton production to selected areas the Nuba Mountains. Experimental plots during the rainy season of 1924 showed that

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[54] Nuba raiding of 'outsiders' is the basis of a common Arab-Sudanese stereotype that the Nuba are, by nature, inveterate thieves. I heard the Nuba described in this way many times in such places as Khartoum, El-Obeid, and Kadugli.

American type cotton could be grown and plans were laid to establish a cotton growing industry under the aegis of the Nuba Mountain Cotton Industry (NMCI) (March, 1948:842; Mohammed, 1986:117). The NMCI retained firm control, cotton seeds were distributed free of charge but farmers could dispose of their crop only to government agents at a predetermined 'official price'. The NMCI also provided nomads with (cotton) seed cake in order to stimulate cotton cultivation among this segment of the population. Aside from lint cotton, the government's aim was to introduce a cash crop to "supplement people's income and to acquaint the Nuba (and nomadic) people with money."[55] Money went to pay taxes (e.g., poll), with the remainder used to purchase cattle and goats.[56] The NMCI also insisted that cotton production supplement grain based agriculture, underscoring British intentions in keeping wage levels low while ensuring adequate food supplies.

The Nuba Mountains was thus drawn into the global system and to the vagaries of its markets through the active intervention of the government to facilitate cotton

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[55] Personal interview with the former General-Director Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation and present member of the Gezira Board of Directors.

[56] The magnitude of the spread of cotton cultivation is evidenced by the fact that "sums amounting to £128,000 in 1938 and £136,000 in 1940 were paid out for rain grown cotton to an Arab and Nuba population estimated at 400,000 souls" (Henderson, 1946:23).

production.[57] Accordingly, the government set up mobile heavy machinery teams to excavate *hafirs* (reservoirs) and to maintain roads. Subsequent promotion of complementary industries points to the depth of British interests. Ginning factories were established at Kadugli, Talodi, Kalogi, Lagowa, Abu Gibeiha, Um Birembitah, and Simieh. Contractors were commissioned to transport the raw cotton to the ginning factories and stored in the yard. There it was ginned and hauled to the railheads at Simieh or Dibeibat for shipment to Port Sudan. The cotton was then sold at auction to British agents. In addition, the government set up enterprises to manufacture oil, soap, and seed cake from cotton byproducts (see fn. 56).

As in other European colonies, the Sudanese were compelled to render payment of taxes in cash, an obligation which necessitated emigration for many inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains.[58] Migrants leaving their autochthonous areas usually were soldiers in the army, policemen, railroad guards, and young men searching for employment. Significant portions

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[57] During WW II, the numbers of feddan under cotton cultivation shrank as the British pressed for greater quantities of sorghum needed to feed its troops. Following the war, the people were once again exhorted to cultivate cotton.

[58] O'Brien (1988:140) argues that "The time of rural tax collection in key labour supply provinces was shifted from the end of the dry season (May-June) to the beginning of the cotton-picking season (January-February) by 1943 in order to ensure that peasants and pastoralists were relieved of their cash at the most opportune time."

of the condominium military and, later, police were comprised of Nuba. It is estimated, for example, that 75 percent of the Tenth Sudanese Battalion and nearly all of the Shendi company were Nuba (Ibrahim, 1985:62). Apart from the construction of Sinnar Dam, the expansion of the Gezira Scheme required large numbers of seasonal workers (Henderson, 1987). Huddleston, Governor of Blue Nile Province in 1924, reasoned that:

> ...an assured supply of casual labour up to 50,000 men will be required. Local sources of supply will by then have been largely eliminated, and reliance will have to be placed on some Sudan source of supply, for example, the Nuba Mountains...(National Records Office, Khartoum, Blue Nile Province; cited in Duffield, 1981).

The scale of out migration from the Nuba Mountains reached such an extent that many *Meks* complained of insufficient numbers of able bodied men left for local cultivation (Ibrahim, 1985:61). In the absence of regular records detailing this phenomenon, Nasr (1971:31) nonetheless provides a clear indication of the trend (Table 3.2).

TABLE 3.2: NATIVES OF THE NUBA MOUNTAINS PASSING THROUGH KOSTI IN 1927.

DISTRICT	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN	TOTAL
Dilling	124	6	1	131
Talodi	45	-	-	45
Kadugli	4	-	-	4
Rashad	17	2	1	20
TOTAL	190	8	2	200

By 1937, the District Commissioner, Western Jebels, estimated the number of migrants from Dilling District alone to be 800 (Nasr, 1971:31). This population drain continues to exert a powerful influence on the course of development in the Nuba Mountains.

Nuba emigration also magnified British worries over the spread of Islam and the Arabization of the Nuba. "Some detribalized Nuba had already been arabized" says Sanderson (1963:236), "but, in the opinion of British officials, the resulting blend tended to combine the shortcomings of both cultures with the virtues of neither."[59] Essentially, the British wished to stem Islamic and Arabic influence and provide a bulwark against their further spread to the southern regions.[60] In an effort to curtail Nuba-Arab contact, the government adopted a policy of Indirect Rule and instituted two forms of governance, one to administer Arabs, the other Nuba. From this developed a separate legal system and set of laws which were continuously modified to meet the exigencies of the day. Subsequently, the Nuba Mountains was proclaimed

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[59] In 1927, the Governor of the Nuba Mountains, Major Northcote, conducted a general survey of the region and classified the districts according to their degree of Arabization: Class I, "pagan naked Nuba; Class II, "tainted" pagans; Class III, pagans with more Arab influence than I and II; Class IV, "mixture of pagan and Muslim"; and, Class V, "pure Nuba Muslims" (Ibrahim, 1985:57-58). Note how Islam and Arab are treated as synonymous, a recurring problem today when discussing the 'Arab' countries.

[60] It is interesting to note that in one breath the Nuba were disparaged and, in the next, "authentic Nuba culture" praised, although the latter was done vis-á-vis the Arabs.

a Closed District in 1924,[61] in effect closing trade to all but 'natives' without a special permit from the authorities and placing restraints on Nuba migration. Nuba migrants, for example, could be repatriated if unemployed and were encouraged to reside in Nuba 'villages' outside areas of employment. With regards to cotton cultivation, it was hoped that it might act as a deterrent to further Nuba migration by providing a means to acquire cash (apart from its economic benefit to the government).[62]

Education policy was formulated along the same lines and reflected the urgency to segregate Arab and Nuba students, after the decision to provide pedagogic instruction to the latter in 1920. *Khalwas* (Islamic schools) were left intact and met the education needs of predominantly Muslim areas. Elsewhere, the administration sought to provide education through the tutelage of the Sudan United Mission and later the Church Missionary Society, predicated on the pattern of missionary education in Southern Sudan. Mission schools, for the most part, failed due to recurrent lack of financial and

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[61] Other Closed Districts included Darfur, most of the rest of Kordofan, Bahr al-Ghazal, Mongalla and Blue Nile, and parts of Dongala, Kassala, and Halfa.

[62] In the words of one British administrator, "if the Nuba can make money within the province instead of having to go abroad for it a considerable tendency towards Arabization is automatically removed" (Ibrahim, 1985:63).

staffing resources, vacillating government policies[63], and gross underestimation of Christianity's appeal. In the end, inconsistencies in British policy of separation in the Nuba Mountains unraveled and is underscored in Nadel's summary (1947:487):

> That we invest them (Nuba *Meks*) with swords and robes of honour, offer them tea in Arab fashion, and encourage them to visit Arab cities or Government offices staffed by Arabs, endorses their own leanings (inclinations towards 'assimilation').

There would be no "Christian-inspired Nuba renaissance." It would not be until 1940, however, that government schools in Dilling, Talodi, and Kadugli would admit Nuba students from the rural areas (Sanderson, 1963).

Government policy for the Nuba Mountains was, unfortunately, beset with contradictions which forestalled initiative and blunted reason. Faced with the necessity to coordinate the extraction of Sudan's resources, the isolation of the Nuba proved impractical from the outset. Moreover, the economies of the Nuba Mountains and the rest of Kordofan were ineluctably intertwined; through the activities of the *jellaba*, the transportation network, and the flow of commodities. At its worst, British policy severely restricted economic opportunities for the Nuba vis-á-the Arabs by creating an arena of competition, but then withholding the

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[63] Language of instruction provides an appropriate illustration of this problem. At one time or another, students were taught in their vernacular, English, Arabic with Romanized characters, and Arabic in its original script.

wherewithal to compete. More importantly, many Nuba were squeezed out in the intense struggle for scarce resources by men wielding considerably more influence. The decided lack of opportunities at the village level forced many Nuba to relocate to regional market towns and national centers of commerce. The results of this have had a profound impact on the course of class formation and ensuing struggle in the region as a whole.

In the final analysis, the economist P.T. Bauer (1984:90) provides the quintessential apologia for Pax Britannica when he writes:

> In British India, as elsewhere, colonial conquest had often been accompanied by bloodshed and early colonial rule frequently involved the levy of forced labor. This phase was largely over by the end of the nineteenth century, and by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, British colonial administrations governed firmly but lightly. They did not attempt to control closely the lives and activities of their subjects. Taxation was modest and people enjoyed virtually complete personal freedom, including the freedom to choose their own activities, to move around the country unheeded, and to dispose of their incomes as they wished.

Hiding behind this rhetoric, Bauer fails to fully comprehend the purely exploitative nature of colonialism; the destruction of extant social formations, the subjugation of people to the narrow interests of an insular ruling class, and the orientation of economies to benefit foreign capital. Hardly a laudable position one would choose to champion.[64] In the

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[64] It is like apologists for the Turkish regime arguing that slaves were ultimately taken in order to best teach them necessary skills. In point of fact, slavery was abolished in Jamaica in 1834, but planters secured a 4 year grace period by

end, British policy in the Sudan, as Turkish rule before it, encapsulated a callous disregard for the masses of Sudanese.

3.5 OLD WAYS AND NEW DAYS: INDEPENDENT SUDAN

World War II formally marked the territorial demise of Britain's global hegemony and was first felt in the crown jewel of the empire--India. Thereafter, the sun swiftly set on its far-flung dominions, with full political independence accorded to the Sudan on 1 January 1956. Lamentably, little changed for the majority of Sudanese whose expectations of the benefits of independence fell far short of its reality, especially with regards to the popular jargon espousing a cornucopia of munificence for all to share in once the chimera of colonialism was slain. But when the echoes of hard fought slogans had settled in the dust, foreign capital had simply been reenforced by an indigenous nascent variety. The only problem with capitalism for struggling Sudanese capitalists was that capital was not sufficiently national enough. As a result, no significant structural changes occurred in the inherited system of economic organization. In short, economic 'miracles' were based on a continued policy of exploitation of agricultural resources for export rather than domestic consumption (Table 3.3).

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the provision of "apprenticeship" of the ex-slave (Post, 1978:22). As if they needed to learn the art of cane cutting!

TABLE 3.3: COMPOSITION OF EXPORTS (as a percentage)

Commodity	1971/72	1980/81
Cotton	58	28
Gum Arabic	8	7
Sesame	8	8
Groundnuts	8	16
Edible Oil	4	3
Oilcake and meal	4	5
Sorghum	2	15
Others	8	18
Total Exports	100	100

Source: IBRD, (1982:17)

Although the first five-year plan promised diversification and an end to privileged concessions, structural reforms quickly faltered due to vested class interests. Instead, the government adopted a policy of "modernization of traditional agriculture," advancing the use of tractors together with seasonal wage labor. A policy of cheap labor required the continued disjuncture between domestic consumption and production.[65] In the case of the Sudan, no market developed for mass consumption nor has an internal capital goods sector emerged.[66] Moreover, there are

[65] Food continues to exhibit a high elasticity of demand, accounting for 71.6 percent of household consumption expenditures, followed by housing, textiles, and miscellaneous at 7.6, 8.1, and 12.6 percent respectively Oesterdiekhoff and Wohlmuth, 1983:14).

[66] The theory of comparative advantage requires perfect market condition, a requirement which never is met outside of a text book. For the Sudan, as in many other countries, the factor which allows 'competitiveness' is labor, a factor which perforce must be cheapened. Government policies are thus geared towards ensuring this.

relatively no intra-industrial or inter-sectoral linkages. "Not more than 6.8% of the agricultural output," write Oesterdiekhoff and Wohkmuth (1983:15), "were processed by the industrial sector despite the latter's bias towards agro-industries." National integration lay prostrate, a problem plaguing Africa and low income countries in general as evidenced by Table 3.4.

TABLE 3.4: SECTORAL COMPOSITION OF GDP (%) in 1984

COUNTRY GROUP	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRY[67]	SERVICES
Sudan	36	14	50
Sub-Saharan Africa	33	27	40
All low income countries	37	32	31
Industrial market countries	3	36	61

Source: World Bank (1984:59).

Scarce government monies continued to finance the expansion of capital-consuming, large-scale irrigated cotton schemes in addition to the opening up of vast tracts of land for mechanized rain-fed agriculture under private arrangement. Although the area under cotton grew measurably following 1956, the expansion of state-sponsored and private mechanized schemes was astronomical, increasing from 200,000 feddans to over five million by 1983 (Affan, 1984:23). The latter, however, amounted to little more than agricultural

[67] Manufacturing, as a subsystem of industry, is equally bleak, accounting for 7% of Sudan's GDP, 8% of Sub-Saharan Africa, 14% of low income countries, and 24% of industrial market economies (World Bank, 1984:59).

stripmining, destabilizing vast tracts of land which ultimately invited desertification. Coupled with narrow international and national interests as well as fluctuating world markets, agriculture stagnated resulting in increased food deficits, exacerbated terms of trade, and a widening trade gap (Table 3.5).

TABLE 3.5: SUDAN'S FOREIGN TRADE, 1960 TO 1974

YEAR	1960	1965	1970	1974
Exports	63.7	68.0	102.2	153.4
Imports	63.0	72.2	108.2	228.3
Difference	+0.7	-4.2	-6.0	-74.9

Source: ILO (1976:29).

As of 1984, Sudan's external debt is estimated to be in excess of 11 billion dollars, while deficit-financing policies and domestic borrowing pushed the rate of inflation to a rate of 38 percent per annum (Fadlalla, 1986:196). The corresponding average annual growth rate for the Sudan between 1960 and 1982 recorded a growth rate of negative 0.4 percent (World Bank, 1984:57).[68] This picture now, however, is exacerbated with the civil war entering its seventh year. Currently, scarcities have become a rule rather than an

[68] The Sudanese pound has also suffered severe devaluation, going from 2.87 US dollars for one pound in 1982 to over seven pounds for one US dollar in 1989. The black market rate is much higher and has approached twenty-one pounds for one US dollar.

exception.[69] In addition to sectoral imbalances and stagnation, regional disparities deteriorated with the Western (especially the Nuba Mountains) and Southern regions suffering the greatest deficiencies respectively (see El-Din, 1983 and Fadlalla, 1986).[70] The central-eastern region (primarily Gezira, the northern riverain lands, and Khartoum areas) however, benefited the most, but these were also the areas most integrated into global capitalism and from a much earlier date. These areas, as a result, also evidence the greatest economic disparities between classes. Although the creation of wealth was made possible from this connection, prosperity quickly became dominated by few privileged individuals.

Select groups profited politically and economically from the withdrawal of the British; established *gabila* and religious leaders, high level administrators and ranking military officers, and, above all, the *jellaba* of northern Sudan.[71] Each stood poised on the eve of independence to manipulate religious, ethnic, and secular symbols; inevitably

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[69] In December of 1987 the government was forced to raise revenues for the war by sponsoring a 'telethon' where viewers were urged to pledge money.

[70] Two civil wars have resulted from the oppression of the southern regions; the Ana Yaya and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement. The latter has increasingly picked up popular momentum in many parts of the country as the other exploited regions have realized their bond of commonality.

[71] Niblock (1987:60-81) underscores this in his detailed depiction of the composition of the Legislative Assembly and the first Parliament. Mahmoud (1984)draws similar conclusions in her research on the Sudanese bourgeoisie.

some combination of Islam, Arabism (and Arabic), and nationalism, but with the latter defined in relation to the first two. Consequently, many groups were circumscribed in their quest for a political voice and, except for their potential labor power, soon became peripheral to the development process.[72] Depending on the specific nature of the instituted relation to the Condominium government and the resulting basis of their puissance, each group promoted different sets of economic interests. Initially after independence, they were bound by shared commonalities of capital accumulation as expressed in the creation of a bourgeois state firmly committed to private property. Factional conflicts, nevertheless, periodically erupted, leading to new economic orientations following repeated state crises depending on the capital requirements of the then dominant faction. In the long run, however, international and national capitalism has shown itself to be remarkably resilient in containing the groundswells of discontent voiced by the Sudanese masses.

Gabila leaders drew early political support from colonial rule.[73] The system of 'native administration' instituted

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[72] Evidence of this is readily seen in the inability of some political groups (e.g., Umma Party) to eschew the creation of an Islamic Republic centered around *Sharia* law. This continues to provide a seemingly insurmountable barrier to a settlement of the current civil war.

[73] The colonial government, for example, gave Sultan Mohammed Bello Mai Wurno the land rights surrounding Maiurno in 1915 in order to bind him the state and present an

under Turkish rule was revived by the British with the Nomads and Shaykhs Ordinance of 1922 and 1927. *Gabila* leaders were invested with powers that originated outside of the 'domestic' community. More importantly, these powers were reinforced by a powerful central government. This presented a different picture, in many cases, than that which operated in previous times. Basically, *gabila* leaders were assigned with the task of collecting taxes, imposing fines on miscreants, adjudicating local disputes, and allocating land in their communities. In many instances, this protected sphere of authority lead to economic self-aggrandizement. For example,

> It is not unknown for a villager to pay dues to the Shaykh for the privilege of tapping (gum Arabic), but a stranger is known to do so. Gum gardens outside the boundaries of a village are regarded by custom to be at the disposal of the tribal chief who as the agent of the Government is entitled to collect these dues from tappers (Bolton, 1948:7).

Numerous *gabila* leaders in the Nuba Mountains were thus able to translate political positions of authority into economic prominence. In post-independent Sudan, some were thus able to take advantage of the new economic opportunities such as the various agricultural schemes, expanded government employment, and business ventures. Those that failed to do so or were

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opposition to urban-based nationalist movements. By 1949, realizing the coming shift to non-territorial forms of imperialism (neo-colonialism), the land was taken back and sold to local *jellaba* (Duffield, 1978:66-67).

unable to have been relegated to talking of past power as these roles waned, especially during the rule of Numieri.[74]

Religious leaders benefited similarly under Condominium rule, especially after the decision to rapidly expand cotton production necessitated greater control of agricultural smallholders. Like *gabila* leaders, support of religious leaders was also crucial to neutralizing local resistance to foreign occupation. Consequently, various religious leaders such as Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi, and Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi experienced a resurgence in their influence and, more importantly, their economic fortunes.[75] Wealth would eventually be turned into political leverage with which to bend the incipient state to their respective wills. The British permitted Muslim leaders to continue to collect *zakat*[76] from their adherents and in the case of some, large landholdings were invested in their hands. For example, the British, seeking to forestall any revival of Mahdism, initially granted al-Mirghani vast lands in the

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[74] A major complaint voiced to me by a number of *sheikhs* in the Nuba Mountains was the lack of authority that position carried and the attendant lack of profitability.

[75] Other families able to translate their positions of religious leadership into economic strength included al-Majdhub (agricultural schemes around Ed Damer), Nur al-Da'im (pump schemes on the White Nile), Siwar al-Dahab (pump schemes around Dongola), and al-Makki (trading concerns covering Kordofan and Darfur). Without question, however, none proved as adept in business as Sayyid Mahdi whose family has become a dominant force in the Sudan.

[76] Literally a tithe but in many ways approaches tribute in cash or kind.

Northern Province, preferring him to Sayyid al-Mahdi for his pro-Egyptian stance and faithfulness during the Mahdiyya. With the onset of WW I and nationalist unrest in Egypt the British turned to al-Mahdi, bequeathing him substantial lands on Aba Island[77], raising his stipend from £15 per month to £2,000 per annum, allocating him lucrative wood contracts, and lending large sums of money which were never repaid. Ironically, in their quest to bind these leaders economically to Condominium rule, the British merely succeeded in providing a powerful basis for their political control of large segments of the populace that eventually formed part of a substantial nationalist movement. The real effects of this policy were immediately apparent after independence as the al-Mahdi and al-Mirghani families quickly rose to political preeminence. The British did succeed, nonetheless, in firmly committing these individuals to a capitalist state committed to close ties with foreign capital.

Another group which proliferated under colonial rule was the educated Sudanese civil administrators (and later military officers). The power of this group--called *effendiya*--increased by the mid 1930s as several of its members acceded to the upper divisions in the administration. Educated

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[77] Sayyid Mahdi later expanded his area of cultivation to other areas in the White and Blue Niles and by 1935 controlled some 15,000 *feddans*. More importantly, Mahdi enjoyed a virtually costless labor supply provided by the Ansar. In return for clearing or cultivating one square meter of his land, for example, they were promised one square meter in paradise (Khalafalla, 1981:86).

primarily at Gordon College (renamed University College of Khartoum and then University of Khartoum), Sudanese civil servants were largely drawn from the leading religious, *gabila*, and *jellaba* families from the north. The composition of the *effendiya* illustrates the immediate and total control northerners held at independence and it is not surprising that many regions like the Nuba Mountains were ignored in the government's attempts to develop the Sudan. The Nuba Mountains remained a labor reserve and a source of cheap agricultural commodities while even basic services continued to be a distant dream.

Foremost among the powerful groups at the outset of independence was the *jellaba*. Trade routes had been established by the *jellaba* since the Turkiyya and before and penetrated most areas of the Sudan. During British rule, however, the *jellaba* were primarily restricted to intermediary positions unless directly sanctioned by the British such as the al-Mirghani and al-Mahdi families. As the oft quoted writing from Beshir (1970:32) illustrates:

> ...that in spite of frequent requests to the contrary, large quantities of 'Arab' clothing are still being made and sold. Please note that in the future, it is **forbidden** to make or sell such cloths...No more Arab clothing is to made from today...This order applies to all outside agents and owners of sewing machines (Beshir, 1970:52).

Indicative of the role of the *jellaba* in 1921, a Sudan Directory shows that of 259 business firms in the Sudan, only one was owned by a Sudanese (Khalafalla, 1981:89).

Nonetheless, the *jellaba* made the Sudan run, acting as the all important link between foreign capital and the actual producers. Merchant capital and extraction of agricultural surpluses have been and continue to dominate Sudanese business enterprises. In the Nuba Mountains, the *jellaba* extended their presence through the provision of weaponry, agricultural, and consumption goods, at first through the medium of slavery and then, more importantly, through cash or kind. With the increased stress on agriculture following independence, the *jellaba*, were thus able through such time proven systems as the *shayl* to monopolize the trade network and thus coerce agricultural products from indebted farmers. The *jellaba* also opened stores at the village level, providing tea, sugar, salt, cloth, coffee, tobacco, etc. Not only did this promote increased trade, but it also widened what was considered necessities (as opposed to luxury goods). For example, coffee in the past was generally considered a woman's drink and now it is a drink enjoyed by both men and women.

The prominent *gabila*, religious, administrative, and *jellaba* leaders were not discretely separable on the basis of these respective endeavors, rather these individuals tended to coalesce into recognizable class fractions on the basis of their relation to capital and its attendant accumulation process as well as ideological orientations. A glance at Niblock (1987) reveals the merging of these individuals into one powerful fraction or another, each attempting to control

the state and ensure access to its revenue.[78] In the Nuba Mountains, government rule with northern administrators led to its economic control by these groups. Mechanized schemes begun in places like Habila, for example, were quickly dominated by those with connections to the government. According to Affan (1984), Shepherd (1983), and O'Brien (1978), the vast majority of leaseholdings in the schemes went to civil servants, military officers, and *jellaba* and not to local farmers (Table 3.6).

TABLE: 3.6: PRIMARY OCCUPATIONS OF LEASEHOLDERS OF UM SEITAT MECHANIZED FARMS.

Occupation of Holders	No. of Schemes	Percentage
Merchants	117	58
Pensioners (Civil/Military)	46	23
Civil Servants/Gov't Officials	23	11
Cooperative Societies	7	3
Farmers	4	2
Companies	2	1
Others	4	2
TOTAL	**203**	**100**

Source: O'Brien, 1980:107.

In fact, local farmers were forced off fertile lands and left to cultivate marginal soils while pastoralists lost precious grazing lands and frequently found traditional migratory routes blocked. In most instances, leaseholders did

[78] Some men such as Sayyid al-Mahdi headed religious sects (Ansar), political parties (Umma), and large business enterprises.

not have farm backgrounds but relied on managers and cheap wage labor. Moreover, the overriding need to keep wages down led to the maintenance of 'subsistence' agriculture. According to Mohammed (1986:341), "traditional agriculture" accounts for 54 percent of the total agricultural area and 28 percent of major crop production, and, in the Nuba Mountains alone, provides the livelihood of some 380,000 smallholders.

At this juncture it is easy to locate the blame for Sudan's poor development of policies squarely on its leaders as is generally done by practitioners of modernization theory. They would be correct only insofar as the role of international capital and foreign states is ignored. As the Sudanese quickly discovered, independence can be illusive, especially when it concerns economic matters. Colonial interventions structured the Sudan's economy according to the precepts of rapid resource extraction, minimal expenditures, and low maintenance costs. National development, however, in the capitalist context is costly and depends either on external infusions of finance in the short-run or its long-term domestic accretion. International financial institutions were eagerly abetting the Sudanese government, pressing the general prescription of comparative advantage in terms of extractive commodities.[79] The dictates of agricultural

[79] "Third World" countries are all pressed to expand their production of extractive commodities under the guise that this is their ticket to development. That the products under demand were those demanded by colonial governments and their adherents does not seem to translate into sound economic

commodities, initiated by earlier regimes, absorbed the interests of the new government. Profits, for those able to secure pump schemes, mechanized schemes, or monopolize agricultural trade, were high (O'Brien, 1978). Development was thus directed towards those commodities needed, first by the West and later by the Middle East. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Economic Community, U.S. Agency for International Development, Arab Agricultural Development Bank among others look to the Sudan as a ready source of cheap commodities and promote their continued extraction.[80] In the end, the Sudan finds itself directed by external demands to the sacrifice of domestic needs. Presently, the Nuba Mountains struggles at the crossroads between northern domination and southern aspirations and thus has been increasingly drawn into the costly civil war.

3.6: ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Aside from the environmental degradations wrought by many agricultural practices, especially tractorized farming, climatic fluctuations also contributed to an already declining agricultural productivity. Rain and water supply are crucial

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policy for the newly independent countries. In fact, with more countries producing the same commodities, the world price has fallen, drastically curtailing most countries ability to secure necessary foreign exchange.

[80] The major portion of the loans made by the World Bank during the 1960s and 1970s were earmarked for agricultural schemes, leaving the delivery of such basic items as clean water to UNICEF. Following this, the development banks in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait became the creditor of choice in their desire to turn the Sudan into an "Arab breadbasket".

to support both crops and animals as well as to sustain people. Throughout the rainy season, surface water is relatively abundant, replenishing *hafirs*, filling numerous *khors*, and raising the water tables. During the dry season, domestic water supply is usually a problem. At this time, water is found in *hafirs*, springs (*seraf*) primarily located near *jebels*, and wells of varying depths. Some *khors* also retain some water during the dry season but usually water is obtained in these by digging holes in the bed. Nonetheless, permanent water supplies can be problematical and this raises the difficulty in its transportation. In some villages it is delivered by lorry (at a cost) but predominantly water is carried in five gallon jerry cans on the heads of women. Nomads too face similar difficulties, especially as they find themselves increasingly in competition with sedentary settlements.

Southern Kordofan forms part of the vast savannahs extending across Africa. The plains consist of a variety of fertile soils, ranging from the *goz* or sandy soils primarily in the northern reaches, *tin*[81] or black and red cracking clay soils located throughout the plains, and *gardud* or non-cracking compact clays interspersed on the plains which tend

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[81] The cracking clay soils occupy approximately 50% of the plains area. The most common extends to a depth of 2 meters with cracks reaching down some 1.5 meters. These soils can be difficult to cultivate as they are extremely hard during the dry season and very gummy during the rainy season so that aside from slickness, it tends to cling to the feet in large clumps.

to be impermeable in their 'natural' state and a second variety made up of reddish-brown gritty loam or fine gravel abutting the mountains. The heavy clay soils are the richest and are locally described as *fawa*, cracking clay soils found in depressed areas subject to seasonal flooding or swampiness, and *hadaba*, cracking clay soils that are not *fawa*. The *jebel* tops and slopes have little soil and consist mostly of rock, sand, and occasional sandy loams. Most are unsuited to anything but grazing except for a few such as Jebel Ghulfan which has soil on top. The pediments, or gently slopping surfaces at the foot of steep slopes contain alluvial soils which are the site of intensive cultivation. In the main, the richness of the soils coupled with adequate summer rains make the area suitable to crop raising and ruminant grazing.

Rainfall, however, has increasingly become a critical factor to the sustainability of the Nuba Mountains. Throughout the period of 1916 to 1978, the mean annual rainfall at the Kadugli station in the southern Nuba Mountains recorded 741 mm while Dilling in the north registered 641 mm (Table 3.7).[82]

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[82] Further south of Kadugli, Talodi recorded a mean average rainfall for 30 years of 860.2 mm, while Lagowa in western Nuba Mountains received 623.9 mm.

TABLE 3.7: MEAN RAINFALL IN mm BY 10 YEAR INTERVALS AT DILLING **AND** KADUGLI STATIONS.

DILLING	MEAN	KADUGLI	MEAN
1916-25	628.5	1916-25	701.6
1926-35	690.2	1926-35	777.0
1936-45	713.3	1936-45	782.0
1946-55	631.6	1946-55	751.2
1956-65	635.6	1956-65	763.0
1966-75	519.0	1966-75	637.0
1976-78[1]	726.3	1976-78	734.6
GRAND MEAN	641.0	GRAND MEAN	741.0

[1] Data is for three years only for both Dilling and Kadugli.

Source: Government of Sudan, 1979, Draft Report on the Hydrometeorology of South Kordofan Province.

Overall, the southern region receives 13.5 percent more rain than the north. North of Dilling, the amount of rainfall drops precipitously, increasingly so in recent years. Although rainfall has been relatively stable during this period, the Nuba Mountains nonetheless experienced the drought felt throughout the Sahel from 1968 to 1973. The most distinct drought years in Dilling occurred in 1970, 1971, and 1972 and in Kadugli in 1968 to 1970 and 1972 to 1973.[83]

The drought enveloping much of Africa in the early 1980s is well known, with images of swollen stomachs, fly encrusted eyes, and the walking dead dominated the media around the globe. Personal conversations in the Nuba Mountains confirm the severity of this drought. It led to mass out-migration

[83] The year 1966 registered the lowest rainfall of the decade in Dilling with 303 mm. For Kadugli, 1968 recorded the least amount of rainfall with 457 mm.

(many assume permanently), especially of young males; decimation of herds; and tremendous human suffering. If calamity can bring people together, it also presents fortuitous opportunities for others. Stories of corruption in 'relief' efforts abound; the drivers of lorries carrying sorghum charged villagers to unload precious grain; international relief foodstuffs sold outright in various markets; gifts of grain disappeared from warehouses; individuals forced to sell their animals at a mere fraction of their value; and of grain hoarded by merchants in hopes of even higher prices. But as Tully (1988) makes clear from his study of Dar Masalit, the drought of the 1980s should have come as no surprise in light of the evidence available in the 1970s which indicate a long-term decline in rainfall. This is readily apparent in the northern more arid zones and imparts graver consequences for the fragile ecological balance. Although there have been good years since 1973, the more recent drought supports that some loses of soils and forests is irreversible and that the regeneration of other areas will take decades to reverse under optimal conditions (Tully, 1988:55).[84]

Table 3.8 indicates the severity of the 1984 drought in both North and South Kordofan, especially during the key agricultural months. The rainfall data for 1987 indicates

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[84] During the period of 1970 to 1984, recorded rainfall in Kadugli indicate that below normal rains fell in 10 of the 14 years.

that the pre-drought rain levels have yet to return to 'normal.' In the El-Obeid area alone, crop failures have been estimated at 75 percent and further north 100 percent. Crop failures further south in the Dilling area (Kortala, Touqma, and Somasem) were not as grave with less than 50 percent failure reported (Nour et al., 1987:26).

TABLE 3.8: RAINFALL IN mm DURING SELECTED MONTHS IN EL-OBEID AND KADUGLI IN 1984 AND 1987.

EL-OBEID	May	June	July	August	Total
1984	5.4	5.9	75.5	10.3	97.1
1987	4.0	18.0	12.0	156.5	190.5
[1951-80]	10.1	23.2	111.7	137.1	282.1
KADUGLI					
1984	53.3	92.7	86.7	143.5	376.2
1987	108.5	58.9	229.6	56.0	453.0
[1951-80]	67.5	104.3	142.1	161.8	475.7

Source: Nour et al., 1987:11.

There are four seasons in the Nuba Mountains. The approximate timing of each, depending on whether one is in the north or the south, is as follows:

Shita	December to February	dry and cool
Sayf	March to May	hot, increased humidity
Rushaash	April to May	early rains
Kharif	May to October	rainy season
Subna		dry spell between rains
Derat	October to December	hot and dry

In general, rainfall is confined to the *Kharif*, although light scattered showers occasionally occur both before and after

this time. *Subna*, or brief dry spell, usually occurs sometime in the middle of the rainy season. A drought is simply an extended *subna*. A prolonged *subna* of between 40 and 70 days with little to light rains has a disastrous effect on crops and pastures. Although August rains may be sufficient, in the northern reaches of South Kordofan and in North Kordofan, these rains are too late. The growing season in South Kordofan (and elsewhere) is limited by the seasonality and distribution of rainfall and begins when the moisture storage of the soil is raised permanently above the wilting point. A potential soil moisture deficit, nonetheless, exists throughout the growing season as evaporation rates tend to be higher than the rainfall supply. Potential evaporation rates reaches its peak during *sayf* when monthly values of around 220 mm can be expected (associated with low relative humidity) and drops to about 170 mm per month during *kharif* (Government of Sudan, 1979:1.1.4).

One point that seems clear is that famine associated with drought is not an 'Act of God'. Rather, it is a social phenomenon not to be written off in the most pretentious of cant phrases--"natural disaster." Hunger and food shortages seem to have always been a part of the Sahelian region, but in the past never approached the catastrophic consequences of the 1973 and 1984 droughts. Drought induced famine, it is argued, is further exacerbated by hopelessly outdated agricultural practices perpetuated by the peoples of the region. In

viewing famine as a 'natural' condition made worse by 'irrational' behavior, the social parameters which influence human behavior are denied. To fully comprehend what is presently happening in the Nuba Mountains (and the Sahel in general), it is necessary to locate the Nuba Mountains firmly within larger economic and political processes. Recognizing the links between environmental fluctuation, level of technology, and famine is insufficient without recourse to the dominant relations of production, including relations of exchange and reciprocity. Together, these may lessen or magnify environmental conditions. This way, human actions are considered as a response to environmental conditions, albeit circumscribed by the manner in which capitalist social relations enter an area.[85]

With the rapid encroachment of capitalism into the daily lives of the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains came a growing need to exploit resources. Accompanying Condominium rule and later independence, cash needs increased and became regularized to pay various taxes as well as to purchase market goods and production inputs. In addition, government and merchant towns such as Dilling, Kadugli, and Talodi swelled,

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[85] Meillassoux (1974) presents a picture of the Sahel which is scathingly critical of the roles played by colonialism and western institutions in breaking down the pre-capitalist social relations of the area. Shenton and Watts (1979) argue along similar lines, positing that colonialism in general and capitalism in particular have eroded past relations of exchange and reciprocity to the point where famine places all at risk.

placing greater demands on their surrounding areas for food, wood fuel, and land. The expansion of mechanized farming schemes also added to the exploitation of the environment. All of this was stimulated by an expanding capitalist economy. Agricultural cultivation expanded, forests were cut down, trees pollarded, and herd sizes grew.[86] Once cash needs are established, they are difficult to forswear. In light of this, it is easy to understand why people have come to discard past practices adopted to maintain soil fertility like multicropping (especially with sesame) and land fallowing. Moreover, for those dependent on tractors in field preparation, they frequently must plow according to its availability rather than on soil conditions. Rainfall in the Nuba Mountains is generally produced by isolated thunderstorms and is often preceded or accompanied by high winds that can produce a *haboob* (dust storm) which carries away unprotected soil. The leading edge intensities of these convective storm cells often exceeds 30 mm of rainfall per hour that can lead to further soil erosion in the absence of sufficient ground cover. Recent drought periods thus propelled people to intensify resource exploitation to make up for cash shortfalls, all of which leads to deforestation,

[86] One result of deforestation is the rapidly dwindling supply of wildlife. Not long ago the Nuba Mountains area supported a wide variety of wildlife, including lions, elephants, giraffes, gazelles, leopards, ostriches, hyenas, and monkeys. Now, aside from an infrequent monkey, one espies an occasional guinea fowl or hare, but certainly encounters nothing more ferocious than the desert rat or white ant.

desertification, and soil infertility. And in the face of falling agricultural labor wages due to increased competition and higher food prices, this cycle of environmental abuse continues.[87]

[87] In 1987, for example, the *subna* made weeding unnecessary in some areas. In others such as Rahad, weeding rates fell to £10 per 1.6 *feddan* and in Wad Ashana dropped to £20 form a 'normal' rate of £40 respectively. The market price for cereals, however, in norther South Kordofan and the El-Obeid area rose increased 50 to 200 percent from May to August of that year. Further reducing wage labor opportunities, due to fluctuating rain supplies, rat and grasshopper infestations, a shortage of tractor fuel and spare parts, and delayed loans from the Agricultural Bank, only 10 percent of the schemes in Kortala and Habila were planted as of August (Nour et al., 1987)

CHAPTER IV

NUBA MOUNTAIN SOCIETY AS A SOCIAL FORMATION

Our investigation, if we are to move beyond general statements, must detail the complex historical patterns encountered in the Nuba Mountains and account for the great disparities in structural arrangements. This requires that we reconsider the larger historical context outlined in Chapter III, but with an effort towards its structuration. Above all, our investigation must be accomplished with the purpose of furthering our understanding of household and the formation of livelihood strategies. This task underscores the intersection of various socioeconomic dimensions, including production activities, consumption, social and generational reproduction, distribution of resources, and patterns of exchange. In this way we will begin to know the deeper meaning of what a household is, the strategies that ensure household survival, and the sources of variability.

What we are attempting is an account of local history in its regional and, at times, national and global contexts; in short, the deep reach of wider socioeconomic and political forces on the everyday life of people. Decisions reached by the World Bank during the 1960s to extend mechanized agricultural schemes in South Kordofan, for example, had a profound impact on the region's nomadic population in addition to altering conditions for local agriculturalists, yet exhibited few immediate consequences for the policy's

initiators. Similarly, the fate of cotton on the world market presented the area's farmers with hard choices; whether or not to grow cotton, hire labor, or join the outflow of migrants. Within these circumvolutions, the organizing 'logic' of many households in the Nuba Mountains changed, altering both their forms and activities, while other households remained relatively untouched.

But how do we establish and give meaning to what we term the organizing 'logic' of households? In other words, how do we conceptualize this logic at different levels of analysis? Is household logic embedded within its internal makeup or is it externally situated?--or somehow both? The dimensions of this dilemma becomes evident in such areas as the Nuba Mountains where the observer is immediately struck by the diverse array of household structures and activities. This lack of accord over the link between household and the wider structural complex arose, it appears, in efforts to theorize the social formation; that is, the wider context in which households gain meaning.

4.1: LEVELS OF ANALYSIS AND MODES OF PRODUCTION

The fundamental problem in employing a mode of production analysis is the level of its conceptualization. This is precisely the thrust of Foster-Carter's (1978: 239) lament:

> one extreme way of resolving the maddening in-between quality of the notion of mode of production: redefine it upwards...to constitute the totality of the object of thought...(or)...define it 'downwards'...at the point of production, thus producing inevitable inflation and debasement of coinage: each Andean valley has its own

> mode of production, and individuals may change them two or three times a week like underwear.

Associated with either extreme, the concept of mode of production pays a heavy price. By encompassing everything everywhere into a unitary capitalist world economy, key issues of non-capitalist social relations are treated epiphenomenally (Wallerstein, 1979). But if reduced solely to single labor processes, mode of production fragments and looses its analytical appeal (see Terray, 1978). In the end, what sustains interest in mode of production as an organizing concept is not the theoretical debates, but the necessity of coming to terms with non-capitalist forms of social organization in the course of fieldwork.

A common error in many formulations of mode of production results from Marx's use of mode of production in both a general and specific sense. The former refers to distinctive historical epochs but in the sense that the necessity of production is determinant, not the actual economy per se as it is actually constituted.[1] In this vein, Marx characterized

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[1] Marx (1954:86) writes: "My view that each special mode of production and the social relations corresponding to it, in short, that the economic structure of society, is the real basis on which the juridical and political superstructure is raised, and to which definite social forms of thought correspond; that the mode of production determines the character of the social, political, and intellectual life generally, all this is very true for our own times, in which material interests preponderate, but not for the middle ages, in which Catholicism, nor for Athens and Rome, where politics, reigned supreme. In the first place it strikes one as an odd thing for any one to suppose that these well-worn phrases about the middle ages and the ancient world are unknown to anyone else. This much, however, is clear, that the middle

historical epochs according to the expressed configuration of economic, political, and ideological aspects of the resulting class process, designating such epochs as capitalism, feudalism, slave, and still others. The latter sense of mode of production brings a much narrower meaning and denotes the actual obtaining economic base or production process, the conjunction of the technical and social relations of production.[2]

It is obvious from this that the more common usages of mode of production must be rejected for their economistic biases. Instead, we must reformulate it in terms that account for the dialectical relation between the economic and non-economic elements. Failing this, the consequences produce such a tightly constructed social configuration that no margin is left for considerations which do not emit from economic explanations. Althusser and Balibar (1970), to the contrary, place mode of production in a broader perspective and provide

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ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part. For the rest, it requires but slight acquaintance with the history of the Roman republic, for example, to be aware that its secret history is the history of its landed property. On the other hand, Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society."

[2] The technical relations or productive forces comprise labor, techniques, and technology, while the social relations of production specify forms of access to and control over them, in addition to the social forms of product appropriation and attendant distribution.

a measure of relative autonomy to the superstructural elements. For Althusser, the notion of structural causality displaces determinism because although the economic base ultimately determines which of his three levels of practice (economic, ideological, and political) is to be the "structure in dominance", the economic is not always in dominance within the "complex structured unity." Godelier (1979:77), with a slightly different twist, asserts the need to probe beyond "reductionist materialism" and to "attempt to reveal the 'effects' of the structures one on another through various processes, and gauge their real impact on the functioning" of society. Thus, in his hierarchy of functions, Godelier (1972, 1977) stresses the reciprocal affectivity of structures such that the dominant one is that which functions to organize the economy.

This broader treatment of mode of production, hereafter referred to as epoch, must also presuppose the two-fold nature of abstraction: a social totality at the level of conceptual abstraction and a social formation at the level of historical abstraction.[3] It is apparent then that in its specific use a mode of production is not a social whole in and of itself, but with other 'elements' forms a unity. As noted, a mode of production refers to the manner by which a society organizes

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[3] Both are, however, concrete abstractions in the sense that the former is not a formalized ideal type, while the latter recognizes that any meaningful systematic historical analysis involves some degree of abstraction. A wealth of mediations, moreover, intimately link these two levels.

its material production. The 'superstructural' elements--that is, the non-economic structures--also 'act' to condition society. Taken together as a social totality, the structured relations provide categorical referents necessary to analyze an historical situation, but at the level in which structured relations assume precedence over individual actions.

At the level of historical abstraction consideration centers on lived relations in the form of practices. These practices, in turn, are drawn in reference to, but not at the level of, social totality; they are derived at the level of social formation. At this level, it is less confusing to conceive of mode of production as form(s) of production. In short, form of production encompasses economic practices: i.e., it is the concrete manifestation of a conceptually abstract mode of production. Moreover, since a form is a site of economic practice, and in conjunction with non-economic practices, we expect a diverse array of phenomenal expressions according to specific historical instances.

The idea behind the above discussion, summarized in Figure 4.1 (p. 174), is that mode of production must be discerned in both its general and specific senses as well as at the levels of both structured and lived relation. This bodes great import for our understanding of 'household logic' in the Nuba Mountains, and is especially critical in grasping societal transformation.

FIGURE 4.1: MODE OF PRODUCTION

Social Totality: structural relations and laws of motion (mode of production, in general)

Conceptual Abstraction

Forces of production (technical relations of production)
- labor
- techniques
- technology
- natural resources

Mode/Form of Production (in particular)

Social relations of production
- access
- control
- appropriation
- distribution

State
- apparatus/bureaucracy
- law

Political

Authority
- compliance
- force

Culture
- artifacts
- institutions

Ideological

Ideational
- ideas
- values
- symbols

Historical Abstraction

Social Formation: lived relations and tendential laws of motion (mode of production, in general)

4.2: SOCIAL FORMATION AND THE NUBA MOUNTAINS

Given the present historical and geographical frame of analysis it is difficult to precisely delineate social change in the Nuba Mountains because it does not stop politely for the regional or even the national boundary. The history of the area, however, clearly demonstrates the important role played by its incorporation into a larger social formation. Social change in any particular period is intimately bound up with wider social forces emanating from outside of the villages confines. On the other hand, ignoring the fact that internal features of non-capitalist modes of production (epochs) such as the lineage mode can be a potent source of change produces a one-dimensional reading of history. By and large non-capitalist modes of production are left vaguely specified or ill defined. And when confronted with capitalism, these other modes appear to passively await their extinction.

We know from the region's history of some of the more remote *gabila*, but information prior to these accounts is scanty, if not lacking altogether. Therefore it is not feasible at this point to present a detailed account of the formation of the non-capitalist modes of production. Moreover, it is not germane to this study. For our purposes we need to provide a brief contextual history of the area, paying particular attention to what is commonly termed the lineage mode of production.[4] This will be accomplished through a blend of the existing

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[4] I will retain the common usage of lineage mode of production rather than epoch here to avoid confusion. Unless specified, mode here connotes the sense of epoch.

literature, both theoretical and empirical, and my own fieldwork, especially the oral histories of the area.[5]

4.3: LINEAGE MODE

The aim here is to sketch out the essential workings or 'logic' of the lineage mode of production, paying particular attention to an indissoluble set of relations realized in concrete patterns of production relations and appropriation of surpluses. What distinguishes lineage modes is an ideological underpinning predicated on kinship-based seniority composed of an hierarchic age-based structure--the division between elders and juniors. The elders' authority is then affirmed in the strict control over pubescent women and through the exercise of a monopoly over prestige goods[6] such as cattle, ironware, and guns. Needless to say, there can be considerable variations between lineage 'societies,' even in the Nuba Mountains. The coherence of the Keiga and Moro elders' authority varies, for example, in their ability to organize production, regulate labor, and appropriate surplus. Kinship groups also exhibit a multiplicity of compositions; patrilineal among the Ghulfan, matrilineal among the Shatt, and duolineal among the Kao. These 'irregularities,' however, are discerned at the level of historical practice and need not compromise its conceptual usefulness.

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[5] The empirical generalizations are a result of my own research except where specific references are made. Individuals were interviewed within the various villages under study as well as in Kadugli.

[6] Prestige goods incorporate goods which cannot be exchanged for commonplace consumption goods, underscoring the elders' monopoly control.

CONCEPTUAL ABSTRACTION

According to Meillassoux (1981, 1983), the lineage mode or "domestic community" is principled primarily on demographic concerns and centers on the circulation of people and prestige goods in such a way that a demographic balance is maintained. Environmental conditions and demographic dynamics causes lineage groups to split or for newer members to be incorporated through marriage, fostering, or force. To this end, "domestic communities" enter into political alliances with each other, establishing a "matrimonial area" in order to ensure an even distribution of pubescent women throughout the participant communities. The large number of mutually distinct languages in the Nuba Mountains, however, points to the inability to forge any significant regional political affiliations. An additional mechanism to guarantee an adequate number of productive laborers includes extensive rules for adoption, either through peaceful means or raids on bellicose villages. Thus the lineage mode is in general a 'closed system,' which can be penetrated only through birth or its equivalent, fostering (Meillassoux, 1991).

Intimately attached to the concept of seniority is the political control of territory "of which the perpetual 'property' (is) symbolically held by the ancestors, and in reality by their representatives, the elders" (Jewsiewicki, 1981:95). The territory over which a group lays claim and has access to is thus the sum of the natural resources available to the group. Not surprising, within a lineage mode agriculture comprises the dominant activity, arable land is relatively abundant[7], technology and

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[7] This is not always the case as in North Africa where a land shortages effects yet more historical variations.

techniques remain simple, and human labor-power supplies the most important source of energy (Meillassoux, 1983). Moreover, the major portion of food required to sustain the community is 'domestically' produced, keeping the necessity for trade to a bare minimum. Upon this edifice emerged the hierarchization of elders as the lineage heads. Unable to secure direct control of production, appropriation of surplus must occur through control over biological reproduction as "a young man can pay bridewealth and marry a wife only through the intermediary of his elder" (Geschiere and Raatgever, 1985: 15).

Of central importance in understanding the lineage mode is the fact that private control of property is not the key to this mode, rather it is control over what is socially produced and realized according to elaborate consumption rules. As depicted by Meillassoux (1991: 25), "Rank and status are expressed in kinship...congruently with the lifelong evolution of each individual in the double cycle of material production and human reproduction." Within this arrangement, juniors 'voluntarily' cede surplus to the elders for reasons that are not initially economic. In effect, by controlling the conditions of assimilation into the basic groups, the elders control access to the utilization of resources. Hence the contradiction between elders and youth is socially and not biologically contrived.

Political rights to a portion of surplus thus stem from being physically and, above all, socially a potential elder; i.e., a male with kin in good community standing.[8] This fact enables access to ancestral lands and confers entitlement to a nubile woman subsequent to payment of

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[8] Conversely, a slave is an individual without kin.

bridewealth. Appropriation of surplus labor, in general, occurs through the productive activities of an elder's dependents such as wives, children, and other social juniors (in the past this included slaves).[9] Full fellowship in the community of elders thus requires the founding of a family. Each male junior consequently holds a profound take in "remaining in his basic group of production/reproduction, which he (views) as a kin group, on pain of losing his recognized status" (Jewsiewicki, 1981:96).

Aside from the idiom of kinship, the authority of the elders is codified and ritualized in an age-grade system which regulates the participation of individuals in social, political, and economic life. Briefly, age grades demarcate the life course of age mates[10], specifying generational relationships and functions at various junctures. Normally, females occupy parallel age grades, but in contrast to males they get married at a younger age and consequently make an earlier change in their social 'status.' In addition, apart from the contradiction between generations, de Jonge draws specific attention to the additional contradiction between the sexes. The status of females is less than that of young males and remains asymmetrical throughout their lives:

> A boy still had the chance of one day attaining the status of adult man, if only he lived long enough. But a woman was destined to be in a position subordinate to that of an adult man for the rest of her life (de Jonge, 1985:56).

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[9] Hence the basis for the common adage among Africanists that control over people is the key to wealth and power. Consequently, males need control over a wife and over her offspring.

[10] Age mates refers to institutionalized groupings of individuals assigned a common age with special prerogatives and specific tasks (Bernardi, 1985: 2).

This remains true regardless of the type of lineal structuring, although empirical variations occur such that women in some lineage modes have more latitude in their personal affairs.

The question of a class process within this mode has been hotly debated. For Rey (1982, 1978) the form of surplus appropriation unique to the lineage mode characterizes it as the central relation of exploitation. Unlike Meillassoux who presents a harmonic model of reciprocity whereby surplus labor is eventually compensated, Rey explicitly points to the existence of classes such that surplus labor appropriated from juniors ultimately serves to reinforce the elders superordinate position. What Meillassoux fails to adequately consider is "whether the actual practice of biological reproduction (is) not more directly determined by internal power relations in the community than by the 'objective' need to strike a balance between the irregular demographic development and the demands of production" (de Jonge, 1985: 45).

Class formation occurs along different lines and does not necessarily result in empirical instances of classes that are at once observable along bipolar and antagonistic lines. This is especially true when the superordinate group, as a result of consolidating its own dominant class position, invokes the ideology of kinship. Ideologies, after all, impart elements of 'ruling' class values and thus mystify relations of exploitation. As recognized by Post (1978:55), ideology may identify goals for class action, but it may not be cognizant of exploitation and therefore goals will not be such as to affect class relations. Under the pretext of kinship, the appeal to 'blood' is frequently so profound that juniors may not consider challenging the

elders' position of authority/power. Moreover, elder/junior relations are also firmly patterned in patriarchal pretense, further binding them in an ideology of gender.

HISTORICAL ABSTRACTION

The Nuba Mountains is a hilly area with most settlements extending from the slopes of the hills out towards the plains. Farming comprises the dominant economic activity and remains primarily a small-scale undertaking. The prevailing form of production provides the basis for what is termed "traditional smallholder agriculture... consisting of small operating units, low levels of capital inputs, dominance of hand labour, and generally low and unstable production" (Mohammed, 1986: 116). Superficially this assessment is correct but to stop here belies significant structural imperatives.[11] Hence we must draw on the organizational principles and points of contradiction of the lineage mode in order to comprehend "traditional" agriculture in the Nuba Mountains. The aim here is to present general historical abstractions, outlining Nuba commonalities in the lineage mode of production.

1. Economic practices: agricultural activities and social relations

Farming instills the life-blood of the Nuba Mountains, although animal husbandry is also of some importance. The pace of life, migrations, celebrations, marriages, and rituals are intimately part of the agricultural cycle. The typical villager reckons time according to the demands of cultivation. In fact, farming is held in such esteem that

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[11] Tradition is always negatively defined, accounting for everything that is not specifically modern or capitalist.

an individual is not really deemed a village member unless they farm.[12] The vary act of farming conveys a seemingly indissoluble bond among villagers. Agriculture as the heart of village life provides the basis of a moral community and obligates communal welfare. Villagers believe that they can count on one another, that mutual cooperation, self-reliance, and good-will are ever present responsibilities. This carries over to daily activities such that rarely if ever do villagers do anything alone; company is always welcomed.[13] This of itself does not negate relations of exploitation, it merely makes them harder to recognize.

The most important means of production in the Nuba Mountains are land and labor. Land is claimed and controlled by respective *gabila* and constitutes their *dar* or domain. Quite often land plays an integral role in *gabila* mythology and colors accounts of their origin (Nadel, 1947). Access to land occurs through a variety of mechanisms but is primarily limited to clearing virgin land, inheritance, borrowing, and gifts among relatives. Purchase of land may also occur between lineage members and historically carries a nominal, standardized price such as one or two goats (Stevenson, 1984). Fields are generally cropped for five to eight years and then put into fallow (sometimes for as long as 10 to 15 years),

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[12] It was not until I joined *nafir* parties, shucked corn, or wielded a threshing stick that villagers began to feel more comfortable with me. I also talked extensively about the agricultural past of my father's family which gave us a mutua point of identification.

[13] One time two friends whom I shared sleeping quarters with left for the night. Osman's younger brother came over to sleep on an adjoining bed stating: "I don't want you to be lonely." In addition, I had to organize my field notes after everyone had fallen asleep or when I was in Kadugli. It also required great skill in isolating people for individual interviews.

depending on land availability. Loss of soil fertility is recognized by the spread of certain weeds such as *buda* (striga). This *kalunki* system consists of elongated, rectangular fields. Farmers frequently have two or three dispersed plots of varying quality and distance from the village at their disposal. In part this helps minimize crop losses from variable rain, insects, fire, or cattle by spreading the risks.

Intercropping is common, usually mixing *dura* (sorghum) varieties with *simsim* (sesame) or *lubia* (cowpea). Without question *dura* is the most important crop and is differentiated by maturation time, size, storability, resistance to pests, usage, taste, and color. *Dukhn* (millet) is of lessor importance in most areas of the Nuba Mountains due to its growing conditions and is distinguished along the lines of *dura*. *Ful* (groundnuts) is primarily limited to *qoz* and *gardud* (sandy soils) as is *dukhn* (millet).

In addition, each household cultivates a *jubraka* (garden) to provide food during the 'hungry period' which extends approximately from July until the first harvest from the main fields. Every *jubraka* is enclosed by either a stone wall or thorn fence (*shok*) to keep out animals and inattentive people. Crops include quick maturing strains of *dura* (such as *nagad*), *tibish* (cucumber), tomatoes, maize, *simsim*, *bamiya* (okra), *battikh* (watermelon), *garaa* (squash), *lubia*, *ful*, *karadeh* (hibiscus), *meloukhia* (greens), and *basul* (onions).

Agricultural technology and techniques, though effective, are rudimentary. An ax is employed for hewing larger trees during the initial clearing of a field, although a few shade trees are left for shelter during the growing season. Underbrush and small trees, as on land

following an extended 'bush fallow,' are cut with an *antabob* (sickle). If there are sufficient dead grasses covering the land it is burned following early rains and the first flush of weed growth. The *harig* method usually kills weeds and delays the first weeding. On land cultivated the previous year, crop residue remaining from grazing livestock or unused for domestic purposes is collected and burned. If the grass covering is insufficient, a pre-planting weeding must be done using a *hashasha* or *sulokab*.[14] Planting is accomplished with either a *sulokab* or *geria* (long pointed pole with a hardened or metal tip). Weeding is accomplished using the tools mentioned above and is performed one to three times depending on the weed growth.[15] Harvesting lasts for several months with *dura* and *simsim* cut with a small knife, while *lubia* and *ful* is harvested by hand. Threshing activities employ a *mudgaba*[16] which is used to pound the *dura* grains from the heads. Most crops must then be dried and/or winnowed before storage in sacks or clay granaries raised on supports. Different crops are stored separately and *simsim* usually ground into oil.

Labor too comprises an important means of production, for agricultural activities tend to be labor intensive. Typically the basic economic unit or group that works together throughout the production cycle is the household group, consisting of a man, his wife or wives when

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[14] A *hashasha* is a short handled implement with a flat metal blade and a *sulokab* a longer version. Both are pushed into the ground and turned at a right angle.

[15] When weed growth is particularly vigorous or has been delayed and rises above the crop, it generally must be pulled by hand. In addition, thinning is done in order to remove inefficient plants.

[16] A wooden implement consisting of a flat board attached at a 45 degree angle to a long pole.

polygamous, and unmarried older children under his guardianship (agnatic or affinic relations).[17] Other sources include labor from obligations of brideservice and age-grades, as well as *nafir*. As part of the obligatory brideprice, a young man must work on his prospective in-law's fields. Quite often similarly 'betrothed' age-mates labor together, reinforcing the social separation between elders and juniors. In addition, in lineages with well defined age-grades, labor can be mobilized to work the fields of particularly influential elders (Nadel, 1947 and researcher's own observations in Shatt Damam).

Nafir is also an important source of labor, especially during peak labor periods such as *hash murr* (first weeding; literally bitter weeding), harvesting, and threshing. Recruitment is based on kinship ties, age-mates, and/or locality (close neighbors).[18] The 'host' compensates the participants with *marissa* (beer is the essential ingredient), *'asida* (porridge), *mulah* (stew), and sometimes meat such as goat. Whereas the 'host' is under obligation to later assist the participants if they in turn call a *nafir*, reciprocity varies in intensity and is not always

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[17] Even today, children under the age of 15 rarely work in the fields. My previous field experience had been in India and the Philippines where child labor is quite common. When I queried why younger children did not perform agricultural work people incredulously responded: "Because they are children!" The rare exception is during planting, especially the *jubraka*, where they will follow adults preparing the ground and plant seeds.

[18] In the main, males and females participate alike although females are responsible for carrying the water, *marissa*, and food to the *nafir* site.

strictly followed.[19] The timing and size of *nafir* parties also expresses differential power among the elders themselves. *Nafir* labor is also used for constructing domestic buildings. Lastly, females also may organize their own *nafir* for work on the *jubraka* or their own fields (in some *gabila* women have rights to their own land).

Nafir also serves as a mechanism which enables community members to express feelings of belongingness and mutual self-sufficiency. Some individuals are invited to join a *nafir*, not so much for their agricultural skills but for their ability to tell humorous stories or sing favorite ballads. Frequently, a *nafir* party will decompose into small groups with one singing words that good-naturedly disparage the working abilities of the other groups while quickening their own work tempo. As the one group finally slows down another picks up the song as well as the pace. This occurs throughout the day, breaking intermittently for *marissa* and food, and brings gaiety to an otherwise monotonous activity.

Although occupational specialization is minimal there is some degree of specialization within most villages. Some individuals in addition to being farmers, for example, are also smiths, artisans, healers and priests. Of greater importance, however, is the division of labor based on sex and age. In many instances these divisions are both formally codified and highly ritualized into age-grades, with age-mates addressing each other in terms that signify a tie stronger than friendship.[20] Age-

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[19] For example, an individual may possess insufficient stocks with which to recompense the laborers because of previous illness or poor harvest.

[20] The organization of age-grades varies considerably throughout the Nuba Mountains. Consequently, the following will offer a cursory overview with a more detailed account of

grades (as is the lineage mode in general) are highly symbolic and ritualistic, marking rites of passage and instilling *gabila* solidarity through various practices such as cicatrization, circumcision (male and/or female), ornamentation in the form of jewelry and skin coloring, and *gabila* identity scars. With limited exceptions few tasks fall exclusively within the domain of one sex although unquestionably females labor more arduously than males and have a greater array of daily tasks.

As young children, boys watch small animals (typically goats and calves) and young girls care for the smaller children. Older boys tend the cattle of the elders, frequently residing at the community's cattle collective (*zariba*).[21] At this time boys begin to learn the art of warfare, physically conditioning themselves through wrestling, stick fighting, and, in the southeastern Nuba Mountains, bracelet fighting. Males roughly between the ages of 18 and 35 are warriors, responsible for village protection and order. Females following menarche are integrated directly into the labor force, working a small *jubraka*, assisting in the fields, and participating in exclusively female activities of carrying water, load carrying, fetching wood, *marissa* brewing, and grinding *dura*. Females wed between the ages of 14 and 16 whereas males do so around the age of 30 after receiving their own lands. Tasks exclusively male include digging wells, herding cattle, and hunting. More importantly, married women have control over the domestic food supplies.

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the Shatt age-grade in Chapter VII.

[21] In some areas these were like separate 'villages.' Young men spent most of their time here under the tutelage of aged elders, inculcating the youth in lineage lore and instilling obedience.

2. Political practices: the power of the elders

As in other lineage modes, the power of elders to control production--land as well as the labor of male age-mates, females, and offspring[22]--stems from their monopoly over the circulation of fertile women. Arrangement of a betrothal occurs between the elders of the respective lineages. A marriage contract entails the husband's lineage presenting the bride's with an agreed upon sum of cattle, goats, and pigs and other prestige goods like spear tips, iron blades, and guns as well as *dura* and *simsim* oil. Brideprice frequently varies according to the prowess of the groom, proved through warfare, banditry, or inter-village sports, or the ability of the bride to brew exceptional *marissa*, adding to a husbands's image of hospitality when receiving his age-mates. Moreover, *marissa* as the central element of *nafir* can attract larger work parties on its taste alone.[23] The bridewealth is kept and distributed among the elders of the bride's lineage (the father and his real and classificatory brothers), although the father normally retains the lion's share for himself.

Tensions between elders and juniors can run high over the latter's desire for marriage and independence. It is not uncommon for a father to postpone his son's marriage for as long as possible. A father, for example, may not acknowledge that his son deserves a wife because he has

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[22] This is highly variable in the case of boys in a matrilineage where a male assumes responsibility for his sister's sons.

[23] During a celebration I attended in one village, I was told that each marriageable girl was preparing her best *marissa* for wide and liberal public sampling. The next day I asked my friends who had the best *marissa* and I was given the names of three girls.

not worked a sufficient amount of time or shown due respect. Aside from the loss of his son's labor, the father also loses the surplus labor of the lad's age-mates (e.g., as among the Otoro). Further friction frequently develops out of a father's own ambition to wed an additional wife in order to enlarge his own lineage, augmenting his personal prestige and political prominence through widening his base of surplus extraction. In all of the *gabila* polygamous marriage is an ideal although only those elders in a position of wealth are able to realize it.

A prospective father-in-law may prove equally recalcitrant. Brideservice, common among a number of lineages such as the Shatt, Tira, and Moro, customarily lasts until the final installment is made and the girl joins her husband. A father-in-law may attempt to lengthen this period and continue to benefit from the labor of the young man and his similarly betrothed age-mates. Throughout this time, due to certain avoidance taboos, the bride remains with her family and continues to help with the agricultural and domestic chores. The personal objectives of both father and father-in-law are, nonetheless, kept within bounds by the marriage rules obtaining in different *gabila*.

Age-grades facilitate the power of the elders over juniors and relegate females to a lifetime of subordination to males. Male seniority is everything, rationalizing and legitimating the unequal division of political authority and attendant material enjoyment. On the surface males appear to move from one age-grade to the next until they attain the status of elder. The progression, however, depends on longevity of life and the customary age of marriage. Due to high mortality rates (more so in the past), few ever attain the status of elder. And of those who do,

fewer yet become privileged seniors (over 50 years of age). Moreover, the 'sanctity' of the elders' position is safeguarded by maintaining a difference between the marital ages of males and females (10 to 15 years on average).

Relations among the elders is not always harmonious. Influential leaders and 'priests' are able to mobilize labor from certain age-grades not available to every elder (e.g., Nyimang). In *gabila* practicing adelphic inheritance of cattle like the Ghulfan of Murong, the position of older brothers strengthens at the expense of younger brothers (as well as sons). Personal ambition exists, after all leaders have to prove themselves time and time again in order to make their insights prevail among the elders. Obedience outside of one's familial circle is not automatic and must be continuously reaffirmed. Among the Shatt, for example, people know who the influential elders are and can readily explain why, pointing out land holdings, wives, children, and abundance of food and *marissa*. In sum, a type of competition prevails among elders, creating a hierarchy among them and their respective lineages. If disagreements grow too heated, however, a group can always go elsewhere and begin anew. The village of Shimal Murta was founded in this manner when a disgruntled individual and his family left Miri Bara over a land dispute.

Still these modes of production prove relatively stable, primarily through the existence of various levelling mechanisms which curtail excessive displays of self-interest, ambition, and aggression. One such function of the many *gabila* celebrations is to 'share' one's good fortune with fellow villagers. These festivities are always occasioned by ample

food and drink. One mark of prestige is the ability to assist those less fortunate in their time of need, either through largess of food or labor. Occasionally influential individuals within neighboring villages will organize a joint *nafir* to weed the fields between the two. The participants then feast on freshly prepared meat (usually beef) and bounteous supplies of *marissa*. But that is a key to understanding the lineage mode, individuals gain not from the accumulation of material goods but from their social consumption.

3. Ideological practices: the cultural nexus of 'religion'

Religion exerts a powerful force over village life, affirming communal unity and rationalizing social differentiation. Religion, perhaps, is a poor choice of words in attempting to describe the autochthonous beliefs and ritual practices in the lineage modes of production found in the Nuba Mountains. These 'religions' are experiential rather than scriptural and realized through personal attitude rather than social ordination. The various indigenous beliefs combine a sense of respect and fear, awe and order which are interwoven within the spiritual, human, and natural 'worlds' (Baumann, 1987: 162-173). Although each variant expounds a supreme spiritual being of creation/destruction in one form or another (as well as the presence of other spirits), religious manifestations assume numerous forms and styles.

The unifying elements connecting the various expressions is the belief in a spiritual medium who speaks though the oracles of a *kujur* or possession priest; a rainpriest who is responsible for agricultural rituals and annual festivals (*sibir*) prior to the first rains; and a

Food and drink
Fortunate
Quarterly
Cards

healer[24] who possesses powers of recovery (Nadel, 1941, 1947; Stevenson, 1940, 1984; Martini, 1961; and Baumann, 1987).[25] Some *gabila* also include a grainpriest who, before the initial sowing of the fields, contributes a small portion of grain to each cultivator to mix with their own seed stock (Bell, 1938).[26]

Although most Nuba religions have lost their out right appeal in the face of Islam and, to a lessor extent, Christianity, they nonetheless provide an on-going backdrop in the villagers' daily lives. It is difficult for either Islam or Christianity to completely dispel these earlier beliefs because they are fluid and effect people in ways that neither contradict nor threaten Islam or Christianity (Baumann, 1987). *'Allah* or God Almighty may be the One God, but this in no way detracts from the comprehensive sense of universal oneness felt by the Nuba. Nuba professing the Islamic faith, for example, can readily recite the basic tenet of One God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad as well as its canons of practice, avoidance, and regulation, but the deeper separation between the religions seems rather ambiguous. As one elderly Kadugli woman in Shimal Murta related to me when asked to explain which religion she

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[24] Often the *kujur* is also the healer, able to divine the cause of particular illnesses.

[25] Witchcraft in various forms also seems to be universal in the Nuba Mountains. Most individuals wear an amulet around their necks to ward off the 'evil eye.' Jealousy is one factor which is considered to provoke a witch, and consequently operates as a levelling device as successful individual do not want to provoke a witch. On the other hand, prosperous people are assumed to have the support of witches by the very act of the success.

[26] In some communities females held responsibility for ensuring rains, healing the sick, and speaking in a spirit's voice as a *kujur*.

believed to be 'true': "They are all the same, there is no difference" (*"Kulu wahid, ma farq"*).

The complex set of beliefs are inexorably associated with the life-sustaining activities of agriculture. The four seasons of the year are distinguished by a succession of ceremonial rituals and village festivals which initiate, regulate, and bless agricultural activities. The opening and closing of such occasions as planting and harvesting is thus afforded every opportunity of success in the eyes of the 'Nuba.'[27] Some of the more common *sibirs* include: 1) *Sibir al Diboia*, a rain-making festival which both marks the beginning and the end of a year. *Diboia* is also one of the times during the year that the *kujur* falls into a trance and speaking in the voice of the spirit his oracles reveal the causes of past misfortunes and prophesies about future occurrences. Another rain-making festival is *Sibir al Lungang*. 2) *Sibir al Bokhsa* is a harvest festival, first for the near farms and later for the far farms, noted for its intricate music played on pipes of differing caliber with distinct notes and accompanied by a singular drum. The dancers form two concentric circles around the band, with the women on the inside dancing counter-clockwise and the men on the outside dancing clockwise. 3) *Sibir al Farig* comprises an initiation festival for males in which the men bind bull's horns to the tops of their heads and with *kosh kosh* (leg rattles) tied to their calves, dance the *kambala*. Women stand around the perimeter in a circle while elders lash the backs of the initiands with whips. 4) *Sibir al Prum* is a festival featuring wrestling, usually pitting youths from

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[27] No 'Nuba' in the past would have thought of initiating an agricultural activity without its time being proclaimed by the rainpriest and celebrated by the village.

different villages against each other. Each villager eagerly anticipates the coming of a *sibir* as it is a time of socializing, song, dance, eating, and drinking.

The Nuba beliefs form a coherent system of thought and practice which helps them cope with an otherwise unmanageable reality. As every Nuba stands in awe of nature's bounty, each shrinks in fear of its retribution. Any violation of the natural order through dismissal of sacral observances can visit disaster on the fields or, for a villager, the world. Baumann (1987: 169) relates this in a pointed exchange between two villagers.

> A Miri Bara farmer suspected of violating a natural observance was questioned by the son of a rainpriest in the presence of half a dozen men of all ages. One of the older men, an outsider by birth and known for his sardonic humour, challenged the rainpriest's son: 'You can't cut this tree before this festival, and that tree before that festival, and grass before any festival.--Next you will invent a festival before which you can't even fuck your wife!' His rebuke was as immediate as it is telling: 'The fuck that you came from was done in Nyimodu village, so cut whatever tree you like when you are there. While you live here, respect our observances and don't bring disaster to our fields!'

These belief systems also form the basis for social stratification. Respect for seniority is established at birth with children of the same mother being named according to gender and the order of birth. As older children are responsible for the well-being of younger siblings, they can demand obedience. On a different level, everyone must accord deference to the aged, especially male elders. Lastly, priests with their ability to control the village's destiny command respect from the entire community. This is evident in the fact that, aside from being elders, they are able to extract additional surplus in the form of labor and material goods. Not only is a priest's field planted and harvested first, but he or she is

frequently the beneficiary of many bequests. According to the Seligmans (1932: 378) in the old raiding days the rainpriest of the Dilling "took a large portion of any plunder as well as certain fines (and) he takes a portion of the bride-wealth."

Unquestionably kinship is the paramount principle in the lineage modes' social order but in their power relations another principle plays a crucial role, the belief in magic. Consequently, the *kujur* is especially revered by the community for his mystical powers. The story of *kujur* Kamali in Shimal Murta portrays the awe in which a *kujur* is commonly held.

> The Arabs were very afraid of *kujur* Kamali. One time when the Arabs came to steal slaves and cattle *kujur* Kamali sent bees on them and drove them away. He also had a spear which he threw at Arabs from the top of the *jebel*. After it had killed an Arab it would return to his hand. Even his brother caught Arabs with Kamali's power and sold them as slaves. He was a powerful *kujur*. Kamali went hunting with a gun without bullets. He pointed the gun at the animal, made the sound of a gun with his mouth, and the animal died. When Kamali grew old he told the people to make *marissa* and prepare for a feast. Kamali killed many cows and the people ate and drank the whole day. When evening came he was approached by a white horse. Kamali told the people that he was leaving them and began to ride up the *jebel*. When it became to steep the horse flew over the top. Kamali was never seen again.

Few question whether or not to obey a priest; with such power the community can be protected or endangered, rains fall on fields or the ground scorched, and individuals remain healthy or take ill.

The diversity and volubility in the types of leadership restrained centralization of power and consequently new leaders continuously rose and fell. In addition to priests each *gabila* contains chieftains. The most influential of these is known as the master of the path (*sayyid al darb*)

and oversees relations between the community and 'outsiders'.[28] Historically, the master of the path negotiated peace settlements, arranged ransom of captives, ensured the safety of visitors or emissaries, and launched raids on other settlements (Ewald, 1990: 25-26). As Ewald notes (1990: 26), the roles of the master of the path and priests (primarily the *kujur*) often blurred, merging into a single powerful individual. In general, the 'offices' remained separate albeit mutually dependent, with neither wielding central authority.

4.4: THE PENETRATION OF NON-LINEAGE MODES

The Nuba Mountains presents a complex articulation of modes of production, though in a variety of concrete instances. Depending on the historical manifestation of a particular lineage mode and the manner by which it articulated with tributary/slave and capitalist modes of production, different lineage practices were strengthened or diminished. More often than not these subsequent modes precipitated crises in the Nuba Mountains, altering the socioeconomic and political contexts and effected new forms of organization. Without doubt lineage-based social relations became more complicated, leading to competing sources of authority and social inequalities within the villages themselves. Certainly the Turkiyya and Mahdiyya conquests must be noted as turning points with the later Anglo-Egyptian Condominium further rupturing lineage social relations, laying the foundations for a new social formation.

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[28] Nadel (1947: 4) refers to this as the "Chief of the Path" and notes the prevalence of this position among the various *gabila*. Also see Ewald, 1990.

ARTICULATION OF EPOCHS/MODES

What remains at issue is specifying the current nature of the social formation in the Nuba Mountains. Multiple complex cultures and intricate social structure present knotty problems for bounded historical inquiry in the Nuba Mountains. The various colonial impositions, as noted, remade long-distance trade and its connection to the Nuba Mountains. Its reordering and expansion were forged in a cauldron of social disorder engendered by the slave trade and its eventual cessation, pestilence and disease, internecine warfare, and new forms of governance and control. The penetration of capitalism into the Nuba Mountains, as well as the tributary/slave epochs, fostered far-reaching consequences against which the various local groups had to refigure new means of livelihood in the aftermath of new socioeconomic and political realities. Yet the persistence of non-capitalist forms of production, authority, and ideation in the face of capitalist expansion raises a key question: How are we presently to conceive the social formation in the Nuba Mountains? In order to understand this we must briefly take up the question of articulation of epochs of production.

World systems analysis suggests a macro-framework but it is hard to shift from general statements to micro-oriented fieldwork. Moreover, we must guard against the oversimplifying role that world systems analysis performs in ordering complex historical reality--everything everywhere is capitalist. It may be misleading, as Long asserts (1984a:11), "to explain non-capitalist relations of production simply by reference to capitalist principles." It is impossible, however, to deny the importance of capitalist pressures in reshaping the socioeconomic fabric of the Nuba

Mountains. Ironically, as Friedmann (1986:121) observes, "Those of us who have criticized the underdevelopment literature must now insist on bringing back its central insight...Underdevelopment creates specific structures, *different from capitalism and each other.*"

The notion of articulation of modes of production arose as a direct challenge to the homogenizing propensity of world systems theory which posited a unitary mode of production defined by an international division of labor linked through market exchanges. But as Mandel (1970: 22) emphasizes, "The historical specificity of imperialism in this respect lies in the fact that although it unites the world *economy* into a single market, it does not unify world *society* into a homogeneous capitalist milieu." More importantly, the articulation literature enabled the Third World to recapture its own history by showing how modes of production emerge, articulate, and decline without having first to deny them their own structural logic and historical dynamic.

A central analytical challenge is to explain the different dimensions of articulation and the consequences of these at various levels of analysis. This requires the reconceptualization of articulation of modes of production, one that gives new understanding to "combined and uneven development." Structural articulation must be visualized as the dialectical interpenetration of political and ideological structures, in conjunction with modes of production (as economic base). At this level, the decisive contradictions that shape the articulation need to be confronted. As Foster-Carter (1978:237) cautions, "articulation without contradiction would indeed be static and anti-Marxist, but contradiction without articulation (or transition without articulation) fallaciously

implies that the waxing and waning of modes of production are quite separate activities, each internally determined, whereas in fact they are linked as are wrestlers in a clinch." In other words, contradiction effects the necessity of structural change over time (Post, 1978).

In addition, the articulation of multiple practices gives broader meaning to social formation and results in the significant modification of the respective laws of motion. In this way, laws become tendencies as they inform and modify one another to the effect that the expanded social formation operates under the impress of contradictory tendential laws irreducibly derived from two or more epochs.[29] Let us further suggest that depending on the level of empirical analysis (e.g., world-system, state, region, village, household), different aspects of tendential laws come into play. In effect, tendential laws of motion provide the immediate sources of individual 'logic' but they are not experienced uniformly. Some consequences fall outside of an individual's empirical domain, while still others escape the perception of the participant.

Analysis must therefore account, at a wide range of empirical levels, for how articulation brings about both new 'livelihood' opportunities and constraints on older methods. Cooper (1981:295), in discussing 'peasant' agriculture in southern Africa, conveys this when he writes "of dead-ends of certain kinds of economic change, of the creation

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[29] We are hard pressed to find an historical example where articulation has not occurred. After all, history is neither static nor composed of isolated moments. Social formations are always in transition and cannot be equated with a 'pure form' or 'ideal type.' What is important here is that change is a diachronic process wherein 'elements' are dialectically interrelated, so that when it is synchronically decomposed, each 'moment' contains the definite impress of the former.

of groups committed to transitory forms of production, yet shaping the character of subsequent changes as they cling to power". And when we look at the complex world of the individual, there is no reason why he or she cannot, individually or as members of a household, participate simultaneously in different activities structured by different modes. The intention is not to resurrect dualism because individuals live and act within a meaningfully constructed whole world; nevertheless, the 'livelihood' decisions people make are constrained by existing contradictions so that, when made, these decisions bring about new sets of contradictions. Practices entail meaning, authority, and subsistence, and these are not easily reduced to structural parameters. Further, when these structural parameters are multiple, it is obvious that there is considerable leeway and empirical variation in the way practices are actually constituted. This only becomes comprehensible in a framework of articulation of modes of production, detailing the articulation of the lineage with the tributary/slave and capitalist modes of production.

4.5: ARTICULATION OF TRIBUTARY/SLAVE MODE

In the first instance of articulation, the tributary/slave mode of production altered settlement groupings, agricultural practices, and trade patterns. The overwhelming need for security drove the Nuba further into the mountains where they were forced to increasingly terrace and cultivate hillsides.[30] According to Wood (1971: 36), "The amount of formerly terraced land...is much greater than most researchers have suspected." Nevertheless, hill land cultivation proved insufficient to meet all of the

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[30] According to Pallme (1844), in the wake of the *Defterdar's* campaign whole villages fled Kordofan to seek refuge in the Nuba Mountains and Dar Fur.

community's food needs, compelling farmers to venture onto the immediate surrounding plains.[31] This reorganization of agriculture production, as mentioned in Chapter II, into near and far farms fostered the *kalunki* system. This system kept farmers together and in close proximity to defensible sites. During times of warfare, the vulnerable low-land fields were abandoned while the near farms could be better defended against raiding parties of all kinds.[32]

Trade among the various Nuba communities is not a recent phenomenon and certainly precedes the nineteenth century. Periodic grain shortages long favored exchange among the Nuba, although emigration and raids presented equally viable options. Agricultural yields vary from year to year but it is difficult to maintain sufficient food stores, in part due to the assorted levelling mechanisms and also owing to the storage life of the numerous grain types (Nadel, 1947: 49-50). In addition, the physical diversity of the Nuba Mountains encouraged trade between communities, who relied on useful "items produced in micro-environments outside of their own villages" such as iron for tools and weapons, fiber for mats and ropes, hardwood for digging sticks and, mimosa wood and poison for spears (Ewald, 1990: 22). Outside traders too were hardly new to the area and brokered their wares in exchange for goods of local provenance (including slaves). Despite the retreat of the Nuba into mountain refuges trading

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[31] One consequence of the reliance on hillside cultivation was the very real possibility of famine. It was the threat or reality of starvation which fueled inter-*gabila* raids throughout the Nuba Mountains.

[32] This necessity also fostered a stronger division of labor between men and women, as men went to the far farms by themselves in order to leave the women and children in the safety of the mountains.

practices continued. Trade after this time, however, differed in that it adopted a distinct medium--human chattel--arising from the voracious demand for slaves. This currency of slaves afforded both freedom from enslavement and famine, except for those unfortunate enough to be tendered.

Controlling forces originating far beyond the Nuba Mountains dramatically affected central contradictions within lineage modes. The inrush of traders and raiders placed the Nuba on a 'permanent war footing,' either in defence from marauders who threatened the region as never before or initiating their own raids in search of food and slaves. In either case, the turmoil enveloping the Nuba Mountains lent a new importance to lineage elders and brought about the need for a more 'stable' coordination of leadership, either in the form of a single powerful chieftain or a collective body. Unquestionably, the master of the path and *kujur* profited most from this situation. The master of the path benefited from his ability to successfully deal with itinerant *jellaba*, coordinate raiding parties, and organize village defenses. The authority of the *kujur* likewise grew with the ability to prophesize the results of raids and afford protection to the community through occult powers. Certainly each received a greater share of any tribute or plunder.[33] One traveler in the late 1800s recounted that among the

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[33] Certain groups became the prey of their more powerful neighbors and as a result, paid protection or ransom for the return of captives. The Kurungu, Tumma, and Katcha, for example, seem to have had this type of relationship with the Miri (Baumann, 1987), while the Shatt were often raided by the Kadugli and *Hamar*. *Jellaba* also provided the master of the path with gifts in order assure his safety while in a particular community.

Dilling, captives were "taken to the (*kujur*), who makes his choice, leaving the rest for the victors" (Martini, 1961: 125). Often an ambitious elder would attempt to assume both roles although instances of this were rare (Ewald, 1990). The authority of other war leaders probably also increased, mitigating against any trend towards centralization.

The essential relation between elders and juniors/women became more exploitative during this period and further facilitated social differentiation. The addition of multiple wives was a significant symbol of the prerogative of chieftainship among *gabila*, exacerbating competition between elders and juniors for cattle and nubile women. In the more predatory *gabila* the infusion of wealth through plunder and 'tribute' paid by weaker communities for protection, probably began the inflation of brideprice, especially the inclusion of guns in addition to an increase of cattle and goats.[34] Enterprising young men could meet the larger demands only though raids on their neighbors, *jellaba*, or pastoralists, bringing yet more wealth into the ambit of elders.[35] Thus the flow of goods and services from the juniors and women enhanced the power position of many elders. In *gabila* subject to repeated victimization the reverse held true. In all probability the stature of the elders diminished along with

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[34] Most accounts of the Nuba from the 1930s describe a decline in the number of cattle and goats from the past. Stevenson (1940), for example, records that the number of cattle fell from seven to three.

[35] Baumann (1987: 100) relates that the "Miri raiders and warriors were soon feared throughout the region" and that "An official British estimate of 1925 states that the then paramount chief of the Miri commanded no less than 500 riflemen."

a deflation in bridewealth. Consequently, the elders' ability to control juniors and women in these situations decreased.

The period of the Turkiyya also pushed a number of *Baggara* pastoralists further into the Nuba Mountains, first to find refugee from pressing tax collectors and later in search of cattle and slaves. Assisted by their knowledge of the environment, they proved extremely effective, operating in small, fast raiding parties. In fact, by the mid-1800s pastoralists provided El-Obeid *jellaba* with most of the slaves (Pallme, 1844). Within these patrilineages certainly the power of elders increased similar to their Nuba counterparts. During the Mahdiyya, however, many pastoralists lost their cattle to raids and the general chaos which ensued. Consequently many took up agriculture out of necessity, although some *Baggara* groups continued to raid such as the *Hamar* who operated out of Daloka and Shatt Safiya. Further elaboration must await Chapter VII and the analysis of the *Hamar* village of Shair Tomat.

4.6: ARTICULATION OF CAPITALIST MODE

The capitalist mode of production, though unquestionably less physically violent after its initial thrust into the Nuba Mountains, proved equally dramatic in its articulation with lineage modes. During the first two decades of Condominium rule administration remained in the hands of the military whose mission was to establish governmental authority and stabilize the region. Early contacts with Condominium forces evidenced little change over most previous relations with outsiders; taxation retained its tributary form with the government extracting surplus from the more vulnerable Nuba and Arab communities,

while the stronger resisted payment. Cattle raids, kidnapping, and trafficking in slaves continued unabated as the government looked the other way, content with its share of the plunder. It was against this background that the colonial state needed to 'break open' older lineage relations in order to force villages into a market economy. The main obstacle to capitalist success lay in freeing up both labor and agricultural products, first by direct coercive means and later indirectly through the commoditization of key circuits of production and reproduction. In short, what was needed for capitalism to effectively penetrate lineage modes was the monetization of 'traditional' obligations and exchanges.

The crucial moment of articulation in the Nuba Mountains (as elsewhere on the African continent) proved to be the monetization of bridewealth. Even today a major preoccupation of young men is over how to acquire enough money to pay for a bride so that young men must migrate in order to earn sufficient bridewealth.[36] According to older informants among the Shatt, Ghulfan, Kadugli, and Miri cash money and 'luxury' goods like tea, coffee, cloth, and sugar did not routinely enter into the circuit of brideprice until the 1930s, although the required number of cattle and goats did decrease. Fines and taxes too played a significant role. At first both were paid in cattle and guns, but gradually money assumed greater importance. In addition to drawing villagers into a cash economy, the loss of guns reduced the threat of raids and intransigence,

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[36] A major complaint voiced to me by young men was the cost of marriage, especially in furnishing a house with 'urban' furniture; metal table and chairs, metal frame bed, glasses, etc.

whereas the deprivation of cattle increased the need for money and began the trend towards unforced out-migration.

As previously mentioned, Condominium administrators faced a difficult problem in how to integrate the Nuba Mountains into its rule and make it profitable.[37] At first the British responded by resettling the Nuba away from their formidable redoubts onto the fertile plains below. Resettlement aided in the collection of taxes as well as in the general aim of pacification. In some instances this was accomplished by Maxims, in others communities voluntarily descended, opting for closer proximity to more fertile soils (Ibrahim, 1985; Roden, 1972). This in itself, however, does not instill the 'capitalist work ethic' nor inspire devotion to Mammon. Armed with previous experiences on the continent and elsewhere, the British knew how to utilize the lineage-based communities instead of tearing them asunder en masse.

The task of involving villages in the capitalist economy required more coercive measures. To this end large-scale labor levies were made against villages to recruit the manpower essential to construct infrastructure, including roads, administrative buildings, and *hafir* for newly developed government cotton schemes. Elderly men in Somasem, for example, told me about having to work on the Dilling to Kadugli road. The men nonetheless received a nominal wage which stimulated the seductive side of consumerism, obvious in such 'store bought goods' as tea, sugar,

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[37] At any rate, by this time the exchequer required that all colonies at a minimum be self-supporting which Khartoum extended to all provinces with the Sudan.

jewelry, and clothing[38]. Other workers not from the Somasem vicinity purchased food and drink from the local women. Cash incomes also went to defray taxes, purchase livestock, and meet brideprices. Once capitalism made suitable inroads into the villages, young men were increasingly willing to engage in wage-labor on their own volition and with the expressed encouragement of their elders.

The state in the Sudan has played an important role in restructuring agricultural relations, first during the Condominium period and later in independent Sudan. Within the framework of development policy, parastatal organizations determined the overall strategy for agricultural development and in this function oversaw the construction of regional infrastructure. In Rey's (1982) perspective advanced in Class Alliances, the capitalist state must burst the near autarkic existence of communities organized by lineage modes. The expansion of capitalism demands new markets in labor, products, and investment opportunities. The development of cash crops (i.e, cotton) was intended to meet these needs by stimulating production for the capitalist market and simultaneously solving the problem of extracting surplus from the local populace. This reorganization of agriculture, however, took place within the older patterns of production--i.e., 'traditional agriculture.'

The Khartoum government established the Nuba Mountains Cotton Industry (NMCI) in 1923 to disseminate the growing of cheap lint cotton destined for the mills in Manchester. Moreover, the introduction of a cash crop was intended to "supplement people's income and to acquaint the

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[38] The adoption of clothing entered the Nuba Maintains with the Islamic (and Christian) concept of shame of nakedness and the requirement to cover one's body.

Nuba people with money," though primarily for poll and crop tax purposes (Al Tilib, 1987).[39] By 1929 the NMCI was in full operation with eight ginning factories: two in Kadugli and one in Dilling, Talodi, Lagowa, Abu Gubeiha, Umm Berembeita, and Semeih. Farmers handed their cotton crop over to local weighing centers where they were paid a fixed government price. Cotton production reached its peak during the 1950s and remained strong up through the 1962/63 season of 1,029,000 *kantars* of seed cotton.[40] The NMCI had also wanted to set up industries for processing cotton byproducts (oil, soap, and seedcake for fattening cattle) but lost interest as Sudanese independence loomed closer.

The post-colonial state differs little from its predecessor in its general orientation to 'development.' State intervention in the form of agricultural schemes remains the primary tool in controlling the Nuba Mountain economy. Cotton production is currently under the auspices of the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Production Corporation (NMAPC) which operates mechanized schemes throughout the region, but now allows for a rotation of *dura* and cotton.[41] Large gaps still remain between the

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[39] The history of cotton in the Nuba Mountains was gathered primarily from interviews with Abdul Rahman Al-Nour Al-Tilib who is presently on the Gezira Board of Governors on August 24 and 26, 1987. Previous to this appointment he was the general director of the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation in Kadugli and also worked for the Mechanized Farming Corporation in Dilling, Damazin, and Gadaraf.

[40] One *kantar* is equal to 99 pounds. During the 1930s farmers were paid 60 piasters per *kantar*, £1.20 in the 1940s, and £3.50 in the 1950s (Al-Tilib).

[41] Al-Tilib lamented the fact that with the use of tractors and the uprooting of trees rather than chopping them down for better fallowing, "we are destroying our environment."

prices farmers receive for seed cotton and the government's export price. Baumann (1987: 207) estimates that from 1969 through 1979, producer prices for seed cotton prices fell 49 percent. Al-Tilib (1987) concurs, stating that "Although the price (for seed cotton) has increased, it is still way below the world market price."

In 1969 the government began another parastatal organization, the Mechanized Farming Corporation (MFC). In accordance with its original goal, the MFC has established six schemes throughout the clay plains with the largest at Habila in the eastern reaches of the Nuba Mountains. Each scheme is apportioned into plots ranging between 1,000 and 1,500 *feddan*. In the beginning short-staple cotton occupied part of the crop rotation but in recent years has fallen out of favor with the decreases in world-market prices. The planting of *dura* presently receives primary consideration as the government hopes to lower the market costs for the dominant food grain and thus the overall wage-bill of workers.[42] According to the General Director of the MFC (1987):[43]

> Those capable of running schemes by themselves are given priority. They must be a proper tenant...judged by their ability to get credit from the Agricultural Bank. Every year the tenants must come to the MFC for a certificate to show the Agricultural Bank for credit. An MFC inspector visits every scheme and notes if the land is cleared and ready for planting.

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[42] According to Oesterdiekhoff and Wohlmuth (1983:14), expenditure on food represents 71.6 percent of household consumption expenditures.

[43] Information on the MFC was gathered, in part, from an interview with the General Director in Dilling, September 13, 1987.

He later acknowledged that *jellaba* monopolized the schemes, relying on the wage-labor of Nuba, Dinka, and others for the actual cultivation.[44] In addition, Nuba villages in the midst of the schemes find themselves hemmed into a circular area with a diameter of six kilometers, necessitating labor migration as the expansion of their own agricultural production proves impossible.

Other recent parastatals include the Nuba Mountains Rural Development Project (NMRDP), the Western Sudan Agricultural Research Project (WSARP), and Agricultural Extension.[45] NMRDP and WSARP have strong ties to the international economic community; the EEC and World Bank/USAID respectively. Their agendas continue to promote capitalist interests in the Nuba Mountains through: 1) the use and restructuring of productive capacities; 2) the extension and expansion of factor and product markets; and 3) the repudiation and replacement of 'traditional' methods of social organization.[46]

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[44] The General Director informed me that "native people" (i.e., the Nuba) were not very adept at this type of agricultural so that most schemes had to be given over to people from outside of the area, although he assured me that they were from Kordofan. In general, his bias towards the Nuba was painfully evident in such comments as: "the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains are unwilling to work," "the Nuba don't work," and "the Nuba aren't very good farmers."

[45] There are also a number of international firms working in South Kordofan. The General Director of Agricultural Extension commented: "There are so many institutions, so many departments working (in South Kordofan) doing similar jobs but without any cooperation. And the foreign ones, they come for a while, do something and then leave while another institution or group takes their place. And we don't always know what they are doing."

[46] The majority of development workers that I interviewed (Sudanese and expatriates) took a narrow view of 'traditional' ideologies and looked upon them with contempt. Interestingly,

All of these agencies are entrusted with 'getting traditional agricultural moving' through increased productivity and sale of products. Owing to the enlarged scope of competition, farmers are increasingly forced to rationalize and mechanize their production. Aside from some of the more technical merits of the intermediate technologies being made available such as the NMRDP's animal traction project, these agencies have intensified the farmers' dependence on agricultural inputs including DDT and other herbicides/pesticides, treated seeds, tractors, etc.[47] The growing need for money to purchase means of production has led to a rise in out-migration and reliance on the *shayl* (moneylender). In addition, changes within agriculture have instigated a different and more pronounced pattern of social differentiation at the village level. A major complaint voiced in rural communities is that development agencies usually target the prosperous farmers for assistance and ignore the contributions of women all together with the exception of an occasional *jubraka* project.

The various mechanisms articulating capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production represent a subtle and complex blend of forms of surplus appropriation, production relations, political authority, and ideological reproduction. The functionaries of capitalism and village elders compliment each other in the convergence of their interests. This convergence, however, is probably not a consciously thought-out strategy or part of the decision-making process. Capitalists often find themselves

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however, the Sudanese 'experts were quick to manipulate their own kinship and ethnic networks.

[47] Needless to say, these means of production are not produced in the Sudan so their sale largely benefit the multinational agribusinesses and petrochemical corporations.

at odds with what they consider to be unproductive uses of cattle and bridewealth. The elders, to the contrary, consider the seemingly authoritarian prescriptions advanced by administrators as insulting to their dignity and threatening to their authority. In effect, this "class alliance" has further exacerbated sharp contradictions within the social formation as it created new social categories and patterns of surplus extraction. Yet while the continuity of lineage relations guarantees a voice for the elders, it is increasingly limited to the village level. On the other hand, those individuals who have gained favorable access to external resources (including education) have been able to transcend the confines of the village and the ensuing obligations imposed by older organizational principles. Nevertheless, parvenus still find that they must translate their new found wealth into the local idiom of kinship.

As indicated, major changes took place in the relations between elders, juniors, and women. Some have opened up new avenues of power for the elders, while others have led to the deterioration of their positions within the community. With the transformation of bridewealth and its subsequent inflation, many young men were driven into labor markets or forced to cultivate cash crops such as cotton.[48] Incomes were used to purchase 'prestige' goods which went to village elders along with money payments. Initially migration was seasonal or lasted only a few years but since the early 1970s its duration has steadily lengthened and some never

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[48] This was and is by no means an even process among the various *gabila* and Arab groups. Among the Nuba, for example, the Ghulfan, Miri, Nyimang having adopted Islam and Sudanese-Arab customs earlier than others enjoyed better jobs and firmly established migration routes for later migrants to follow.

return to the village except for the occasional visit. In part this is due to the expansion of employment opportunities outside of the fields of agriculture, herding and military/police service, especially in the construction industry and service sector in the Khartoum conurbation. In these circumstances, remittances are frequently forwarded by migrants but are channeled differently than bridewealth, usually limited to immediate kin. A further erosion of the elders' power is evident in villages where young men, against accepted practice, wed a wife from outside of the 'matrimonial area' while migrating. In effect this circumvents and thus undermines the monopoly of the lineage elders over marriageable women. Hence young men can gain access to village lands without ministering to the obligations imposed by the need for establishing a family.

Ironically, what adds to the wealth and power of the elders in many villages also contributes to its demise. The increased absence of young men creates labor shortages and contributes to the break down in *nafir* and results in the greater exploitation of women. In most areas of the Nuba Mountains competition for agricultural labor is fierce and farmers vie against each other to attract workers. They must manipulate and cajole every claim and obligation in calling a *nafir* party. In this aggressive quest to attract laborers, competition has popularized the ethos of *nafir* past its prior meaning, even to the extent that it requires cash outlays. As obligations between age-mates or consanguine kin gave way to cooperation among neighbors and friends, sumptuary principles underwent inflation. Now it is difficult to arrange a *nafir* without serving meat (especially goat), tea, sugar, and, in some instances, *saut* (chewing tobacco). And in the case of a specifically cash crop like cotton that is

at odds with the 'culture' of *nafir*, wage labor is hired, opening the door to its regular utilization on other crops. Of all the potential labor resources, however, extra burdens of cultivation fall unevenly on women who find they must intensify their work load to make up for short falls.

The very act of expanding agriculture onto the plains necessitated the acquisition and clearing of new land and cut into the power of elders. These new lands lay outside of the elders' domain and in most communities the elders were unable to stake their claim as ancestral guardians to them. Only those still reliant on the hillside claims of their elders are inspired with filial obedience. In addition, migrants lend (or lease in some areas) their lands while absent from the village. These transactions also lay outside of the purview of elders.

Money is now a fact of village life; needed for education and medical services, agricultural inputs and labor, and taxes and bridewealth. Consequently, there is always the possibility of going into debt. The *shayl* has always been extremely generous with cash advances. The aim of the largess, however, is apparent; the individual is obliged to sell the crop to him at the end of the coming season. There are limits, however, in that an individual cannot be separated from the means of production, most notably land as this is enmeshed in the authority of the elders and communal land rights. The *shayl* therefore finds it very difficult to gain direct control over production and must remain content with simple usury. Nevertheless, the *shayl* undermines any ability to accumulate surplus and hence bridewealth. Fear of an uncertain future and the *shayl's* position in the marketing system ensure repayment of debt.

The new system of governance likewise presented competing bases of authority. In some *gabila* like the Ghulfan of Somasem the position of elders and priests was entirely undermined. Initially the British appointed a village chief (*sheikh*), a completely new type of leader, to collect taxes and maintain civil order, but accorded him no substantive power of enforcement. Consequently, only the weak paid while the collector had to make up the difference himself (Ibrahim, 1985:46). Not surprisingly, at first villagers viewed this new civilian administration with distrust as it went against the grain of the lineage elders. The *sheikh* functioned as a lightning rod for village discontent, with elders carping about disclosure of cattle for tax purposes, insubordination to priests, and collusion with outsiders. In spite of their beginnings, the rise of the politico-administrative elites, wealthy farmers, and successful entrepreneurs provides an independent power base and thus offers a way out from under the oversight of the elders.

4.7: CONCLUDING COMMENTS

At its most abstract level, household is the basic unit and primary site for the social and biological reproduction of labor-power. There are no requisite household forms--the character and composition of households are variable--and the importance of certain activities varies markedly from region to region and over time. Nevertheless, household, although not a primordial institution, assumes certain primordial functions (e.g., giving birth, preparing food, providing affection) that are basic to human social and biological existence (Stauth, 1984: 91). These base functions inherent in the household are crystallized and given concrete interpretation by the household's relation to the wider society. That is,

households are organized and structured by a given social formation, deriving means to meet subsistence requirements in the broad sense, but in accordance with the logic of that social formation. And if the ensuing social relations encapsulated within a household entail the articulation of modes of production, various logics come into play. It is for this reason that households can be especially volatile as members are involved in multiple economic, political, and ideological practices originating in different epochs/modes of production.

Moreover, tensions resulting from the dialectical interplay of lineage/family, privileges/rights, exchange-value/use-value, and accumulation/levelling exert strong cross-cutting pressures at the household level. In this way, households function as a conduit for wider contradictions and tend to be no less susceptible to outside pressures than other structures. Consequently, households continuously compose, decompose, and recompose. But households are also enmeshed in extra-household domestic networks where, for example, neighboring households share food and labor, or watch each other's children in order to free up female members for off-farm work. These relations are important for comprehending the continuity of particular household forms. Where household membership is fluid, the presence of domestic networks provides a degree of stability to people in an otherwise chaotic world.

Household transformation is thus a dynamic process which does not always lend itself easily to momentary encapsulation. But by understanding particular social formations, we can begin to discern the 'behavior' of households at different moments in time and space. Households frequently embody cumulative inequalities in the acquisition of

land and technology, the organization and control of the labor, and the ability to appropriate and distribute surpluses. In short, external forces influence the viability of households and the power of their respective members. Among the Shatt, for example, traditional control over the circulation of women, bridewealth, defence, and raiding parties enabled lineage elders, as household heads, to effectively dominate young males and women. That dominance and the presence of *nafir* prevented the generalized buying and selling of labor within the village. Present economic opportunities outside the village now threaten that dominance, altering the organizational basis of households (and the village in general) as young men increasingly migrate in order to eke out an existence, leaving females, the young, and the aged to sell their labor-power to wealthier households.

In summary, households reflect contradictions presented by the larger social formation, but worked out within the household. Within the lineage mode, households are structured around kinship. As such, households tended to be complex and multiple, depending on the power of the senior male. Marriage enables a junior to escape the confines of the elders and begin his own household. Household stability is maintained through elaborate mechanisms of marriage and fostering, as well as age-grades and *nafir*. The tributary/slave mode either strengthened or weakened households, depending on the ability of lineage elders to organize defenses and initiate raids. In particularly hard hit communities, the organizing principles of households changed with the waning of the power of elders. In these instances, various lineages probably splintered into smaller and more isolated groups. The capitalist

mode instills its own contradictions, namely the need to rationalize production/reproduction which introduced the sale of labor-power. This trend reinforces individualization through monetizing relations within and between households. By the time of Nadel's study the 'nuclearization' of households in the Nuba Mountains had begun.

CHAPTER V

TRANSITION: MULTIPLE STRUCTURES AND A COMPLEX OF VILLAGES

Evidence of uneven development, documented through detailed fieldwork, underscores the frustration of conceptualizing agrarian transition. One is immediately struck by the maddingly in-between character of transition used to describe such places as the Nuba Mountains: it is neither wholly capitalist nor non-capitalist.[1] Hence our empirical level of analysis shifts to the region in order to examine the parameters of capitalist development in the Nuba Mountains through the analysis of fieldwork material. This discussion also brings into question the persistence of non-capitalist modes of production and highlights the difficulty faced by capitalism in sweeping away older modes of production.

Households within the Nuba Mountains were fashioned by the unevenness in the development of the lineage modes and later reshaped by external pressures brought to bear on them, forces emanating in entirely different circumstances and modes of production. Thus the primary purpose of this chapter is to provide additional understanding of households through clarification of how and to what degree the Nuba Mountains has been integrated into the capitalist world economy. This has

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[1] As Trotsky (1967: 22) pointed out: "The development of historically backward nations leads necessarily to a peculiar combination of different stages in the historical process. Their development as a whole acquires a planless, complex, combined character."

great import for our understanding of household variations through considerations of patterns of social differentiation, market integration, and overall extent of capitalist penetration.

The processes of commoditization and class formation draws households into regional, national, and international markets as their circuits of reproduction become increasingly dependent on commodities for means of production and consumption. Nevertheless, the resiliency of non-capitalist forms of organization in the midst of capitalism poses a distinct analytical challenge for political economy, especially those variants associated with small-scale agricultural production. In fact, in some areas peasant household producers and family farm enterprises seem to have thrived rather than quietly disappear as many assumed. Yet how do we conceive of the "people who do not fit," those who do not fall neatly into the conventional wisdom regarding agrarian transition? (Friedmann, 1986a). Questions arise over appropriate analytical categories, primarily over their conditions of existence. But if we are to refine our conceptualization of rural transition, we must first comprehend its concrete expression.

5.1: AGRARIAN TRANSITION AND SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS

Theoretical dilemmas arise in the course of explaining and substantiating the nature and tempo of agricultural transition and the shift from non-capitalist to capitalist

modes of social organization.[2] We cannot readily assert, as do P. Gibbon and M. Neocosmos (1985), the generalized circulation of commodities in all areas of the globe, including the Nuba Mountains. In our own need to represent social reality, we must avoid the pitfalls of rendering everything everywhere capitalist. We must admit that explanations embracing non-commodity (and non-market) relations are not misdirected and erroneous simply because some scholars cling tenaciously to theories which do not neatly permit the credence of a capitalism that is not all inclusive. On the other hand, "it is imperative that we retain one of the most fundamental insights of world-systems theorists, which is the complexity (or polymorphous development) of capitalism as seen from *within* its own internal dynamics." (Chevalier, 1982:155).

Currently there are a variety of household types engaged in small-scale agricultural production in the Nuba Mountains, not only because their integration into capitalism has been uneven and achieved by a various means, but because not all appear to have succumbed to it. Research by Mohammed (1986) indicates that agriculture in the Nuba Mountains remains dominated by 'traditional smallholders' (Table 5.1). Manufacturing too has made little headway, with Kordofan accounting for a mere 3.3 percent of Sudan's industrial labor

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[2] This trajectory is also referred to as the transition from subsistence to market production and associated with the increased use of money in relations of exchange.

force (Ali, 1980: 167).[3] Yet there is no reason why a process which was very complex and slow in Europe should be simple and swift in places like the Nuba Mountains. It is my contention that it is only by 'articulation' that we can begin to understand agrarian transition in the Nuba Mountains and address key differences between 'peasant household production' and 'family farm enterprises.' Here we must recall the social formations predating capitalism in the Nuba Mountains and the forces which govern the reproduction of households in order to theoretically ground small-scale production.

TABLE 5.1: SIZE OF PLOTS CULTIVATED BY SMALLHOLDERS IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS AREA, 1979/80[4]

Total Area of Cultivated Plots in *Feddans* (N=161)					
0.0-5.0	5.1-10.0	10.1-15.0	15.1-20.0	20.1-30.0	> 30.0
58.0%	36.0%	15.5%	9.3%	3.1%	4.3%

The debate over the tenacity of family forms of production resides largely in the consequences of capitalist penetration in the countryside and its effect on existing agricultural practices. What V. Lenin (1977), K. Kautsky (see

[3] Kordofan includes both North and South Kordofan so that most of the industrial labor force is outside of the Nuba Mountains in El-Obeid and Babanusa.

[4] Table 5.11 is abstracted from Mohammed (1986:126). He lists landholdings by region and essentially considers all farmers outside of the government-operated schemes to be smallholders. Mohammed (p. 116) estimates that "traditional agriculture" provides the livelihood for some 380,000 smallholders.

Banaji, 1976), and A.V. Chaynov (1986) suggest is that the issues involved in agrarian transition are extremely complex and require far more sensitive theorization. For our purposes we need to come to terms with both: 1) the essentialist interpretation of increasing economic differentiation among the rural populace and an attendant decomposition of household-based production as evidenced by the increase of on-farm wage-labor and off-farm employment; and, 2) the subjectivist logic of peasant subsistence production where commodity sales/purchases (especially wage-labor) are merely adaptive strategies and resource allocation remains a family affair. Differences lie in the conclusions each draw, with the first stressing decomposition and the latter continuity. Both perspectives, nevertheless, emphasize the need to abstract the nature of household relations through an examination of historically specific totalities. Within agriculture, the organization of production through the household is a common occurrence. The presence of commodity circulation, however, imparts definite and distinct implications for the subsequent internal organization of households, especially those characterized as peasant production.

5.2: TRACES OF CAPITALISM

One of the more troublesome tasks associated with fieldwork involves the recognition, simplification, and classification of information. Optimally, the researcher

enters the study site with ready categories, then diligently sets about collecting data, and eventually struggles with analysis. But we know better. Preconceived categories are rarely self-evident in the field nor wholly appropriate outside of their originating context. In the present case our problem centers around identifying manifestations of the world-capitalist system in the Nuba Mountains context and specifying the character of small-scale commodity production. H. Bernstein (1977, 1979a, 1979b, 1988), for example, argues that capitalism has already broken the reproductive cycle of peasant (non-capitalist) households and that they have been supplanted by simple commodity producers. Drawing on her work concerning the North American plains as well as Bernstein's African experiences, H. Friedmann (1978a, 1978b, 1980, 1986a, 1986b) advances simple commodity production as a form of capitalism whose external relations are governed by competition, full factor mobility (including 'free' access to land, labor, credit and product markets), and the universal exchange of equivalents which are evident in such quantitative indicators as land sales and rents, wage labor, interest rates, and product prices.[5] On the other hand, C. Smith (1984: 213-14), in reference to her work in Guatemala, states

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[5] Friedmann (1980: 168) further argues: "The increasing prevalence of systematic factor prices, then, is an index of the deepening of commodity relations within reproduction and thus of simple commodity production, while stable or decreasing generality of factor prices indicates resistance to commoditisation."

that "until capital dispossesses most labour in the system, one finds no predetermined economic logic of the system....and that it is the material context of the situation which determines what practice is used."

What is of primary interest, then, is the overall extent of capitalist penetration in the Nuba Mountains, including the forms it assumes through traces of mediation imparted by capitalism. Thus, we will briefly examine the twelve villages of Shatt Damam, Shair Tomat, Somasem, Kortala, Touqma, Keiga Lubin, Keiga Al-Khail, Umm Sardeiba, Umm Jabralla, Demick, Kalulu, and Miri Juwa scattered throughout the Nuba Mountains (see Figure 1.1, p. 32). On the whole, the material presented underscores the lack of uniformity in the spread of capitalism in this region as evidenced through a variety of indicators. While these indicators are not conclusive evidence supporting the existence of non-capitalist social relations, nonetheless they point to the continued importance of direct production in meeting 'domestic' needs; such needs are met through a multitude of non-market communal and familial relations.

5.3: ELEMENTS OF MEDIATION

Where historians tend to emphasize sequences of events, sociologists look for patterns of interaction. Taken together, it becomes possible to trace the effects of specific processes which come to dominate at particular junctures in space and time. Household formation, like commoditization, migration, social stratification, or mechanization, is a

process that occurs in a coherent and definable way. Each process, however, exacts distinct outcomes at different empirical levels and consequently their shared connections are not always readily discernable nor intuitively apparent, leaving us with seemingly unconnected phenomena.[6] Processes, nonetheless, disclose evidence of their existence--elements of mediation--which can link seemingly dissimilar phenomena. In this way, various mediations permit us to isolate critical processes at various empirical levels and differentiate them into increasingly more manageable units, thus expediting the construction of concrete categories within which to locate households.

In Peasants and Capital, Trouillot (1988: 198-230) characterizes elements of mediation "by their function at particular moments...rather than by their functional nature" (p. 199). He distinguishes spatially "fixed" and "mobile" elements of mediation, with the latter further differentiated into "material" ("instruments of mediation") and "human" elements ("agents of mediation"). For our purposes, spatially fixed elements include shops, mosques, churches, oil presses, clinics, schools, roads, markets, agricultural schemes, and the like. Material elements encompass various items such as tea, *marissa*, matches, oil, batteries, remittances, spears,

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[6] A hierarchy of mediations intervenes between phenomena and essence and tends to obscure the linkage. Thus, while it is untenable to draw direct correlations by way of crude reductionism, neither is it warranted to argue independence of form.

rifles, hoes, tractors, mechanical threshers, taxes, bridewealth, money, and so on. Human elements contain such individuals as *sheikhs*, *jellaba*, *shayl*, farmers, laborers, tractor drivers, tea vendors, teachers, and sociologists.

Alone, traces of processes are merely 'things' and have no real significant social meaning. Taken together, however, elements of mediation link individuals in specific patterns of social relations, although ensuing events hold differential relevance for the actors involved (Trouillot, 1988). In this way elements of mediation refer to and reflect particular processes, but to the effect that singular elements do not affect everyone equally; hence their importance varies. The importance of elements of mediation, therefore, is in the clues it imparts relating to 'human behavior' and its options.[7]

FIXED ELEMENTS OF MEDIATION

The central question here is: What broad patterns and trends has capitalism affected which have transformed the physical environment of the Nuba Mountains? The analysis of such relevant items as shops, commodity markets, roads, water sources, and agricultural schemes demonstrates clear evidence

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[7] It is not always easy to follow these slender threads (order, simplify, and classify data), especially in an articulated social formation rent with structural contradictions and human struggles. Events and patterns hold different outcomes for the various actors involved. Some are affected directly by the play of events while others are only indirectly. How the actors 'fit' into a sequence of events serves to shape subsequent patterns of interaction.

of capitalism's presence as well as its recent temporal advancement. Fixed elements are also important collection points because they draw people in as sellers, buyers, and producers of commodities, citizens of the Republic of the Sudan, practitioners of 'global' religions, or social denizens enjoying camaraderie. These elements bring together diverse people who, on a personal level, share information which may confirm old ideas, alter present perceptions, or foster future plans. In short, it is here where the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains find identity within the Sudanese state, as well as their place in the world outside those borders. What fixed elements reveal is that even relatively remote villages are not far removed from the corridors of capitalist power lying beyond the expansive planes broken up into agricultural fields or the immediate confines of hilltop communities.

1. Institutions and services

Table 5.2 (p. 229) shows the spread of selected institutions and services within the twelve villages. On the whole, each village witnessed a substantial increase in the number and types of institutions and services with the exception of Kalulu and Shair Tomat.[8] The extension of certain government institutions and services (health clinic,

[8] The inhabitants of Kalulu have remained in the hills and are distrustful of outsiders. In fact, when some children spied me coming they fled shrieking into the 'bush,' sure that the 'bogey man' had come for them. Shair Tomat, on the other hand, is a small village and relies on the surrounding villages for needed services.

TABLE 5.2: INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES, NOW AND CHANGE IN NUMBER FROM 20 YEARS AGO

Institution/ service	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.
	Shatt Damam		Shair Tomat		Somasem		Keiga Kortala		Keiga Lubin		Kalulu	
Mosque	1	-	1	+1	2	+2	2	+1	2	+1	0	-
Church	1	+1	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Health clinic	1	-	0	-	0	-	1	-	1	-	1	+1
Primary school	1	-	0	-	0	-	3	+1	1	+1	0	-
Police station	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
People's Coun.	1	+1	0	-	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	0	-
Weekly market	1	-	0	-	0	-	1	+1	0	-	0	-
Four mill	2	+1	0	-	1	+1	2	+1	2	+2	1	+1
Cooperative	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	1	-	1	+1	0	-
Electric gen.	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	+1	0	-	0	-
Number change		**+4**		**+2**		**+5**		**+5**		**+6**		**+2**
	Umm Sardeiba		Demick		Touqma		Keiga Al-Khail		Umm Jabralla		Miri Juwa	
Mosque	3	+2	4	+3	3	+2	2	+2	1	+1	1	-
Church	1	+1	0	-	0	-	0	-	4	+4	0	-
Health clinic	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	+1	1	+1	1	-
Primary school	3	+2	2	-	1	-	2	+2	1	+1	1	-
Police station	1	+1	1	-	0	-	1	+1	0	-	0	-
People's Coun.	1	-	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1
Weekly market	1	-	1	-	0	-1	1	+1	0	-	0	-
Flour mill	1	-	3	+2	1	+1	2	+2	1	+1	1	+1
Cooperative	0	-	1	+1	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	+1
Electric gen.	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Number change		**+6**		**+7**		**+3**		**+10**		**+9**		**+3**

primary school, police station, flour mill, and village council) indicate Khartoum's commitment to 'integrate' these villages into its general vision of a 'national' Sudan, especially the larger economy, although nothing is said of motive. Primary school instructors, for example, teach in the Arabic language. In itself this may indicate the need for a mutually comprehensible lingua franca, but the medium is increasingly the content of The Koran.[9] In addition, People's Councils tend to undercut the authority of village elders (unless they also dominate these institutions) and, in conjunction with Islam, minimize the authority of the autochthonous priests. In some villages like Shatt Damam, Umm Jabralla, and Miri Juwa, however, priests are not subject to the civil jurisdiction of local *sheikhs*.

It should not be impled that equal access to local institutions and services exists; this requires more in-depth, class-based considerations. The presence of cooperatives, nonetheless, evinces what Baumann (1987: 189) terms "redintegration" such that a cooperative establishing a *tahona* or flour mill can restore a village's "viability, self-reliance, and communal pride." On the other hand, a flour mill, regardless of its source, also frees up the labor of women for other activities such as wage-labor and farm work as

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[9] This point was first made to me by a Dinka youth in Kadugli who told me: "I don't mind learning Arabic, we have to able to talk to different people. But I do not want to become a Muslim, I don't want to study The Koran."

they no longer need to spend hours pounding *dura*, just as it necessitates the need for money.[10] Cooperatives such as a flour mill or village shop are usually created in conjunction with the collaboration of village people, labor migrants, and the Department of Co-operatives. The existence of regular weekly markets provides a ready outlet for cash sales of crops and, conversely, their purchase.

The number of mosques and churches in each village with the exception of Kalulu ('animism') imparts concrete evidence of the penetration of 'foreign' ideologies and belief systems. The manner by which Islam and, more importantly, Northern Sudan Arab Muslim culture has become so pervasive in many ways speaks as a metaphor for the trade which helped create and sustain the need for outside commodities.[11] Without question, Islam has also changed local values in the Nuba Mountains, fostering shame of nakedness, proscriptions against alcohol (*marissa*) and pork, female seclusion (when

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[10] It takes approximately twenty minutes for three women to pound a *malwa* (4.125 litres) of *dura* into edible grain. Women usually sing 'grindstone songs' while working.

[11] Islam from its inception arose in a mercantile capitalist culture, originating in the vast trade centers of the Arabian peninsula. The success of Islam, from its beginnings in Mecca, lay in its combination of urban mercantile elites with Bedouin nomadic warriors. Similar patterns are equally evident in the Sudan (as well as the Nuba Mountains). Rodinson (1974) argues that Islam is not antithetical to capitalism and in fact, capital sectors developed in the 'Arab world' similar to their Christian European counterparts. Muslim merchants, however, remained content with trade and not with controlling local production (see Turner, 1974).

economically feasible), denial of matrilinear customs, displacement of the 'natural order,'[12] alteration of rituals surrounding birth, marriage, and death, and the generally perceived superiority of Islam. More cynically, conversion to Islam, at least the cessation of keeping pigs and the public imbibing of *marissa*, frequently is a touchstone for a village acquiring government services such as a school or flour mill and in gaining government employment.[13] The expansion of Christianity is associated with the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, primarily through the early organizations of the Church Missionary Society, Sudan United Mission, and Catholic missionaries such as Bishop Danielé Camboni.[14] Since independence Christian proselytization has been effectively held in check. Nonetheless, acceptance of either religion by the faithful acknowledges membership into a worldwide fellowship of like-minded believers. And for any devout

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[12] Islam, like Christianity, is a 'temple-bound' religion rather than 'nature-oriented' (Campbell, 1988). Consequently, 'animist' religions are considered to be displays of magic in their attempts to place themselves in accord with nature. Temple-bound religions break with nature such that it must be dominated and controlled.

[13] In the hills around Kadugli I witnessed Christian church workers offering food and clothing to those who would 'embrace Christ.' Consequently, depending upon whom some Nuba were addressing, they would respond with the 'correct' religious orientation.

[14] Christianity is bound up with the twin missions of spreading Christ and capitalism, although the relationship between the two in the Nuba Mountains is not as clear cut as Islam where Islam and trade are closely intertwined.

Muslim, making the pilgrimage to Mecca represents the capstone to a pious life.

The presence of police posts is primarily restricted to large, centrally-located villages and provides a powerful symbol of Khartoum's hegemony. The police are entrusted with maintaining civil order, especially in serious crimes such as homicide, cattle theft or arson. Like many other institutions, the police force (and security forces in general) is deeply politicized as the following story reveals. In a dispute between the Nuba of Shatt Safia (a village near Shatt Damam) and Arabs over grazing rights, seven Nuba were killed. The Arabs claimed that the Nuba had stolen 400 head of cattle, while the Nuba maintained that Arab cattle had destroyed their *dura* fields. The government police, acting as a mediator, decided that the Nuba should pay 460 cattle while the Arabs would pay 31 cows per slain Nuba as well as £250,000 in compensation for the destroyed crops. Still the Nuba persistently denied that they had stolen any cows, and in all likelihood it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to steal quietly away with 400 cows. On the day that the 'swap' was to be completed the Arabs took the Nuba cattle, returned 217 of the worst to the Nuba, paid no money, and left smiling. It seems that on this day the government mediators were not only 'insignificant' policemen but forces dispatched from the Security for Southern Kordofan in Kadugli.

2. Infrastructure

The village shop (Table 5.3) is an important conduit for the transmission of commodities within villages. Each village contains at least one shop while larger villages on thoroughfares boast many. Not only are goods available from other parts of the Sudan, but frequently come from distant countries as well. The village store (*dukkan*) is the source for satisfying the now social necessities of local life, including tea, coffee, matches, spices, beads, cloth, soap, tobacco, and (especially) sugar. These goods, more than anything else, attest to the observable incorporation of villages into the larger capitalist world. In most villages the shops are specialized: general stores, tea stalls, and eating establishments, while larger ones like Keiga Lubin, Kortala, and Demick also feature a *marissa* house(s). Shops also comprise sites where outside news is passed along, gossip and information exchanged, and young men sit playing dominos.

TABLE 5.3: NUMBER OF SHOPS, NOW AND 20 YEARS AGO

Village	Now	≥ 20	Village	Now	≥ 20
Shatt Damam	5	3	Kortala	21	9
Shair Tomat	1	0	Keiga Al-Khail	6	5
Somasem	5	2	Umm Jabralla	3	1
Keiga Lubin	11	3	Tougma	7	3
Kalulu	3	0	Demick	29	5
Umm Sardeiba	5	2	Miri Juwa	1	0

The medium of exchange utilized in most shops in smaller villages like Shatt Damam, Somasem, Kalulu, Umm Jabralla, and Miri Juwa suggest the limited nature of transactions. In the larger villages and towns of Kadugli, Dilling, Lagowa, and Talodi paper currency predominates as the medium of exchange; fifty pound notes down to twenty-five piaster notes. In villages such as Shatt Damam coins between five piasters to one pound still prevail for small purchases, exhibiting the 'closed' nature of money circulation at the local level and the paucity of money in general (as well as escalating urban prices).[15]

Roads are essential in carrying the life blood of capitalism--commodities. Without adequate access to markets, the outflow of commodities bound for the *suq* are choked off at the source. The principle route connecting the Nuba Mountains to the Khartoum area runs from Kadugli to Omdurman via Dilling and El Obeid. With the exception of the tarmac road linking Kadugli and Dilling, conditions are tough and the roads are poorly maintained, especially in the *qoz* areas and where *khors* bisect. Long stretches of the tarmac road, however, have also fallen into disrepair, forcing buses and lorries to drive alongside the deeply cratered surface. Another popular route leading from Kadugli permits passage through Habila and

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[15] After I had returned to Khartoum for a brief stay I stopped to purchase a cup of tea and paid with coins. The tea vendor laughed and asked me where I had come from. Replying the Nuba Mountains she looked knowingly at me.

reaches up to Kosti on the edge of the vast Gezira scheme.[16] In addition, the network of dirt roads constructed between 1948 and 1951 are deeply eroded and now merely mark the way to various villages. Other rudimentary tracks radiate throughout the Nuba Mountains, although these too are frequently impassable.[17] Table 5.4 indicates the type of road connecting the sampled villages to regional market centers, especially Kadugli or Dilling. Depending on the terrain, the roads can be year round, seasonal, or conditional (variable roads are dependent on daily weather, regardless of season).

TABLE 5.4: ROAD ACCESS TO THE TWELVE VILLAGES

Village	Road Type	Village	Road Type
Shatt Damam	seasonal	Kortala	seasonal
Shair Tomat	variable	Keiga Al-Kheil	variable
Somasem	year round	Umm Jabralla	seasonal
Keiga Lubin	year round	Touqma	year round
Kalulu	seasonal	Demick	variable
Umm Sardeiba	seasonal	Miri Juwa	seasonal

Within capitalism the circulation of commodities conveniently takes place in 'formal,' fixed markets. Were commerce currently differs from the past "is the nature of the involvement of the common people" (Tully, 1984: 224). From an

[16] Kortala is a bus/lorry stop on this road.

[17] One road I traveled on from Kadugli to Miri Juwa passed over an extremely rocky *jebel*. One stretch of the road was constructed using a lining of small boulders. On the return trip the front tire slipped causing the front drive shaft to snap in half.

administered and restricted practice, open markets have now penetrated even the remotest village. Agricultural products and livestock comprise the primary commodities of a system of trade dominated by merchants (*jellaba* and *tajir*), allowing some individuals to acquire needed goods and others to accumulate capital. Market transactions are undertaken with differing motives. From the perspective of the 'typical' farmer in the Nuba Mountains, for example, exchange presents itself as C_1-M-C_2; i.e., commodities (C_1) are exchanged for money (M) which in turn is exchanged for different commodities (C_2). A farmer may sell *dura* in order to buy sugar. The motive underlying such a transaction assumes selling one set of use-values for purchase of another. For those desiring to realize exchange-value rather than a good's use-value, trade presents itself as M_1-C-M_2, where M_1 represents money used to purchase a commodity (C) in order to generate more money (M_2). In this case, for example, a merchant uses his money to acquire sugar to sell at a profit.

In principle, market transactions assume that every commodity exchanges at its value.[18] Aside from the purchase and deployment of labor-power[19], it is perplexing to see just

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[18] In neo-classical terminology, there is a perfectly competitive market with perfect knowledge of prices and costs.

[19] According to Marx (1977), the commodity labor-power is a greater source of value than it costs itself. Here we get the equation M_1-C_1-C_2-M_2, where M_1-C_1 is money purchasing labor-power which produces another commodity (C_2) that is sold (M_2). This is the essence of surplus value that is realized as profit or the difference between M_1 and M_2.

how merchants become enriched. In reality, the situation is one of merchant monopoly and monopsony which enables them to 'buy cheap and sell dear.' According to Mandel (1968: 80-81), initially the appearance of professional traders from "a more advanced trading civilization...appear alongside owners of commodities who merely want to get rid of these commodities in order to meet some needs."[20] Hence, the latter are unaware of the real value of their goods while the former are. Certainly this finds familiarity in the first waves of *khawaja* and later the *jellaba* who found their way to the Nuba Mountains. Now, however, other mechanisms also account for the decided lack of competition; poor transportation system, small quantities sold by villagers over an extended period, the *shayl* preempting a farmer's options, and the vertical and horizontal integration of the merchants themselves. It is not surprising, then, that most villagers I questioned believed that merchants were duplicitous, less than honest in their dealings with them.

Table 5.5 (p. 239) outlines markets available to the respective villages, the day(s) of operation, and the mode of transport individuals utilize to bring their goods to market. The "informal on demand" market available in each village at

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[20] Apart from the "law of uneven development," Mandel (1968: Chapter Three; especially 90) further states: "The entire history of capital, form its origins to its apotheosis in the capitalist mode of production, is the history of the slow disintegration of this fundamentally non-market economy, through the effect of trade, of usury, of money, of capital and of surplus value.

TABLE 5.5: MARKET LOCATION, DAYS OPERATED, AND TRANSPORT MODE

Village	Market Domain: Days Operated: Transport Mode
Shatt Damam	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. local: weekly: variable. 3. Kadugli: daily: *reikha* (basket); rarely lorry.
Shair Tomat	1. Kadugli: daily: donkey and lorry.
Somasem	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Kurgel: daily: lorry. 3. Dilling: daily: lorry.
Keiga Lubin	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Demick: Sat./Mon.: 2--5 by *reikha*, 3. Al Bardab: Sat./Mon.: bicycle, donkey, 4. Koweik: daily: oxen, or lorry 5. Kadugli: daily:
Kalulu	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Kadugli: daily: *reikha*; rarely lorry.
Umm Sardeiba	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. local: daily: variable. 3. Kadugli: daily: donkey, oxen, or lorry.
Kortala	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Agricultural Bank: local: variable. 3. El-Obeid: daily: lorry.
Keiga Al-Khail	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. local: Mon./Thurs.: variable. 3. Kadugli: daily--*reikha*, oxen, and donkey.
Umm Jabralla	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Umm Sardeiba: daily: 2--4 by donkey, 3. Umm Dolo: daily: oxen, and lorry. 4. Kadugli: daily:
Touqma	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Dilling: daily: lorry.
Demick	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. local: Sat./Mon.: variable. 3. Kadugli: daily: *reikha*, donkey, camel, & lorry.
Miri Juwa	1. local: informal on demand: variable. 2. Miri Bara: daily: *reikha* and donkey. 3. Kadugli: daily: lorry; rarely *reikha*.

first glance may appear trivial compared to the larger *suq* in Kadugli or Dilling, or even the markets in Keiga Al-Khail, Kortala, and Damick. This marketing arrangement, however, constitutes the core of the entire system and, in fact, is what primarily connects the village to the global economy. The *tajir*, or proprietor of the village *dukkan*, literally brings the market to an individual's front door. Most farmer's enter the market as needs arise and/or agricultural surpluses become available.[21] The *tajir* purchases the usually small amounts offered periodically by farmers. When a *tajir* amasses sufficient quantities he transports them to regional markets or continues to hoard until prices rise. Although farmers fare better in the larger 'regularized' markets, they still find the market controlled by the commercial networks of merchants. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the goods offered in the markets do not remain in the Nuba Mountains.

Contemporary Sudan was integrated into the capitalist world economy through the global agro-technical system; as a primary exporter of short-staple cotton and later of *dura*.[22]

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[21] The *shayl* system operates on the premise that household consumption is squeezed to the maximum such that are no surpluses with which to meet the needs of household reproduction.

[22] This is quite obvious when studying the mandate and practices of such global institutions as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, U.S. Agency for International Development, European Economic Community, Arab Bank for Economic Development, and Faisal Islamic Bank. It was hoped that Sudan would become the 'bread basket of the Middle East.'

Overall, agricultural development has concentrated on large-scale mechanized schemes cultivated by contractual tenants (Gezira and the MFC schemes), but with cotton in the Nuba Mountains cultivated within the framework of the 'village economy' (NMAC).[23] The various schemes (especially MFC schemes) can be an important source of cash, although agricultural wage-labor employment on the schemes is less popular now with the emergence of other opportunities.[24] Generally, villagers will only seek work on the large MFC schemes rather than the small NMAC plots as the pay is better. Kortala village is in the midst of Habila scheme, while Touqma and Somasem are 1½ hours away by lorry. Miri Juwa is twelve kilometers from the nearest NMAC schemes at Al-Mashisha and Al-Kedik, and Shatt Damam is some forty kilometers away from the NMAC scheme at AbuSunun.

Table 5.6 notes the agricultural schemes directly located within village domains. As part of the arrangement between farmers and the NMAC, farmers receive access to land and agree to plant half in cotton every other year.[25] In return the

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[23] Presently many international agencies criticize the Sudan for its mechanized schemes, calling them agricultural strip-mining, the World Bank played a key role in their inception as did the Arab Development Bank.

[24] As Al-Tilib (1987) informed me, most of the labor on the MFC schemes are Dinka and Arabs from North Kordofan.

[25] This appears to be the typical arrangement although others exist such as 15 *feddan*; 5 for cotton, 5 for *dura*, and 5 left fallow. Cotton is grown on a yearly basis within this type.

NMAC tractor discs the land, supplies seeds, and purchases the cotton at the end of the season. Most 'participants' in this arrangement, however, expressed displeasure with the NMAC, claiming that fields are frequently ploughed late, management heavy-handed, and government prices too low. As one individual told me: "Farmers are philosophers by nature, if anything is not justified by the labor in the fields, they wont sow it" (Al-Tilib, 1987).[26] Nevertheless, cotton cultivation can be a commanding cash crop and besides, the participants prefer having their *dura* or *simsim* fields ploughed as it reduces the amount of time spent weeding. Umm Sardeiba, as part of the NMRDC, receives HYV seeds which significantly increases sorghum yields. It is also the site of an animal traction project.

TABLE 5.6: AGRICULTURAL SCHEME WITHIN EACH VILLAGE[27]

Village	Scheme	Village	Scheme
Shatt Damam	none	Kortala	none
Shair Tomat	NMAC	Keiga Al-Kheil	NMAC
Somasem	none	Umm Jabralla	NMAC
Keiga Lubin	NMAC	Touqma	NMAC
Kalulu	NMAC	Demick	NMAC
Umm Sardeiba	NMRDC	Miri Juwa	none

[26] According to Al-Tilib, the optimum sewing time follows the first ample rains. A month past this reduces the crop anywhere from 30 to 50 percent.

[27] NMAC is Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation and NMRDC is Nuba Mountain Rural Development Corporation.

3. Resources

With the dominant type of agriculture practiced in the Nuba Mountains it is difficult to increase production without recourse to fertile lands since agricultural practices are extensive rather than intensive. The presence of the large mechanized schemes may offer a source of employment for agricultural labor but they also compete for land. In may ways the expansion of mechanized farming may be likened to the enclosure and engrossing movement which occurred in Great Britain over 300 years ago. Relocation of whole villages or their encirclement with the loss of their 'traditional' farming lands occurs under the guise of a perverse eminent domain whereby no compensation is forthcoming as the government technically owns all of the land. Kortala is not directly part of a scheme but it is located within Habila and lost some of its stock of agricultural lands to the MFC. Touqma and Somasem, also near Habila, feel indirect pressure. As the MFC schemes grow, villages come increasingly into direct conflict with each other over land-use rights.

Land availability is shown in Table 5.7. Kortala, Somasem, and Miri Juwa reported that there were no unused, unclaimed lands available. Inhabitants of Miri Juwa, hemmed in by rugged *jebel*, reported that available lands were extremely difficult to access during the rainy season because of a rain engorged stream impeding the way. The remaining villages indicated that new and unclaimed lands were

available. These lands, however, are not always convenient to the villages: Kalulu is 1 hour away by foot and also requires crossing a khor; Umm Sardeiba 2 hours away, Demick 2½ hours, and Keiga Al-Khail 3 hours.

TABLE 5.7: 'UNCLAIMED' LANDS FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION, AVAILABILITY, AND DISTANCE FROM VILLAGE

Village	Avail./Dis.	Village	Avail./Dis.
Shatt Damam	yes/far	Kortala	no/claimed
Shair Tomat	yes/near	Keiga Al-Kheil	yes/3 hours
Somasem	no/claimed	Umm Jabralla	yes/near
Keiga Lubin	yes/near	Touqma	yes/near
Kalulu	yes/1 hour	Demick	yes/2½ hours
Umm Sardeiba	yes/2 hours	Miri Juwa	no/claimed

In general, the 'traditional' means of acquiring arable land continue to predominate at the village level. Table 5.8 displays the low mobility of land through land rentals and sales now and twenty years ago. The enduring belief equating land rights and *gabila* membership limits its rental and deters outright land sales. An outsider might rent land for a short period of time, but can effect no long-term claims on it. After a couple of years they must vacate the land and move on. Most land rentals occur between villagers where an absent migrant needs *dura* for his household or an individual is unable to cultivate due to illness or age. Typically this involves a 'sharecrop' agreement, but there is no established sum and does not entail direct cash payments.

TABLE 5.8: LAND RENTED AND SOLD NOW AND 20 YEARS AGO

Village	Rental		Sale	
	Now	≥ 20	Now	≥ 20
Shatt Damam	no	no	no	yes
Shair Tomat	no	no	no	no
Somasem	no	no	yes	no
Keiga Lubin	yes	yes	no	no
Kalulu	no	no	no	no
Umm Sardeiba	yes	no	yes	no
Kortala	yes	no	no	no
Keiga Al-Kheil	yes	yes	no	no
Umm Jebralla	yes	yes	yes	yes
Touqma	yes	no	no	no
Demick	yes	no	no	no
Miri Juwa	no	no	no	no

As the above table reveals, land sales are much less common, especially cash sales involving outsiders. This entails the actual transference of land rather than just rights to its cultivation.[28] The Nuba of Umm Sardeiba were quick to point out that it was the Arab residents who rented and sold land. To them this seemed a very bad act, a denial of the sanctity of land and thus the village. There was one incidence of land sale in Somasem but many villagers were reluctant to discuss it because they were still angry with the individual who did it. People felt that it would cause others to follow suit and diminish the land supplies of the village. More revealing, one old man in Somasem sadly shook his head and grieved: "In the past we used to be a village, but not any

[28] Nadel (1947) noted land sales as the transfer of use rights within a *gabila* for a nominal fee. Hawksworth (1932) and Wood (1971) found no incidences while I found it to be very minor.

more." In the past, the elders of Shatt Damam allowed a *'Fellata'* merchant to purchase land on a one-time basis and settle within the village.

In a semi-arid region water perhaps constitutes the most important resource. Sources of potable water (Table 5.9, p. 247) determine the location of villages in large measure, regulate women's work load as the prime carriers, and affect the well-being of the community through water-born diseases such as *frendit* and amoebic dysentery. In the past villages were limited to springs (*saraf*), streams, wells, and *hafir*. Many villages now boast hand pumps which not only reduce the time women spend ferrying water, but provide safe drinking water.[29] Only Somasem did not have a pump and had to rely on a *hafir* which they shared with their cattle and goats. Both Somasem and Touqma also had water delivered, but most people are unable to afford this luxury.

MOBILE ELEMENTS OF MEDIATION

Mobile elements of mediation are equally important and continuously reflect the mode of penetration of capitalism into the Nuba Mountains. These elements are ubiquitous, from the *marissa* purchased by field laborers in Habila, to the agricultural inputs designed to increase yields; from the radio blasting the latest ballads popular in Khartoum, to the poster of Michael Jackson taped to the wall of a small shop in

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[29] Most of the pumps were installed by UNICEF who train local people in their maintenance.

TABLE 5.9: WATER SOURCES AND DISTANCE, NOW AND 20 YEARS AGO

Village	Source Now: Distance	Source ≥ 20: Distance
Shatt Damam	1. well: 15 min. 2. spring: 20 min. 3. pump: inside	1. well: 15 min 2. spring: 20 min
Shair Tomat	1. surface well: 30 mins. 2. deep well: inside 3. pump: inside	1. surf. well: 30 min. 2. deep well: inside
Somasem	1. *hafir*: inside 2. pump: 3 hours 3. delivered: inside	1. *hafir*: inside
Keiga Lubin	1. stream: 15 min. 2. pump: inside	1. stream: 15 min. 2. surf. well: 10 min.
Kalulu	1. spring: 5 min. 2. stream: 15 min. 3. pump: 1 hour 4. surface well: 1 hour	1. spring: 5 min. 2. stream: 15 min.
Umm Sardieba	1. stream: 15 min. 2. pump: inside	1. stream: 15 min. 2. surf. well: inside
Kortala	1. *hafir*: inside 2. pump: inside	1. *hafir*: inside 2. surf. well: inside
Keiga Al-Khail	1. surface well: 10 min. 2. pump: inside	1. surf. well: 10 min.
Umm Jabralla	1. surface well: inside 2. spring: 15 min. 3. stream: 15 min.	1. surf. well: inside 2. spring: 15 min. 3. stream: 15 min.
Touqma	1. deep well: inside 2. stream: 10 min. 3. spring: 10 min. 4. delivered: inside	1. deep well: inside 2. stream: 10 min. 3. spring: 10 min.
Demick	1. spring: 20 min. 2. deep well: 15 min. 3. surface well: 10 min. 4. pump: inside	1. spring: 20 min. 2. deep well: 15 min. 3. surf. well: 10 min.
Miri Juwa	1. spring: 15 min. 2. stream: 15 min. 3. pump: inside	1. spring: 15 min. 2. stream: 15 min. 3. pump: inside

Kadugli; from the lorries transporting their cargo, to the UNICEF plane landing on the gravel strip at the Western Sudan Agricultural Research Project; and, from tablets of chloroquine to combat malaria, to the remittances sent back by family members laboring outside of the Nuba Mountains. Material elements of capitalism are too numerous to list and are ever present in their often sharp contrast to the supposed 'bucolic' life of the village. But these are just inanimate objects, inconsequential without the people whose lives they touch. People are thus the crux of social reality and by giving meaning to the physical world, they set their stamp on space and time. Here it will be useful to briefly highlight some of the more important material and human mobile elements of mediation.

1. Material articles

The valorization of every commodity presupposes an eventual use-value. Most use-values at the village level go to satisfy subsistence needs. While it is possible to delineate an absolute minimum necessary for human existence, this quickly unravels when applied across the board. More revealing are relative standards that are historically, culturally, and ethically defined. Accordingly, commodities offered in the *dukkan* provide evidence as to what satisfies the social average of basic needs.[30] Yet while some may

[30] Class considerations are apparent in satisfying 'consumer demand.' Therefore what one class may consider a necessity, another will deem it a luxury although equally

appear to be luxuries, tell that to the young woman in courtship desiring a bottle of scent or an older man relaxing with his friends enjoying *saut* (snuff). Table 5.10 (p. 250) lists various commodities on (or under) the shelves of most shops. The prices in 1969 and 1977 are for the village of Fungor, located in the southeastern section of the Nuba Mountains. The prices in 1987 come from the *suq* in Kadugli and Dilling.

Price rises from 1969 to 1987 are quite dramatic. While these comparisons have no absolute validity, they nevertheless convey the image of an expanding capitalist economy, but an especially volatile one. Even the Nuba Mountains was not shielded from global inflation, although some increases are probably attributed to Sudan's sagging economy in general. The disparate prices also reveal an inherent problem of market instability, primarily induced shortages from hoarding and Sudan's chronic shortage of foreign exchange, as well as the increased dependence on external sources for necessities (with the exception of oil, salt, onions, these products must be secured from sources outside villages). On the other hand, the rise in importance of certain commodities mirrors the expansion in transport services needed to get these products to market. Lastly, escalating prices also indicate an increase in the money supply, although not in the numbers of people with 'effective market demand.'

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desirable.

TABLE 5.10: SELECTED COMMODITY PRICES IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS, 1969, 1977, AND 1987[1]

Year		1969	1977	1987	1987
Commodity	unit	Fungor	Fungor	Kadugli	Dilling
		prices per unit			
1. coffee	kg	0.36	2.80	25.00-	22.50
		0.80	4.45	37.50	
2. hoe, axe, spear, knife blades	1	0.10-0.15	0.25	4.00-10.00	7.00-15.00
		each			
3. cloth (plain white)	m	0.05-0.08	0.15-0.25	6.00-12.00	7.00-17.50
4. sugar	kg	0.15	0.15	4.25-10.00	4.50-6.75
5. salt	kg	0.08	0.11	1.00	1.00
6. scent	bottle	0.15-0.25	0.25-0.50	16.00	6.00-10.00
7. oil	kg	0.30	0.45	6.75	6.75
8. dates	kg	0.15	0.25	8.00-20.00	4.50-19.00
9. matches[2]	box	0.03-0.05	0.02	.25-.75	.50-.75
10. flashlight	1	0.50	1.00	25.00	23.00
11. batteries	1	0.08	0.15	5.00-7.50	6.00-8.00
12. bulbs	1	0.05	0.05	.50	.50
13. mirror	1	0.25	0.50	4.50	5.50
14. beads	strand	0.10	0.20	2.50	2.50
15. blueing	pack	0.10	0.15	.25	.25
16. snuff	kg	NA	2.20	15.75	18.00
17. cigarette	10	NA	0.20	3.00-7.50	5.00-10.00
18. soap	powder/bar	NA	0.07	.75-1.50	.75-1.00
19. tea	kg	NA	2.30	27.00	22.50
20. onions	kg	NA	0.10	2.25	1.85

[1] Unadjusted prices for 1969 and 1977 are from Iten (1979:81).

[2] Matches in 1969 were primarily used for making bullets. Now they are primarily for lighting fires.

In its broadest sense, "the labor theory proposes that the social activity devoted to reproduction of the material means of life provides critical support for the sustenance of all other varieties of social activity" (Becker, 1977: 20). Capitalism, as a historical abstraction, is a particular social relation whereby 'free' and 'unutilized' labor is bought and sold through contractual relations; the laborer receives a wage while the employer owns the product of that labor. A useful summary of the penetration of capitalism is thus revealed in the labor process; i.e., the source of labor in the fields. Table 5.11 profiles the types of agricultural labor used by order of importance.

TABLE 5.11: TYPE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOR, BY ORDER OF IMPORTANCE[31]

Village	Labor	Village	Labor
Shatt Damam	N,F,W	Kortala	W,F,*
Shair Tomat	F,W,N	Keiga Al-Kheil	N,F,W
Somasem	W,N,F	Umm Jabralla	F,N,W
Keiga Lubin	F,N,W	Touqma	F,N,W
Kalulu	F,N,W	Demick	F,N,W
Umm Sardeiba	F,W,N	Miri Juwa	F,N,W

N=*nafir* F=family W=wage labor *=do not use anymore

Villagers in Kortala abandoned *nafir* in the early 1970s. People claimed that arranging *nafir* became too taxing owing to out-migration and lack of time which limited participation in

[31] Rank order, from left to right.

other's *nafir* parties. Villagers also cited its expense and preferred to replace it with wage-labor. Besides, as one informant explained, "People come and they just want to drink *marissa*, so it is easier to use wage-labor." The villages of Shatt Damam, Kalulu, Umm Sardeiba, and Umm Jebralla, on the other hand, reported an increase in the use of *nafir* labor. In part, this is attributable to difficulties in securing wage-labor at reasonable rates, but hiring wage-labor also involves the tacit admission that one has no kinsmen, age-mates, and friends to count on to help. Reliance on *nafir* remained constant in Somasem, Touqma, and Damick as farmers who expanded production took advantage of any type of labor regardless of its perceived costs.

The ethos of *nafir* has changed in some instances. In addition to providing the 'traditional' foods, some *nafir* participants receive 'non-traditional' inducements such as cash or *saut* in Shatt Damam, Kalulu, Somasem, and Umm Jebralla. Essentially this is a form of wage-labor, but without the pejorative labels that accompany it.[32] Most males believe their community standing would be compromised if they worked for a fellow villager by showing a cavalier attitude towards their own fields. Consequently, the majority

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[32] Bad farmers (as well as good) are frequently the subject of local songs. One element of being a good farmers is the willingness to share one's bounty, evident in sumptuous *nafir*. In this case hiring wage-labor, even if a farmer has the cash, would appear vulgar and dismissive of one's communal obligations.

of villagers laboring on their neighbors fields for cash are women, children, and the aged. This not only points to chronic labor shortages affecting villages due to the excessive out-migration of young men, but to the economic plight gripping many villages. Farmers in Shatt Damam, Kalulu, Keiga Al-Kheil, Umm Jebralla, and Miri Juwa employed labor from within the village while those in Touqma, Keiga Lubin, Umm Sardeiba, Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Demick hired labor both from within and outside their respective villages. Only Kortala residents hired labor exclusively from outside.

Full-blown capitalism demands rationalization of production under the dictates of expanded reproduction. Part of this process involves increased productivity achieved through technical inputs. All of the villages except Umm Jebralla reported that recent harvests have been less bountiful than twenty years ago. While some of this is because of a tendency to view the past with wistful nostalgia, there are very real constraints. Rain dominates any topic of conversation, more so since the drought of 1984, but everyone concluded that the rains were better twenty years ago. Additional barriers given for 'poor' agricultural production were pests (birds, locusts, bullworms, flea beetles, ants, termites, and rats), weeds (*umm chakko, abu lissek, moletta, and buda*), and 'tired' soil.[33] Few inputs were available to

[33] Also cited was the poor system of NMAC which caused late planting and stray animals in the fields.

combat these problems and when they were, the farmers had little knowledge of proper usage.[34] Chemical fertilizers were rarely used although DDT and Aldrex T[35] were commonly utilized by 'large-scale' village farmers. Diseases affecting cattle include anthrax (*fahima*), rinderpest (*judri*), other bacterial diseases such as *safra* and *umm zagala*, and *umm brijango* (a poisonous plant). Farmers still trek their herds northward during the rainy season in hopes of avoiding these. Other problems which deflate productivity included human illness such as malaria and guinea worm (*frendit*).

Marissa must be mentioned. Traditionally, as the primary source of nutrition and calories, *marissa* is the 'cultural super-food' of the Nuba Mountains.[36] It also carries strong cultural and symbolic connotations. *Marissa* comprises the primary 'food' of *nafir* parties, it is offered to all guests as a measure of hospitality, and it is central to 'religious' rituals and village festivities. The enjoyment of *marissa* is very much a communal affair such that few people (if any) drink it alone. Although *marissa* is intoxicating, it is a mild libation that in the moderate quantities consumed does

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[34] The was particularly frightening, especially with such toxic chemicals as DDT. One farmer quit using it because it made his cattle ill, but made no mention of its effect on himself or his family. Moreover, the chemicals were handled with bare hands.

[35] *Suweit* is a substitute manufactured locally in the Sudan.

[36] Rice provides most calories in Asia, corn meal in Central America, bread in North America, etc.

not cause drunkenness, merely a lightening of the human spirit. Therefore when a Nuba no longer partakes of *marissa* on religious grounds (Islam), they are rejecting, in large measure, a part of Nuba culture. Moreover, *marissa* holds an important place in a cash economy, especially for women who control its brewing. Yet this also allows a male access to female labor. A man cannot force his wife to work in his fields but he can make legitimate requests for *marissa.*

2. Human instruments

Although we have already discussed elements of human mediation, especially people with power such as the *kujur*, rainpriest, elders, small-scale farmer, etc., we must return briefly to the merchant. Merchants, the *tajir* and *jellaba*, form the vanguard of capitalism although they remain content with making their living in the realm of circulation and, for the most part, do not attempt to control the agricultural production process.[37] The *tajir* operates at the village level, buying crops from the villagers and selling them manufactured goods. The *jellaba* functions at the regional level, dealing in wholesale markets. One indication of the paucity of capital in the Nuba Mountains is the minimal cash outlay required to enter into trade. A hopeful trader, however, must first attach himself to a *jellaba* in order to

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[37] Merchants seem to own and control everything except the immediate production process. In part, there is too much uncertainty in the main except on MFC schemes where money capital and land is government subsidized minimizes risk.

establish the 'right' connections and ensure the flow of commodities. The marketing system thus centers around a two-tiered system of dependence: the village retailer on the *jellaba* for transport, manufactured goods, and government rationed items[38], and the local populace on the retailers for their purchases and sales (Salih, 1984). Ironically, what also facilitates this dependence is the desire to avoid taxes that must be paid to the government agent in the larger markets; *ushuur* (paid by the seller) and *gibaana* (paid by the merchant).

Where more than one *dukkan* exists, the *tajir* usually are relatives or fast friends, thus maintaining a close reign on the 'market.' Similar ties bind the local retailers to the *jellaba* and enables a relatively inclusive market structure. In addition, the more successful *tajir* and *jellaba* own the lorries which transport people and goods to market, as well as the off-scheme tractors needed by farmers if they hope to expand their production. Differences of opinion do exist between merchants and relations are not always harmonious among traders. Nevertheless it is in their economic interests to minimize discord.

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[38] The *jellaba*, through their connections in the Rural Council and cooperatives, are relegated the 'responsibility' of dispersing goods covered by the government rationing system--essentially food goods like sugar and wheat-flour. I rarely saw any commodity sell at its fixed government price. Consequently, there is a lively 'black market' and when real shortages appear in the markets, it is essential that a person know somebody with 'connections.'

The local merchant also functions as the *shayl*. It is difficult to obtain information on this informal credit system; not on how it works but on its specifics. Most people will acknowledge knowing someone who has borrowed money, grain, or seed from a *shayl*, yet only a handful will admit to having done so themselves. It is not a point of social honor to be forced to do business with a *shayl*. Not only does debt bring into question an individual's farming ability, but of being unable to adequately care for one's family. In short, debt imparts a loss of respect. As noted, the *shayl* system requires a farmer's mortgaging future crops or, less frequently, repayment in cash at exorbitant rates (commonly 50 to 75 percent interest rates).

Unquestionably, agricultural activities dominate village life. Although limited specialization predates capitalism, what differs is its scope. In the past skillful artisans generally produced goods like saddles, wooden bowls, or baskets to meet a limited need. These 'avocations' still exist, but equally important in shedding light on capitalism's penetration into the local economy are the growth of non-agricultural wage-labor employment. The general local shortage of money forces some to look for alternate sources of cash outside of farming. Table 5.12 (p. 258) presents these occupations within villages now and twenty years ago.[39] The

[39] Not included is the position of operating a flour mill. With the exception of Shair Tomat which has none, each village has a local individual who does this.

TABLE 5.12: NON-AGRICULTURAL WAGE-LABOR OCCUPATIONS WITHIN VILLAGES, NOW AND CHANGE IN NUMBER FROM 20 YEARS AGO

Occupation	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.	Now	Diff.
	Shatt Damam		Shair Tomat		Somasem		Kortala		Keiga Lubin		Kalulu	
Carpentor	0	-	1	-	8	+8	0	-	3	-	0	-
Tailor	5	+4	0	-	0	-	6	-	6	+4	0	-
Cobbler	1	+1	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-1	0	-
Builder	6	-	0	-	2	+2	0	-	6	+3	0	-
Butcher	3	+3	0	-	1	+1	5	-	4	+3	1	+1
Midwife	0	-	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	5	+5	0	-
Blacksmith	4	+2	0	-	0	-	6	+5	3	+1	0	-
Teacher	1	+1	2	+2	1	+1	6	+5	3	+3	0	-
Civil servant	0	-	2	+2	0	-	52	+52	25	+17	2	+2
Number change		+11		+5		+13		+63		+35		+3
	Umm Sardiba		Demick		Tougma		Keiga Al-Khail		Umm Jabralla		Miri Juwa	
Carpentor	0	-	3	-	0	-1	3	+3	0	-	1	-
Tailor	2	+1	11	+8	5	+5	4	-16	0	-	0	-
Cobbler	0	-	2	-19	1	+1	4	+3	0	-	0	-
Builder	0	-	6	+3	0	-	10	+10	0	-	0	-
Butcher	1	+1	6	+3	2	+2	4	+3	1	+1	0	-
Midwife	1	-	2	+1	1	+1	1	+1	1	+1	1	-
Blacksmith	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	2	-	0	-
Teacher	6	+6	3	+2	0	-	3	+3	3	+3	3	+3
Civil servant	21	+21	40	+22	6	-2	18	+18	18	+18	35	+12
Number change		+29		+20		+6		+25		+23		+15

rapid increase in the number of civil servants mirrors the general trend in Sudan as a whole. These include *omda*, *sheikh*, guard, police, *katib as-suq* (market clerk), etc. Although a school teacher may still cultivate a small plot, teaching indicates the local desire to gain new opportunities. Nevertheless, teachers are usually townsmen who rarely remain past their initial appointment. Tailors sew garments by order on pedal-operated machines owned, in most cases, by the local *tajir*. Cobblers similarly make or repair shoes on demand, primarily for town dwellers who have adopted the habit of footwear. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and builders, ply old trades to people with money who no longer have the time to undertake these chores themselves and are unable or unwilling to call a *nafir*. Butchers cater to the local demand for meat, but where an individual has no animals or does not want to slaughter one of his own animals. Although people enjoy eating meat, its expense has pushed it out of the daily diet of most villagers.

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Household, Community, and Individual: The Formation of Livelihood Strategies in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan

By

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CHAPTER VI

HOUSEHOLDS: FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION AND CLASS PROCESSES

For the past several decades, the focus of empirical investigation on the structuration of households in the 'Third World' has attempted to account for the endurance of non-capitalist social relations, most notably in the form of peasant households. Their persistence in the face of the capitalist world system has been interpreted in several ways: as an independent system complete with its own logic which somehow is able to effectively resist the advance of capitalism (Harrison, 1977); as a transitional phenomenon merely awaiting the next turn of the screw before ultimately surrendering to capitalism (Bernstein, 1979); as a dependent entity allowed to remain (in some instances partially rejuvenated) because it meets a functional requirement of capitalism (Wolpe, 1980); and, as a non-problem since peasant households are treated as mere equivalences of their family farm counterparts found within advanced capitalism (Seddon, 1981). In order to escape similar lines of argumentation and clarify what is meant by household logic, we must return to modes of production and their articulation at varying levels of analysis.

The current debate on the penetration of capitalism has far-reaching consequences. If, on one hand, all economic activities are capitalist, our analysis would be simplified. Such a conceptualization allows for the homogenization of the

structural field; we need only note which side of the commodity nexus people fall. Hence, the dilemma of the "people who do not fit" is solved through denying significance to non-capitalist forms of production, employing such euphanisms as "wage-labour equivalents" (Bernstein, 1979), "proletarians in disguise" (Roseberry, 1978), and "concealed wage" (Banaji, 1977). Certainly isolating households and hence livelihood strategies is made easier. On the other hand, if we accord importance to the systematic engagement of people in non-commodity relations then we must deconstruct the 'popular' prescriptions and construct alternative analyses of agrarian relations. In other words, we must come to terms with small-scale producers organized as households in order to begin laying the theoretical groundwork for our reformulation of "the people who do not fit."

As we descend levels of discourse and arrive at the household level, contradictions become all the more apparent in the immediate blur of household forms and functions. The diverse array of economic, political, and ideological forces creates a number of household alternatives. The outcome of their intersection is what social scientists momentarily observe as differences in behavioral characteristics and motivations of people. These are important but for us only in respect to the internal and external conditions of existence of any household. Hence our task unfolds with the two-fold aim of formulating theoretical categories which clarify the

variant forms of production which organize households and devise class 'positions' for the various household members. It is within this framework that households and consequent livelihood strategies assume meaning by drawing together a household's material conditions of existence and individual members's responses to those conditions.

6.1 PEASANT AND SIMPLE COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Every instance of agricultural production that is not conclusively capitalist has at one time or another been referred to as 'peasant.' The decided lack of theoretical specification over the notion of peasantry led F. Cooper (1981:285) to observe that "Its only specificity is its ambiguity". In general, the peasantry is defined as "small agricultural producers who, with the labour of their families, produce mainly for their own consumption and for the fulfillment of obligations to the holders of political and economic power" (Shanin, cited in Cooper, 1981:285). In light of the confusion surrounding peasants, it is not surprising that concepts for family farms in 'advanced capitalist economies' have proven equally elusive. Although the goal of both peasant households and family farm enterprises is primarily to secure 'subsistence' requirements, peasant production is distinguished by a lower level of technology and incomplete commoditization of the household's reproductive

cycle (lower organic composition of capital in general).[1] What we are left with, however, are matters of degree and not kind.[2]

HENRY BERNSTEIN

Bernstein presents an alternative to approaches which delineate a 'peasant mode of production' directly from household agricultural producers.[3] This collapses two distinct levels of analysis; unit of production with mode of production. The primary difficulty with essentialist concepts is that they "conflate phenomenal features with the relations and conditions that produce them" (1988: 262). In order to escape these inherent dangers, Bernstein (1977: 62) argues that capitalism, through the process of commoditization,

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[1] For this reason the use of peasant is reserved for agrarian relations structured by kinship in the 'Third World' and family farm for those in 'advanced capitalist economies.'

[2] de Janvry (1980), in "Social Differentiation in Agriculture and the Ideology of Neopopulism," juxtaposes the two terms. Personally, within the literature I have not always found it easy clearly grasp their particular uses. What most people invoke in peasant or family farm are particular sets of socioeconomic and political conditions which are then assumed.

[3] Like Bernstein, Ennew, Hirst, and Tribe (1977) reject the concept of peasant altogether and reformulate the discussion in terms of simple commodity production, citing the general absence of a distinctive set of production relations aside from kinship. In point of fact, they convincingly illustrate that 'enterprises' based upon kinship relations are common to many different modes of production, including capitalism and feudalism, and thus we cannot derive specifically 'peasant' relations of production. "Hence the units of production are formed and maintained through *nonfamilial* conditions, conditions which do not depend on kinship or on communal sanction" (p. 309).

regulates the conditions of peasant production by rupturing its cycle of reproduction through the monetization of some of its factors. With the "destruction of natural economy," peasants become poised with capitalism as simple commodity producers. In short, "the reproduction of households takes place increasingly on an *individual* basis through the relations of commodity production and exchange" (1979: 424). According to Bernstein, once commodity relations become conditions of existence, differentiating between exchange-value and use-value production is secondary; "commodity production becomes an economic necessity" (1977: 61).

For Bernstein, simple commodity production is a form of production whose variations must be explained in relation to particular historical periods, in this case capitalism. "Commodity production," asserts Bernstein (1977: 63), "becomes an economic necessity" and these conditions are thus "internalized in the simple reproduction cycle to the extent that it cannot take place outside commodity relations." Simple commodity producers are erroneously viewed as peasants because they are not entirely separated from the means of production nor are they fully dependent on off-farm wage-labor. Thus, peasants are in actuality "wage-labour equivalents;" that is, "producers of surplus-value, but in less determinant conditions than the proletariat" (1979: 436). It then becomes possible to bridge the theoretical gulf between most uses of peasant household and family farm

enterprise by denying them *a priori* independent theoretical status. Nevertheless, Bernstein depends on the enabling assumption of generalized commodity production in Africa to the exclusion of non-capitalist considerations.

HARRIET FRIEDMANN

Friedmann offers the clearest expression of simple commodity production in relationship to peasantry and throws open the possibility of household 'enterprises' in other than stringent capitalist terms. Friedmann takes as her major project the distillation of a single form of simple commodity production. In an effort to create a concept within deductive theorization, Friedmann elaborates on the category form of production which refers to the "minimal unit of productive organization"--the farm within agriculture (1978a: 552).[4] Form of production, however, is doubly confirmed by the internal structure of the productive unit and external relations within the social formation.[5] Simple commodity production, as a form of production, is the end point of commoditization (1980:163; also see Bernstein). Friedmann thus places primary importance on the objective logic of

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[4] Here she considers only 'viable' agricultural units, those which can provide for the main source of subsistence to the owners. Sole cultivation of a *jubraka* in the Nuba Mountains then would not be considered as a form of simple commodity production as it merely supplements other primary activities such as wage-labor.

[5] Friedmann's from of production is reminiscent of Wolpe's expanded and restricted mode of production; internal and external conditions of existence.

capitalism, the structural laws of motion, which compel a process of widening and deepening commodity relations. Hence, for Friedmann (1978: 548): "When household production is specialized and competitive, and means of production and subsistence must be purchased, it is *simple commodity production.*" Relations of production within the household, in contrast to the capitalist firms, are not based on wage labor but upon kinship ties, and thus the regulation of the household is largely internal.

Friedmann's compelling contribution lies in her conceptual categories which permit analysis of the household both at the level of enterprise and at the level of the wider capitalist economy. Nor does she attempt to postulate specifically 'transitional' structures and thus avoids becoming ensnared in minutia of quantitative differences.[6] Instead, Friedmann (1980, 162) reasons that:

> 'simple commodity production' identifies a class of combined labourers and property owners within a capitalist economy, and the circuits of reproduction of simple commodity production intersect with those of commodity, landowning, and banking capital, and with markets in labour power, in abstractly determined relations. 'Peasant' household reproduction involves important communal and/or class relations which limit the penetration of commodity relations into the productive concept. These are specific to the larger economy in each case.

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[6] A typical treatment of agrarian stratification proceeds with differentiating farms households on the basis of acreage, number of livestock, ratio of crops domestically consumed and sold on the market, etc. While these may be strong indicators, they require solid theoretical grounding.

The conditions of existence permitting simple commodity production are thus distinct from those of peasants. Hence, according to Friedmann (1980: 167), "the transition from 'peasant' to simple commodity production has as its underlying mechanism the individualisation of productive enterprises," while "Personal ties for the mobilisation of land, labour, means of production, and credit are replaced by market relations."[7] What ultimately differentiates simple commodity producers from peasants are their respective conditions of reproduction, the historically specific relations of land, labor and credit (1980: 166).

Like Chayanov, Friedmann concludes that the unity of ownership and labor negates the relevance of separating profit and wage costs.[8] Consequently, these do not figure into the household's internal organization. This absence of a structural requirement to produce a surplus product results in simple reproduction and signifies that any surplus (i.e., surplus value) is used to purchase goods for consumption and not for productive investment. Capitalist firms, on the other

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[7] Unlike Bernstein, Friedmann's analysis does not require generalized commodity production and the full operation of the law of value in other than specifically capitalist social formations. On the other hand, "In 'peasant' production the social formation, or that sector of it relatively separate from national labor markets, is not fully capitalist by definition." Moreover, there can be different forms of peasant production.

[8] Like Chayanov, without profit as a condition of reproduction, the inflexibility of wages and other costs of production are replaced with the flexibility of household consumption.

hand, require expanded reproduction or accumulation whereby a given portion of the surplus is employed to increase the existing scale of production. Nonetheless, the survival of simple commodity production forms relies on remaining sensitive and adaptive to competitive market relations. "Thus," concludes Friedmann (1980: 160), "simple commodity production in the strict sense of competition among units, mobility of labour, and markets in land, other means of production, and credit, depends no less than a capitalist enterprise on a larger capitalist economy." Peasants, to the contrary, rely on vertical and horizontal communal and noncommodity ties for access to land, labor, other means of production, and credit (pp. 162-163). In conclusion, Friedmann (1980: 176) states that "For the various forms of 'peasant' production to undergo commodisation, changes must occur in the social formation leading to factor markets, in particular markets in labour power."[9]

JACQUES CHEVALIER

Contrary to Bernstein and Friedmann, who focus primarily on conditions external to the household to depict forms of

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[9] Friedmann (1980: 176) further states: "If commoditisation leads to simple commodity production, household labour remains but undergoes specific changes related to competition and labour mobility. If commoditisation leads to capitalist production, household labour gives way to labour power offered for sale by individuals, and the individualisation of labour accompanies the individualisation of enterprises."

production[10], J. Chevalier (1983) pinpoints the subjective logic of household-based producers to delineate forms of production. This can be equally revealing since it is grounded in material conditions and power structures. Friedmann keeps the 'logic' of capitalism outside the simple commodity producer's door, while Chevalier invites it in by allowing for 'valuation' as a behavioral response to market or non-market impulses. In this way, Chevalier emphasizes the different values commodity producers attach to 'things' and not on the myriad of ways production is organized (Smith, 1984). Capitalism, according to Chevalier, is not as straight forward as many argue and, in fact, is a "polymorphous structure of variable relations of production" which may deviate, at least phenomenally, from the logic of a capitalist mode of production (p.156). Not only are social relations delimited by the material context, but by the ideological/cultural perceptions of the social actors occurring within that context (also see Long, 1984). Chevalier's attempt is laudable. With regards to households, individual members (and as members of other groups) develop livelihood strategies which constantly alter the effective terrain of social practice such that the scope of activity is continuously transformed, albeit with the framework of

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[10] There are no external factors pressing on the household for Chayanov because the peasant (mode of production) is deduced directly from individual households. Therefore there are only internal variations due to demographic differentials.

acceptable social practices. As Chevalier makes clear, ideology is difficult to deal with and often times we simply employ cultural values to fill in the conceptual holes in our analyses.

Chevalier provides additional analytical specification by proposing that simple commodity production be reconceptualized in terms of formal and real subjugation of labor to capital. Working within an approach that combines both world-system theory and a type of articulation, Chevalier (p. 155-156) asserts that (at least some forms of) simple commodity production is integral to the "logic" of capitalism, yet differs according to its form of subsumption. He contends that the inability to adequately situate simple commodity production is a result of the tendency to "oversimplify" the structuring of capitalist social relations of production. Under conditions of formal subsumption, for example, factors of material consumption can become commodities without ever entering the market by means of the transference of their calculable cost onto other commodities sold on the market. With regards to real subsumption, technical change may not "revolutionize" production, yet still may entail equal loss in the producer's control of production. Chevalier's major project thus is to establish the "logic" of simple commodity production as "maximization without capitalization" and thus without necessary accumulation.

LIMITATIONS OF APPROACH

Throughout this brief review, it is obvious that the presence of commodity circulation holds definite and distinct implications for the subsequent internal organization of households. "Before capitalist production was fully developed," writes Perelman (1983:20), "one could not locate a clear boundary separating those activities directed toward the production of commodities for sale on the market from those other activities performed to reproduce the household." At this point agreement ends. Keyder, (1983:86) in reference to agrarian relations in Turkey, argues that "whatever the extent of commodity production, capitalist dynamics rule the modulations of village transformation...transformations that are subordinate to a capitalist dynamic." Within these formulations it is difficult to preface non-capitalist social relations as anything other than secondary phenomenon, as totally dependent on their conditions of existence from the wider capitalist social formation. In this instance, why bother to argue the case for non-capitalist relations? The same dilemma is faced by Bennholdt-Thompson who equates peasants with domestic labor in that both are functional and necessary to capitalism.[11] This inevitably begs the question

[11] Both the subsistence activities of peasants and housewives is subordinated to capital and hence leads to the valorization of their labor (Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1982). Consequently, "it would be false to consider the production of use-values as not belonging to the capitalist mode of production, only because at first sight it does not seem to be integrated into generalized exchange relations" (p. 244).

as to whether the unevenness of capitalist development is a case of its 'failure' or a case of the 'successful' resistance to its intrusion. Or, in other words, has "capital created underdevelopment not because it exploited the underdeveloped world, but because it did not exploit it enough" (Kay, 1975:x), rather than "that the economic and social structures that capital encountered...turned out to be infinitely more resistant than European precapitalist structures" (Rey, 1982:vii)?

Even the existence of trade by itself fails to illuminate the argument. Most would agree that autarky has seldom, if ever, been a dominant feature of any unit of production in meeting its reproductive requirements. Exchange, although acquiring different forms and meanings, has been common throughout history. Marx (1959:325-326) writes:

> the extent to which products enter trade and go through the merchant's hands depends on the mode of production, and reaches the maximum in the ultimate development of capitalist development, where the product is produced solely as a commodity, and not as a direct means of subsistence. On the other hand, on the basis of every mode of production, trade facilitates the production of surplus-products destined for exchange, in order to increase the enjoyments, or the wealth, of the producers.

Therefore, if the basis of social control, and by this wealth and power, is not to be found directly in the sphere of production, but in, say, the circulation of women and prestige goods, it is difficult for capital to gain access to and

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This has much in common with Bernstein's "wage-labour equivalents" and Chevalier's "maximization without capitalization."

effective control over production and thereby increase productivity and the steady improvements which it requires. As any so-called 'development expert' will confirm, the mission of turning peasants into 'commodity producers' has been difficult indeed for this very reason. Cooper (1981) also notes that the problem with peasant agriculture is that peasants bring commodities to the market very inconsistently because they are not engaged in **generalized** commodity production.

With regard to the thesis of commoditization (monetization), it should be remembered that:

> non-capitalist institutions act to restructure the monetary elements introduced into the system, and so long as peasants retain a relatively independent basis for the operation of their economic affairs, then capitalist relations and principles will not prevail in all situations. Non-capitalist forms are not, of course, outside the capitalist framework but represent the way in which local or subordinate social structures mediate the effects of capitalist penetration (Long, 1984:13-14).

Therefore, as is evident, commodity production as a 'thing' is not definitive of capitalism, rather capitalism is a social relation by which commodities are produced. Moreover, when the conversion of production is not generalized into the wage-labor/capital relation, "there are no generalized capitalist relations of production, in spite of the hegemony of capital...And in spite of integration into the capitalist world market" (Mandel, 1975:366). If we recall, the world market provides the basis for the capitalist mode of production, but "is incapable by itself of promoting and

explaining the transition from one mode of production to another" (Marx, 1959:327).

6.2: PEASANTRY AS SIMPLE COMMODITY PRODUCTION

To facilitate a concrete analysis of households, we need to reassess and refine our analytical tools. As noted, 'peasant' remains a residual category, embracing all that a simple commodity producer is not. It seems to me that a major problem with the concept 'peasant' is that unlike simple commodity production, it has eluded attempts at theorization. As an inductive concept based on empirical generalizations, it lacks analytical specificity[12] and empirical cases quickly get out of hand. In the main, 'peasant' is linked with 'domestic' or 'natural' economy such that the prosaic reproduction of these long-standing types of production seem to proceed endlessly until faced with capitalism at which point they give way to simple commodity production. But as we have seen, there is no domestic or natural economy in the Nuba Mountains, rather so-called peasant production was formed within the lineage and later the slave/tributary modes (epochs) of production and subsequently articulated with capitalism.

The concept of simple commodity production was created within the political economy frame of reference to fill this theoretical void. Nevertheless, a notable feature is its ambiguity. A peasant remains a peasant precisely because they

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[12] Friedmann makes a strong case for this point.

are now simple commodity producers; the form persists, only the content has changed. Too heavy a burden is placed on the concept so that all types of small-commodity producers such as peasants, family farmers, artisans, and petty traders are lumped together (Scott, 1986). Simple commodity production has been reduced to a sort of *deus ex machina* within the development literature by those seeking to escape dualism or mechanical functionalism while explaining the persistence of non-capitalist relations of production.

REFINING SIMPLE COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Part of the problem of simple commodity production lies in its identification exclusively with capitalism. To the contrary, simple commodity production, as a general form of production, is a **simple category** and has existed in many modes (epochs) of production; sometimes unobtrusively, sometimes not. As argued by Marx, simple commodity production is part of capitalism, expressed by the equation C_1-M-C_2, but it is equally correct that it is a necessary though not sufficient condition of its being capitalist. The production of commodities is not a recent phenomenon brought about by the advent of capitalism. It developed with the creation of "a sufficiently extensive market" and has been especially preponderant in periods of urban civilization, such as in the sixth century B.C. Greece, the eighth century A.D. Islamic world, and the eleventh century onward in western Europe

(Mandel, 1968: 65-66).[13] In its specific association with capitalism, simple commodity production becomes a concrete or **complex category** and therefore acquires bounded significance specifically in terms of capitalism.

Bernstein (1988: 261) correctly notes that under conditions of generalized commodity production, "some of the phenomena of capitalism resemble those of pre-capitalist social formations."[14] After all, "capital subsumes the labour process as it finds it...developed by different and more archaic modes of production" (Marx, 1977: 1021).[15] According to Gibbons and Neocosmos (1985: 170), simple commodity production is "a phenomenal category of commodity producers who possess the means of production necessary to produce commodities and who engage in production on the basis

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[13] Mandel (1977: 14-15) further clarifies the issue: "Commodity production in these pre-capitalist modes of production is intertwined with, and in the last analysis subordinated to, organizations of production (in the first place agricultural production) of a clearly non-capitalist nature, which follow a different economic logic from that which governs exchanges between commodities or the accumulation of capital."

[14] Generalized commodity production may be said to prevail when individuals are no longer able to reproduce themselves outside of the circuit of capitalism (commodity markets) and the accompanying division of labor created by the essential capital/wage-labor relation (Gibbons and Neocosmos, 1985). In my opinion, the generalized production of commodities also requires the enabling assumption of the real subsumption of labor to capital. Formal subsumption is a transitional moment.

[15] Moreover, "Formal subsumption," according to Marx (1977: 1019), "can be found in the absence of the [specifically capitalist mode of production]."

of unpaid household labor alone." The phenomenal appearance of unpaid household labor external to the market does not perforce mean that it is not capitalist (Bernstein, 1988). This turns both ways, however. The existence of wage-labor, for example, is not limited to capitalism but was in evidence in non-capitalist modes of production (Banaji, 1977).[16] The conflation of simple and complex categories has thus undermined attempts at the theorization of simple commodity production.

FORM OF PRODUCTION RECONSIDERED

The popularity of form of production arose as a means to broach the impasse embroiling modes of production analysis and quickly became identified with simple commodity production.[17] But as Scott (1985) correctly points out, there has been a tendency to confuse the nature of form of production with simple commodity production. Erring to the other side in her effort to instill theoretical rigor, Scott imbues form of production with the same theoretical intent as mode of

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[16] "Duby tell us," writes Banaji (1977: 6), "that 'from the very earliest years of the thirteenth century, the administrators of the estates of the bishop of Winchester spent hundreds of pounds every year on wages.' Moreover, 'on the lands of Worchester Abbey the growth of the demesne economy was entirely achieved by taking on wage-labour...'."

[17] Advocates of form of production sought to juxtapose the context of the capitalist world system with the sensitivity to non-capitalist social relations advanced by articulationists, but without recourse to independent (restricted) peasant or simple commodity modes of production. When joined with simple commodity production, little room is left for manoeuvering. It becomes the task of individual researchers to determine just how various forms of production are in fact capitalist.

production, considering it from both levels of abstractness and concreteness.[18] Thus, the invariant elements that she draws relative to form of production are actually derived from mode of production, the level of structured relations. As previously mentioned, form of production, as an economic practice (historical abstraction), is a manifestation of an essential mode of production (conceptual abstraction). Nor is the connection readily apparent; it must be worked out through the determination of the various intermediate links mediating the two. Forms of production are highly variable and find structural limits only by the mode(s) of production which determines their conditions of existence. Failing this understanding, we have two parallel terms--form and mode--which further confuse the issue.

Needless to say, forms are not infinite in number and depend on the historical situation, although the nature of any form of production can be abstracted to its essential invariant core. Within capitalism, simple commodity production becomes the concrete category, petty commodity production. Puzzlement stems from the fact that petty commodity production embodies both capitalist and wage-laborer. In other words:

> The independent peasant or handicraftsman is cut up into two persons. As owner of the means of production he is capitalist; as labourer he is his own wage-labourer. As capitalist he therefore pays himself his wages and draws

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[18] Scott conceptualizes both variant (essential) and invariant (phenomenal) elements for a form of production.

> his profit on his capital; that is to say, he exploits himself as wage-labourer, and pays himself, in the surplus-value, the tribute that labour owes to capital...he himself is split in two, so that *he*, is capitalist, employs himself as wage-labourer (Marx, 1969: 408).

In this way, the capitalist corporation and the petty commodity producing household are deemed forms of capitalism. Both exhibit the essential capital/wage-labor relation such that labor is "capital-positing, capital-producing" (Banaji, 1977: 6-7). Further phenomenal differences arise in that each express different ideological and political practices which further obscures their essential similarities.[19]

Petty commodity production is inherently unstable over time for the very fact that it is equally subject to capitalist laws of motion, realized in competition, concentration, and accumulation.[20] As stated by E.P. Thompson (1966: 416): "Each stage of industrial differentiation and specialization struck also at the family economy, disturbing customary relations between and wife, parents and children, and differentiating more sharply between 'work' and 'life'." Consequently, "the peasant who produces with his own means of production will either gradually be transformed into a small capitalist...or he will suffer the

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[19] J. Paige 1975) illustrates this point eloquently in Agrarian Revolution where he analyses political and ideological differences between various types of 'peasantry' according to their relation to the means of production.

[20] One has only to look at the American 'family farm' over the past forty years, for example, to realize this point for petty commodity production.

loss of his means of production (Marx, 1969: 409). Friedmann is therefore wrong to assume that the logic of capitalism does not infect the internal functioning of "simple commodity production." Deere (1990:9) critically notes that: "It is particularly difficult to think of Friedmann's capitalized family farmers not acting at least as income maximizers, if not as profit maximizers, given that they must invest in expanded means of production to stay in business." Moreover, as Goodman and Redclift argue (1986:28), "If competitive pressures dictate the employment of wage labor for extended periods of the generational cycle, it will be necessary for simple commodity producers to earn a surplus product as a absolute condition, though not a relative one, of their reproduction."[21] In this case, wage-labor ceases to serve merely an ancillary function in the labor process of the household's production activities and becomes a structural requirement in the household's reproduction which necessitates the regular creation of surplus-value.[22]

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[21] Goodman and Redclift also criticize Friedman for not more carefully exploring the broader role and implication of wage labor in the "family enterprise;" namely an accounting of class which also presents a structural requirement for surplus profit.

[22] Kinship at once simplifies the problems of labor recruitment and wages (although as evidence indicates it does not necessarily alleviate it), but it also brings a host of other problems. Phenomenally kinship is a mechanism for labor recruitment (and resource distribution). This should not detract from the essential capital/wage-labor relation. So at level of economic practice, tendential laws of motion work out

The flexibility that Friedmann attributes to "simple commodity production" inheres in the preponderance of family labor.[23] And for her, since this is not specifically a wage-labor relation, exploitation cannot occur. We need only to recall Bennholdt-Thompson's (1982) insight which underscores the power of ideological mechanisms (such as family bonding) to obscure the process by which use-value production is transformed into exchange-value production.[24] Accordingly, "Commodity-relations of production are never directly reflected in consciousness--their forms of appearance mediate their reception into consciousness" (Banaji, 1978: 384). Moreover, as Hayami and Ruttan demonstrate (1985), the historical conditions in North America favored technological investments (i.e., mechanization) in the face of a scarce

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in sometimes illogical strategies. For example, some petty commodity producers retain the use of *nafir* even though wage-labor might be cheaper in order to maintain community standing.

[23] Friedmann's simple commodity producer may have certain advantages over capitalist enterprises, although the profit requirement can only be revealed by consideration of repeated circuits rather than a single circuit of (re)production. It is difficult indeed to fathom how simple commodity production is dependent on the wider economy, but that somehow it escapes the necessity to make a profit (although the 'accounting' methods will certainly differ).

[24] In their analysis of urban small commodity production in Dakar, Senegal, LeBrun and Gerry (1975:23) state that it is "not fundamentally a matter of personal pride and concern for quality; it reflects [the petty commodity producers'] objective relations with the market for their products and increasingly...involves the dissolution of all values into exchange-values."

labor supply. In other words, 'simple commodity producers' could capitalize adequately without recourse to hiring labour on a full-time basis (Smith, 1984: 211). Cautioning against technicism, Tribe (1979: 6) nonetheless notes: "The significance of a machine as 'agricultural' innovation cannot be judged simply from the level of sophistication of the factors concerned, while on the other hand the mere existence of innovatory practice is itself of major importance for the assessment of economic organization." The use of a tractor in the Nuba Mountains, for example, involves an irreversible commitment to land size which can lead to a 'built-in' dependence on specific inputs of labor. Over time, a tractor invariably causes the viability of petty commodity production to be undermined and achieves an entirely capitalist form of production (or leads to dispossession).

Aside from this, there are other implications concerning competition. If the employment of wage-labor is required, even if only periodically, we are saying something about the scale of production; i.e., the acreage under cultivation does not fluctuate with the "life cycle" of the 'domestic unit.'[25] The competition associated with capitalism generates the tendency to expand the scale of production and thus the 'shaking out' of those unable to effectively compete. In addition, competition also determines the social average of

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[25] In other words, the acreage under cultivation remains in proportion to the peak domestic labor supply which is of relatively short duration in the household's life cycle.

productivity, the 'proper' range of labor and land utilization along with the corresponding technologies and production techniques (Lenin, 1977). The conditions which allow for petty commodity production are thus the conditions for capitalist production. The two are differentiated primarily by scale and all that scale implies; namely labor marshalled through the market rather than based on 'family' or communal ties.[26] Hence, a distinguishing factor demarcating the two forms are formal subsumption of labor to capital in petty commodity production and real subsumption in the capitalist production. As a result, we expect differences in livelihood strategies according to the dictates of absolute and relative surplus extraction respectively.[27]

NON-CAPITALIST FORMS OF PRODUCTION

As mentioned, simple commodity production is not limited exclusively to capitalism. Many so-called peasants are also simple commodity producers, albeit in a dissimilar form than petty commodity producers. It is only through understanding the lineage mode of production in the Nuba Mountains that we can differentiate other forms of simple commodity production

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[26] Labor-power becomes commoditized through specific historical processes and occurs with varying degrees of completeness.

[27] Absolute surplus value entails lengthening the working day, intensifying the work pace, and/or reducing wages/consumption (formal subsumption). Relative surplus value involves raising productivity through altering the forces of production (real subsumption).

and provide theoretical coherence to peasantry. For convenience sake this commodity producing form is termed lineage commodity production, while the form of non-commodity production is labeled lineage non-commodity production. The attempt here is not to provide complete theorization for all possible forms of production but to deal solely with the task at hand. As C. Smith (1984: 210) so persuasively states:

> To argue about what features exist or do not exist at one moment of a system in motion does little to explain how the system operates at that moment, much less how it got that way. We need less argument about the essences of particular forms of production and more information about the interactions taking place between very specific forms of production in particular places and how these interactions produce a particular history.

Yet practical experience indicates that we must avoid definition by default and comprehend the conditions of reproduction of these non-capitalist forms production.

It is not always possible or feasible to determine a form of production from economic practices alone, especially in instances where the production process is structured by the ideology of kinship in the lineage mode or the politics of compliance in the slave/tributary mode. An important consideration for lineage commodity production is the complex within which it is embedded. As noted, the division of labor and appropriation principles of lineage commodity production (and non-lineage commodity production) are governed by kinship, patriarchy, age, and gender. The reproductive cycle of an individual unit of production producing a narrow, fixed range of commodities on demand passes through a 'market,' but

more importantly lineage commodity production is dependent upon non-commodified relations for its reproduction. Certainly at one point this form was minimal, depending more or less on the extent of 'trade' and artisinal specialization within and between specific *gabila*. Unlike petty commodity production then, the reproduction of an essential capital/wage-labor relation is absent within lineage commodity production.

A useful understanding of lineage commodity production at the level of production is captured by Banaji's (1978) notion of "preformal subsumption." In this way lineage commodity production can manifest the conditions but not the substance of formal subsumption which requires capitalist relations of production and all that these entail.[28] This holds important consequences in an articulated social formation. The penetration of a non-lineage mode such as capitalism via circulation (i.e., exchange or the market) in this sense is different from 'orthodox' dependency or world system perspectives because these assume that the mere act of commodity production constitutes formal subsumption of labor to capital. The largely intermittent production and 'sale' of commodities, to the contrary, is simply part of the overall reproduction of the lineage mode and thus is not essential to

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[28] The preformal subsumption of labor to capital, according to Banaji (1978: 356-257), "would tend to lead in the vast majority of cases to the system of formal subsumption," but, as he cautions, "over time."

the reproduction of these forms of production. And since lineage commodity producers do not relate directly to markets, individually or competitively, they have no 'market strategy' as evidenced in their difficulty in adapting or responding to market changes such as commodity prices. Petty commodity producers, on the other hand, are subject to market competition, although its effect may be limited or extreme.[29] The way lineage commodity production and non-lineage commodity production relate to the economy is mediated by non-capitalist relations which buffer them from existing capitalist pressures.

Unquestionably, non-lineage modes amplified the production of commodities, but not necessarily to the extent that their production and use dominated the reproduction of their various producers nor the lineage mode as a whole. That does not mean that the slave/tributary mode left no traces or that the effects of capitalism somehow exist outside of the lineage mode. Lineage commodity producers are involved in an encompassing network of social relations such that non-lineage modes must break this and not the individual producer's reproductive cycle per se.[30] Although the

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[29] When capitalism assumes at least indirect control of the production process, then it can force the production of cash crops or restrict it and propel people into wage labor.

[30] This belies the question of control of the production process which is crucial to considerations of subsumption and the question of whether or not commodity relations dominate economic practices.

slave/tributary mode did not 'take over' forms of production encountered within the lineage mode, it nevertheless, like capitalism, exerted a profound impact manifested in changes in political control and surplus extraction, organization of agricultural production, and expansion of trade in connection with merchant capital to name a few. Similarly, the penetration of capitalism both crystallized and eroded the lineage mode of production. Crystallized it through accentuating the circulation of women and the power of elders, and eroding it through the monetization of prestige goods and taxes which forced juniors to labor outside of the village. So too with females whose 'roles' changed with the absence of young men, affording them an economic independence previously unknown.

DIFFERENTIATION OF FORMS PRODUCTION

On an empirical level, the key lines of inquiry differentiating petty commodity production from lineage commodity production are:

1. Withdrawal from the market without adverse effects over time such as absolute consumption shortfalls and/or super-exploitation of domestic labor (e.g., drop out of school, work at younger ages than social norm, bring women more to main farms).

2. Market calculation (e.g., shift between types of labor (*nafir*, family, and wage; specialization of production; shift what produce).

3. Source of market demand for commodities (e.g., M_1-C-M_2 or C_1-M-C_2).

4. Scale, technology, and techniques of production (e.g., acreage, use of tractor, and basis of labor control).

Livelihood strategies engendered within capitalist production, petty commodity production, and wage-labor are inexorably shaped by the market (commoditization) and the individuation of production, while those of lineage commodity production and non-lineage commodity production are fashioned by 'communal' needs, responsibilities, and obligations. These strategies also convey specific values and perceptions since they are devised to meet reproduction requirements formulated within different sets of opportunities and constraints. For example, cattle owned by those in a lineage mode are kept as a 'store of wealth,' while within a capitalist mode they assume the form of capital. What is of interest, however, are the contradictions the pursual of specific strategies creates, how these are subsequently resolved, and to what result. This does not imply an equilibrium state between various epochs of production as in mechanical articulation, because the dialectic entails both equilibrium and disequilibrium; i.e., contradiction. As we shall see, the lineage mode is not infinitely elastic and eventually irrevocable consequences occur which lead to its eventual demise.

6.3: FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION AND HOUSEHOLD

Sifting through the empirical complexity underlying household types is relatively easy at the extremes where we have household members who either own means of production and employ wage-labor, or else lacking access to the means of production sell labor-power. Yet households conceived within

a capitalist mode of production are both quantitatively and, above all, qualitatively different from those based in the lineage mode. It is this middle morass in which one invariably gets bogged down in the mire of analytical differentiation. Household typologies must therefore rely on more than just observable differences if we are to avoid a retreat into empiricism. Moreover, a household by itself cannot provide the basis for directly deriving characteristics of the larger social totality. Hence, the need for well-reasoned theory grounded in historical reality. After all, only theory can provide the necessary validity check for our typologies. "The method by which a typology is constructed," write Whatmore et al. (1987:23), "derives from and embodies a set of epistemological assumptions about how we conceptualize and explain social phenomena and thus how theory and empirical work are related." Thus, even though two households, for example, may 'own' the same number of feddan and/or cattle, and whose members participate in similar non-agricultural activities, they may not be classified the same because they have different conditions of existence.

Labor, as the source of a value, comprises the core of Marx's materialist conception of history. We begin the construction of our categories with the assumption that the household is the primary locus of labor's daily and generational reproduction in the Nuba Mountains. The household, constituted predominately by family, is still the

basis of reproduction in the demographic sense and ensures the creation of future labor. Variations in the life cycle of a household, in part, can be attributed to the life course of individual members rather than to a systematic breakdown in the 'family.'[31] Reproduction also involves the household labor process, an institutionalized process through which the household provides its material sustenance. Not only does this include agricultural activities but also non-agricultural endeavors. We talk of household labor in that it excludes other sources of labor such as *nafir* and wage, although these also may prove significant for the household's reproduction. In addition, the household is a site of socialization, where members are oriented towards the world and given instructions for deportment.

The conceptualization of the household in association with variant forms of production creates categories of households as effective sites of reproduction. What this assumes is that household composition and function, including the ideological (kinship, inheritance) and political practices (marriage responsibilities, control of resources) which buttress them, are intimately connected to specific forms of production. That is, households can be classified according to their dominant means of material (re)production. This is

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[31] Although with the advent of capitalism this changes, especially in places like Kadugli, where, for example, males cohabitate and from a household for the purpose of residence and consumption on a daily basis. There is no minimal family unit of mother and infant.

especially effective in the Nuba Mountains where, in most instances, the household is both the unit of reproduction and a unit of production. Theoretically choice may be infinite but in reality choices are given structural parameters imposed by the epoch of production in which people operate on a daily basis. At the level of typological formulations, households in the villages of Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam are differentiated categorically according to their resource base and form of economic (re)production:

1. Capitalist producers (CP) generally with substantial off-farm economic interests.

2. Petty commodity producers (PCP) who are **not** able to withdraw from the market and who as a routine matter **regularly** sell agricultural and non-agricultural products and whose members **regularly** engage in off-farm employment, though to a far lesser degree than does the first group. Differences between this and the capitalist producers is one of **degree** of market participation and not kind.

3. Lineage commodity producers (LCP) who are able to withdraw from the market and who **irregularly** sell commodities or whose members only intermittently work off the farm. Differences between this group and petty commodity producers is one of **kind** and not degree. That is, they are differentiated by market ties and by their regularization of commodity production, including wage labor.

4. Lineage non-commodity producers (LNCP) who, when they do engage in market activities, trade and barter. When money is involved, it is merely another item for barter that never assumes the form of capital for future investment.

5. Wage-labor producers or "proletarians" (WLP) whose livelihood is gained off the farm through the sale of their labor-power, but who generally operate a *jubraka* to supplement that income.

We expect each form of (re)production to exhibit different 'behavioral characteristics' due to differential exposure to the structural constraints and opportunities present within the wider society. Table 6.1 summarizes households by the forms of (re)production of which they are part. From this perspective, we will analyze household livelihood strategies as they reflect the household's internal structure, but by constant appeal to contradictory external forces. This recognizes that household is but one effective site of reproduction, albeit an important one (Deere, 1990). Other sites include the politics (e.g., the Sudanese state, authority of elders, customary law) and culture (e.g., religion, age grades, gender ideolgies).

TABLE 6.1: HOUSEHOLDS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION IN SOMASEM, SHATT DAMAM, AND SHAIR TOMAT

	Household by Form of (Re)Production						
Village	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total	(N)
Somasem	3.3%	65.0%	10.0%	10.0%	11.7%	100.0%	(60)
Sh. Tomat	3.3	66.7	13.3	6.7	10.0	100.0	(30)
Sh. Damam	3.3	31.7	35.0	30.0	.0	100.0	(60)
TOTAL	3.3%	51.3%	20.7%	17.3%	6.7%	100.0%	
(n=)	(5)	(78)	(31)	(26)	(10)		(150)

Admittedly, this represents a blend of form of production as a labor process and household as a reproductive unit. In addition, the boundaries between our categories tend to blur.

Yet as the subject matter is empirical in nature, the boundary of household requires delineation. In order to establish credible household boundaries, the categories must be refined by constant appeal to empirical material and abstract elements. At the concrete historical level, analysis entails detailing interrelations between categories while at the theoretical level, analysis involves further differentiation on historical-logical grounds. In this way, subgroups are sifted out from primary categories, such as agrarian capitalists from merchant capitalists, and greater clarity between categories is achieved. Furthermore, we are in position to situate individuals in terms of household-oriented social relations. The important point to note from this argumentation is that we must look at the types of households encountered and try to understand the structural pressures which result in the observed patterns. From the above attempt to establish a typology of households, at least in principle, livelihood strategies pursued by various households begins to make sense.

6.4: HOUSEHOLDS AND CLASS

As a last step in understanding households we must briefly consider class formation. To begin with, class is a process involving distinct parameters to individual choice. For example, Nelson (1988:13) reasons that "the capacity to convert one form of labor into [an]other engages the interplay of the entire ensemble of political, economic, and ideological

relations." In other words, brideservice and wage-labor have different conditions of existence and hence their usage invokes entirely different class processes for those involved. Nor are decisions a simple matter of individual volition because class provides real limits and consequences to human behavior. The objective class locations of household members can thus provide powerful insights into the meaning of household livelihood strategies used and pursued by household members. In other words, the types of class processes household members are engaged in directly concern the viability of household forms and their reproduction over time.[32]

LAWS OF MOTION AND CLASS PROCESSES

One of the purposes of Capital is to show the structural underpinnings of class; its formation and the laws governing its development. At this level of abstraction Marx derived laws of motion, the logical requisites of history if it is to be understood as a structured process. These laws directly point to the parameters--the logic--within which human action is compelled to operate. They also have major implications for class composition and formation. The accumulation of capital, for example, is the objective force that forges the historical development of capitalism, and the subordination of labor to capital is the means by which accumulation is

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[32] Or if children, the initial socialization experience and resource base will be a function of the class location of their principal nurturers.

accomplished (de Janvry, 1981:9). Accumulation is, nonetheless, subject to particular rhythms and phases. For example, the law of value determines the pattern of investment according to the rate of profit prevailing in the various sectors of the economy. This leads not only to different organic compositions of capital, but to unequal patterns in the development of social differentiation. Similarly, accumulation promotes the concentration and centralization of capital, reducing more and more of the population to the status of wage-laborers. This results, in part, from competition between capitalist 'enterprises' and hence the need to 'revolutionize' the means of production in order to extract greater quantities of surplus value using less labor. The point is that laws of motion in the form of structural pressures act to shape classes and the loci of class struggle.

Laws of motion, in effect, are filtered through class struggle and are therefore mediated by historical events. Laws of motion are thus tendential rather than absolute, manifested materially and empirically in daily life. Marx's claim about necessary development is made at the level of conceptual abstraction, not at the level of lived historical reality (Ruben, 1979:69). Therefore, we must locate the historical forces responsible for generating particular class configurations and the consequences of these on economic, political, and ideological differentiation.

We should not minimize the general task of constructing an adequate conceptualization of class. It must be consistent both with its theoretical constraints and with its historical formation. As a structured processual relation, class is the contradiction between, say, capital and wage-labor, or elders and juniors/women. At the level of practices struggles occur between people organized around different means of control and resistance, exerting power or not. In this respect, the relation is one of irreconcilable opposition such that what one class is, another is not. Nevertheless, class formation is not always easy to grasp, since the class process involves the acquisition of distinct identities on the basis of economic, political, and ideological practices not always (in fact seldom) corresponding to objective positions which a particular epoch of production entails.

MULTIPLE CLASS PROCESSES

Class as a process is not received in an explicit and coherent form, rather it is dynamic and fluid. Consequently, analysis of class formation is rarely, if ever, a neat undertaking. In an articulated social totality/formation like the Nuba Mountains, class contradictions abound with the presence of more than one basis for class formation. New class configurations are not superimposed upon the old and neither are the old automatically supplanted by the new simply by dint of the initial transforming of class activities. As Geschiere (1978: 45) perceptively comments:

> The prevailing relations originate from very different political-economic systems: modern wage labour and labour obligation based on kinship, subsistence agriculture and production for the capitalist market, etc. Yet for the producers themselves in Africa, these relations are often closely intertwined. Of course these various relations imply completely different contradictions, and it is these contradictions which makes the development of classes in Africa such a confusing process.

At the extremes we will get 'capitalists' and 'proletarian' classes in addition to lineage elders and juniors/women. But there is also a blurring of class considerations as individuals invariably occupy more than one class position.

ANALYSIS OF CLASS FORMATION

In a creative approach to rural social differentiation in Northern Peru, Carmen Deere (1990) draws on the work of Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff in rethinking the class position of peasants. This allows her to focus on class as a process whereby unpaid surplus labor is routinely appropriated from direct producers. In this formulation, Deere's treatment of class comes alive rather than appear as so many structural gradations or mechanical positions. This enables her to move beyond the constraining boundaries of a dichotomous two-class treatment and account for multiple classes in the Peruvian highlands, especially within households.

Resnick and Wolff (1982: 2-6; 1979: 8-11; 1991: 13-16) remind us that for Marx, class is the entry point for social analysis and hence is essential for understanding concrete social situations. Class differences arise over surplus labor; total labor time expended minus necessary labor or the

amount of labor time required to reproduce and sustain the producer at a customary standard of living. The key to Resnick and Wolff's conceptualization is the distinction they delineate between fundamental and subsumed classes. Fundamental classes refer to individuals who either perform or extract surplus labor. Subsumed classes, on the other hand, encompass individuals who do neither, yet provide certain social functions necessary to the extraction of surplus labor and, as a result of their activities, receive a share of that surplus from one or more of the fundamental classes. Subsumed classes thus provide certain "conditions of existence--non-economic as well as economic--of the fundamental class process (1982:3)." The relationship, nevertheless, is dialectical in that subsumed classes cannot reproduce themselves without their share of the surplus, whereas the fundamental class process unravels without the reproduction of its conditions of existence being satisfied by subsumed classes. Examples of subsumed classes within capitalism include merchants, bankers, and directors of the state bureaucracy, and whose condition of existence is "commodity trade," "credit," and "politico-legal privileges" respectively (1979: 8-9).

As Deere makes amply clear, the importance of Resnick and Wolff's contribution to class analysis inheres in their emphasis that society, as a social formation, "is always a complex formation of interacting fundamental and subsumed classes" and that "individuals within a social formation

usually occupy multiple, different class positions, both fundamental and subsumed" (1982:3). Moreover, class relations continuously change through the "overdetermination" of both class and non-class considerations. "In a word," Resnick and Wolff conclude (1991: 16), "class exploitation overdetermines and is overdetermined by racism, sexism, patriarchy, ownership, control, capital accumulation, technology, modernism..."[33] It is for this reason that "The finest-meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of class, any more than it can give us one of deference or of love" (Thompson, 1966:9). Nevertheless, Resnick and Wolff theoretically advance a basis for identifying class relations and evaluating real and potential sites of class struggles. And for us, the household is one such potential arena.

CLASS FORMATION IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS

Our immediate concern is the totality of social production within which classes are formed. Class is a complex of qualitative social relationship whose analysis begins with quantitative indicators of class practice. By working with these indicators it is possible to isolate the various class processes within the Nuba Mountains (Figure 6.1, p. 300). As mentioned, the roles of the *kujur*, priests, and

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[33] Overdetermination, a concept developed by Althusser, rids Marxist analysis of determining the 'final instance,' and the existence of entities is thus always contradictory, "hence changing and thereby altering their influences on all other entities in a ceaseless play of constitution and deconstitution of one another" (Resnick and Wolff, 1991: 13).

FIGURE 6.1: CLASS RELATIONS **IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS**

Capitalism	Fundamental classes:	
	performer	wage-laborer
	extractor	capitalist
	Subsumed classes:	
	extractor	state functionaries
		merchants/businessmen
		bankers
Tributary	Fundamental classes:	
	performer	service laborer
	extractor	*sheikh*
		kujur
		priests
		master of the path
	Subsumed classes:	
	extractor	merchant/trader
		usurer
Lineage	Fundamental classes:	
	performer	juniors/women
	extractor	elders
	Subsumed classes:	
	extractor	*kujur*
		priests
		master of the path

master of the path took on a different function when confronted with the slave/tributary epoch of production. In this epoch, these individuals extract surplus in the form of 'tribute,' while the *sheikh*, a creation of Condominium rule, mandated taxes and requisitioned labor. In the lineage epoch the *kujur*, priests, and master of the path appropriate surplus on the basis of their ideological/political roles which are necessary to the reproduction of the fundamental class process and therefore they function as subsumed classes. Accordingly, class analysis accounts for household members' connections to the means of production, control of the labor process, and forms of surplus appropriation. The class processes people are part of thus comprise an important mechanism illuminating intra- and inter-household relations.

HOUSEHOLD AND CONSEQUENCES OF CLASS PROCESSES

More importantly, when households are comprised of members involved in different class processes, tensions between members often develop along class lines. Bernstein (1988: 266) forcefully argues that variant class positions may be differentially distributed within households such that "Patriarchal heads of households may represent more the class position of capital, and women and children more the place of labour." Out-right ownership of the means of production by specific individuals within the capitalist class, for example, provides the dominant male the basis for potential control of other household members and surplus appropriation. On the

other hand, within the lineage mode, control and appropriation originates in an elaborate kinship system which masks the exploitative nature of class relations. And when an individual is part of multiple class positions, conflicting pressures frequently result in erratic strategies, at least at the household level. The point is, class pressures are responsible for the direction and content of household formation and account for its dynamics.

Individuals as members of households confront a variety of processes--economic, political, ideological, and natural--which threaten their reproduction. Household members must respond to their environment by formulating livelihood strategies to meet these pressures. Sometimes households are successful, at other times they fail. Even when they are successful, however, new pressures and constraints arise as a result of that success. Whatever the outcome of household livelihood strategies, households are pulled in certain directions which affect both the form of (re)production of the household and the class relations of its members, undermining the household's condition of existence. At a certain juncture, for example, the hiring of wage-labor to replace the contributions of migrating members, especially as the duration of migration increases, figures significantly into the reproduction of the household. And if migrants are unable to send cash remittances, those left behind may find it increasingly necessary to sell their own labor-power.

Therefore over time we may see a household engaged in lineage commodity production shift to petty commodity production to wage labor, while the household members go from one set of class processes to another such as elder/junior to capitalist/wage-labor to simple wage-labor. These changes in form of (re)production and class processes may never be a conscious strategy. Actual outcomes are rarely if ever the product of what people envision since structural forces usually remain outside of an individual's frame of reference.

The purpose of the following chapters is to explore household livelihood strategies in the three villages with the aim, not of distilling individual motivations, but of drawing people closer to the structural parameters which condition those responses. This will be accomplished through an understanding of variations in livelihood strategies among household forms of (re)production within the respective villages.

CHAPTER VII

SOMASEM: ALIENATION ON THE HOME FRONT

The first thing an outsider notices in Somasem at the beginning of the rainy season are the tractors. The development of the conditions for capitalist production, however, must be located in a wider context. In itself, these types of changes did not originate within the confines of the village, but came from without. Nevertheless, external conditions were only partially successful in restructuring village life, the remainder of the equation resides in the villagers attempts to cope with these transformations. Recent changes appear to have divided the village, pitting those favoring production for exchange against those opting for production for use, juniors against elders. Yet reality is seldom black or white and many households are seemingly caught in the contradictions wrought by the articulation of capitalist and lineage modes of production.

The use of a tractor is not value neutral; land size must be increased, labor organized, and money accumulated. Neither is a *nafir* labor party; relations of personal obligation must be nurtured, activated, and reciprocated. Consequently, livelihood strategies are difficult to retreat from once set in motion. And what is increasingly evident in the outcome of livelihood strategies is the individualization of production and commoditization of social relations. Access to land and labor no longer a guarantees that a household will effectively

reproduce itself as a social entity over time. Social reproduction also depends increasingly on the mix of economic activities in which household members engage and the range of assets its members can marshall.

7.1: CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

In many ways Somasem appears to be a village whose inhabitants seem anxious to leave--if not this day than perhaps another. In the center of the village a cluster of young men seem to be playing endless games of dominos under the shade of a *rakuba*[1]. As the busses and lorries rumble past heading for distant cities, they wistfully look up and begin talking of better lives in El Obeid, Port Sudan, or Khartoum. They are always making plans for the day of their departure. Stories of those who have 'made it' elsewhere punctuate the heavy sighs of boredom. Even the layout of Somasem imparts this image of pervasive discontent, with its division into three separate sections. Shardi, approximately one hour drive south of Dilling, is split by the tarmac road. It extends westward from the base of a small protective hill, although many constructions attest to the ferocity of the wind-born storms of seasons past through their various states of disrepair. Shardi also claims the market which contains three shops, a flour mill, an oil press, two tea stalls, a mosque, and a small shelter to house adult literacy classes. Situated

[1] A *rakuba* is thatching raise on poles to provide shade and is left open to any comforting breeze.

out of sight of Shardi, some 15 minutes northwest by foot, Belangadu is separated from Shenku by a seasonal *khor*. Like their neighbors in Shardi, the inhabitants of both Belangadu and Shenku have also sought shelter at the base of hills from the near-constant winds.

No one can say with any confidence the exact date of Somasem's settlement, although most concur that it was around 1920.[2] Prior to the accelerated pace of slave raids during the latter 1800s, however, travelers of the day reported agricultural activity "some 10 miles north of Jebel Ghulfan" (Sagar, 1922:140). As the site of far farms, Somasem was probably populated at this time, at least through the growing season. With the deployment of Condominium forces to the area in the aftermath of the Mahdi uprising, the Ghulfan once again felt secure on the plains and journeyed forth from various outlying mountain strongholds such as *Jebel* Sigda, Muring, Namma, and Shagra to occupy their main farms and/or to acquire new lands around Somasem. Others followed later, arriving from nearby villages such as Engarko and Dileba in search of fresh lands. Without question, the 'original' settlers claimed the best fields nearest to the village and kept other lands as "family reserve."

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[2] As noted in Chapter II, the tumultuous Mahdist period created a disjuncture among many groups in the Nuba Mountains to the effect that information prior to this time is often scanty. Until the 1950s Somasem stayed quite small with very few inhabitants remaining past the growing season.

Of the sampled households originally from Somasem, 60 percent own more than 20 *feddans* and 40 percent more than 40. On the other hand, slightly more than 71 percent of households coming later own 20 *feddans* or less.[3] For the new comer today, those without roots in Somasem, "it is impossible to acquire land." At best, a local farmer may provide a non-villager with the use of land for one to three years after which he is obliged to move on.

The commencement of Islamization in the Ghulfan range can be pinpointed with more precision. As with other communities in the Nuba Mountains, the Ghulfan found themselves overrun by the Mahdist forces which abducted many villagers as slaves and slave soldiers for its army. Following their release with the Mahdist defeat at the battle of Omdurman in 1898, the former captives made their way back to their home villages. As Baumann (1987:123) notes for the Miri, for the first time "villagers were exposed, in their daily lives, to a community of Muslim converts among their own kinsmen, clansmen, and neighbors." The manner of Islam's introduction among the Ghulfan attests to the speed in its widespread adoption, especially with the social dislocation induced by the terrors of the Mahdist insurgency. Indigenous Ghulfan beliefs among the inhabitants of Somasem, however, have paid a heavy price. Gone are the various priests, village-based *sibirs*, and

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[3] The relationship between amount of land owned and time of arrival of late comers yielded a correlation coefficient of .428 and is significant at the .01 level.

codified age-grades. In fact, many of the villagers are embarrassed to discuss these beliefs, feeling that somehow this past marks them as 'backwards.' The last *kujur* died in 1966 leaving only the elderly to mourn his passing.

The adoption of Islam and the Arabic language does not necessarily signify that the Ghulfan desire to be Arabs. Besides, old suspicions and grudges die hard and the Ghulfan, like other Nuba communities, have a long memory for past injustices. This is evident in their relations with many Arabs, especially the *Hamar* and Dilling *jellaba*. Somasem bisects a major north/south route used by *Hamar* nomads in their seasonal trek to obtain adequate pasture for their livestock. One day a group of nomads stopped in Somasem and asked a few of the men if they might water their sheep and camels at the village *Hafir*. The men responded that for a certain price they were welcome to quench their animals thirst but hastened to add that the people could drink for free. The *Hamar* grew agitated, dismissing the villagers' concern that their sole source of water, the *Hafir*, was already low. As the conversation grew more heated, the women and children of the village quickly and quietly retreated to their houses while the men slowly moved up to form a line behind their fellow villagers. Each man held a spear, ax, or agricultural implement. The *Hamar* soon moved on. Past experiences with many Arabs have united the villagers in their steadfast refusal to allow any to take up residence in Somasem or to use

ancestral lands, proudly claiming that "there are only Nuba here!" Rancor against Arabs shows in other ways. The villagers take exception to the fact that in Dilling "the Nuba have only small shops, but the Arabs own big shops." And when the question arose over the loss of livestock, the villagers roundly blamed Arabs for the theft of seven cows, 48 goats, and three camels over the past five years.

Relations with other non-Nuba groups are less forbidding. A *'Fellata'* named Mohammed arrived in Somasem in the mid 1970s. Obtaining permission from the *sheikh*, the man built a store and a living compound for his large family. Nevertheless, the family departed after only a few months because the villagers refrained from patronizing his store, preferring their neighbors' businesses instead. On the other hand, Abdul Gadir, also a *'Fellata,'* fared well in his encounter with the people of Somasem. His friendly demeanor persuaded the elders to grant him access to unused village lands. After a number of years he relocated to Dilling and opened a shop, although he still has economic ties to Somasem, renting out the tractor he now owns. The relationship proved equally profitable for a number of Somasem men too. In 1976 Abdul Gadir organized 43 other men in Somasem and together they rented 1000 *feddans* of land in Habila. The first year the group undertook all of the labor themselves. With the profits from that first year, they hired labor throughout the

subsequent years and even leased an additional 500 *feddans* in 1979. The land was left fallow in 1986 and 1987.

Agents of social differentiation assume many forms. None have exerted as powerful an impact on contemporary Somasem as did the advent of the tractor around 1970. According to Khamis Ali, one of the first to employ a tractor in his farming operations, the village labor cooperation system began to deteriorate at this time because "now people are more interested in making money." Another responded that *nafir* is becoming difficult to organize and "it is expensive." Prior to the introduction of tractors the use of *nafir* labor was much more extensive. In the past, farmers would meet informally to schedule *nafir* parties in order to avoid conflicts in their timing. This practice has since broken down so that on some days there might be several *nafir* parties, thus reducing the size of some of the *nafir*. Consequently, a type of 'bidding war' has diluted the ethos of *nafir* with participants attending those which offer meat (preferably goat) and plentiful *marissa* over those that do not.[4] But, as explained by Idris, most farmers having the means do not mind as a 'good' *nafir* accrues status and goodwill for the host.

Tractors also require some degree of economies of scale and therefore larger fields to make the use of a tractor

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[4] One day, for example, four *nafir* parties were held for weeding. After visiting each I noticed a strong correlation between the amount of provisions and the size of the *nafir*.

profitable.[5] Access to sufficient labor, especially for *jankab* (second weeding) and harvesting, can be problematic though depending on an individual's household composition, community standing, and cash on hand. As a result, sections of fields are often left unweeded which, according to local estimates, reduces the yield by 30 to 50 percent. Yet tractor use has somehow entered into the local conception of what constitutes a good farmer, regardless of the 'bottom line.' Peer pressure prompted a number of farmers to begin employing tractors. After a lengthy explanation on why he wanted to expand production, Salaam conceded that he finally began hiring a tractor because "everyone else was using tractors." Another farmer replied: "I saw everyone getting ahead of me, so I decided to do it also." Still another claimed that "A neighbor told me that a tractor is better than a digging stick." One respondent also admitted that his brother pays for a tractor to disc his field because "he does not want to be embarrassed by me." Tractors are never used to plough the *jubraka* as "it is small and is no problem, the *jubraka* is women's work."

Agricultural cooperation is not lacking altogether, however, as evidenced by the group of 44 villagers leasing

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[5] In Somasem the field sizes are given in *mukhamas* which is larger than the *feddan* at 1.6 *feddan*. The relationship between a household's amount of land under cultivation and net income produces a correlation coefficient of .8108 and is significant at the .001 level. When controlled for by tractor usage, the correlation coefficient is .8256, significant at the .001 level.

land in Habila. This undertaking required a large measure of mutual trust. The lease is in the name of five men who also maintain the records, control the money, and manage the labor. Over the years, the group purchased three tractors and disc ploughs as well as a small lorry. When the land was left to fallow, two members bought a couple of the tractors, leaving one tractor and the lorry for the coming season. It has proved to be a profitable undertaking over the years. Aside from the sale of *dura*, the group rents out the tractors to other area farmers. Nonetheless, not all of the participants will rejoin the group when they start up again, citing old age, lack of money, or general misgivings.

Cooperation and civic spirit are low. Of the sampled households not originally from Somasem, nearly 57 percent made the move to be closer to their main farm or to acquire land, while roughly 26 percent came as children accompanying their parents. While this in itself may not be surprising given the concept of ancestral land and access to it, few respondents in private spoke warmly of Somasem.[6] Some listed the lack of suitable water, a school, and a health clinic for their dislike of Somasem. Water presents a particularly acute problem.[7] With the exception of the *Hafir*, the nearest water

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[6] Control of lands through the village limits intra-rural mobility in general.

[7] In all fairness, there are technical difficulties involved since Somasem rests on a thick rock layer (conversation with director of UNICEF water operations in Kadugli, 1987). Nevertheless, the *Hafir* is contaminated by

source are hand pumps located in Engarko, 1½ hours by foot. This burden adds to the labor load of women. Water delivery lies out of the reach of most at a cost of 60 piasters per five gallon jerry can and £S 7.50 per 44 gallon barrel. The village elders are slow to petition the Water Corporation to construct an appropriate *Hafir* because, as told by Abdullai, "the people are afraid that they will have to spend money and no one wants to spend money on water." Other villagers mention the unfriendliness of their neighbors: "We do not know why, if you go to anyone's house they do not care, they will greet you and then say *'ma'a salaam'* (good-bye). They are just like dead people." Another added that the villagers in Engarko and Dileba look contemptuously upon them and consider them lazy and indifferent. Most of the insults within Somasem are reserved for Shardi with one resident of Belangadu scoffing: "And they think that they are civilized."

The village elders are trying to reach agreement on reducing the brideprice. They understand that it can pose a barrier to marriage for both males and females alike. Currently, the typical brideprice consists of four to five cows and *shayla*, an agreed upon amount of sugar, oil, rice, dates, coffee, onions, lemon juice, sweets, and clothes, especially *tobes* for the women and *jellabiyas* for the men. In addition, the groom must provide a house and furnishings for his new wife and undertake repairs on the house of his future

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runoff carrying human and animal excrement.

in-laws. A father, if able, usually will help his son(s) with the first wife by providing some cattle and/or land, but the hopeful youth invariably finds that he must migrate to earn sufficient cash for the *shayla*. Still, vested interests in brideprice make consensus on its reduction difficult; the more prestigious the girl's family, the greater the *shayla*.

In Somasem, the paternal uncles also contribute cows for their nephew's brideprice since, according to local custom, "when you receive cows from your daughter's brideprice, you give some to your brothers." Abas received four cows from his brothers when their daughters married and used them to wed his uncle's daughter. His uncle, in turn, used the cows to obtain a wife for his son. There are exceptions of course to sharing cattle. Mohammed received a total of 17 cows when his daughters wed; he gave each of his three brothers two and his sister six so that her sons might marry. When Mohammed's niece wed he wanted none of the cows as his brother "was poor and should keep all of the cows." Moreover, the villagers believe that the transference of cows binds a husband to his wife. Not surprisingly, in the case of a 'justifiable' divorce, the woman's father is obliged to return at least some of the cows, depending on the duration of the marriage. Krutukella, after divorcing his wife of 11 years, received two of the four cows he paid as brideprice. "I divorced her because she was *haramia* (bad). She would [have sex with] any man she wanted. I did not want to kill anyone and I did not

want to be killed. I had to fight everyday so I sent her back to her father." Another man took all four cows back after a similar problem, but he remained married for only one year.

The role of cattle in brideprice highlights other issues, most notably ideological practices engendered within the capitalist and lineage modes of production. Traditionally, cattle convey a variety of meanings. According to one old man who owned over a hundred cows in the past:

1) "Cows provide the means to marry your sons."

2) "If a man has many cows he can attain high status, people from all around will know him as a 'rich man'."

3) "If a man has many cows people will come to him for advice and favors such as milk in time of need."

4) "Cows are necessary to leave your sons so they will not be thought of as 'poor' men."

No where did he include consideration for their commodity component; i.e., their exchange value. Many of the young men, on the other hand, see only this aspect. They care neither for a wife or a life in the village. Ismail, 17 years of age, argued repeatedly with his father. Two of the cows from the family herd were his. His father considered the cows as potential brideprice, Ismail viewed them as a source of immediate cash to fund his resettlement to Khartoum. His father was adamant upon which Ismail told his friends: "If he does not give me the cows to sell, I will go to Khartoum anyway and I never want to see his face or my mother's again." Harsh words anywhere, but especially so in a lineage system. He eventually left much to his parent's anguish.

Even the authority of the village elders and *sheikh* has waned. Clearly social roles are changing in Somasem. No longer is it sufficient for a male to found his own household to ensure access to social surplus. The elders' absolute power in their respective lineages remains, but only insofar as the juniors depend on them for land or other resources. Opportunities outside of the purview of the lineage system and the importance of money have undermined older social relations. Regardless of the changing socioeconomic environment, however, the position of women evidences little improvement, in part due to the canons of Islam. Similarly, the villagers no longer automatically look upon the *sheikh* with respect and trepidation. Today the *sheikh's* role is limited to boundary disputes, settling petty civil infractions, and collecting the government animal tax (*Dariba*).[8] Previously a *sheikh* had the power to send a person to prison or fine him, and had policemen at their disposal. In addition, before 1982 the *sheikh* received ten percent of the taxes he collected. When queried who the important men of the village are now the villagers cite those men with large landholdings and profitable business enterprises, regardless of seniority, lineage size, and knowledge of Ghulfan customs.

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[8] This is £S 1.75 per cow, £S 3.00 per camel, £S .5 per goat or sheep, and £S 1.00 per donkey. Needless to say, the *sheikh* underreports their number to the government's tax collector.

The following story illustrates the decline of both the authority of the village elders and *sheikh*.[9] Juma'a, a married man of about 45, had sexual relations with Howa, the young second wife of Ali who was 65. When Ali found out he confronted Juma'a whereupon Juma'a added insult to injury by soundly beating Ali with his ax handle. As an act of contrition, Juma'a paid his doctor bills and then ignored the matter. Ali attempted recourse, first through the *sheikh* and later through the village elders. Eventually they ordered Juma'a to recompense Ali seven cows. Juma'a laughed and refused. Ali was forced to go to Dilling and lodge a formal complaint with the judge who ordered Juma'a to pay 14 cows or face prison. The elders and the *sheikh* told Juma'a to heed the judge but to no avail. One dark night, Juma'a went to Halima's sleeping quarters and tried to convince her to go to the judge and tell him that she had not had sex with Juma'a. Ali heard them talking and called out: "Who is there?" Juma'a replied: "*Iblise* (the devil)." Cocking his gun Ali aimed and shouted: "Let me show you where *Iblise* lives! I will send *Iblise* home!." Juma'a began to cry loudly. Hearing his frightful sobs the neighbors ran out and protected Juma'a. The next day Juma'a paid the 14 cows. The point is, neither the elders nor the *sheikh* could force Juma'a to pay. It was

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[9] This incident occurred three months after I first arrived in Somasem. With each visit I quickly caught up on each new twist. In fact, I made one last visit to Somasem before leaving the Nuba Mountains to learn of the conclusion.

only after Ali threatened his life that he saw the wisdom of their advice.

The practice of *karama* also contributes to the deepening pattern of social stratification. In the past the burial of a family member was followed by death commemorations on the third, seventh, fifteenth, and fortieth day and on the first anniversary. This sequence is still maintained but is now understood more as familial obligation than community hospitality to ease bereavement. It is frequently an expensive undertaking for the surviving household members. Halima, for example, slaughtered a goat on each of the appointed days and a cow for the year anniversary of her husband's death. In addition, she exhausted the granary store of *dura* in the process of commemorating her husband. "If you do not provide a lot of food it is shameful, it means that you did not love the (departed). We have to do it." Most villagers agreed that people spent too much on *karama*, "but if you do not, you will not be in a good situation." Only Ali said that "for myself, I believe that it is better to keep the money for the children." But then, he is still alive. Needless to say, *karama* is particularly onerous for those households with minimal stocks and can cause impoverishment, especially when the primary adult male dies. Hasania and her aged mother were forced to borrow £S 700 from the *shayl*. Her brother repaid the loan with a large cow worth £S 1000.

Another elderly woman, Kafi, sold her husband's last cow to pay for his *karama*.

A final point regarding social differentiation in Somasem concerns the drought of 1984. Overall, Somasem fared relatively well, although the cost of a sack of *dura* (approximately 100 pounds) shot up from £S 90 to £S 150. Needless to say the coffers of the three village *shayl* swelled. Moreover, those fortunate enough to have ample grain reserves or cash on hand purchased cattle from the surrounding hard hit areas, as well as from passing nomads. One sack of *dura* bought two to three cows. Even Juma'a purchased 15 cows for £S 2000 where one cow the previous year normally sold for over £S 600. The volatile grain market continued through 1985. Immediately prior to and after the commencement of harvesting, a sack of *dura* sold for £S 120 to £S 125. By the conclusion of the harvesting season the price had dropped to £S 35 per sack. The fortunate few earned windfall profits while for most, "They cried big tears." Of greater importance, the drought exacerbated social stratification within Somasem, further opening the way for capitalism.

7.2: HOUSEHOLD ORGANIZATIONS

An important characteristic distinguishing household forms of (re)production is their mean size (Table 7.1).[10]

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[10] CP refers to capitalist producers, PCP to petty commodity producers, LCP to lineage commodity producers, LNCP to lineage non-commodity producers, and WLP to wage labor producers. Throughout the following chapters, these notations are used in the tables for matters of convenience but

Capitalist and petty commodity producers show larger mean household sizes at 11.5 and 6.9 members respectively. In addition, with more children than the other forms, their mean age is lower. On the contrary, wage-labor and lineage non-commodity producing households contain the fewest members with 2.9 and 3.3 per household, an indication of the lack of adequate family labor for economically productive undertakings, including main farm agriculture and off-farm employment. Lineage commodity producers, with a mean size of 5.5, member age of 31.4, and household head age of 53.8, are both larger and younger than their non-commodity producing counterpart which is an aging form of household. This may appear a moment in the lineage household's life cycle, but it is more a testimony to the incremental rise in the standard of living and of people's expectations of daily necessities which is at odds with a more self-sufficient mode of existence. Overall, the lineage forms of (re)production exhibit pressures resulting from the reproduction squeeze affecting many households in Somasem. In general, the trend towards the sale of products presents evidence of the decline of the lineage mode of production. Those households unable or unwilling to make the transition to regularized commodity production are forced in the other direction to wage laborers.

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specified within the text.

TABLE 7.1: HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND AGE STRUCTURE BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% of households	3.3%	65.0%	10.0%	10.0%	11.7%	100.0%
Mean household size	11.5	6.9	5.5	3.3	2.9	6.1
Mean member age	18.9	21.2	25.2	31.4	24.4	22.1
Mean number age < 16	8.5	4.5	3.3	1.7	1.7	3.9
Mean age of head	34.0	47.3	43.3	53.8	41.1	45.8
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)

The sex of household heads across forms of (re)production is an important consideration of the general distribution of power between genders and reflects the available economic opportunities and constraints, especially for those living in households headed by women (Table 7.2).[11] Female headed households differ significantly from those headed by males, with the former relatively evenly divided between all but the capitalist production form in which there are none. Male headed households, on the other hand, are concentrated

[11] With respect to household size and age structure, female headed households differ little from Table 7.1. Although the mean age of members and household heads is younger, much of the difference is attributable to earlier age of marriage of women and the fact that the female heads are primarily divorced or widowed.

Female headed households		AGE STRUCTURE				
% female headed	.0%	28.6%	21.4%	21.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Mean household size	---	4.3	6.0	3.3	3.0	4.1
Mean member age	---	20.2	21.8	24.4	21.7	21.8
Mean number age < 16	---	2.0	3.3	1.7	1.5	2.1
mean age of head	---	40.8	39.4	40.0	42.3	40.6
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(14)

predominantly within petty commodity production, reflecting different sorts of pressures and a broader range of opportunities. Most households, in line with Ghulfan convention, contain a single head. The two exceptions are joint headed households; one male and the other female.

In the first instance, Habila and his eldest son, Idris, share a large domestic compound with their families. Idris, recently returned from Khartoum, will eventually inherit his father's land but has claimed and cleared some of his own. Both men stressed the closeness of their relationship as the reason for sharing a household: "Some people don't like to spend and help their children, but my father and I are very close and money has never been a problem." Usually such an arrangement signifies the elder's incontinence in daily affairs. This is not the case since Habila continues to cultivate his main farm and is capable of providing for his wife and four children by himself. They routinely consult each other on important decisions and both families, drawing on a common food stock, regularly take their meals together. The second case concerns the three widows of Abu Ali.[12] Together, they inherited six cows and 45 *feddans* of land, although the women serve essentially as caretakers. The cows

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[12] The three women spent heavily on *karama* for their deceased husband, including 2 cows, 7 sacks of *dura*, 3 goats, 4 pounds of sugar, 5 pounds of tea and 3 of coffee, 15 pounds of rice, 50 pounds of onions, and 2½ gallons of oil. They admitted that this represented much of what their husband had left them outside of land.

are intended to help meet the brideprice for Abu Ali's sons and the land will eventually be claimed by them. Aside from the obvious economic considerations, the three enjoy a warm relationship. The main farm is jointly cultivated and the grain goes into a common granary. Nonetheless, each women has her own *jubraka* and chickens which are important sources of personal income. They take turns preparing meals, gathering wood, and hauling water for the collective household. Decisions are mutually arrived at although the rule of seniority still is in force. For example, when they decide to sell a goat, Zirega, the youngest, journeys to Dilling to sell it. Hakuma and Miriam hope that one day soon Zirega will remarry since she had no children with Abu Ali.

TABLE 7.2: SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total	(n)
Male	4.4%	75.5%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	100.0%	(46)
Female	.0	28.6	21.4	21.4	28.6	100.0%	(14)
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)	

In conjunction with the marital status of household heads (Table 7.3), a clearer pattern begins to emerge. Female household heads, either widowed or divorced, gain head status by default. Without adequate resources, however, there is often little compensation in this status. Hakuma, for example, solemnly described how she lost her husband in 1977

to a sudden illness and how her only child, a son, was killed in the civil war raging in the South. Most female heads candidly admitted that while their husbands were alive, live was much easier. Without an adult male, the primary responsibility of cultivating the main farm shifts entirely to women, in addition to the already taxing domestic operations. Moreover, opportunities for off-farm employment are far less generous for females. Male household heads, on the other hand, are usually married. More importantly, when a spouse dies, proves barren, or divorces, males find remarriage easier and thus do not suffer the same fate as women. Seven of the male heads presently married had wives who had died or were childless.[13] Remarriage is not really an option open to women. Only one woman remarried after the death of her spouse, wedding her husband's younger brother according to Ghulfan practice of leviratic marriage which reintegrated a widow into another male headed household. Polygamous marriage also presents an active livelihood strategy for a male in his adult life course, extending the household's life cycle. Twelve of the 46 sampled male heads presently have two wives and two have three wives. Ironically, the main reason females outlive their mates is not necessarily due to their longevity, but the sequence of wives and the difference in marriage ages.

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[13] Tow wives had been unable to bear children and a third died in childbirth. Given the practice of female circumcision prevalent among the Ghulfan this is not unusual.

Only males in wage labor forms find remarriage a closed option due to the inability to meet brideprice.

TABLE 7.3: MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY SEX

Male	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
married	100%	94.1%	100%	100%	50.0%	91.2%
single	.0	2.9	.0	.0	.0	2.2
widower	.0	2.9	.0	.0	25.0	4.4
divorced	.0	.0	.0	.0	25.0	2.2
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(34)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(46)
Mean age head	41.0	48.5	49.7	67.7	40.0	48.8
Female						
married	NA	20.0	.0	.0	25.0	11.8
widow	.0	40.0	80.0	100	50.0	64.7
divorced	.0	40.0	20.0	.0	25.0	23.5
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(5)	(5)	(3)	(4)	(17)
Mean age head	--	38.6	39.4	40.0	42.3	39.9

By far the dominant type of household residential arrangement in Somasem, with the exception of wage labor producers, is nuclear and complex (Table 7.4).[14]

[14] Female headed households MARITAL STATUS

	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Single adult	---	25.0%	.0%	33.3%	25.0%	21.4%
Single--w/dep.	---	75.0	66.7	66.7	50.0	64.4
Nuclear	---	.0	.0	.0	25.0	7.1
Complex	---	.0	33.3	.0	.0	7.1
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(14)

Nevertheless, single adults, with or without dependents, constitute 25 percent of the household sample, although most are concentrated in both lineage forms and wage labor production, accounting roughly for 33, 50, and 71 percent of these forms respectively. Five households contain a single member (two male and three female) and another ten single adults with dependents (one male and nine female). In light of the sex, marriage status, and age of household heads, a different picture emerges, revealing distinct dimensions to the reproduction squeeze, especially for those with minimal or no kinship bonds within the village.

Historically, the lineage mode prescribes specific responsibilities and obligations which define an individual's role within the community. Specific social mechanisms provide an important security network which invariably sees people through often difficult times, such as the loss of a spouse or old age. In the case of single mothers with young children, her brothers and brothers-in-law assume responsibility for the 'heavy' agricultural tasks. After her husband's death, Ima Salim moved her family to Somasem to be near her brother. He gave Ima land and each season prepares it for planting and transports grain from the field following the harvest. Similarly, mothers move in with sons to take control of domestic operations. Following the death of his wife, Al-Nour's mother came to help raise his two small children. In the case of the elderly, fostering is a common occurrence

where a grandchild resides with an aged grandparent(s). Three of the elderly women have grandsons living with them, helping with household chores and agricultural operations.

The penetration of capitalism alters the possibility and quality of these relations. It is not necessarily out of indifference to the plight of kin, but more out of time and labor constraints associated with the transition from sporadic to regularized commodity production and labor-power sales which undermine the support structure. Of course, neglect is not absent. Hamra Shatir's son, a prominent farmer and a local shop owner, ignores his mother because she does not conform to the Muslim norms of physical shame. The point is, when the lineage mode does not predominate at the local level, it is difficult to maintain the full force of kinship relations. Many villagers are increasingly reluctant to assume the additional burden kinship obligations impose, a further indication of the growing rupture in lineage relations in Somasem. Halima and her children arrived from Kurgul after her husband died in 1980 to be nearer to her husband's family. Much to her consternation they do not provide any assistance: "I don't know why they won't help me, they are of no use. I think they have forgotten me." Halima feels betrayed because they left her husband's land to his brothers and now cannot return. Similarly, Bakhit must labor alone and complains that his brothers would rather give him seed before helping in his fields. Moreover, the absence of younger family members due

to out-migration contributes to the neglect of the elderly. Halwa's children, for example, have all left Somasem, five to Khartoum and two to Namma, and now she has no kinship network to help in her old age.

TABLE 7.4: HOUSEHOLD RESIDENTIAL TYPES

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Single adult	.0	10.3	33.3	33.3	28.6	16.7
Single--w/ dependents	.0	2.5	.0	16.7	42.8	8.3
Nuclear	50.0	66.7	16.6	50.0	14.3	53.3
Complex	50.0	20.5	48.1	.0	14.3	21.7
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)

Lastly, spatial residency patterns are important outcomes of household livelihood strategies (Table 7.5). With the exception of single member households, approximately 28 percent of households have members residing temporarily outside of the primary residence, while another five percent of households are composed of multi-residences. Slightly over three percent combine both spatial patterns. Out-migration of members is frequently a crucial element in the reproduction of the household from one cycle to the next by the temporary removal of an 'unproductive' member, especially during the 'hungry season,' or through remittances sent back by gainfully employed members. On the other hand, the labor of long-term migrants is lost for household agricultural production and

many migrants are either unwilling or unable to send cash. Especially hard hit are lineage forms. In this instance, some households find the *shayl* as the only recourse to their reproductive requirements. What ever the outcomes, the differentiation of households in Somasem, as well as individual members, presupposes particular class-based relations which are clarified in household activities.

TABLE 7.5: HOUSEHOLD SPATIAL RESIDENCY PATTERNS

Spatial pattern	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
co-residence	50.0%	59.0%	66.7%	66.6%	14.3%	55.0%
dispersed	50.0	30.8	16.7	16.7	28.6	28.4
multi-residence	.0	5.1	.0	.0	14.3	5.0
disp/multi-residence	.0	2.6	16.7	.0	.0	3.3
single member	.0	2.6	.0	16.7	42.9	8.3
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)

7.3: SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household self-sufficiency in Somasem is more mythic than real. Those celebrating its virtues nostalgically dream of a distant past, to a time before money acquired such important dimensions in the household's life course. No longer is it possible to meet the needs of household members through the inclusive activities of the household as a production unit. Very few individuals, including those in lineage forms, felt that they could manage entirely from the efforts of

agricultural pursuits in meeting their perceived needs. Brideprices, metal implements, and culinary needs like tea and sugar have long forced household members into market exchanges, whether barter or cash. Moreover, money and the goods it can buy have become the mark of success and evoke the social worth of an individual. As one man remarked, "In Somasem it is important to make money. A man with a lot of money is important. If a man has no money people don't care about him, he is nothing."

Reproduction of households is no longer possible solely through agricultural and animal production. Consequently, the combination of these activities with other economic endeavors is widespread and reveal the complexities of livelihood strategies. The nature and number of income sources expose strong differences between production forms (Table 7.6). Capitalist producers depend primarily on agricultural sales and household businesses to generate income, while petty commodity and wage labor producers illustrate the multiplicity of activities necessary to secure cash needs. Lineage commodity producers also participate in a wide variety of income-generating activities, but in those whose time demands are flexible and do not detract from lineage responsibilities. Lineage non-commodity producers display the fewest off-farm activities. Both lineage forms, however, indicate the importance of remittances in meeting their simple reproduction

requirements with nearly 68 percent of these households receiving them.

TABLE 7.6: SOURCE OF INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES OF HOUSEHOLDS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Activities	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Crop sales	100.0%	79.5%	83.3%	50.0%	28.6%	71.3%
Animal sales	50.0	79.5	50.0	50.0	28.6	57.7
Businesses	100.0	66.7	50.0	16.7	.0	53.3
Ag. labor	.0	2.6	.0	.0	14.3	3.3
DaHwa	.0	28.2	83.3	.0	57.1	33.3
Non-ag. labor	.0	17.9	.0	.0	42.9	16.7
Remittances	.0	12.8	66.7	66.7	28.6	25.0
Mean no. sources	2.5	2.9	3.3	1.8	1.9	2.7
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)

The survey data also highlight the contribution of non-agricultural activities to the formation of household incomes by the variety of its sources (Table 7.7). Only capitalist producers obtain the bulk of their incomes from crop sales, while petty commodity producers do so from both the sale of crops and animals. Wage labor households generate more than two-thirds of their income through employment in off-farm non-agricultural occupations, significantly exceeding all other sources of income. Income generating activities not organized and owned by the household are of little importance to lineage forms of production in meeting reproductive requirements, although nearly seven percent of the commodity producing variety has members toiling in *daHwa* labor. Of greater interest, remittances comprise notable sources of income for both lineage forms, yet neither has household members engaged

in off-farm non-agricultural labor. This points to the continued significance of broad lineage relations in securing access to surplus of juniors.[15] Yet remittances also show the precariousness of the lineage mode. In addition, lineage non-commodity producers account for over half of their income through household businesses, relying on a mere 12.6 percent of their income through the sale of crops and animals. Food self-sufficiency remains an important value: "Your own *dura* always tastes better than *dura* you buy in the *suq*. Also, if you have your own *dura* you can withstand drought or any hard times."

TABLE 7.7: ALL HOUSEHOLDS; PROPORTIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS SOURCES OF INCOME ACTIVITY TO TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Income sources	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Crop sales	64.3%	45.2%	36.2%	7.0%	.8%	47.7%
Animal sales	.7	14.5	7.8	5.6	11.0	10.3
Businesses	35.0	31.8	22.3	59.0	.0	31.2
Ag. labor	.0	.8	.0	.0	12.4	1.1
DaHwa	.0	.5	6.7	.0	3.7	.7
Non-ag. labor	.0	5.5	.0	.0	67.1	7.0
Remittances	.0	1.7	27.0	28.4	5.0	2.0
Mean net income (£S)	20,784	2498	334	298	1510	2556
Median net income (£S)	20,784	1377	200	138	906	989
TOTAL (n=)	100% (2)	100% (39)	100% (6)	100% (6)	100% (7)	100% (60)

[15] Seventy percent of the remittances received by lineage non-commodity producers come from former household members and lineage commodity producers obtain 60 percent from former household members and 10 percent from other relatives.

Mean net incomes across forms of (re)production disclose substantial social stratification among households. The mean net income (£S 2556) is significantly higher than the median (£S 989), evidence of wide variances in the sample. By far, the three production forms forged by capitalism have higher incomes than the lineage forms. Net incomes of lineage commodity producers is only marginally higher than non-commodity producers due to greater market participation. Although the former evidences more sources of income, the latter indicates more lucrative household businesses. The fact that both incomes are lower than the three forms of capitalism is explained by their general economic orientation towards household self-sufficiency.

The analysis of income composition for female headed households emphasizes a different trajectory than the sample as a whole (Table 7.8). Overall, these households enjoy far fewer opportunities and face more constraints. In fact, much of the variation in the sample incomes derives from the substantially lower access of female headed households to the means of production. *DaHwa* or day labor, for example, pays poorly and consequently only women, children, and the aged engage in it. Due in large measure to cultural biases favoring males, farmers chose not to hire them for piece work, preferring adult males who are paid by the *feddan*.[16] Thus,

[16] Every farmer I talked with insisted that men can do more agricultural work in one day than a female. In all probability, proof of this resides more in sex biases. With

men can earn more in a given day. *DaHwa* accounts for slightly more than 35 percent of incomes in female headed lineage commodity producing households. Furthermore, income from the sale of crops and animals betrays the tenuousness of female headed households in the non-commodity producing lineage form. Unquestionably, these sales cut into the household's consumption stock which can only be offset by remittances. Aside from crop and animal sales, non-commodity producers do not participate in off-farm economic activities. Petty commodity producers rely significantly on household businesses, while wage labor households depend on non-agricultural off-farm employment, indicating their difficulty in sustaining main farm agriculture.

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regards to weeding, for example, physical differences should not prevent women from working as quickly and efficiently as men as is the case of India.

TABLE 7.8: FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS; PROPORTIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS SOURCES OF INCOME ACTIVITY TO TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Income sources	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Crop sales	NA	48.4%	31.8%	30.6%	1.6%	16.9%
Animal sales	NA	7.9	19.5	26.0	.0	4.6
Businesses	NA	28.5	.0	.0	.0	7.3
Ag. labor	NA	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
DaHwa	NA	12.0	35.7	.0	7.4	9.9
Non-ag. labor	NA	3.2	.0	.0	87.1	55.8
Remittances	NA	.0	13.0	43.4	3.9	5.5
Mean net income (£S)	NA	398	147	117	117	507
Median net income (£S)	NA	240	151	94	444	146
Mean income sources	NA	2.3	3.3	2.3	2.0	2.4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(14)

Lastly, *zakha* or the Islamic practice of tithing contributes significantly to the maintenance of penurious households and provides an indication of the minimum number of marginal households across production forms. Not every household in need of additional food accepts charity because of its negative connotations, especially for healthy adult males. Rather than cash contributions to the 'poor,' *zakha* assumes the form of sacks of *dura* in Somasem and augments the grain stocks of nearly 17 percent of both lineage forms and 43 percent of wage labor producers. Some eight percent of petty commodity producers also receive *zakha*. The difficulties encountered by female headed households in meeting at least subsistence requirements is drawn into question. While no petty commodity producers accepted *zakha*, one-half of the

lineage commodity, two-thirds of the lineage non-commodity, and two-thirds of the wage labor forms did.

7.4: HOUSEHOLD REPRODUCTION STRATEGIES

It is difficult to pinpoint the moment of time which transformed Somasem from a relatively self-sufficient village in the lineage mode to one increasingly integrated within the circuits of capital. Young men have long migrated to seek their fortunes, although most migration was seasonal, tied to the rhythms of the agricultural season, with the two main periods coming immediately after the planting of main farms and following their harvests. Not until the 1950s did long-term migrants begin to outnumber more temporary and seasonal varieties and appears to have reached significant proportions when the Nuba Mountains became fertile recruiting grounds for the army and police. During this period, the purpose for the majority of migrants began to change from simply acquiring resources to marry and start an independent homestead, and now includes capital to enter commercial agriculture.

Individual motivations are often rather tenuous and subject to frequent revision. Perhaps the seductive face of consumerism smiled upon Somasem with the return of early migrants, creating endless rounds of new needs and desires. Possibly, the rapid spread of the mechanized schemes in Habila and elsewhere stimulated local imaginations to previously undreamt of possibilities. What is certain is that the desire to increase agricultural production has come to dominate the

livelihood strategies of most householders in Somasem. Even those households not engaged in commercial agriculture partake of the cash economy in one way or another through the periodic sale of labor-power, business enterprises, or money remitted from kinsmen. Participation in the consumption of cash commodities is now widespread; coffee and tea provide relaxing libations, cloths must be worn, medicines purchased, *dura* ground, and *karama* dispensed for the deceased.

AGRICULTURAL ASSETS

Livestock and land comprise the core of wealth in Somasem for the vast majority of sampled households (Table 7.9 p. 338). Together, they form the basis of livelihood strategies which, in one way or another, involve food security, cash incomes, brideprices, a hedge against future uncertainties, and a means to provide sons opportunities, either as farmers in their own right or in some other occupation. More durable than other forms of agricultural surplus, livestock frequently represents the difference between success and failure in achieving household reproduction goals. And unlike cash savings, through careful husbanding these animals are truly interest bearing. Consequently, their loss from disease or theft is hard felt. Without question, cattle afford the greatest 'store of wealth' followed by goats. Chickens, in many ways, represent the savings accounts of women and the poor, providing more steady sources of income throughout the year. Traditionally, chickens are primarily 'female' animals

TABLE 7.9: HOUSEHOLD AGRICULTURAL ASSETS: LAND, COWS, GOATS, AND CHICKENS BY FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
LAND						
% who own	100.0%	97.4%	100.0%	66.7%	71.4%	91.7%
Mean *feddan*	116.0	44.7	16.2	9.4	9.4	38.4
Mean cult.	102.2	18.3	5.4	2.9	1.6	17.3
COWS						
% who own	100.0	66.7	50.0	33.3	14.3	56.7
Mean no. own	15.0	15.2	8.0	2.0	2.0	3.3
GOATS						
% who own	100.0	79.5	100.0	66.7	18.6	75.0
Mean no. own	17.5	17.0	7.5	7.3	5.0	14.4
CHICKENS						
% who own	100.0	92.3	100.0	82.3	42.9	86.7
Mean no. own	19.0	10.7	10.2	5.0	3.3	9.5
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)
Female headed households						
LAND						
% who own	0.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	50.0	78.6
Mean own	---	7.3	15.4	11.2	9.2	10.6
Mean cultivate	---	5.7	2.7	2.5	1.8	2.8
COWS						
% who own	NA	0.0	33.0	33.3	25.0	21.4
Mean no. own	---	---	10.0	3.0	2.0	5.0
GOATS						
% who own	NA	50.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	64.3
Mean no. own	---	6.3	---	---	4.7	5.5
CHICKENS						
% who own	NA	75.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	78.6
Mean no. own	---	5.3	10.3	4.7	6.5	6.7
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(14)

to dispose of as they chose, but in resource-poor households profits from the sale of poultry slip from the control of women.

Among petty commodity producers the sale of a few cows or goats provides funds for farm operations--hiring tractors and paying wages for laborers--and to satisfy consumption requirements. Nearly 39 percent of these households sold cows and a further 50 percent goats. Lineage forms part with cows only under extreme duress since they are needed for brideprice, as well as for the status they impart for the lineage elders. Hassan believes that his 'manhood' was debased when he lost his cows to the 1984 drought and all of his goats to poachers in 1985. Only one lineage commodity producer sold a cow because of indebtedness to a *shayl*, though a third of each lineage form sells goats. Goats and chickens also incorporate important elements in labor recruitment strategies, essential to the provisions which ensure a well-attended *nafir* or to attract wage-laborers. Sales of surfeit grain following a successful harvest, in turn, permit farmers to periodically replenish livestock. Only in well-off households do goats and chickens provide a source of protein; rarely are healthy cows slaughtered. Those without animals, such as the majority of wage labor producers, thus find themselves placed at a distinct disadvantage in formulating agricultural production strategies. Without alternative income sources, fewer *feddan* are cultivated and then in

relation to available household labor.[17] With the exception of chickens, female headed households own few animals and consequently cultivate far fewer *feddans*.

Access to arable land presently poses little problem, although the newer farmer must be prepared for a long walk. In the main, villagers are limited more by access to satisfactory labor resources than anything else. Nonetheless, the villagers realize that one day a shortage of land will arise and therefore strong social pressures exist against its sale. Even then, there are exceptions. Izrak, preferring *marissa* and gambling to farming, sold his land. Other than express their total contempt for him, however, the villagers did not ostracize Izrak, citing the fact that his grandfather had been the *sheikh*, the land was very far from Somasem, and that it was at least sold to neighboring Namma Nuba.

None of the sampled farmers initially accumulated sufficient income directly from agriculture to further the development of productive agriculture. The means to employ tractors and hire wage-labor in the early 1970s derived principally from the sale of cattle, often acquired through previous off-farm employment. Of the 25 sampled households heads originally from Somasem, 13 had engaged in wage-labor

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[17] The correlation coefficients for amount of land cultivated and the numbers of cows, goats, and chickens owned proved significant at the .001 level.

outside of Somasem when they were younger[18]. There were exceptions of course. According to Abas Jalil, "Many of the rich farmers here made money from their father's cows. They sold them and went into agriculture using tractors and hired labor." By the size of his herd at one time, Allah Jabo was an extremely influential elder with over a 100 cows and 45 goats. He was able to give each of his six sons four cows with which to marry and when Allah Jabo grew old, he divided the remainder among them. Hussain promptly sold his share and was one of the first to dramatically expand agricultural production in 1970 and now cultivates 131 *feddans*. He later opened a store where he is also ensconced as a *shayl*. Khamis, on the other hand, worked in Khartoum from 1964 to 1968 as a policeman. Upon his return to Somasem he purchased ten cows. Three years later Khamis sold seven and now cultivates 100 *feddans*. With his earnings he too opened a shop and began speculating in *dura* and *simsim*. Today, both Hussain and Khamis are the two wealthiest men in Somasem.

Although cows are still important for expanding agriculture, cash savings is now the dominant trend among Somasem's migrants. Omar worked for nine years as a policeman and in 1985 ended his service with £S 3,328 in severance pay. He immediately hired labor to assist him in clearing his field and made arrangements with a local tractor owner to plow it.

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[18] One capitalist, ten petty commodity, and two lineage commodity household heads.

Only after he had completed this business did Omar contemplate buying cows. He plans on enlarging the area under cultivation each year as finances allow. Similarly, Abdul Karim spent 28 years in the army and returned with £S 16,000 in savings and severance pay for "farming expenses." In addition to hiring labor for his fields, Abdul Karim also purchased a lorry for business purposes.

Most stories, however, are not as spectacular. The typical early migrant contented himself with acquiring a few cows, such as Abdul Gadir who managed to obtain three small cows before homesickness drove him back to his family. And besides, he merely wanted to marry. Most migrants did not consider mechanizing land preparation and regularizing commercial agriculture until the late 1970s when household reproduction became increasingly difficult without it due to the flow of commodities into the area and the loss of active laborers through out-migration. The point is, however, lacking cows or cash a farmer cannot mechanize land preparation and employ wage-labor without at least having access to other marketable resources. Osman, for example, was forced to sell his two rifles and a tape recorder in 1984 in order to expand agricultural production and meet growing household demands. Those bereft of resources must shape alternate household livelihood.

Not every migrant, however, succumbed to pressures to significantly capitalize agricultural production. Lineage

forms of (re)production, though certainly altered, provide socioeconomic parameters which are not always easy to break. Omar worked as a railroad policeman in Khartoum for five years in the early 1960s. As soon as he earned enough money to procure five cows, Omar returned to Somasem and married with two of his cows and two of his father's. With the cajoling of his father and uncle's he retained three cows for the time his sons would marry. Omar never really considered the possibility of commercial agriculture and remains satisfied with working his small landholdings. To be sure, lineage forms are diminished as indicated by the age of households in the lineage non-commodity producing form and the increasing shift towards cash incomes of lineage commodity producing households. On the other hand, young adults frequently find themselves emersed in class process outside of the lineage mode which strike at the heart of lineage relations.

The advantage of off-farm employment for the original inhabitants is obvious in the number of *feddans* cultivated and owned when compared to the twelve original households whose heads did not migrate. On the average, past migrants currently cultivate 32.5 *feddans* and own an additional 28.9, as compared to 16.9 and 34.4 *feddans* cultivated and owned by those choosing not to migrate. The latter group, composed mostly of lineage forms, owns more cows however, a further indication of the importance of older social relations and their resistance to commercial agricultural production. As

summarized by Jabouna Omar, a lineage commodity producer, "it is alright to own a shop or work in Khartoum, but is better to be a farmer, to take care of your family and help your neighbors." Interestingly, the mean number of cows owned by original migrating villagers is 5.3, but 10.0 for migrants from the lineage commodity form, evidence of the difference in livelihood strategies and relative importance of cows. In addition, those who did not migrate, primarily lineage members, currently own more cows at 12.2 than those who did. Late comers to Somasem evidence little difference in whether or not they had migrated when younger. They cultivate less *feddan* and own fewer cows. Their dilemma lies in land and labor access, length of residence in Somasem, kinship connections, and stage in the household's life cycle. On the average, latecomers are at either extreme of the life cycle and consequently are either older or younger than the original inhabitants, especially male headed households. There is little significance in mean household size, although original migrating heads have slightly larger households.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

In conjunction with household landholdings, access to labor further distinguishes household livelihood strategies by forms of (re)production. Throughout the history of the Ghulfan, lands were cultivated primarily by *nafir* labor; planting, weeding, harvesting, threshing, and, when required, the clearing of new fields. *Nafir* also extended to the

construction of houses which need to be replaced every ten years on the average. The great stress placed on ties of obligation and cooperation bound the community, each household to the other, on the basis of kinship, seniority, and fellowship. In short, *nafir* functioned to define the community and assured a well-ordered subsistence agriculture. Withholding participation went against postulated norms and lay outside the Ghulfan conception of a sensible or rational person. Refusal to help thus constituted denial of core values integral to the 'logic' of the lineage mode and abrogated one's position within it. Now, however, as a result of pressures exerted by the wider capitalist economy coupled with out-migration, commercial activities have led to larger field sizes which rapidly undermined *nafir*, replacing it with wage-labor instead. In fact, some farmers eschew the use of *nafir* altogether, denigrating it as inefficient, the tool of the poor and 'backwards.'

Although *nafir* constituted the primary labor force for agricultural activities, household labor provided a means to complete unfinished tasks, especially when particularly wet seasons produced excessive weed growth. No household in the past entered an agricultural season with the intention of relying singularly on the labor of its members. The responsibilities and obligations enacted by *nafir* thus conditioned the household labor process. Even the elderly, who at the end of their life cycle cultivated just a *jubraka*,

counted on *nafir* as well as the labor of younger lineage members. The present trend towards dependence on family labor divulges the difficulty in organizing *nafir* and the impecunious state of many households which prevents the hiring of labor (see Table 1.1, p. 34).

Wage-labor in the fields gained momentum during the 1960s with the stress exerted on the agricultural economy by the outflow of young men, though contract labor initially prevailed as a casual undertaking to supplement the loss of migrating active adults. In the main, the villagers responded to the loss of young kinsmen through expanding the recruitment basis of *nafir* beyond the conventional mechanisms of consanguinity. Bound by the language of lineage, one still spoke of the necessity of helping a brother or sister, an uncle or aunt, regardless of actual lines of descent. If anything, reciprocity and mutual dependence intensified within the village. Even more striking, the absence of young active adults pushed women on to the main farms and ruptured the gender division of labor which restricted females to the *jubraka* and males to the main farm or *zera*. This furthered the individualization of households by permitting the continuance of out-migration and sustaining households without male heads, both which diminished a man's responsibilities to provide for women.[19] Individualization also extends to less

[19] Men held an important stake in the breaking down of land restrictions since fathers, brothers, and husbands were obliged to provide for their daughters, sisters, and wives.

fortunate lineage members and minimizes those social obligations: "People think that if a man does not make money it is because he lazy or stupid, it is his own problem." The decline of lineage cohesion thus opened the door for capitalist social relations to reorganize agriculture and domestic life, though in line with male interests.

Important distinctions differentiate *nafir* from wage labor. The hallmark of *nafir* revolves around reciprocal obligations such that every villager is expected to help any other in a *nafir* party and, conversely, everybody is expected to assist them. What must be bourn in mind, however, is that the consumption of comestibles does not equate with the 'purchase' of labor-power and thus a sponsor cannot dictate the pace of work of a *nafir* party. There are certain standards but paradoxically the participants rather than the host will usually chide an individual not fulfilling their obligations. Wage-labor, on the other hand, involves an entirely different set of social relations. The selling of labor-power presumes, at best, marginal access to the means of production which compels an individual to work for cash or some other form of remuneration. Consequently, those controlling resources employ those who do not, dictating the nature and tempo of work. As a specific transaction, the relation ceases with the expiration of the contract. Of greater relevance, the hiring of wage-labor excludes the broader obligations and responsibilities imposed by the

lineage mode and permits the immediate extraction of surplus value. The duration of *nafir* transactions, on the other hand, takes years before labor exchanges permit the extraction of surplus labor and requires the attainment of elder status. Therefore, those elders unable or unwilling to employ wage-labor in lieu of *nafir* lost years of invested labor.

To describe the demise of *nafir* solely in economic terms provides only a partial understanding, for in reality its debasement affected the entire edifice of the lineage mode in Somasem. *Nafir*, aside from its necessity in an agriculture marked by low technology, evokes the social nature of the work group as well as the wider community. After a particularly enjoyable *nafir*, for example, a host may spontaneously slaughter a goat or a chicken and the participants will eat and drink into the evening, accompanied by humorous stories and favored songs. More importantly, the intense feelings of fellowship aroused by such displays accentuate group cohesion by mitigating lines of individual difference. These exuberant demonstrations of fellowship do not make sound economic sense in terms of capitalism and today seldom punctuate the conclusion of a *nafir* party.[20] Most older farmers after reminiscing sadly acknowledged that they missed these

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[20] During my stays in Somasem only one such festive occasion transpired with the slaughter of a goat leading to laughter and songs long into the night. Young people, on the other hand, periodically gathered around a cassette in the evening to listen and dance to music popularized in Khartoum. If anything, this activity further distanced the young from the elders.

occasions of merriment and were quick to point accusatory fingers at commercial farmers and shop keepers, citing their greed for wealth and 'urban' demeanor as the cause for their rarity.

Only one of the two capitalist households currently uses *nafir*. Khamis still hosts a *nafir* for weeding, not out of nostalgia, but as a conscious strategy intended to maintain secure links to a potential labor source and to retain the goodwill of his neighbors. In the latter case, *nafir* also functions as a type of *zakha* since he could easily employ wage laborers instead. Khamis regularly attends one *nafir* per season in order to satisfy the local perception of reciprocity. Hussain, to the contrary, disdains the formalities involved in *nafir* and prefers to rely on wage-labor for all agricultural activities. Any weeding left undone is then finished by the women of the household. Only 14 percent of wage labor households utilize *nafir*, although some 60 percent indicated a preference for it. Incidences of *nafir* use among these households is low primarily because insufficient stocks would force wage labor households to purchase comestibles in the market and off-farm employment restricts member's time. Those hosting a *nafir* serve *marissa* but are unable to provide meat. Slightly more than 32 percent, however, attend other people's *nafir* parties on an average of eight times per season. The higher rate of participation, in part, is one element in these household's

consumption strategies during the 'hungry period' preceding the harvest of early maturing *dura*. A household finding it difficult to make ends meet would rather accept prepared food than a sack of grain.

Nearly 60 percent of petty commodity households sponsor at least one *nafir* during the agricultural season, while all households in the lineage forms do so. A common reason offered by the former for the abandonment of *nafir* is their adherence to the Muslim taboo on the consumption of alcohol. In all fairness, the strong association between *nafir* and *marissa* turns a number of farmers away from calling a *nafir* work party. It is not the fact that an individual may choose not to drink *marissa*, but that those who do are viewed with shame and scorn. Younger people not exposed to the time when everyone freely partook of *marissa* find abstinence much easier and tend to be more critical of its usage. On the other hand, every inhabitant of Somasem accepts Islam, yet not everyone strictly adheres to its prescripts. The public consumption of *marissa* is frowned upon in Somasem, yet when an individual drinks it as part of a *nafir* party, they do so as a farmer which, in effect, provides special dispensation.[21] Most hosts also offer *medida*, a non-alcoholic drink made from *dura*, as a substitute for *marissa*. Some villagers, critical of what

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[21] When I first asked about *marissa* I was told that it was *haram* and that no one drank it. I was somewhat surprised then when i went to a *nafir* and saw bountiful supplies of *marissa*. Yet it is not that the people were hypocritical, but that *marissa* is such an integral part of *nafir*.

they consider the equivalent of moral turpitude, privately contend that it is not so much a sign of piety, but a means to cease sponsoring a *nafir* and participating in other people's work parties. In all probability, dislike of *marissa* merely reinforces the structural tendency towards wage-labor. Such changes are not readily perceptible in the short-term, rather they have been gradual processes.

On first impression, there appears to be little dissimilarity in the use of *nafir* between petty commodity and the lineage forms. Closer examination, nevertheless, shows entirely different strategies in the numbers of *nafir* parties held and the rates of reciprocity. Petty commodity producers sponsored an average of 1.4 *nafir* work parties per season, while lineage commodity households hosted two and lineage non-commodity producers three. Fragmentation of the cooperative nature of *nafir* is confirmed in the former's lower rates of reciprocation. Even though approximately 21 individuals attend the *nafirs* of petty commodity producers, reciprocation consists of the participation of one and occasionally two household members nine times throughout the growing season. Interestingly, 13 percent of petty commodity producers, those with larger land holdings, do not reciprocate at all. The lure in attracting participants to a *nafir* hosted by petty commodity households is not perforce shared labor obligations, but the dietary supplement. Some 91 percent provide meat, although 40 percent do not include *marissa*. Lineage commodity

producers, to the contrary, reciprocate a mean 25 times sending two household members, which roughly approximates the number of individuals attending their cooperative labor parties. *Marissa* is offered by 67 percent of these households and 83 percent provide chicken or meat available in the market. Non-commodity producers reciprocate an average 12 times per season with two household members in attendance. Rates of labor exchange are similar but because of the smaller size of land cultivated and lack of surfeit grain, fewer people are required in *nafir* work parties.

Comparison of the utilization of wage-labor indicates more clearly the principles upon which agricultural production is organized by the respective forms. Capitalist households contract a mean of 18 men who are paid by the *feddan* and 12 laborers at a *daHwa* rate. In addition, threshing is accomplished by machine and two laborers. Overall, petty commodity producers employ a mean of four men for piece work and five *daHwa* laborers for weeding and sometimes harvesting. Households cultivating more than 15 *feddan* seasonally hire a mean of seven piece workers and two *daHwa* laborers, while those cultivating less retain a mean of one and two respectively. Moreover, those with larger cultivations also employ mechanical threshers.

The majority of capitalist and petty commodity households believe that hired labor is superior to *nafir*. The primary criticisms leveled against cooperative labor concern its

expense, inefficiency, and lack of control when compared to wage-labor. In the opinion of Krutukella, a petty commodity producer: "I don't like *nafir*, it is expensive. They eat and drink too much and do very little work. If a person prepares for a *nafir* and it rains, they will eat but not work." Clearly, in these terms capitalist and petty commodity producers calculate the costs of both wage-labor and *nafir* on the basis of profit and loss.[22] Slightly more than 33 percent of petty commodity producers, however, prefer *nafir* but the structural organization of this form of (re)production militate against its use; household consumption needs must be met, children educated, agricultural production costs paid. Most of these farmers turn to *nafir* in order to break a labor bottleneck, during times of wage-labor scarcities and shortages in family labor. *Nafir* labor thus affords capitalist and petty commodity producers an ancillary source of labor, critical for such labor intensive activities as weeding and harvesting. Nonetheless, household labor is critical in agricultural activities, especially for petty commodity producers cultivating less than 15 *feddans*. As Khalil responded when asked about family labor: "If your sons and daughters don't work, why have them? If they didn't work, I would throw them from the house."

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[22] Interviews with petty commodity producers revealed a consistent concern with production costs and a frustration over the fact that *nafir* labor could not be controlled to the degree that hired labor can.

Wage labor households do not hire labor, although 42 percent indicated that they would if resources permitted. The reproduction squeeze forces these households to rely systematically on its own labor to meet agricultural demands, regardless of labor preference. Small plot sizes work against the use of either hired labor or *nafir*. At best, these households can only satisfy a scant two-thirds of their yearly food requirements from their own fields which precludes surfeit necessary for securing outside labor, notwithstanding the source.

Lineage commodity producers find themselves turning to *daHwa* in order to supplement cooperative labor exchanges and family labor because of increasing difficulties encountered in organizing *nafir*, competition which raises its 'cost,' and the enlargement of field sizes. Nonetheless, its use is intermittent and is restricted to weeding. Lineage non-commodity households do not employ wage labor; working within a cooperative group is far too important. What *nafir* does not finish is completed by the household. Regardless of the form, most lineage householders agreed that *nafir* provided the best source of labor because "it is good to work with your neighbors," the ability to "complete a large number of *feddan* in a given day," and "the nature of reciprocity brings a measure of labor security to the household."

Concomitant with out-migration, the commencement of the tractorization of field preparation and planting activities in

the 1970s permanently exposed the fragility of *nafir* labor within Somasem and hence the lineage mode. The expansion of field sizes simply precludes the capabilities of *nafir* and requires careful manipulation of all sources of labor, especially the labor of all capable household members. Household relations, for those unable to hire labor and due to the decline of *nafir*, changed with the increase in reliance on family labor. It has become commonplace for marginal households to pull children from school, especially females, and bring them into the fields at an increasingly younger age. Adult females also found that their work load now regularly includes laboring on the main farm, aside from the traditional domestic operations in which they daily engage.

Whatever the motives prior to 1984, the drought created cheap labor supplies, both within and outside of Somasem. When people first began hiring wage-labor no one thought of employing his neighbor or kinsman. Besides, working in another's field for cash compromised a farmer's standing in the village as self-reliant and independent. Consequently, farmers preferred to hire outsiders. Now, capitalist and petty commodity farmers draw no distinction since they are concerned more with its cost and less with its source, and even employ lineage members. Many of the same people continue to labor in other farmers' fields with the difference being that it is no longer a *nafir* party but a work group. Households in need of money frequently find few alternatives

to offering the labor-power of its members to their neighbors and kinsmen. In addition, for households in debt to the *shayl*, repayment demands more than the swallowing of pride.

Yet change in the labor force speaks of other transformations. To suggest that the desuetude of traditional labor patterns is solely responsible for the reorganization of households and its activities misses other important concerns. One obvious mistake conflates result with cause by locating the problem in the failure of 'community' or the perceived cultural deprivations of other ethnic groups. In the words of Al-Bai:

> People helped each other more in the past and wanted everyone to do well. Now people are jealous of each other, each wants to be rich. During the time of my grandfather, a good person was one who had many cows and a lot of sorghum, and would unselfishly help anyone. Thirty years ago if a person had nothing to eat, the one who had the cows would give one or two so the hungry person would have milk. Those with sorghum would give that. After the problem was over the cows were returned. Now the feeling of community spirit is dead. The Arabs and *jellaba* teach people to be unkind, to think only of yourself.

In short, change in access to labor and life in general is nothing less than the manifestations of forces and contradictions generated by the articulation of capitalist and lineage modes.

Overall, female headed households experience greater problems in securing labor outside of the household. As a result, they are unable to cultivate the same amount of land as their male counterparts. Even though females can now acquire rights to main farms, they soon discover themselves at

a distinct disadvantage in recruiting labor. In the main, female headed households contain fewer members and simultaneously have less access to both wage-labor and *nafir*. Although a female farmer may have cash, many male laborers are reluctant to work for a woman if other employment opportunities exist, preferring to take orders from a man. And with regards to *nafir*, cooperation among women is traditionally restricted to the *jubraka*. Women do participate in *nafir* parties, although they accompany husbands who are responding to other males. In conjunction with the chronic shortage of *nafir* labor within Somasem, women enjoy far fewer historical links to cooperative labor, from the breadth of activities to the depth of relations of obligation.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES

In Somasem, household reproduction requires the careful allocation of the labor of its members in a series of productive activities. As noted, agriculture comprises an important though not exclusive undertaking. In a 'normal' year, a central goal revolves around meeting household food needs and then producing a surplus to acquire other items of use. To have no *dura*, imparts a severe loss of respect. In some ways, however, agricultural production is antipathetic to the rapid escalation in consumption and production standards. Yet for all but the largest cultivators, agricultural surplus is too variable to provide the sole source of subsistence. And for the largest cultivators, agricultural surfeit provides

the means to branch out into other lucrative ventures. Securing household reproduction thus compels the inclusion of specifically non-agricultural productive activities into livelihood strategies. This in itself is not new, after all, at a minimum metal tools must occasionally be replaced, cloths purchased, rituals observed, and so on. What is different is the intensity and scope of these endeavors. Furthermore, interviews revealed stark differences between household forms in perceived production and consumption necessities, from field preparation to diet.

In the face of wider capitalist pressures, the ability to protect oneself from indebtedness and hunger currently requires multiple economic strategies. Without access to non-agricultural sources of income, a household's only recourse during times of production shortfalls is increasingly the *shayl* which brings loss of others' respect and, more significantly, diminishes independence. Once trapped, extrication from the debt cycle proves illusive for most. As explained by one such borrower, "What you pay today makes you poor tomorrow." Beyond some minimum of subsistence, to be a salaried worker, to work for others, lessens a man's self-esteem, especially if it involves being ordered around in another's field. Therefore, it is better to own a business, to obtain cash through one's personal efforts. Interestingly, this concept of respect and pride does not extend to women who find few off-farm business opportunities.

Table 7.10 shows the percent of households owning a business enterprise and the mean number owned for all households. Interestingly, wage labor households operate no businesses. Of course, time frequently conflicts with opportunity, especially for those whose cash needs are immediate and pressing. Wage labor producers must struggle daily to satisfy subsistence needs in the absolute sense. As one wage laborer grumbled: "The pay (to wage laborers) is very little, you cannot live on it. How can you live on a few pounds a year?" In this framework, reliance on wage employment, in addition to meager household cultivation, precludes the cash savings and extra time necessary to initiate a business. In the past, men collected gum arabic or engaged in artisan production during the dry season. These, nonetheless, require the expenditure of time, especially gum collection since the acacia trees are found in the sands far to the north of Somasem. In addition, demand for artisanal crafts is low[23] and must now compete with less expensive goods available in the Dilling *suq*.

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[23] Handicrafts include saddles, mortars for pounding grain, bed frames, gates, stools, rope, and *zirs* (large clay pots for holding water).

TABLE 7.10: RATE OF HOUSEHOLDS OWNING BUSINESS ENTERPRISES BY FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% who own	100.0%	66.7%	50.0%	16.7%	0.0	53.3%
Mean no. owned	3.5	1.3	1.0	2.0	---	1.4
(n=)	(2)	(39)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(60)

A wide variety of business enterprises contributes to the formation of incomes for over half of the sampled households, with the exception of wage labor households. Because access to means of production differ, it is not surprising that the types of enterprise differ as well. Table 7.11 illustrates that capitalist households and particularly petty commodity producers engage in a diverse range business activities. Most of these enterprises stand out due to their higher capital requirements which serves as an 'entry barrier.' They also generate higher incomes. The initial capital for petty commodity producers came from past employment in the army. Three household heads stationed for a number of years in Khartoum, for example, rent their former residences in the capital, while another invested his savings in a lorry before returning to Somasem.

Low capital enterprises such as a tea stall, *marissa* brewing, gum collection, wood and thatch cutting, and artisanal handicrafts yield meager incomes and consequently are dominated by petty commodity producers cultivating less than 15 *feddan*. Females monopolize tea stands, *marissa* brewing, and *zir* manufacturing which are specifically female

endeavors. Males control the remaining activities and usually undertake them during the dry season after the completion of agricultural tasks. What is striking about low capital activities, with the exception of gum collection, is that the products are now routinely exchanged commodities. Farmers whose wives refuse to brew *marissa* for a *nafir* must purchase it, while single males seek fellowship at tea stalls. That there is a market for wood and thatch for the construction of domestic compounds and wooden handles for agricultural implements further attests to the breakdown of *nafir*. Not too long ago, no one would have thought of buying what he could have accomplished himself or had done with fellow villagers and a pot of *marissa*. To pay another would have meant that a man had no kinsmen or friends, no standing in the community. Today, only those in the lineage forms look down on such ventures. Similarly, handicrafts were made to order rather than explicitly produced for a faceless market and were paid for in kind or cash. The reorganization of space and time in Somasem, to be sure, posed the opposition of interests in structural terms, but expressed them in the lives of individuals through the fragmentation of everyday relations.

TABLE 7.11: TYPES OF ENTERPRISES OWNED BY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Type of enterprise	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
general store	25.0%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	8.5%
tractor rental	25.0	.0	.0	.0	4.3
agricultural broker	12.5	5.8	.0	.0	6.4
real estate rental	.0	8.8	.0	.0	6.4
lorry transport	.0	2.9	.0	.0	2.1
shayl	12.5	.0	.0	.0	2.1
oil press	.0	2.9	.0	.0	2.1
agricultural scheme	25.0	23.5	.0	.0	21.3
tea stall	.0	2.9	33.3	.0	4.3
gum collection	.0	23.5	66.7	.0	21.3
cut wood/thatch	.0	8.7	.0	.0	6.3
artisan/craft production	.0	11.6	.0	100.0	12.6
brew marissa	.0	2.9	.0	.0	2.1
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(Total n of enterprises)	(8)	(34)	(3)	(2)	(47)

Lineage producers exhibit far fewer business enterprises. Gum collection, a long-standing means to acquire cash income, is an arduous task that requires the tapper to be absent for up to three months. Nonetheless, lineage commodity producers continue to collect gum since it can command a good price in the market and does not detract from the household's agricultural labor force. In fact, gum collection enables these households to pay for tractor rental and *daHwa* labor. One household operated a tea stall alongside the tarmac road. Howa, the sixteen year old daughter of Suliman, recently bore a child out of wedlock and began selling tea and coffee to provide for her infant son. Nevertheless, when needed she still labors in her father's fields. Lineage non-commodity

producers continue to produce their traditional handicrafts, bartering with those who need and appreciate their skills.

Few business opportunities exist for females in Somasem. As a result of gender barriers, especially in the broadened domestic labor requirements, women usually are forced to work *daHwa* in order to obtain cash incomes. Women used to dominate the collection of wood but were squeezed out when men took up this activity, primarily because the distances one must now travel in search of wood. Only one female operated outside of the traditional female domain, brokering okra. Of course, this niche did not directly compete with village males and thus posed no threat.

The story of Umkom, a petty commodity producer, deserves further elaboration since she is atypical of most villagers. A 50 year old divorcee, Umkom currently lives with her five children and a 'servant.'[24] Her philosophy of life is straight forward: "If you are poor, you sleep on the floor. After that you try to buy an *angerib* (bed). Its like land, you try to increase the size (under cultivation) and improve it. You must be able to control your budget, to save money and improve your life."[25] Perhaps the lack of help from

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[24] The status of Mohammed was not clear. Originally from Chad, he has been with Umkom's household for 12 years and does all of the heavy work and many of the domestic chores such as carry water and cook. He is paid very little for his contributions.

[25] Umkom also had a wonderful sense of humor. One day her daughter returned from the store with coffee beans. There was a small hole in the wrapping through which beans had fallen.

other relatives following her divorce turned her away from lineage responsibilities or the fact that her former husband offers no assistance; "He doesn't care about this family." Umkom began hiring a tractor in 1983 and only hires wage-labor if the work proved too much for the household (two sons and three daughters) to complete. She earns cash by purchasing okra from neighboring women at one pound per *malwa* (4.125 liters) and sells them for five pound in Dilling. Umkom is equally shrewd in selling surplus grains, patiently watching the market for the optimum price. She is resigned to profit as the "way of the world." According to Umkom, "Profit is O.K., for the one who makes it, but bad for the one who has to buy from that person."

OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT

Somasem's encounter with the wider society and its subsequent integration into the circuits of the capitalist mode effects households in various ways. It effects households differentially to the degree that their reproduction depends on cash incomes; hence their access to the means of production determines, in large measure, livelihood strategies. The household labor process is not always sufficient to provide the minimum of food and cash either for daily or generational reproduction. As noted, inconsistencies in agricultural yields require alternative

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When Umkom noticed she told her daughter: "Go back and pick them up, we aren't planting coffee this year."

means to ensure at least basic subsistence. Unfortunately, not all households are able to bypass this difficulty through self-employment, or the market is such that there is low demand among the local clientele.[26] These households would not survive on a daily basis without some sort of outside involvement nor would young men be able to marry and begin their own families. Thus, the increased reliance on the sale of labor-power distinguishes the forms of (re)production. Moreover, when the marginal productivity of labor has reached the point of diminishing returns within the household unit, individuals less critical to the household labor process seek outside employment. On the other hand, not every individual aspires to an agricultural life and off-farm opportunities offer a way out of this existence.

Of the sampled households, nearly 37 percent of petty commodity producers have at least one member engaged in off-farm employment, while 100 percent of lineage commodity and wage labor households do. No member from the capitalist or lineage non-commodity forms labors in activities not directly controlled by the household, though for different reasons. The pursuit of off-farm employment, however, is not without its consequences and often creates a tension between the logic of household reproduction and the mechanisms of the larger economy within which households are located. In other words,

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[26] In fact, in 1985 Juma'a was forced to close his general store due to lack of business.

outside involvement frequently places members in distinctly different class processes which redefine household relations. The need to engage in outside employment creates the basis for independent income-streams and probably contributes to the weakened commitment to the household as a shared unit of reproduction. Moreover, this situation aggravates the need for young men to migrate and adds to the diminishment of the available pool of *nafir* participants. Women too find the complementary production domains further eroded which accentuates the imbalance of power between males and females.

Table 7.12 (p. 367) shows the disparities in the distribution of wage labor activities by sex for household members working off the farm. Most males still refrain from laboring in other villager's fields, yet seemingly experience no conflict in sending female household members for *daHwa* work. The only source of cash from off-farm employment for lineage commodity households, for example, is females engaged in *daHwa* labor. Even more striking, *daHwa* is one of the few avenues of employment available to females within the village. When we consider female headed households, this fact becomes clearer. Of the sampled women working off the farm in this category, 84, 100, and 72 percent of females in petty commodity, lineage commodity, and wage labor households respectively work *daHwa*. Males, on the other hand, evidence a greater range of occupational pursuits. Certainly, male mobility comprises an important factor in securing gainful

TABLE 7.12: **DISTRIBUTION OF OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT BY SEX AND FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION**

MALE	PCP	LCP	WLP	Total
Skilled employment				
teacher	7.7%	.0%	.0%	5.6%
civil servant	7.7	.0	20.0	11.1
electrician	.0	.0	20.0	5.6
Semi-skilled employment				
flour mill attendant	7.7	.0	.0	5.6
store clerk	15.4	.0	.0	11.1
prayer caller	7.7	.0	.0	5.6
manage ag. scheme	.0	.0	20.0	5.6
Unskilled employment				
tend livestock	.0	.0	20.0	5.6
manual laborer	15.4	.0	.0	11.1
daHwa laborer	38.5	.0	20.0	33.3
TOTAL	**100%**	**.0%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(13)	(0)	(5)	(18)
FEMALE				
Skilled employment				
teacher	9.1	.0	.0	5.6
Semi-skilled employment				
store clerk	4.5	.0	.0	2.8
Unskilled employment				
daHwa laborer	86.4	100	100	91.7
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(22)	(9)	(5)	(36)

employment since Somasem, like most villages, offers a limited number of opportunities. With the exception of Khadija, a school teacher in nearby Dilling, all of sampled females work in the village. Khadija regularly remits her earnings to her father (a petty commodity producer). Only two women worked in occupations other than *daHwa* labor in Somasem; one as an adult literacy teacher and the other a clerk in a general store, though she the owner's niece. Nearly 38 percent of males, to the contrary, migrate, usually to Khartoum, El-Obeid, Dilling, and Kadugli.

MIGRATION ACTIVITIES

As indicated, cash needs coupled with meager employment potentials in the Somasem vicinity forces young men to migrate elsewhere. Some may never return, forsaking agriculture for urban opportunities. Others do return, marry and begin their own families. Still others return already married and claim lands of their own. Women, on the other hand, either join newly married husbands or leave temporarily to visit family members. Only one female respondent temporarily migrated for employment purposes and then only as far as Dilling. What is of concern here, however, are those whose migration is temporary; that is, migrants who remain household members. Not surprisingly, given greater male mobility and the money demands of marriage and agriculture, men evidence a higher incidence of temporary out-migration, with nearly 20 percent of male household members leaving Somasem. In distinction to

males, only 13 percent of females migrate for short periods of time. No male members of lineage non-commodity household migrate, nor do females from either lineage form. Table 7.13 displays the percentage of households with incidences of temporary migration and the mean number of migrants, as well as the percentage of household members by sex who temporarily migrate.

TABLE 7.13: PATTERNS OF TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% w/migrants	50.0%	30.8%	33.3%	.0%	57.1%	41.7%
mean number	1.0	2.0	1.3	0	2.3	1.7
% of household members by sex						
Male	8.3%	20.3%	25.0%	.0%	30.0%	19.5%
Female	9.1	16.4	.0	.0	9.1	13.1

Equally revealing are the primary objectives underlying migration episodes (Table 7.14). What is immediately apparent is the fact that overall only some 27 percent of males migrate for other than economic purposes, while 92 percent of females do. Young men labor at a wide variety of jobs, although manual labor is more common with 21 percent of males engaged in this activity. Older men, accounting for 59 percent of employed male temporary migrants, collect gum arabic. Aside from attending a secondary school, 52 percent of female migrants temporarily leave Somasem to visit relatives or

accompanying other household members. Overall, females tend to remain in Somasem until they are married when they join their husband's household.

TABLE 7.14: PRIMARY REASON FOR TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY SEX AND FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION

	CP	PCP	LCP	WLP	Total
MALE					
employment	.0%	19.2%	.0%	100%	23.5%
seek employment	.0	7.7	.0	.0	5.9
tend livestock	.0	15.4	25.0	.0	14.7
collecting gum	.0	30.8	50.0	.0	29.4
attend school	100.0	15.4	25.0	.0	17.6
visiting	.0	11.5	.0	.0	8.8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(26)	(4)	(3)	(34)
FEMALE					
employment	.0	4.3	.0	.0	4.0
attend property	.0	4.3	.0	.0	4.0
attend school	100.0	34.8	.0	100.0	40.0
visiting	.0	30.4	.0	.0	28.0
accompany others	.0	21.7	.0	.0	24.0
TOTAL	100%	100%	.0%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(23)	(0)	(1)	(25)

Although male migration certainly contributes to the decline of *nafir* and increased rates of separation of men from their families[27], distance does not necessarily dissolve household bonds. Cash remittances as well as food and clothing from working migrants continue to be an important source of household sustenance, with temporary migrants

[27] Roughly 43 percent of male migrants are married and another 11 percent are sons and brothers of the household head.

sending an average of fS 284 a year, and food and clothing an average of 1.5 times during the year.[28] As long as lineage obligations are met, husbands sustain ties to families and single males retain their claims on ancestral lands. In general, all but the wealthiest households feel the production squeeze and are more prone to migrate as the result of lack of opportunities. At the other end, wealthy households are able to fall back on their own resources so that sons and daughters migrate primarily in search of education or to access other sources of economic mobility.

When compared to males permanently leaving the household, 73 percent initially migrated to gain employment, with three men traveling as far as Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Permanent migrants, those severing household ties, also work in various jobs, although 37 percent are manual laborers and 21 percent are in the army or police. Only 17 percent of permanent male migrants remained in Somasem, having married and begun their own households. Of the permanent female migrants, 90 percent severed household ties only after marriage, while the remaining 10 percent joined the household of another relative.

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[28] Migrants from petty commodity households remit an average of fS 460 per year, fS 240 from wage labor households, but only fS 20 from lineage commodity households, reflecting the type of employment. Most migrants from the latter form are cow herders, guards, or construction laborers, all paying meager salaries.

CHAPTER VIII

SHAIR TOMAT: YEOMAN FARMERS IN THE NUBA MOUNTAINS

Success is measured in different ways; for some by an individual's proficiency in amassing material wealth, and for others through the ability to fulfill social responsibilities. To be successful in Shair Tomat requires both, but the pursuit of riches should never come at the expense of another person, especially a relative. Unlike Somasem, success is not solely an individual affair, but imparts an obligation to other household members, to the wider lineage, and then to the village as a whole. In short, success translates more as a collective than an individual attribute. The household centeredness of the production and consumption unit facilitates and ensures this. To be sure, issues of patriarchy, age, and gender structure household relations and thus define the scope of opportunities open to the respective members. Nevertheless, within these parameters members work to promote their respective pursuits, ever mindful that an individual's good fortune is conditioned by the household's providence.

Within Shair Tomat, food self-sufficiency dominates all other livelihood considerations. When this condition is met, growing cotton, off-farm employment, and household businesses take on a different character. These activities provide an abundance, something apart from self-sufficiency. Thus agricultural endeavors lie at the center of household

livelihood strategies. Yet despite the importance of agriculture, most villagers acknowledge that the reproduction of the household requires a careful mix of other economic activities, but only as long as they do not interfere with the household unit's basic sustenance and well-being. Consequently, livelihood strategies are formulated around the household's agriculture schedule and rely on the invocation of patriarchy, the position of women, and the general ideology of kinship in their implementation.

8.1: CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Shair Tomat, with approximately 380 people, isn't a particularly populous village but seems typical to others found throughout the Nuba Mountains. The houses are characteristically round[1], constructed of mud with thatched conical roofs. The living compounds are scattered across the top of a large rolling knoll and extend down the gentle slopes to its base and beyond. The original families occupy the uppermost area, in part for the panoramic view of the plains and the distant *jebels* beyond. In a small clearing atop the knoll stands a large shade tree which is a favorite place for the elders to congregate in the evening to discuss matters of the day. The young boys patiently serve the elders, shuttling back and forth from the living compounds to bring a glass of cool water or hot tea. The faces of the boys reflects the

[1] These structures, called *goteas*, are the most prevalent type of houses in the Nuba Mountains. Square houses are more recent and are influenced by urban Arab culture.

gravity of the on-going conversations with their somber looks or mirthful grins.

The manner of Shair Tomat's settlement goes to the core of Sudanese history. With the consolidation of Condominium rule in the Nuba Mountains during the 1920s and 1930s, British policy was carried out with the twin missions of regularizing the production of agricultural commodities, most notably cotton, and collecting taxes. After years of internecine warfare throughout the *jebels*, this proved no easy feat. The objectives of pacification involved relocating various Nuba communities to the plains, demobilizing the Arabs, and minimizing contact between the two "tribes" (see Stevenson, 1984). The establishment of Shair Tomat grew directly out of those efforts. The initial *Hawazma* (*dar Jama'a*) settlers arrived in the area in 1933, forcibly moved by the British from Daloka in the Shatt range. They were given specific instructions to take up farming and desist from future raids on their Nuba neighbors. In many respects, then, the *Hawazma* of Shair Tomat were 'created' in the pastoral image of the English yeoman farmers.

The extended family of Al-Haj Abdullah was the first to be relocated by the British from Daloka to Shair Tomat. The move, however, was not a matter of choice. The mid-nineteenth century witnessed the rise of the Mahdi movement and the siege of El Obeid. At this time many *Hawazma* fled southward to the Nuba Mountains in order to escape the chaos engulfing Northern

Kordofan. Al-Haj's family eventually made their way to Daloka along with other *Hawazma*. Having lost their livestock and not being sedentary agriculturists, the *Hawazma* took up slave raiding and eventually cattle rustling in the outlying areas adjacent to their new home. Al-Haj's grandfather and later his father organized the incursions with military precision. The captured Nuba slaves were sold in towns such as El Obeid and Al Nahud, or to passing *Hamar* Arabs. The cattle were disposed of locally. Needless to say, these activities proved intolerable to the British and it was decided that they would make better farmers, but not in their old hunting grounds. Nevertheless, not all of the *Hawazma* were forced from Daloka and today Al-Haj still has a few relatives residing there.

One day Kafi, a Miri Nuba from Seraf Al Dai, came to visit the wife of Moustafa Abdullah, the granddaughter of one of the wives of Al-Haj's deceased father. His story illustrates the rather curious and complex ties that bind people in Shair Tomat. Kafi's grandfather, as a small child in Miri, was kidnapped by Arabs and sold in Northern Kordofan. Tio managed to escape after three months and find his way home. Unfortunately he was kidnapped again but his luck held firm. On route north he managed to kill a guard and fled to Seraf Al Dai where he was given shelter (or held) by an old man in return for helping the old man in his fields. When Tio became older the old man adopted him and gave him land as he would to a son. Eventually Tio's father learned of his son's

whereabouts and travelled to Seraf Al Dai to ask Tio to come home. Tio explained that his life was good in Seraf Al Dai, that he was happy. Tio's father was pleased with his son's good fortune and sent two of his daughters to live with Tio. One day a sister was kidnapped by Al-Haj's grandfather (old habits die hard) and Al-Haj's brother married her. That women's granddaughter, the one Kafi came to visit that day, is married to Moustafa. Moustafa is the son of Al-Haj, making his wife's grandmother his paternal great aunt.

Other people settled in Shair Tomat in the intervening years. Like Somasem, the availability of unclaimed fertile lands provided the main attraction. The newcomers, however, found it necessary to adopt the *Hawazma* customs practiced by Al-Haj's family in order to remain in Shair Tomat. The family of Yagoub Omar, for example, journeyed from Northern Darfur by way of Zolatair. Unlike the *Hawazma* of Daloka, the *Bergu* had a history of farming and *nafir* labor parties. Nonetheless, the drinking of *marissa* stopped in Shair Tomat as Al Haj's father was a devout Muslim who did not tolerate its use even in the fields. El Baroud Kuku's family, the second largest in Shair Tomat after Al-Haj's, originally hailed from the Miri range, although their far farm was in the vicinity of present-day Shair Tomat. As peace slowly came to the area the Kuku family edged ever closer to their primary lands, first settling in Seraf Al Dai, then Tesse, and finally in Shair Tomat. Like Yagoub Omar, El Baroud and his brother readily

reply that they are *Hawazma*.[2] With the exception of one Keiga Nuba family, all of the inhabitants of Shair Tomat today claim to be *Hawazma*, having fully adopted the customs.

Family ties run deep in Shair Tomat. Perhaps it is the *Hawazma* customs coupled with the manner of the village's settlement which make kinship bonds so strong. At any rate, these ties mitigate against the full penetration of capitalism, the 'rational' pursuit of profit and full subsumption of labor to capital. According to the village elders, a successful farmer, first and foremost, is one who is able to feed his family and meet their needs. Any money left over should be utilized to purchase animals, an important 'store of wealth' against future uncertainties. "If you are very rich," added one elder named Al Yas, "you must be *harami*, not taking care of the family." An individual is also obligated to assist members of their extended family or lineage, not necessarily on a day to day basis, but always with life's larger problems and uncertainties. Mahdi, for example, helped feed his brothers' families during the drought of 1984 with his ample grain reserves. El Baroud and Ismail unquestioningly undertake each other's field chores when one is too ill to work. Moreover, El Baroud's son tends both his father's and uncle's cattle since Ismail also operates the

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[2] When I first began interviewing Ismail and Baroud I was surprised when they replied that they were *Hawazma* since they looked like Miri people. It was through these two men that I began to appreciate the fluidity of so-called tribal distinctions.

tahona in Seraf Al Dai, although cattle sales are kept separate. It is difficult to imagine anyone in Shair Tomat refusing a legitimate request from a relative. As summarized by Issah, "If you cannot depend on your family, who can you depend on?," to which the elder Adam added, "No one will care for you like family."

The people of Shair Tomat exhibit a strong attachment to the land; it is the source of everything that is good in the village. Not only does land provide the means necessary to live and prosper in the village, it is at the heart of local values which place great importance on being independent. To perform manual labor for cash, especially on another's field, is to ignore one's own farm and family, and is almost akin to being a slave. Finally, land is what ultimately holds the family together and, in part, defines their relations. Farmers rely principally on family or household labor in their agricultural operations. According to the household division of labor, male members are entrusted with cultivating the main farm and females the family *jubraka*. Both may, however, work on either depending on the labor requirements of a given day, although women will never work the main farm if non-lineage males are present since female exclusion prohibits this interaction.[3] Older children toil alongside their parents until they marry and begin families of their own, helping out

[3] Roughly 63 percent of the sampled adult male farmers reported that they worked in the main farm and *jubraka*, while nearly 73 percent of adult females did both.

wherever they are needed. What the family is unable to accomplish in the main field is completed by wage-labor and/or *nafir*, depending on the availability of each, as well as household finances. Optimally, most farmers plant their fields with the intention of doing all of the work with family labor and resort to outside labor as the last recourse.

The importance of family labor cannot be overstated, in part because of the difficulties involved in obtaining non-household labor. The overall scarcity of wage-labor reflects the competing employment opportunities in Kadugli, Khartoum, and elsewhere, placing its use out of the range of many household budgets for all but the most labor-intensive tasks such as weeding and picking cotton. Even then it can be difficult to locate and frequently must be enticed through the provision of a mid-morning meal replete with meat of some kind. This can significantly add to the already expensive cost of wage-labor.

The practice of *nafir* in Shair Tomat suffers a similar fate, especially in the absence of a strong tradition of *nafir* throughout the village as a whole. In the face of limited consanguine relations, no other mechanisms of recruitment exist to buttress *nafir* relations of obligation. Accordingly, attending four other *nafir* parties is considered a reasonable number by many farmers. As a result, the average *nafir* size is much smaller in Shair Tomat than in either Somasem or Shatt

Damam, even given the smaller population of Shair Tomat.[4] Moreover, *nafir* parties in the past were scheduled in consultation with relatives and neighbors to limit the number of *nafir* in a given day. Now *nafir* parties contend for village labor by providing meat such as beef, goat, or chicken, which can make a *nafir* gathering a rather expensive undertaking. Many villagers prefer wage-labor to *nafir* since they believe that it can accomplish more work in a day than the latter. In line with *Hawazma* customs, *nafir* activities are organized by gender and the sexes kept separate.

Bounded by Saraf Al Dai to the west, Tesse to the north, Al Kamboi to the east, and Shimal Morte to the south, there are not a lot of unclaimed land reserves available to the inhabitants of Shair Tomat. A unique inheritance system has emerged which effectively copes with the relative shortage of land in conjunction with maintaining the viability of holdings. Land inheritance is adelphic according to *Hawazma* customs--land is always inherited by males--but with an added twist. In order to inherit land a male must marry his first cousin from within the village, preferably his father's brother's daughter (patrilateral cross-cousin marriage). This also empowers a male to claim and clear available unused village lands. If a young male does not have at least one wife according to the dictates of custom or indicates no

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[4] When I told farmers in Shatt Damam about the number of *nafir* people attended in Shair Tomat they laughed and said: "That is because they are not Nuba, they don't know *nafir*."

desire to farm, he, like his sisters, can inherit anything but land.[5] This practice preserves the integrity of family fields and, of equal importance, village lands. Strong informal sanctions exist to preserve this convention. In the words of Daoud:

> The old people see who married within the family and divide their land among them. Those who did not can only get land temporarily, maybe for two or three years. If people break this custom, people will come and tell you. You must make things right or you will be isolated and forced to go. Otherwise no one will have enough land or outsiders will get it.

It is the function of the *sheikh* to oversee the village lands, especially important for those lands left idle by temporary migrants.

Furthermore, village lands are not rented out for a period of more than two years. The elders have strong opinions on this matter. According to Ibrahim:

> If your sons leave the village for a while and you rent your land, they will not return because you have no land to give them. It can be a big problem for those who return and find no land to farm. Renting land is bad for the family.

If at the end of two years the lessee wants to own the land or shows a reluctance to vacate it, the elders go to the police and force his eviction. Consequently, most are leery of renting lands to outsiders. The one exception to this occurred in 1970 when the elders quarreled incessantly over what to do with excess uncleared village lands after the

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[5] In practice females generally do not inherit little if anything. It is assumed that her husband has sufficient means to take care of her and that he will inherit from his father.

government made moves to confiscate it. Some wanted to rent the lands to a *jellaba*, others did not. In the end the elders contacted Ismail Mousa, a *jellaba* of acquaintance from Kadugli (he was originally from El Nahud), who cleared and farmed 1,250 *feddans* until 1972. Ismail gave the villagers some *dura* so that they would feel good about him. After Ismail departed, the land was let fallow for two years until the villagers attempted to reclear the land by hand. This task proved too difficult. Hashim Abdullah then suggested that the village apply to the Nuba Mountains Agricultural Corporation (NMAC) for inclusion in their cotton schemes. In this way, the matter of the excess land was finally resolved through the NMAC consolidating the village landholdings and redividing it into *dura* and cotton fields.

The NMAC ploughs the cotton fields and, for a fee, the *dura* fields, although some farmers rent private tractors for the latter due to the logistical problems inherent in the NMAC operation.[6] Most farmers are dissatisfied with cotton now, citing its low price and the insufficiency of rain. In fact, Al Nour fully expects cotton to fail every fourth year. No one is forced to grow cotton and can exchange their cotton field for lands solely within the *dura* section. The farmers, however, have become accustomed to the NMAC ploughing their fields and at a much lower cost than the *jellaba* charges for

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[6] Unlike Somasem, the correlation coefficient for household income and area under cultivation is not significant when controlled for by tractor use.

his tractor. As a result, many neglect their cotton fields and concentrate on the other crops.

Life is far from idyllic for the people of Shair Tomat. There is a small community-owned shop, but it is open intermittently at best. All other services must be attained at Seraf Al Dai, approximately one hour walk. The marketing of crops poses an additional difficulty as the village is some 30 minutes walk from the tarmac road. Those without a donkey or the cash to rent a lorry or donkey must haul the crops to the road which places limits on the amount farmers can sell at any one time. The *jellabas* who venture to Shair Tomat in order to purchase crops directly from farmers are a poor alternative since they offer lower prices than the *suq* in Kadugli. Furthermore, the rise in brideprice over the years continues to force young men to migrate and decreases the supply of family labor. Currently, a typical brideprice consists of between £S 300 to £S 500 in addition to clothes, one sack each of sugar, onions, charcoal, and wheat flour, two sacks of *dura*, two jerry cans of oil, one carton each of sweets and washing soap, one gallon of kerosine, five pounds of tea and ten of coffee, and twelve bottles of perfume. The groom must also provide a house for his wife. As in Somasem, a community consensus has proved illusive in reducing the brideprice, although cattle are no longer required.

Finally, *karama* can deplete a household's resources, placing marginal households at risk. And since husbands and

fathers customarily command more respect than wives and mothers, more is spent on their *karama*. Fahtma, for example, sold her husband's last two cows in order to commemorate her deceased husband. Social convention cannot easily be disregarded and family pride requires obeisance such that older lineage members will quietly urge a reluctant widow or son to spend. But as explained by Hamid, "If a person spends a lot of money on *karama* then Allah will bless you." Batul, on the other hand, chided Hamid, replying that "the dead don't work!."

In spite of these problems, Shair Tomat is a tightly knit community. Neighboring men often carry their dinners to a convenient location to dine in the company of their friends, while women and children similarly eat together with their neighbors. Relatives also routinely take their meals jointly, with the women alternating the cooking. This sense of the collective well-being extends to other areas as well. There is no *shayl* in Shair Tomat, primarily because the villagers refuse to grant them a foothold. The importance of this is not lost on the villagers. Outside of the household and even the village, one must avoid being in debt in order to remain independent. Consequently, the reproduction squeeze affecting households in Somasem looses the harshness of its impact. Essaug, for example, advanced the £S 800 needed to cover the village sugar ration and at times will lend his neighbors money for unforeseen expenses. Loans are always repaid but

when people have the money and at no interest. Overall, the degree of social differentiation through indebtedness is limited in Shair Tomat in comparison with the other two villages of Somasem and Shatt Damam.

Unlike Somasem, the village of Shair Tomat withstood the more deleterious effects of the drought of 1984. Although social stratification exists, it was not exacerbated through the institution of the *shayl*, the depletion of granaries, or the loss of livestock. To be sure many people suffered, but not to the extent of other villages such as Shatt Damam. In part, kinsmen with a surfeit of grain opened their stocks to needy relatives and better off households did not abandon the practice of *zakha*. Moreover, Shair Tomat was able to access international food relief agencies through influential former village inhabitants in Kadugli.

8.2: HOUSEHOLD ORGANIZATIONS

On the whole, the village of Shair Tomat is relatively prosperous by Nuba Mountain standards. No one goes hungry nor are villagers, with very few exceptions, reduced to selling their labor-power to their neighbors. In fact, rarely are household members compelled to abandon the village during the hungry season in order to leave more food for those remaining. People do leave, but for different reasons. The degree of social stratification found in Somasem and Shatt Damam is strikingly absent in Shair Tomat. Few households are considered poor by Nuba Mountain standards, yet fewer still

enjoy an abundance of wealth. Most households remain small-scale enterprises with some 68 percent engaged in petty commodity production and another 13 percent lineage commodity production. This not only reflects present realities of multiple economic strategies, but the level of commoditization of social relations; i.e., the transformation of the lineage mode.[7] Within this context, the regularized production of commodities and/or sale of labor-power are increasingly a precondition of household reproduction. Young people are particularly prone to capitalist pressures in their efforts to marry or to meet household consumption requirements. Consequently, the lineage forms are both aging households and small. What allowed lineage forms to remain viable in the recent past, ironically has led to its demise; namely the system of land inheritance, education of male children, and subsequent off-farm employment of sons. Table 8.1 summarizes household size and age structure by forms of (re)production.

TABLE 8.1: OVERVIEW OF HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND AGE STRUCTURE BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% of households	3.3%	66.7%	13.3%	6.7%	10.0%	100.0%
Mean household size	8.0	7.1	4.3	3.0	6.3	6.4
Mean member age	9.8	22.1	33.1	24.5	16.1	22.4
Mean no. age < 16	5.0	3.2	1.3	1.5	4.0	2.9
Mean age of head	52.0	51.5	60.8	52.5	41.3	51.8
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)

[7] In other words, exchange transactions are less C-M-C and increasingly within the circuits of M-C-M^1.

The sex of household heads is indicative of the intensity of Islamic patriarchy, strength of female subservience to males, and general lack of female empowerment (Table 8.2). Female headed households, lacking in the capitalist and lineage commodity forms of (re)production, are structurally similar to their male counterparts in petty commodity and lineage non-commodity forms. This, however, is no consolation for the women themselves of Shair Tomat, but reflects the severe state of inequality between men and women in general. Contrasts between male and female headed households are more revealing among wage labor producers. Of the three wage labor households, one is made up of a single aged female with no dependents which places the entire burden of the household workload on her, while those headed by males contain dependents with whom the work load may be shared, if not now than in the near future.[8] Nevertheless, statistical differences across forms of (re)production do foreshadow the over all lack of opportunities available to females in the higher rate of male headed households in petty commodity production, lower rate in wage labor households, and absence in the lineage non-commodity form.

[8] Female headed households

	PCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% of households	57.1%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%
Mean household size	7.0	3.0	1.0	5.0
Mean member age	20.3	24.5	50.0	21.9
Mean number age < 16	3.0	1.5	NA	2.1
Mean age of head	48.4	52.5	50.0	49.6
(n=)	(4)	(2)	(1)	(7)

TABLE 8.2: SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total	(n)
Male	4.3%	69.6%	17.4%	NA	8.7%	100.0%	(23)
Female	NA	62.5	NA	25.0	12.5	100.0%	(8)

Consideration of the marital status of household heads further contrasts men and women (Table 8.3). Female heads are disproportionately widowed or divorced; none are married and obviously gain head status by default. Even then, women do not completely gain independence of action when elder male lineage members reside in the village. Male elders of the same lineage customarily consult each other in reaching important decisions regarding such issues as out-migration and household businesses, with the senior male (*rab al-usra* or family head) exercising greater authority. Despite being a household head, women do not become part of this inner circle of kinsmen and still find that they must present their opinions through a male relative. Moreover, the brother-in-law of a widow, for example, serves as the caretaker of the deceased husband's assets. Fahtma's brother-in-law kept a firm hand on the household's purse strings, allowing Fahtma sole discretion only in sales which did not involve his dead brother's estate. Most of the female heads resent this exclusion but adhere to it since they depend on the help of male relatives to preform the heavy main-farm tasks. Despite objective limitations over the assistance male relatives are

able to extend, the alternative to no aid can be frightening and ensures female compliance to the commands of male relatives.

TABLE 8.3: MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD, BY SEX AND FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Male	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
married	100%	93.8%	100%	NA	100.0%	95.7%
widower	.0	6.3	.0	NA	.0	4.3
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(34)	(3)	(0)	(4)	(46)
Mean age head	52.0	52.4	60.8	NA	37.0	52.5
Female						
widow	NA	80.0	NA	100	100.0	87.5
divorced	NA	20.0	NA	.0	.0	12.5
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(5)	(0)	(2)	(1)	(8)
Mean age head	--	48.4	--	52.5	50.0	49.6

Remarriage for women is rare, even leviratic marriage in the case of widowhood. Males, on the other hand, find no social obstacle to remarrying. Three currently married male heads had out lived at least one wife. Another four of the 23 sampled male heads presently had two wives. As in Somasem, polygamous marriage provides a distinctive livelihood strategy, either to extend the household's life cycle or to increase the number of children of the same age group through the immediate addition of fertile women. In accordance with the system of land distribution, the first wife of male residents is always a first cousin from Shair Tomat, while the

second or third are usually Nuba women from surrounding villages.

All of the households in Shair Tomat contain a single head with the exception of one headed by two widowed females who jointly pool their resources on the basis of friendship and need. Although Miriam's brother was the husband of Katchi, their household arrangement was not forged through kinship bonds. According to Miriam, "We had been friends for a long time, so when our husbands died we decided to make a single household. This way, life is a little easier for both of us." The single female household also merits special consideration. Ammu was never able to bear children. Nonetheless, she and her husband raised three of his nephews who have since migrated from Shair Tomat. Her brother-in-law took her husband's land upon his death and now she cultivates only a *jubraka*, a gift from her late brother. Having no males to assist her, Ammu relies on cash remittances from her nephews.

Without question, the dominant type of residential arrangement is nuclear, followed by complex. Single adults, either alone or with dependents, comprise only slightly more than 13 per cent of all household types (Table 8.4). Three households contain a single adult with dependents, two in the petty commodity and one in the lineage non-commodity form, and one household holds a single adult in the wage-labor form. Female headed households are primarily single adults with

dependents or complex in organization. Complex households demonstrate the necessity of drawing in other active adults in order to meet household labor requirements, including labor for domestic activities.

TABLE 8.4: HOUSEHOLD RESIDENTIAL TYPES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Single adult	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	3.3%
Single--w/ deps.	.0	10.0	.0	50.0	.0	10.0
Nuclear	100.0	50.0	100.0	.0	66.7	60.0
Complex	.0	35.0	.0	50.0	.0	26.7
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)
Female headed households						
Single adult	---	.0	---	.0	100.0	14.3
Single--w/dep.	---	25.0	---	50.0	.0	28.6
Complex	---	75.0	---	50.0	.0	57.1
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(0)	(2)	(1)	(7)

Spatial residency patterns reveal the paucity of economic opportunity within Shair Tomat (Table 8.5). Although some 53 percent of households are co-residences, one third have members living outside of the primary residence at some time throughout the year. Another 10 percent are multi-residential or dispersed/multi-residential. Out-migration represents an important element of livelihood strategies through various forms of remittances. In addition, migration enables young

men the occasion to accumulate resources necessary for marriage and beginning an independent household of their own. Incidences of off-farm employment, however, draws individuals into variant class relations which can place younger members at odds with the desires of elders. All of the single member households are found in the wage labor form and underscores the role of kinsmen in helping some households resist the pull into relying solely on the sale of household labor-power in reproducing the household.

TABLE 8.5: HOUSEHOLD SPATIAL RESIDENCY PATTERNS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Spatial pattern	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
co-residence	.0%	60.0%	50.0%	100.0%	.0%	53.3%
dispersed	100.0	30.0	50.0	.0	33.3	33.3
multi-residence	.0	5.0	.0	.0	33.3	6.7
disp/multi-residence	.0	5.0	.0	.0	.0	3.3
single member	.0	.0	.0	.0	33.3	3.3
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)

8.3: SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

When asked to characterize the village ideal for securing the household's livelihood, Mahdi doffed his *tagia*[9] and rubbed his head slowly as he mulled over his response. Finally Mahdi answered: "To be a farmer, to work on your own land. Other work is O.K, but you aren't independent." Nevertheless, the

[9] A *tagia* is a 'skullcap' worn by male Muslims.

people of Shair Tomat realize that agriculture is a deferred investment whose return must literally mature in the field. Moreover, food is not always available when needed nor is there always a marketable surplus to satisfy cash needs. In short, other economic pursuits provide greater economic flexibility and ensure income on a regular basis. Yet in Shair Tomat few employment opportunities exist outside of agricultural labor and forces young males to look elsewhere. In addition, the dependence on multiple sources of income has consequences on class formation which frequently introduces strong contradictions in traditional household relations.

Certainly new needs have been created in the last two decades. Nonetheless, villagers maintain a hard distinction between necessities, luxuries, and vices. Necessities are culturally and historically molded and embraces anything which includes simple reproduction in its most basic sense. The notion of necessity therefore fluctuates over time and for most have now come to include male education, tractor rental through the NMAC, and the occasional hiring of agricultural labor. These new needs require a cash income, invariably with some sort of certainty. Luxuries represent an abundance and permit a household to move beyond necessary subsistence, such as educating females, hiring additional labor to replace labor lost off the farm, and purchasing better furniture, a radio, or bicycle. Vices are to be avoided at all costs since they are the antithesis of 'proper' behavior and undermine the

well-being of the household. Vices, mainly integral to the prescriptions of Islam, include alcohol, tobacco, idleness, and gambling, as well as any necessity or luxury carried to the extreme.

As Table 8.6 indicates, household reproduction encompasses a wide range of economic activities for all but the lineage forms. The type and quantity of income sources outlines stark differences between capitalist and lineage forms of (re)production. Previously, cotton, cattle, and goats comprised the essential sources of cash income for all households. But in the past, cash needs were minimal. Today agriculture is unable to generate sufficient income for most households. And besides, cotton no longer is a reliable income strategy due to the paucity of rainfall in recent years and mismanagement within the NMAC. Furthermore, farmers part with their animals only to meet pressing needs, mainly agricultural expenses, *karama*, or crop failure.[10] The sale of surplus *dura* and sesame still is not intended to meet all cash expectations. Of the sampled households, only capitalist and petty commodity producers sell more than 10 percent of these crops and then primarily because they cultivate more land. Wage labor producers, on the other hand, do not sell any crop since they refrain from planting cotton and plant grain solely with household needs in mind, while a mere 33.3

[10] In the past two seasons, 40 percent of farmers noted at least one partial crop failure, usually of cotton although 17 percent indicated the partial failure of the *dura* crop.

percent of these households evidence animal sales to make up for shortfalls in food production.

Petty commodity households alone depend to some degree on agricultural labor for cash, reflecting their greater need for immediate sources of cash. Household businesses and off-farm employment also comprise important sources of cash, principally for capitalist and wage labor households, although 35 percent of petty commodity producing households have members employed off the farm. In striking contrast, both lineage forms depend entirely on agriculture surfeit and/or livestock sales, with the exception of two lineage commodity households receiving cash remittances. Roughly a third of petty commodity and wage labor households are also the beneficiaries of cash remittances. Yet remittances also displays the extent of the reproduction squeeze affecting small-scale producers.

TABLE 8.6: PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS IN SOURCE OF INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Activity	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
Crop sales	100.0%	95.0%	75.0%	50.0%	.0%	80.0%
Animal sales	100.0	70.0	100.0	100.0	33.3	73.3
Businesses	100.0	40.0	.0	.0	33.3	33.3
Ag. labor	.0	35.0	.0	.0	.0	33.4
Non-ag. labor	100.0	35.0	.0	.0	67.7	33.3
Remittances	.0	35.0	50.0	.0	33.3	33.3
Mean no. sources	4.0	3.2	2.3	1.5	1.7	2.8
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)

Further analysis of income composition discloses the contribution of non-agricultural activities in those households embedded within the capitalist forms of (re)production (Table 8.7). Capitalist, petty commodity, and wage labor producers generate the bulk of their incomes through some combination of off-farm non-agricultural employment and household-owned businesses. Off-farm employment accounts for approximately 77 percent of the income of wage labor households, 40 percent of petty commodity producers, and 18 percent of capitalist households. Household-owned businesses contribute only slightly more to incomes than remittances for petty commodity households, but nearly half for capitalist households, and 20 percent for wage labor producers. The lineage forms continue to rely on crop and animal sales to meet household needs and are differentiated from each other by quantity sold and quality of market interactions. Lineage non-commodity producers have very limited market transactions and tend to barter directly for what they need rather than sell for cash. Interestingly, some 17 percent of lineage commodity producers meet their cash needs through remittances, although no household member is engaged in off-farm employment. This points to the continued importance of wider lineage relations in gaining access to the cash incomes of junior lineage members.

TABLE 8.7: PERCENT CONTRIBUTION OF SOURCE TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
INCOME SOURCE						
Crop sales	14.0%	27.5%	38.2%	26.4%	.0%	20.9%
Animal sales	18.3	15.1	44.4	73.6	1.8	14.4
Businesses	49.9	7.5	.0	.0	19.6	14.5
Ag. labor	.0	3.2	.0	.0	.0	2.0
Non-ag. labor	17.8	40.3	.0	.0	77.2	43.1
Remittances	.0	6.4	17.4	.0	1.4	5.1
Mean net income (£S)	5,554	1,476	427	146	3,037	1,540
Median net income (£S)	5,554	887	355	146	167	759
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)

Examination of mean net incomes by forms of (re)production reveals a stark division between capitalist and lineage based households, especially in the greater orientation of lineage forms towards household self-sufficiency and their minimal integration into the circuits of capital. The difference between the mean net income (£S 1,540) and the median net income (£S 759) in Shair Tomat is not as wide as in Somasem and suggests that social stratification within the village is not as advanced or as pronounced. Nevertheless, the large discrepancy between the two measures in the wage labor form records wide differences in types of employment opportunities. Of greater significance, the trend towards increased income needs implies possible grounds for future stratification since the need for

cash is largely realized through off-farm employment (43.1 percent of all households engage in this activity).

Female headed households evidence a different outlook than the sample as a whole (Table 8.8). In general, female headed households must depend significantly on adult male household members or other male relatives. Katchi's son-in-law, for example, makes the arrangements with the NMAC for cotton seed and ploughing. Moreover, adult males are important in recruiting both *nafir* and wage labor. As a result of social and cultural constraints, petty commodity households generate 12 percent of their incomes from agricultural labor, and only 8.6 percent from crop and animal sales. Lineage non-commodity households depend entirely on agricultural activities. The two households in this form maintain strong ties to neighboring Nuba villages, placing claims on the lineage obligations and responsibilities of their kinsmen. Ammu, a single female wage labor producer, no longer is able to work and receives all of her income through the largess of her nephews.

TABLE 8.8: PERCENT CONTRIBUTION OF SOURCE TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Female headed	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
INCOME SOURCE						
Crop sales	NA	4.6%	NA	26.4%	.0%	5.5%
Animal sales	NA	4.0	NA	73.6	.0	7.0
Businesses	NA	0.8	NA	.0	.0	0.7
Ag. labor	NA	12.1	NA	.0	.0	11.4
Non-ag. labor	NA	70.4	NA	.0	.0	65.7
Remittances	NA	8.1	NA	.0	100.0	9.7
Mean net income (£S)	NA	1,526	NA	146	150	935
Median net income (£S)	NA	804	NA	146	150	193
Mean income sources	NA	4.0	NA	1.5	1.0	2.9
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(0)	(2)	(1)	(7)

Finally, *zakha* represents an important means of redistribution within Shair Tomat and provides a crude indicator of the reproduction squeeze, especially evident during the 'hungry season.' Roughly 23 percent of all households receive grain in this manner. Nonetheless, not every household in need of additional grain accepts *zakha* since it connotes a lack of independence and calls into question the farming abilities of a household. Only after the death of a main provider or in the aftermath of a severe catastrophe such as the drought of 1984 do households readily accept *zakha*. Lineage non-commodity and wage labor households are the most dependent on *zakha* with 50 and 33 percent of these households respectively receiving one sack of *dura*. Some 20 percent of petty and 25 percent of lineage commodity

producers are the beneficiaries of *zakha*, but accept only half a sack. Not surprisingly, slightly more than 57 percent of female headed households receive an average of three sacks of *dura*, a further indication of the precariousness of their lack of economic opportunities.

8.4: HOUSEHOLD REPRODUCTION STRATEGIES

In the main, change is an incremental process occurring over time. It is difficult for a social scientist to isolate with any certainty its exact dynamics. In Shair Tomat, however, the task is made easier by the manner of its settlement. By 'creating' ready-made farmers in the perceived image of the English yeoman, Condominium administrators at once undermined broadscale lineage relations; that is, they rewrote production relations away from lineage obligations. The Al-Haj family certainly was no stranger to market transactions although they had been on the fringe of capitalism through the sale of slaves and cattle. And not having a tradition of *nafir* at once reinforced the organization of agricultural production through the household and then forced households into the wage-labor market in their efforts to expand agricultural production. Even the late comers to Shair Tomat with a tradition of *nafir* found their own use of this form of labor attenuated.

So too with individual motivations; why this strategy and not some other. Hence we are not overly concerned with singular variations, but more with the wider structural

constraints and opportunities. And depending on the form of (re)production, households devise particular types of strategies. Once strategies are pursued, however, it is difficult to retreat and embark in different directions. More importantly, a particular consciousness develops in consonance with specific social relations, a consciousness which provides a way of looking at the world and one's position in it. One of the outcomes of this is the fact that households, through the actions of its members, are structured by multiple class-processes which tends to place respective notions of household responsibilities at odds. In other words, traditional notions of seniority and gender are no longer sufficient in themselves to ensure compliance to prescribed norms.

AGRICULTURAL ASSETS

Unquestionably, land and livestock form the basis of household livelihood strategies. To be a full member of the community in Shair Tomat requires land ownership, whatever the extent of its cultivation. Without land, an adult male never gains a voice in village affairs and women whose husbands do not have land never fully acquire standing among their peers. Each of the sampled households owns land (Table 8.9, p. 402).[11] Land cultivation, however, is not sufficient by itself to ensure a household's basic reproduction, even food self-sufficiency. Livestock, especially cattle and goats,

[11] In fact, every household in Shair Tomat owns land, regardless of whether they work elsewhere or not.

TABLE 8.9: HOUSEHOLD AGRICULTURAL ASSETS: LAND, COWS, GOATS, AND CHICKENS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
LAND						
% who own	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean *feddan* own	21.5	27.5	29.1	8.8	14.2	24.9
Mean cultivate	17.5	16.1	10.3	3.6	2.7	13.2
COWS						
% who own	100.0	35.0	75.0	50.0	33.3	43.3
Mean no. own	7.0	8.7	17.0	2.0	2.0	9.5
GOATS						
% who own	100.0	90.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	90.0
Mean no. own	25.0	9.4	14.3	9.0	8.3	10.4
CHICKENS						
% who own	100.0	100.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	96.7
Mean no. own	7.0	11.3	6.0	9.5	12.0	10.6
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)
Female headed households						
LAND						
% who own	NA	100.0	NA	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean own	---	22.4	---	8.8	.6	15.4
Mean cultivate	---	10.5	---	3.6	.0	7.0
COWS						
% who own	NA	0.0	NA	50.0	0.0	14.3
Mean no. own	---	---	---	1.0	---	.3
GOATS						
% who own	NA	100.0	NA	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean no. own	---	2.3	---	9.0	1.0	4.0
CHICKENS						
% who own	NA	100.0	NA	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean no. own	---	8.0	---	9.5	6.0	8.1
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(4)	(0)	(2)	(1)	(7)

provides an important source of 'savings' which a household may draw on to supplement the household diet, attract both *nafir* and wage labor, satisfy social and religious obligations, or to sell in the market to meet expenses incurred throughout the course of the year. Only one household keeps sheep; most do not because of unfavorable foraging conditions. Chickens, as in Somasem, comprise the primary store of wealth for women and poorer households. In the main, women sell chickens to augment domestic budgets and to purchase luxuries such as cloths, scents, kerosine, and rice.

Overall, less than half of the sampled households own cattle. In part, this is due to the original inhabitants relocation to Shair Tomat with little else but their immediate personal possessions. Condominium forces confiscated most of their cattle since ownership proved questionable or took them in fines for civil infractions, leaving the founding families with only a few goats. It is probably for this reason that agreement among the elders could be reached over removing cattle from the standard brideprice. The original inhabitants own an average of 2.3 cows while those settling later own 6.2. Lineage commodity producers possess the largest herds, regardless of time of arrival, with an average of 17 cows. A third of these houses sell approximately one cow per year, invariably to meet agricultural costs or *karama*, while nearly 43 percent of petty commodity producers market one or two cows

during the year for similar reasons. The lone capitalist household sold two cows for £S 1,870 in order to pay for relocations costs from Shatt Safiya. Al-Nour and Batul no longer felt safe due to the rapid deterioration in Shatt-Arab relations. In addition, they needed to replace some of the 22 goats stolen in Shatt Safiya.

Some 90 percent of the sampled households own goats, although 25 percent of lineage commodity households do not preferring cattle instead. Similarly, nearly 97 percent of households keep chickens. By far, goats account for most livestock sales with 74.1 percent of households selling an average of two goats. Only 13.8 percent of households market chickens, maintaining them instead for a dietary supplement. Thus, most households in Shair Tomat enjoy a relative bounty of animals, including female headed households with the exception of cattle.

Land scarcity presently poses no problem in Shair Tomat, mainly because the size of landholdings remains moderate. Agricultural expansion remains more constrained by the paucity of available labor than accessible land. Currently, the villagers cultivate 53 percent of claimed land. Female headed households evidence a more difficult time and farm 45 percent of *feddans* owned by those households. Most farmers nonetheless remain content with the arrangement worked out with the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation, in part because tractor and seed expenses do not need to be paid until

after the harvest is complete when farmers have cash on hand. Consequently, households are not forced to market livestock for this part of household operations. Few farmers expressed a desire to significantly expand the scope of their agricultural undertakings citing the general paucity of labor. If anything, farmers would prefer to raise production through intensification practices such as fertilizer and pesticide applications. In fact, 50 percent of petty and lineage commodity producers use fertilizer and DDT in their operations, while the lone capitalist household and 75 percent of the petty and lineage commodity producer utilize treated seeds.

Overall, 53 percent of households receive technical assistance from the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation and another 20 percent from the Agricultural Extension office in Kadugli or the Western Sudan Agricultural Research Project.[12] Participation in these programs is not equal. Aside from the capitalist household, 90 percent of petty commodity producers and 75 percent of lineage commodity households receive technical assistance. Neither the lineage non-commodity nor wage labor forms are contacted nor do these households employ extra inputs in their operations. Most of the farmers not benefiting from technical services would like to improve their agricultural situation and are aware of the advantages of

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[12] Most of the assistance from WSARP comes in demonstration plots and herds on the WSARP grounds. WSARP transports the farmers to its locations.

inputs like treated seeds but can not afford them. Some of these farmers have appealed to agencies but as one farmer bitterly complained: "[The government] only helps rich farmers, they don't care for the poor ones like me."

Unlike Somasem, little significant difference exists in the size of landholdings between the original inhabitants and those coming later, although a farmer's proximity to their landholding depends on time of arrival.[13] The original settlers own an average of 26.7 *feddan* while late comers possess 23.4 *feddan*. The key distinction between the two groups lies in their general economic organization. The first group predominates within the capitalist forms of (re)production and the latter in the lineage forms. Again, the manner in which the groups came to Shair Tomat explains this phenomenon to a large degree. Late comers did not undergo the same socioeconomic rupture that the founding families experienced and thus were better able to resist wider capitalist pressures towards regularized commodity production and the routine sale of labor-power. Moreover, both lineage forms have maintained closer ties to their former villages.

Interestingly, no advantage seems to have been gained from previous instances of off-farm employment by household heads. Approximately 44 percent of the sampled household heads from among the original inhabitants had migrated for

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[13] Of the sampled households, 53% were original settlers of Shair Tomat and 43 percent arrived later.

employment purposes, while some 55 percent of household heads settling later had done so for similar reasons. In general, both groups secured employment as soldiers, policemen, construction laborers, or agricultural laborers. Past off-farm employment appears to have been exclusively for marriage purposes, household formation, and procuring cattle rather than for agricultural expansion. The present arrangement with the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation mitigates attempts to increase areas under cultivation as the agency will only plough *dura*/sesame fields in relatively close proximity to cotton fields. Moreover, private tractors for hire usually arrive late since they begin on lands near Kadugli and work towards Shair Tomat. And with the exception of cotton, planting must still be accomplished by hand. Difficulties encountered in securing wage-labor further exacerbate the dilemmas posed by attempts to expand agricultural production. As a result, most households have come to rely on non-agricultural activities to ensure a cash income.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

By far, access to labor presents pressing problems for farmers in Shair Tomat, especially in light of the restricted notion of *nafir*. The history of the village reveals a household agricultural production strategy of labor made possible by patriarchy and the general ideology of kinship. From its initial settlement, labor marshalled through the family has undertaken the majority of work in the fields (see

Table 1.1, p. 34). No child, male or female, would refuse to work in their father's fields (or in their mother's *jubraka*).[14] To go against a father's will denies the sanctity of the family and abrogates one's position in it. Nor would an adult's siblings fail to respond to a *nafir* call without good cause. The emphasis placed on family ties, both nuclear and extended, thus reaffirms mutual obligations and responsibilities, although gender and age distinctions evoke different ranges of roles. Thus, elders enjoy a wider latitude in their ability to solicit labor.

With few exceptions, the male head of household is historically the ultimate authority. Al-Haj Abdullah's father and grandfather before him, for example, ruled the family with an iron hand. Not only did they control the destinies of their sons and the women of the household, but as senior lineage males unmarried brothers would defer to their judgment before making important decisions. Even today, a son must solicit permission from his father to leave Shair Tomat in order to pursue higher education or to seek his fortune. Consent is granted only if his labor is not essential to the farm operations. On balance, relations between fathers and older sons exhibits certain strains since it is in the interest of the former to hold junior members in the household as long as possible while sons desire to leave in order to

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[14] In general, males do not have to work in the *jubraka* and young females will work in their father's field only if unrelated men are not present.

gain control over their own labor and its products. Daughters, on the other hand, provide both domestic and agricultural labor until their marriage is arranged around 14 to 16 years of age and remain largely uneducated since little benefit is seen in their education. Temporary out-migration by unmarried females, except to visit relatives, is not an option as it is for males. Consequently, sons can hope to eventually ameliorate relations of unequal exchange through families of their own, but daughters simply go from one set of inequitable relations to another.

Interestingly, labor demands in Shair Tomat have yet to break gender distinctions in agriculture. In other words, a household will cultivate fewer *feddans* in order to maintain the separation of the sexes in the fields. Indeed, the increase of male out-migration has failed to diminish this aspect of *Hawazma* culture, even among labor deficient households. Thus, gender discrimination can prove more onerous for female headed households than for those headed by males. Females are automatically denied direct access to non-kin male labor and consequently are unable to cultivate as many *feddans*. This tendency is reenforced by the inheritance system which effectively bars women from outright land ownership. Widowed or divorced female household heads therefore find that rules of patriarchy make their reliance on non-household male relatives indissoluble. Without adult male

relatives within the village, a widow such as Ammu is quickly reduced to reliance on *zakha* and other forms of charity.

On the other hand, the absolute authority of family elders is now attenuated vis-à-vis sons. When Al-Haj's third son, Moustafa, informed his father that he wanted to leave the village in order to further his studies and become an accountant, Al-Haj immediately dismissed his request. Moustafa, however, was persistent and at times the arguments grew heated. Eventually Al-Mahdi, the eldest son, interceded and an agreement was reached where Moustafa would be allowed to pursue his ambitions in return for his continued work in the fields for a period of two seasons. Al-Mahdi, with an eye towards the future, realized that the family would benefit from economic contacts outside of Shair Tomat. Today Moustafa is a government accountant and has managed to purchase a lorry. Moustafa, however, did not permanently leave the household until he was 22 years old and continued to assist his father when possible. Since Moustafa now helps his brothers by transporting their grain to market, Al-Haj has all but forgotten the original conflict with his son. Still, a son (or any other family member) would never publicly defy his father.

Not all family or kinship ties are economically important nor fundamentally of a value-producing or consuming nature. Nonetheless, households as economic units are dependent upon and reproduced through kinship ties, while production

relations are generally intertwined with domestic relationships and conditioned by sex and age. Hence, family bonds appear as moral equivalents which can be manipulated according to household needs, especially in satisfying agricultural sustenance. Viewed from within this parameter, domestic activities begin and end with the family for most households. In terms of household agriculture, the majority of households prefer family labor (50 percent), followed by wage-labor (26.7 percent) and *nafir* (23.3 percent). Nearly 80 percent of respondents favoring household labor list pride in the family's ability to farm and its superior quality of work. Other considerations include difficulties in organizing *nafir* or in securing wage-labor.

Nafir similarly operates on kinship principles and is solely intended to break labor bottlenecks, especially acute during weeding and harvesting. No farmer would think of sponsoring a *nafir* party for work normally undertaken by household labor unless circumstances presented unforeseen hardships such as illness or some other sudden change in the family situation. In principle, a man organizes a *nafir* party from among his kinsmen for work on the main farm. The timing of a *nafir* reflects the individual's position within the extended family or lineage. Al-Baroud, for example, as the eldest married Kuku male holds his *nafir* before his younger married brothers. Likewise, Al-Mahdi's *nafir* is called first among the Abdullah family members. Not all communal labor,

however, comes under the rubric of *nafir*. Lineage members frequently extend assistance to those members unable to sponsor a 'formal' *nafir*. Al-Haj's relatives regularly help him in his fields even though they realize that he is too old to reciprocate in kind and that they are responsible for their own food.

Nearly 78 percent of sampled households sponsored an average of one *nafir* party throughout the agricultural season. The lone capitalist household held an average of 1.5, petty and lineage commodity producers one each, lineage non-commodity households two, and wage labor households none. A third of the wage labor households indicated that they had sponsored *nafir* parties in the past but were no longer able to due to a lack of food reserves, death of a husband, absence of adult male relatives in the village, or the small size of the area under cultivation. The remaining wage labor households had never done so. Similarly, 15 percent of petty commodity producers had never sponsored a *nafir*, citing its inefficiency and expense. Goat meat or chicken is served in 40 percent of *nafir* parties, while 13 percent of households indicated that they never included meat. Over half of both lineage forms do not provide meat, a further reflection of the reproduction squeeze affecting these households. Nevertheless, the shortage of meat does not deter kinsmen from answering a *nafir* call. Today, since a number of household heads do not have many male relatives resident in the village, any man may

respond without invitation. When two or more *nafir* parties are scheduled on the same day, non-relatives go to the one supplying meat.

Those households preferring *nafir* labor, most notably the lineage forms of (re)production, cite its low cost and efficiency as primary reasons for its use. Strikingly absent are any references to feelings of good will emanating from communal labor. Petty commodity producers, on the other hand, note the difficulty in locating wage-laborers before commenting on the cost or efficiency of *nafir* labor. Only a couple of the aged Nuba residents who are no longer economically active reminisced about the lack of a 'real' *nafir* and the positive feelings gained from working with one's fellow villagers.

Although *nafir* parties are technically organized along lineage lines, the least advantaged in the village nowadays also attend. Yet the presence of non-relatives does not invoke mutual obligation and reciprocity. In this manner an unequal transfer of labor occurs between households. This permanent extraction of surplus labor-power between households leads to a differential accumulation of value and thus is at the heart of contemporary stratification in Shair Tomat. In short, the overt lack of reciprocity within the system of *nafir* recruitment can quickly undermine the basis of household equality, independence, and subsistence. A number of households indicated that they frequently attend more *nafir*

parties than the number of people participating in theirs, if they hold a *nafir* at all. Although wage labor households do not sponsor *nafir* parties, an average of 1.5 members participate in approximately 6.5 *nafir* parties during the agricultural season. Both lineage forms evidence a similar disparity, though to a lessor degree. As a result, disadvantaged households neglect their own fields during critical periods in order to provide *nafir* labor for better-off households in return for food during the 'hungry period.'[15] In this way more food becomes available to household members, but at the cost of a households's own agricultural needs. Wealthier households, on the other hand, are able to attract additional labor for the price of a couple of chickens or kilogram of goat meat.

Nafir also provides an important source of labor for building houses. Slightly more than 63 percent of sampled households sponsored a *nafir* for such activities, although the capitalist household preferred to employ wage-labor for this task, and two-thirds of wage labor households do not sponsor a house-building *nafir*. The remaining households not utilizing *nafir* generally rely on more informal labor arrangements to raise the roof which lasts but three or four hours. Such arrangements, sporadically requested during an individual's lifetime, do not require food, nor is a an

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[15] Essentially, *nafir* in these instances is little more than a food for work arrangement and assumes a form of wage labor.

obligation to return the work incurred. Free time rather than blood lines determine who will help among one's neighbors, friends, and kin. Many of the workers will bring food of their own to share among their fellow laborers. Informal work parties serve to reaffirm feelings of community, especially if two men have experienced recent disagreements. Helping a neighbor build a house provides an acceptable means to ameliorate tensions.

Women too arrange *nafir* parties among their female relatives and friends, primarily for work on the *jubraka*. Labor exchanges provide an important supplement since women must also undertake arduous domestic activities. Like *nafir* parties held by their male counterparts, food is served to participants although not meat since this would be considered a luxury. A single female head of household generally relinquishes control of the agricultural labor process to the eldest adult son, or even nephew or cousin, who will call his kinsmen to the main farm *nafir*. The women of the household will prepare and transport the food; assistance in the fields depends on whether or not non-relative males are present. Without the active aid of adult male relatives single females are unable to sponsor a *nafir* party for the main farm. In contrast to males, a woman must present her individual needs to the man's consideration before he will assist her in calling a *nafir* party. The amount of aid offered a by non-household male relative is restricted only by his own sense of

responsibility. Consequently, widowed and divorced females are totally dependent upon male relatives for the construction or repair of houses since they are unable to all a *nafir* composed of men. Informal exchanges of labor are more common, where two or three women will assist a neighboring women in need or simply work together just to enjoy each other's company.

Increased incidences of out-migration of young men during the last decade have tended to undermine the family work unit. In the past, the absence of young men could easily be made up by sponsoring a *nafir* party; now this is no longer possible given the small population of Shair Tomat. The loss of villagers due to out-migration in conjunction with mechanized cotton production necessitates the employment of wage-labor, particularly for labor deficient households. Of course some households simply cultivate fewer *feddan* in response to decreases in household labor, but for those households firmly fixed within the ambit of capitalist circuits of production, wage-labor proves essential to agricultural operations.

With the exception of the capitalist household, employment of wage-labor, like *nafir*, is intended to augment household labor during peak periods of the agricultural season. The capitalist household contracts an average of nine workers who perform the bulk of agricultural labor, a pattern in effect for the last 14 years. Overall, 63.3 percent of households hire agricultural labor, primarily for weeding and

the harvesting of cotton. Lineage non-commodity households have never used wage-labor in their fields, preferring to accomplish agricultural tasks with household labor and then *nafir*. Of those households contracting labor, petty (75 percent) and lineage commodity producers (70 percent) employ an average of six and five agricultural workers annually and began the practice with the arrival of the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Production Corporation tractors ten years ago. Wage labor households (33.3 percent) hire an average of two men for weeding, a recent occurrence started in the past two years. Only the capitalist household employs a thresher. Not surprisingly, two-thirds of the agricultural workers hail from distant villages with the remaining residing in Shair Tomat or nearby. Of those households preferring wage labor, 75 percent stress the fact that it is easiest to control, 12.5 percent claim that wage-laborers work hard, and 12.5 percent argue that it is less expensive than *nafir*.

Remarkably, the local laborers employed by farmers are women. In spite of the prejudice against village women moving about freely in public, the need for labor seemingly blunts this area of concern. The economic rationale for employing women should be self-evident; male agricultural laborers are scarce and females can be paid less per *feddan*. The more relevant question involves why farmers hire women when to do so goes against local *Hawazma* conventions. The female field workers come from petty commodity households; one female and

two male headed. Within each, adult females outnumber adult males. Coupled with the already precarious economies of these households and the absence of other alternatives to cash incomes, household heads see little choice to making household women labor in their neighbors fields. Furthermore, the exploitation of female labor remains because it is largely unseen. That is, distant relatives employ them as a last resort and they labor in the fields by themselves and not alongside men.

Labor is also employed by households with large cattle herds. The capitalist household, three petty commodity producers, and one lineage commodity producer regularly employ Shatt herdboys to tend their cattle. Rarely are they given cash for their services. Typically payment consists of a small cow per year. This arrangement is fairly common throughout the Nuba Mountains and represents the traditional means young men use to obtain cattle for brideprices.

As mentioned, female headed households find it difficult to directly employ agricultural laborers. Overall, only 37.5 percent of these households employ wage-labor, although 50 percent of the female heads indicated that their husbands had regularly done so. In the main, female headed households must limit cultivation to what family members are able to accomplish in a given season. As a result, female headed households are more dependent upon *zakha* and other forms of village largess.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES

The village of Shair Tomat, compared to either Somasem and Shatt Damam, appears insular, seemingly unaffected by events occurring elsewhere in the Nuba Mountains. But to argue the case of relative isolation because the village lies at the fringe of change does not mean that it is independent of the influence of wider capitalist pressures. To the contrary, the mere presence of the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation contradicts any claim to village autarky. And although farming remains the principle activity of most households, increasingly the monetization of the rural economy coupled with growing expectations and needs forces a number of households to seek alternatives to agriculture. Satisfying household reproduction thus requires the inclusion of specifically non-agricultural economic activities into livelihood strategies. Still, household independence and agricultural self-sufficiency provide the backdrop for village life in Shair Tomat. To be dependent on others for labor or *dura* dishonors the household.[16] Similarly, the sale of labor-power to a fellow villager compromises a household's image of self-reliance and calls into question an individual's standing within the community. Household-owned businesses comprise one such endeavor which does not necessarily undermine the notion of pride and respect.

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[16] Of course exceptions are made for female headed households, who through no fault of their own, must rely on others to some degree for the reproduction of the household.

Table 8.10 indicates the percent of households owning a business enterprise as well as the mean number owned. Of immediate interest is the fact that only those households expressly forged within capitalism operate some type of business. Moreover, revenues from businesses contribute just 14.5 percent to total household incomes, although nearly 50 percent to the capitalist household. Lineage forms of (re)production, although smaller in size and slightly older than capitalist forms, devote household energies to agricultural and livestock production. The production strategies of these households more closely approximate the Chaynovian life cycle with agricultural activities expanding and contracting according to household requirements. Too, cash needs are significantly less, especially for lineage non-commodity producers. As Zayda, a widow in the lineage non-commodity form, commented: "My husband was a strong farmer, he could do everything himself. When the children were here, they helped in every way. Now, I have enough and my children still help. I need very little." With regards to lineage commodity producers, only one child attends school and the use of wage-labor remains intermittent as it is dependent upon the cotton crop. According to Hamad: "If the cotton doesn't fail and is good, I will hire labor. If the cotton is poor but too much for the family, I will use *nafir*."

TABLE 8.10: PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS OWNING BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% who own	100.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
Mean no. owned	3.5	1.5	---	---	1.5	1.6
(n=)	(1)	(20)	(4)	(2)	(3)	(30)

The cash sphere of Shair Tomat's economy remains limited, primarily by the prevalence of and desire for domestic self-sufficiency. To be sure, most households have some cash savings but locally there are remarkably few money transactions between households. Cash usually changes hands between individual households and government agencies such as the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation. Rarely do households produce anything that other households are unable or unwilling to make themselves. Consequently, few business opportunities exist within the confines of Shair Tomat. Only two of the businesses serve the villagers; the provision of sesame oil and various goods in the general store.[17] Four of the remaining enterprises are located in Kadugli and Shatt Safiya, while eight traders ply their merchandise in the surrounding villages.

As Table 8.11 shows, the capitalist forms of (re)production engage in a narrow range of business activities. The enterprises owned by the capitalist and wage

[17] The general store is a community enterprise although Hassan is allowed to sell other commodities in exchange for operating the store.

labor households stand out in sharp contrast to those of the petty commodity producers. Aside from brokering in agricultural commodities, the enterprises of the former necessitate significantly greater inputs of capital which effectively place these activities out of reach of petty commodity producers. Moustafa acquired a lorry through capital accumulated from his accountancy position with the government. Batul, on the other hand, first began purchasing grain from her neighbors in Shatt Safiya in 1966 with the help of her husband, Al-Nour, who worked as a guard. Later she started selling cloth, dye, and matches. Batul's activities proved profitable and by 1972 she and Al-Nour opened a general store in Shatt Safiya, selling a wide range of commodities including tea, coffee, and sugar as well as purchasing small amounts of grain offered by the Shatt.[18] With the profits generated by the store, they had a house constructed in Kadugli and subsequently rented it out.

The majority of petty commodity producers, to the contrary, engage in the low capital enterprises of wood and thatch cutting. More importantly, these activities do not diminish the household's agricultural labor force as they are undertaken during the dry season. Lacking a market in Shair Tomat, the wood and thatch is sold in nearby villages such as

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[18] Batul and Al-Nour still own the store but returned to Shair Tomat in 1987 when Arab-Nuba relations soured. They continue to operate the store but are trying to sell it to a local *Fellata*.

Seraf Al-Dai and in Kadugli. Businesses dominated by petty commodity producers generate very little profit but afford an important sources of cash income, principally for paying hired labor.

TABLE 8.11: TYPE OF ENTERPRISE OWNED BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Type of enterprise	CP	PCP	WLP	Total
general store	33.3%	10.0%	.0%	14.3%
agricultural broker	33.3	.0	.0	7.1
real estate rent	33.3	.0	.0	7.1
lorry transport	.0	.0	100.0	7.1
sesame oil	.0	10.0	.0	7.1
cut wood/thatch	.0	80.0	.0	57.2
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(Total n of enterprises)	(3)	(10)	(1)	(14)

Given the nature of gender relations in Shair Tomat it is not surprising that few occasions exist for females to possess their own businesses.[19] If anything, most women, like the village men, consider such activities to be male interests. Socially ascribed gender divisions are too deeply imprinted in community values which restrict female mobility and public visibility. Only two females operate business enterprises; both are from depressed petty commodity households. Miriam started cutting thatch as a business enterprise following the

[19] Batul represents a 'deviant' case. Clearly she is the more enterprising in household economic affairs than Al-Nour although he is technically the 'boss.' Most of the village men are aware of the arrangement and quietly laughed at Al-Nour for his perceived lack of 'manliness.'

death of her husband. Katchi's brother sells the thatch for her in Kadugli and the proceeds are used to hire field laborers. Amal, a sixteen year old neighbor of Miriam, began accompanying Miriam when she was 14 and now markets her own thatch to supplement the household budget. If anything, the cases of Miriam and Amal point to the reproduction squeeze beginning to affect more marginal households. Women, nonetheless, do contribute to the economic well being of the household, though on an irregular basis, by selling surfeit okra, groundnuts, and corn to merchants in Seraf Al-Dai. Profits are used to procure household necessities or luxuries such as kerosene, coffee, or meat.

OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT

The incorporation of Shair Tomat into the wider circuits of capitalism has taken a number of forms and affects households differentially. As noted, few alternatives exist to generate additional income through business enterprises. Yet household-based agriculture no longer is able to satisfy the reproductive requirements of most households. As a result, households look to other economic activities. Off-farm employment provides cash incomes to some 67 percent of sampled households. Very few farmers from the three capitalist forms feel that they could manage solely on what they are able to produce on the land. Some type of regular income is felt to be needed by all but the lineage forms of (re)production who believe that they can ill afford to till

another's field when their own requires attention and consequently do not turn to off-farm employment. Thus, the strong reliance of the majority households on the sale of labor-power serves to further differentiate capitalist from lineage forms of (re)production.

Off-farm employment for males is hardly new. Young men labored off the farm in the past to obtain cash in order to marry and begin their own homesteads. What differs is the fact that one-third of those working off of the farm are females. Although their labor is minimal and predominantly restricted to the fieldwork, not too long ago this would have been unspeakable. Off-farm employment by females suggests a strong indication of the reproductive squeeze facing petty commodity producers. Although only women from four households pursue this type of activity, in all probability the inclusion of females into the labor force will spread in Shair Tomat as it did in both Somasem and Shatt Damam. Moreover, control over the incomes generated by females introduces new stresses within the household. Aside from wanting more say in the disposition of their earnings, a number of the young workers mentioned that they believe females should have equal access to education. Like females, a number of males working outside of the house are disgruntled with their current status. At a certain point, the labor of children produces more than the cost of their maintenance. But in the face of capitalist encroachment, elders want to retain control over children for

longer periods of time. This is evident, in part, in the later age of marriage for many females and males. In general, the variant class positions occupied by working household members underscores tensions inherent in most household relations and loosens commitments to family cooperation.

Table 8.12 (p. 427) displays the distribution of wage-labor activities by sex of household member. A single member of the capitalist form works as a guard, but by choice rather than necessity. Al-Nour dislikes farming as much as he fears his wife and thus prefers to work as a guard in Kadugli; she resides in Shair Tomat. Petty commodity producers evidence a wide range of off-farm employment activities, albeit most prefer agricultural or manual labor, in part due to its flexibility which enables them to work around the labor needs associated with household production. Two members from the wage labor form enjoy high-salaried positions; Moustafa is a government accountant and Khalif is a driver in Saudi Arabia. In terms of gender, without doubt male mobility provides greater opportunities in pursuing employment.

Given the demands of the household agricultural schedule, slightly more than 58 percent of off-farm workers engage in activities which do not conflict with the household's need for family labor. On the other hand, the pursuit of off-farm employment frequently leads household members out of Shair Tomat with 56 percent migrating to such areas as Kadugli, El-Obeid, Khartoum, and Saudi Arabia. Not every male is content

TABLE 8.12: DISTRIBUTION OF OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT, BY SEX AND FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

MALE	CP	PCP	WLP	Total
Skilled employment				
civil servant	.0%	7.7%	50.0%	12.5%
Semi-skilled employment				
military	.0	7.7	.0	6.3
store clerk	.0	7.7	.0	6.3
flour mill attendant	.0	7.7	.0	6.3
driver	.0	.0	50.0	6.3
Unskilled employment				
tend livestock	.0	7.7	.0	6.3
manual laborer	.0	15.4	.0	12.6
agricultural laborer	.0	46.2	.0	37.5
guard/watchman	100.0	.0	.0	6.3
TOTAL	**100%**	**.0%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(1)	(13)	(2)	(16)
FEMALE				
Semi-skilled employment				
nursing aid	.0	12.5	.0	12.5
Unskilled employment				
agricultural laborer	.0	87.5	.0	87.5
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(0)	(8)	(0)	(8)

with the meager wages paid in the surrounding areas or aspires to a life of farming. Migration provides a way out. Only one female worked outside of the village in Juba where she lived with her brother's family. Nevertheless, the effect of out-migration spreads throughout the entire household.

MIGRATION ACTIVITIES

Out-migration is a relatively common occurrence in Shair Tomat today given the paucity of economic opportunities in the area. After all, young men must acquire money for brideprices and the ensuing demands of household operations that marriage brings. Not all return, however. New networks are established, lifestyles formed, and livelihoods earned. Some 87 percent of males permanently residing outside of the household live elsewhere with 52 percent in Kadugli and Khartoum alone. Some may eventually come back but the inheritance laws governing the distribution of land make this unlikely. Of the four surviving sons of Al-Haj, Mahdi and Hassan live in Shair Tomat, two make their residence in Kadugli, and Moustafa has primary residences in both Shair Tomat and Kadugli. Table 8.13 shows the percentage of households with incidences of temporary migration and the mean number of migrants, as well as the percentage of household members by sex who temporarily migrate. Overall, 67.7 percent of households have at least one member temporarily residing outside of the village. The difference between male and female rates of migration reveals the lack of mobility of

women; 31 percent of male household members migrate while only 8.7 percent of women do.

TABLE 8.13: PATTERNS OF TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% w/migs.	100.0%	75.0%	50.3%	.0%	67.7%	67.7%
mean number	3.0	1.5	1.0	0	.7	1.3
% of household members by sex						
Male	50.0%	32.4%	30.8%	.0%	12.5%	31.0%
Female	.0	9.9	.0	.0	9.1	8.7

Equally interesting are the primary reasons cited for episodes of migration (Table 8.14). The majority of males migrate for economic reasons or to pursue higher education. Non-economic objectives overwhelmingly underlie incidences of female migration. Men work at a variety of jobs, although 31 percent labor in the fields of Habila or the construction industry. When compared to males permanently leaving the household, 83 percent initially left for economic reasons with 43 percent finding employment in the army and police. Fewer now follow that path. In general, females remain in Shair Tomat until the marry and join their husband's household. Cash remittances, from working migrants provide an important supplement to the household budget. Temporary migrants in the

remit an average of fS 212 per year.[20] No members from the lineage non-commodity form migrate.

TABLE 8.14: PRIMARY REASON FOR TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY SEX

	CP	PCP	LCP	WLP	Total
MALE					
employment	33.3%	34.8%	.0%	100%	32.3%
tend livestock	.0	4.3	75.0	.0	12.9
attend school	66.7	39.1	25.0	.0	38.7
visiting	.0	4.3	.0	.0	3.2
accompany others	.0	17.4	.0	.0	12.9
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(3)	(23)	(4)	(1)	(31)
FEMALE					
employment	.0	14.3	.0	.0	12.5
attend school	.0	14.3	.0	100.0	25.0
visiting	.0	71.4	.0	.0	62.5
TOTAL	100%	100%	.0%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(7)	(0)	(1)	(8)

[20] Migrants from petty commodity households remit an average of fS 308 per year, fS 200 from lineage commodity producers, and fS 150 from wage labor households.

CHAPTER IX

SHATT DAMAM: LIVING ON THE EDGE

The air is cool in the shade beneath the *rakuba* as the elders discuss the affairs of Shatt Damam. The flow of conversation rises and falls with the heat of the moment, punctuated by heavy sighs, rich with frustration and despair. The elders are all too aware that life for the Shatt is rapidly changing and that its direction is largely outside of their control. Obedience of juniors and women is not assured like the old days and they struggle to find new ways to maintain their roles. Accounts of two villages forming a large-scale *nafir* now begin with "In the past." Sitting in silence the men pass the gourd filled with *marissa*, finally laughing as one begins to tell a favorite story.

Shatt Damam is a historical precipitate, to be comprehended both as it is now as well as in terms of the conditions in which the village was created. Presently, pressures exerted by the wider capitalist economy, realized primarily through state functionaries, Islamic development agencies, and private merchants, preclude visions to the past. Increasingly successful livelihood strategies must include activities which involve cash remuneration, from the selling and buying of labor-power to "making business." And for those unable to compete on new terms, the ever present *shayl* is quick to lend money, but at the cost of household integrity. But ironically, the price of success frequently requires

turning one's back on kinsmen and friends. If nothing else, people do not always have the time to devote to sustaining village relations. In short, the monetization and individualization of social relations has drawn forth a new day in Shatt Damam that clearly requires innovative strategies. Thus, the crisis of the lineage mode occurs against the backdrop of a new structure of inequality where the control or surplus-labor takes old relations and invests them with new meaning.

9.1: CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Nestled within a series of *jebels* approximately 15 kilometers southeast of Kadugli lies the picturesque village of Shatt Damam. The construction of many of the houses attest to the rugged topography of the mountain sides with walls fashioned from rock and earth. The living compounds are widely scattered on the tops and slopes of the surrounding *jebels*. Many of the *jubraka* are neatly enclosed by *shok* (thorny brush) fences to keep out the occasional foraging pig or goat. Women sing bawdy grindstone songs as they pound *dura* in rhythmic unison, men sit drinking *marissa* enthralled by a humorous story from a migrant newly returned from Khartoum, small boys practice the latest wrestling moves on each other, and young girls make a game of rounding up crying babies. All in all, Shatt Damam appears a very pleasant village. Closer inspection, however, reveals a different story. Times are increasingly difficult. Aside from inadequate rain in recent

years, the paucity of available farm lands, prolonged absence of adult males, and mounting indebtedness to the local merchant are frequently heard laments.

Shatt Damam is a rather large village and is sub-divided into the settlement clusters of Kadamiro, Gurdum, Zarick, and Dong. These communities are not physically distinct and the divisions are more a matter of logistical convenience than anything else. Kadamiro is the largest and contains the village *suq*, with an elementary school, dispensary, *tahona*, and six shops. The *omda*, or village head who presides over the divisional *sheikhs*, resides here.[1] The *omda*, as well as the *sheikhs*, are men of property and influence within the community; hence their words carry more authority than just their respective offices convey. The local merchants also play significant roles in village affairs, albeit less overt.

The Shatt people are one of the more distinct Nuba groups in the region despite a number of shared commonalities such as age-grades, ritual practices, and cicatrization. Little is known of their origin or precisely how long they have resided in their present area. The Shatt are allegedly a branch of the Daju who migrated some 600 miles from Darfur and still share linguistic commonalities. When asked the time period of Shatt Damam's founding, most villagers reply: "Before the Mahdi." The outward appearance of the Shatt is also unique.

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[1] For these reasons and for sampling purposes, Kadamiro was selected for this study. It should be emphasize that in all other aspects these communities are similar.

The women, for example, braid their hair down the back of their heads and coat it with animal fat, giving the braid the look of a flat paddle. Young men wear brightly colored trunks and frequently color their upper torsos and heads. Finally, the Shatt still maintain their matrilineal system of inheritance despite governmental pressures to adopt the patrilinear practices of the dominant Northern-Sudanese Arab culture. Nevertheless, capitalism has made inroads into Shatt Damam, primarily because of the scarcity of available lands for agricultural expansion and the resulting need to migrate, as well as the economic practices of local merchants.

Unlike the Ghulfan of Somasem, the Shatt have managed to resist the process of 'Arabization.' In fact, relations between the Shatt and Arabs remain hostile to violent and few Shatt willingly trust their Arab neighbors. Although the Shatt suffered during the slave raids associated with both the *Turkiyya* and the *Mahdiyya*, the western and northern *jebels* withstood the worst effects, especially during the latter period which witnessed the destruction of whole villages and the forced removal of their inhabitants to Omdurman. In this respect, the internal social relations of the Shatt probably did not undergo the same fragmentation as did the Ghulfan nor did they endure as lasting a blow to their self-esteem. Even today, however, the Shatt are weary of outsiders and at the village of Kalulu children flee and women retreat to their houses with the approach of a *khawaja*. In addition,

Condominium policy of "tribal" separation conceivably allowed the Shatt time to reconsolidate through minimizing contact with Sudanese Arab culture and northern *jellaba*.

The Shatt are generally looked down upon by other Nuba communities[2], *Fellata*, and Arab alike, who consider them "peculiar" and "backwards." This tends to consolidate the Shatt vis-á-vis the outside world. With the exception of a few *Fellata* merchant families in Kadamiro, all of the inhabitants of the larger village are Shatt.[3] The relationship between the villagers and their non-Shatt neighbors within and outside the village fluctuates between commercial necessity and outright animosity.[4] The Shatt are equally suspicious of the government and view the elementary school, dispensary, and *tahona* as another means to convert the villagers to Islam and undermine Shatt culture. It is not the belief in Allah as the One God revealed by the Prophet Mohammed which the Shatt object to, but Islamic mortification of nudity, abstinence from drinking *marissa*, and avoidance of

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[2] The 'Arabized' Nuba such as the Miri and Kadugli, for example, laugh derisively at the Shatt. Consequently a number of people would scratch their heads in wonderment that I was studying Shatt Damam instead of a more "civilized" village. One Miri man I was talking to in Kadugli found it hard to believe that the Shatt practiced matrilinear inheritance.

[3] One Shatt man's wife in Kadamiro was a Dinka from the southern area of South Kordofan.

[4] When I first arrived in Shatt Damam, some of the Shatt took me on a tour of the village. They never introduced me to the merchants. Later when I asked them why one man replied: "Because they are not Shatt, they are just here."

eating swine. These prohibitions seem to the typical Shatt as a strike at their communal consciousness.

Admittedly an extreme example, the following incident characterizes the underlying nature of the Shatt relation with outsiders. Late in 1987, the senior *Fellata* merchant responsible for distributing the government allocation of sugar unilaterally decided that it might be a good idea to introduce a new method of rationing the sugar. He took the sugar to Kadugli and sold it in the *suq*. Not surprisingly, the people of Shatt Damam were very angry over this and several decided to take their grievance directly to the merchant's house. The merchant refused to discuss the matter with them so they burned his house down. The merchant, to say the last, was impressed with the magnitude of the anger and promptly fled with his family. The Arabs in the area, finding the merchant missing, decided that the Shatt had killed him. Seeking revenge they turned up in force one day and proceeded to burn as many Shatt houses and as much of the *dura* crop as possible. In the process, they managed to kill five Shatt (four men and a woman). The merchant showed up a few days later, unscathed. In an attempt to calm the situation, the government called for a conference between the warring factions to which the Shatt elders promptly replied: "We will talk to the Arabs when the dead Shatt begin talking again." The Shatt needed only to recall the government's most recent attempt at reconciliation at Shatt Safiya (see p. 264).

The indigenous religion of the Shatt still exerts a powerful influence in village life as evidenced by the continued importance of the *kujurs*, rainpriests, and healers. The traditional occasions of celebrating and feasting, such as *Sibir al Diboia* and *Sibir al Boksa*, are eagerly anticipated by young and old villagers alike. Not only are festivities joyous events, the ritual occasions reaffirm what it means to be Shatt. Although the intensity of belief may have lessened in recent years, Shatt ceremonies and rituals still provides a bulwark against external forces and binds the community together. During *Sibir al Diboia*, for example, the *kujor* and select elders enter the dark oracle hut where the *kujor* falls into a trance and reveals the cause of past misfortunes, predicts the outcome of impending plans, or confers advice on current domestic problems. Shatt religion thus not only imparts a sense of community, it offers a unique way of looking at the world and the Shatt place within it.

The connection between ritual and social behavior is readily observable in agriculture. Many farmers continue to heed the providential wisdom of the *kujur* and rainpriest in signalling the propitious time for planting or harvesting. Any violation of this natural order through irreverence can summon catastrophe on the whole village. The breach is dealt with according to the perceived severity of the infraction. Stopping the nourishing rains, for example, invites grave consequences and can lead to the burning of the guilty party's

house and the beating of the culprit (usually to death). In 1978, for example, the rains began and then abruptly ceased. The farmer suspected by the rainpriest of violating a natural observance had his house razed but managed to escape to Khartoum where, according to local legend, he stopped the rains again. The healer is also an important figure who rids the inflicted of bad spirits or evil curses by dashing the patient with special water, administering herbal concoctions, or applying hot spear tips to the inner elbow or lower neck, depending on the particular symptoms.

The structuring of an individual's life course though codified age-grades (*bobongabani* or 'friends from the same age period') is an important aspect of Shatt society. Age-grades underpin the Shatt division of labor by distinguishing categories of activities by age classification and gender. The first two grades extend from birth to approximately 14 years of age and correspond to infant and child. Little is expected of boys and girls throughout this period although during childhood boys will tend goats while girls watch younger siblings or assist in light domestic chores. The next age grade, youth or young adult, ranges roughly from 15 to 25 years of age and ends with marriage.

When a male child makes the transition to youth, they are sent to the 'forest' with elders from the village where they will learn what it means to be a 'man,' in addition to being trained in the art of wrestling. The young men will then live

collectively at the village *zariba* (cattle camp) where they tend the cattle and continue wrestling, competing against other communities. It is often at this time that a young man will work as herdsman for others such as the *Baggara*. The herder is traditionally paid one cow per season which will go towards the eventual brideprice he must pay. Nowadays, the youth of Shatt Damam increasingly prefer migrating to towns in order to seek their fortune. Young men between the ages of 20 and 25 also provide for village security by protecting the main farms, retrieving stolen cows, and (though less common now) poaching cows not owned by Shatt. Females, following menarche, are considered young women and learn the domestic tasks that will see them through life. The status of elder for males and married woman for females is achieved upon marriage. The last age grade, senior elder and senior women, begins around the age of 45.

The intrinsic bond of age-mates endures throughout an individual's life. Though not imparting the same status of kinship, age-mate (*wopisko*) indicates ties stronger than just friendship.[5] Fellowship is a condition of mutual survival and requires the careful nurturing of all three types of attachments. Agriculture for the household instills mutual

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[5] The strength of these bonds cannot be overstated. In fact, one of the difficulties in pin pointing the Shatt household is the common practice of sharing meals and living quarters, especially with one's age mate. As this is a relatively common occurrence, however, the numbers even out leaving the household intact.

dependence and is realized through *nafir*. Farming, especially given the technology involved, is not an individual affair but a cooperative undertaking requiring numerous hands. The successful art of farming depends on an individual's ability to assemble the assistance of others. But aside from enabling the completion of agricultural tasks, *nafir* validates feelings of reciprocity and good will within the village. House construction similarly relies on *nafir*. Thus *nafir* is central to village life in Shatt Damam and reaffirms an individual's dependence on one's kin, age-mates, and, to a lessor extent, neighbors. The spirit of cooperation even extends to informal work parties such that men invariably cut *gaish* or *shok* and make charcoal in the company of one another, while women collect wood, grind *dura*, and fetch water together.

The Shatt system of matrilineal inheritance reflects the orientation of kin-based social relations. In general, males inherit land and cattle from their mother's brothers, a pattern termed avuncular inheritance. On the other hand, "if your mother has no brothers, usually the oldest son will ask the *sheikh* for some land. He will give some land to his younger brothers, or they can ask the *sheikh* themselves." Females frequently inherit land from their mothers. Disputes over land inheritance are growing primarily due to its shortage. Moreover, the court system does not recognize the Shatt system of matrilineal inheritance and rules in favor of the father's son. Kuku's father upon his death, for example,

left his farm to his sister's son. It happened that his farm was more fertile than the land inherited by Kuku from his maternal uncle. Kuku bypassed the *sheikh* and brought the matter to the local magistrate in Kadugli who promptly awarded the lands to Kuku in accordance with *shari'a* or Islamic legal tradition. These types of disputations have tended to erode the Shatt inheritance system and increased village tensions.

The relationship between a boy and his maternal uncles is customarily quite strong: "You can take anything from your [maternal uncle], even a watch if you need it. But you never take anything from your father unless he wants to give it to you." When faced with a problem, young men will seek the council of their mother's brothers over that of their father's family. Of greater consequence, males are obligated to attend to their maternal uncles' fields and care for their animals as well. They may help their fathers if they choose, but are under no compulsion. When a young man approaches the age of marriage, he will request the assistance of his maternal uncles who will perform the delicate marriage negotiations and assist their nephews in its payment.[6]

The standard brideprice consists of three to five cows, three to six goats, two to three pigs, one gun, six spears, and two jerry cans of oil. In recent years money has assumed a more prominent role, with 'requested' amounts ranging

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[6] Generally a lad's father does not pay anything unless he wants to and "usually he does not want to help because he has to help his sisters' son.

between £S 50 to £S 200. In addition, the groom is obliged to perform brideservice, working on his future father-in-law's field for a period up to four years. The young man undertakes this with the aid of his similarly betrothed age mates. This practice, however, has decreased in recent years in conjunction with the inclusion of money in the brideprice and the out-migration of young males. The preferred form of marriage is between matrilateral cross-cousins, whereas unions between parallel cousins is considered incestuous. Marriage between non-kin is also common. Arab patterns of marriage (as in Shair Tomat), however, are increasing in Shatt Damam as an indication of the strength of conviction by recent converts.

Presently, a variety of mechanisms of exploitation are evident in patterns of social differentiation. The older mechanisms associated with the lineage mode--brideprice, bride service, and labor obligations of juniors to elders, women to men, and villagers to priests--remain, though certainly attenuated. What has changed significantly is the context with the overall growth of the cash economy, in part stimulated by the monetization of brideprice and, more revealing, as a result of the process of out-migration itself. Most migrants feel that they have little choice but to leave Shatt Damam because of the small size of most farms and the limited opportunities to acquire new lands. Ironically, out-migration helps ease land pressures since men working outside of Shatt Damam for an extended period of time will lend or

lease their lands to those who stay behind. On the other hand, not only does migration pose a drain on household labor and add to the already heavy work load of females, but it also requires access to additional labor at peak agricultural periods. The demand for labor has led to the necessity of meat to attract a *nafir* and, in some cases, to offer cash loans that will never be repaid, in addition to forcing some farmers to hire wage-labor. The prolonged absence of young males also contributes to the break down of age grades as juniors do not all undergo the same ritual inclusion into the village. Consequently, the door is opened wide to outside capitalist pressures.

A telling instance of recent changes is found in the role of village merchants. The merchants purchase the small volumes offered periodically by villager at low prices and resell them in Kadugli. In 1986, for example, a sack of *simsim* costing a merchant £S 90 in Shatt Damam sold for £S 120 in Kadugli, and a £S 90 sack of *waka* (dried okra) sold for £S 110 in Kadugli. In the words of one local merchant, "Owning a store is good business because you can make a big profit, they (the villagers) have no one else they can sell to." Ostensibly, the villagers could travel to Kadugli where they would find more favorable prices, but the long walk coupled with the small quantities offered precludes this in most instances. The largest merchant (who resides primarily in Kadugli) combines this activity with transport services. He

and his brother also own several sewing machines and employ Shatt men to make clothes for the market in Kadugli. In addition, money lending provides a profitable activity for the merchants since many households chronically run short of *dura*, sugar, and oil, especially during the 'hungry period' preceding the first harvest in the *jubraka*.

A final word must be mentioned on the form of governance in Shatt Damam. Before the system of sheikhs, a council of village elders managed village affairs. The council of elders selected the 'chief' (or master of the path) on the basis of a combination of traits, including fierceness in battle, number of cattle owned, and prowess as a wrestler. Many of these men assumed the roles of *sheikh* and *omda* which enabled them to benefit from both sets of social relations, an essential position in the uncertain economic environment of Shatt Damam. Invariably, many of these men were able to translate past power into present wealth, carefully bridging both lineage and capitalist modes of production. Most of the village inhabitants, however, are not as fortunate and bear the press of economic uncertainties wrought by capitalist pressures.

9.2: HOUSEHOLD ORGANIZATIONS

Paradoxically, Shatt Damam exists on the margins of capitalism; it is neither here nor there. An important characteristic differentiating Shatt Damam from Somasem and Shair Tomat is the number of households based in the lineage

forms of (re)production; 65 percent of the sampled households (Table 9.1). Furthermore, no household is dependent exclusively for its reproduction through the sale of labor-power. Hence, there are no wage labor households. Lineage relations thus serve as a bulwark against capitalist encroachment through the provisioning of critical organizing principles, particularly in agricultural production. Nevertheless, the number of petty commodity producers provide evidence of the reproduction squeeze confronting small-scale producers, mainly visible in the growing regularization of commodity production and long-term out-migration. With the exception of the capitalist households, the other forms are structurally similar, suggestive of the fine line separating them. The capitalist households are comprised of more recent arrivals, non-Shatt *Fellata* merchants, who tend to have older household heads and larger families.

TABLE 9.1: HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND AGE STRUCTURE BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total
% of households	3.3%	31.7%	35.0%	30.0%	.0%	100.0%
Mean household size	14.0	7.4	7.7	5.6	NA	7.2
Mean member age	19.2	17.3	19.3	20.5	NA	18.9
Mean n. age < 16	8.9	7.1	8.3	7.9	NA	7.8
Mean age of head	42.5	37.1	35.9	36.6	NA	36.6
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(0)	(60)

The sex of household heads across forms of (re)production provides insights into the general distribution of power between genders. Except for capitalist households, Table 9.2 reveals greater empowerment of women compared to the other two villages.[7] Slightly more than 29 percent of household heads are females, though with the majority in lineage non-commodity households, followed by lineage and petty commodity producers. Households exclusively headed by females comprise 17 percent of the total sample and differ only slightly from their male counterparts, albeit without a current mate female headed households tend to be smaller in size. In general, statistical differences do not of themselves signify inordinately greater hardships for female headed households than for male. In part, the matrilinear system of kinship which facilitates life-long relations between brothers and sisters, coupled with female access to land, cross-cuts the more negative effects of patriarchy.

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[7] With respect to household size and age structure, female headed households differ little from Table 7.1. Differences are attributable to earlier age of marriage of women and the fact that the female heads are primarily divorced or widowed.

Female headed households SIZE AND AGE STRUCTURE

	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
% female headed	30.0%	40.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Mean household size	4.7	6.5	3.7	5.1
Mean member age	19.8	21.2	15.3	19.5
Mean number age < 16	9.3	7.5	4.7	7.3
mean age of head	40.7	40.3	34.7	38.6
(n=)	(3)	(4)	(3)	(10)

TABLE 9.2: SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Sex	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	WLP	Total	(n)
Male	3.9%	31.4%	35.3%	29.4%	NA	100.0%	(51)
Female	.0	14.3	28.6	57.1	NA	100.0%	(21)
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(24)	(27)	(0)	(72)	

Of equal importance, some 18 percent of the sampled households are jointly headed. This type of household more closely resembles those headed by males.[8] Nine are made up of husbands and wives, one by a father and son, and one by three brothers. Joint head arrangements more clearly reflect the lineage mode at the household level; ten of the eleven are in the lineage forms. In the case of females, husbands may desire sole authority but women are also notable actors at this level and enjoy greater economic opportunities than females in either Somasem or Shair Tomat. Access to arable land, in particular, not only enables women the occasion to produce grain for household needs, but with control over any surfeit provides a cash income which she can use at her own

[8] SIZE AND AGE STRUCTURE BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Joint headed households	**PCP**	**LCP**	**LNCP**	**Total**
% joint headed	9.1%	27.3%	63.6%	100.0%
Mean household size	10.1	8.0	6.3	7.1
Mean member age	15.8	17.0	19.3	18.2
Mean number age < 16	7.5	7.4	7.7	7.6
mean age of head	39.0	30.0	33.0	32.8
(n=)	(1)	(3)	(7)	(11)

discretion.[9] In other words, males do not exercise automatic control over women's incomes simply by virtue of being a man. The style of headship in this case is less teamwork and more accurately approximates independent consultation.

In addition, consideration of the marital status of household heads (Table 9.3) offers a better understanding of female opportunities in Shatt Damam. Not every female gains headship status by virtue of divorce or death of spouse; 57.1 percent of female heads are married. Nevertheless, nearly 43 percent of females are single heads as opposed to male heads who are predominantly married. Although brothers offer their sisters assistance in the field, without adult children at home female headed households cultivate fewer *feddan* since they are also responsible for domestic chores. In the case of divorce or the death of a wife, male reliance on females for domestic activities compels them to quickly remarry. Consequently, no man dies a widower. Polygamous marriage also affords both a livelihood strategy and a sign of affluence. Twelve men presently have two wives and one has three. Not only does this expand the household labor pool, but multiple wives symbolizes a man's wealth and standing within the community, principally in the lineage forms. There are no household heads who have never been married since marriage is a requirement of household formation.

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[9] Men can, however, gain access to the *dura* of wives through 'legitimate' requests for *marissa*.

TABLE 9.3: MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY SEX AND FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Male	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
married	100%	100%	94.5%	100%	98.0%
divorced	.0	.0	5.6	.0	2.0
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(16)	(18)	(15)	(51)
Mean age head	42.5	37.1	35.9	36.6	36.6
Female					
married	NA	.0	50.0	75.0	57.1
widow	NA	66.7	.0	8.3	14.3
divorced	NA	33.3	50.0	16.7	28.6
TOTAL	NA	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(3)	(6)	(12)	(21)
Mean age head	NA	40.7	40.3	34.7	38.6

Households are fluid by definition, a point amply evident in Shatt Damam. Households here frequently combine a wide range of kinship and generational configurations. Over all, nearly 47 percent of households are complex (Table 9.4). At any given time, members of these households include a wide assortment of kinship arrangements including elderly parents, siblings, in-laws, cousins, and grandchildren. Not only does this represent a household labor strategy, but also the force of lineage bonds in defining social security. Where kinship networks tend to be exclusive in the other two villages, they are more inclusive within Shatt Damam. To deny a member of one's lineage is tantamount to denying the sanctity of lineage obligations and responsibilities. Shawaish, for example, took in his brother's wife, children and mother when his brother

was forced to flee to Khartoum after a severe altercation in the village. It was never a question of room or sufficient comestibles, Shawaish merely did what anyone would have done without calculation or consideration. Moreover, the fluidity of household composition acts as a buffer to labor lost through the increased out-migration of the young. Female and joint headed households reflect similar considerations. Some 40 percent of female and 46 percent of joint headed households are complex types.

TABLE 9.4: HOUSEHOLD RESIDENTIAL TYPES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
Single--w/ dependents	.0%	21.1%	4.8%	16.7%	13.4%
Nuclear	.0	26.3	42.9	55.6	40.0
Complex	100.0	52.6	52.4	27.8	46.7
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)

Finally, spatial residency patterns provide important insights into household livelihood strategies (Table 9.5). Although some 43 percent of households are co-residential, slightly more than 53 percent have at least one member residing temporarily outside of the household, indicating the high degree of spatial mobility in Shatt Damam. Out-migration embodies an important strategy, both during the dry season to reduce demand on the household granary and for the money and goods remitted by migrants. Furthermore, young men must still

accumulate cash and goods for brideprice and to provision a home for his wife. Another three percent comprising the capitalist households possess two primary residences in addition to having members residing temporarily outside of the house. The heads of these households also own houses in Kadugli where they have substantial business interests. Most of their family members currently live outside of Shatt Damam due to the deterioration of security in the Nuba Mountains.

TABLE 9.5: HOUSEHOLD SPATIAL RESIDENCY PATTERNS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Spatial pattern	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
co-residence	.0%	47.4%	28.6%	61.1%	43.4%
dispersed	.0	52.6	71.4	38.9	53.3
disp/multi-residence	100.0	.0	.0	.0	3.3
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)

9.3: SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Tio Kapi has worked in Kadugli for the past three years as a bakery employee. He lives with his wife, her young sister, and their two small children in the hills nearby. Tio's wife supplements his meager pay with food grown in the small *jubraka* surrounding the modest house. They both miss Shatt Damam but know that for now they must continue to try and save money for the day Tio can acquire a field of his own. Tio's (maternal) uncles are still active farmers and he has no access to land. In addition, one of his uncle's sons has

already advanced a claim to the land despite customary Shatt law. Nevertheless, he visits the village frequently during the growing season to help in his uncles' *nafirs*. After all, lineage obligations run deep. The case of Tio is not unusual; it reflects growing hardships and uncertainties confronting households in Shatt Damam. Tio's family is merely a consequence of contradictory tendencies restructuring the parameters of household reproduction.

To farm a good sized land holding and maintain a large herd of cattle, goats, and sheep in Shatt Damam requires a large family and retaining grown children in the village. Such success was guaranteed as long as the will of elders went unchallenged and ample land reserves existed. The degree of surplus appropriation from juniors and women were important determinants of the level of household wealth, access to lineage and village labor, and authority of elders over community affairs. Yet the encroachment of the slave/tributary mode of production and later of capitalism both created new opportunities for accumulation and introduced new constraints, particularly through the monetization of brideprice and general increase in consumption standards, both of which required young men to migrate.

Paradoxically, what initially permitted elders greater wealth contributed to a reduction in the labor supply, both *nafir* and household) and initiated new patterns of social differentiation. Increased out-migration of young men to

acquire brideprices thus facilitated new mechanisms of surplus extraction, namely wage-labor and the *shayl*. In addition, population pressures on available land coupled with assaults on matrilinear inheritance customs by Islamic patrimony, strike further at the heart of Shatt lineage principles. As a result, access to wives, land, and labor are now problematical. And of course, new consumption needs have emerged that have expanded the realm of necessity, needs which in the main can only be satisfied in the market.

Given present conditions within Shatt Damam today, household livelihood strategies now embrace a wide variety of economic activities, including the sale of labor-power and marketing of goods (Table 9.6). Crop and animal sales continue to provide important sources of cash incomes for most households. The same is true of off-farm employment, except that it no longer dominated by young men working to amass brideprices, although no member of capitalist households engages in wage-labor. Nevertheless, the multiplicity of income generating activities pursued by household members, as in Somasem, evidences broad bases of social differentiation and the wide range of mechanisms of surplus extraction through the multiple class processes of household members.

The survey data also emphasize key distinctions between petty, lineage commodity, and lineage non-commodity producers. Some 42 percent of households in the petty commodity form own businesses compared to only 9.5 percent of lineage commodity

households. Both forms exhibit similar rates of participation in agricultural and non-agricultural off-farm employment, although *daHwa* labor provides incomes for almost 62 percent of the lineage commodity producers and only 37 percent for petty commodity households. Lineage non-commodity households rely almost exclusively on cash earnings from *daHwa* labor and only marginally on non-agricultural employment, primarily because *daHwa* employment is flexible and employs more redundant household labor. Of greater interest, remittances comprise important sources of cash for both lineage forms, particularly non-lineage households, indicating the significance of lineage relations in securing access to the surplus of migrating members, both present and past. More importantly, remittances also reveal the precariousness of household reproduction in these forms and can signify the difference between meeting subsistence goals and the local *shayl*. Only 5.9 percent of petty commodity household receive remittances.

TABLE 9.6: SOURCE OF INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES OF HOUSEHOLDS BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Activities	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
Crop sales	100.0%	84.2%	81.0%	83.3%	83.3%
Animal sales	50.0	42.1	52.4	38.9	45.0
Businesses	100.0	42.1	9.5	.0	20.0
Ag. labor	.0	10.5	14.3	.0	8.3
DaHwa	.0	36.8	61.9	38.9	45.0
Non-ag. labor	.0	36.8	33.3	5.6	25.0
Remittances	.0	5.3	19.0	33.3	18.3
Mean no. sources	2.5	2.7	3.0	2.3	2.7
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)

The composition of household incomes further distinguishes capitalist forms of (re)production from lineage forms (Table 9.7). Household-owned businesses generate the bulk of incomes for capitalist households (96.4 percent) and contribute to nearly 27 percent of the incomes of petty commodity producers. On the other hand, off-farm non-agricultural employment comprises the most important component of household income for petty commodity producers (45.9 percent), but at the expense of labor since most members find employment outside of South Kordofan. Furthermore, capitalist households sell an average of 36 percent of their *dura* and all of their *simsim*, yet crop sales contribute a scant 2.4 percent of the total income of these households. Crop sales, however, account for 17.4 percent of the total incomes of petty commodity producers who market 16 and 43 percent of their *dura* and *simsim* crops respectively.

Lineage forms of (re)production evidence different economic considerations. In general, these forms remain dependent upon agriculture and livestock for income generation, although rarely are healthy cattle sold.[10] Lineage commodity producers market an average of 16 percent of their *dura* and 25 percent of their *simsim* crops, while lineage non-commodity households part with 10 percent of their *dura* and 15 percent of their *simsim*. In general, lineage non-

[10] Cattle sales throughout Shatt Damam are negligible due to their store of value, symbolic prestige, and use in brideprice. Goats overwhelmingly make up livestock sales.

commodity producers exchange grain for other goods at the local shop or use it to repay the *shayl* in-kind. Off-farm non-agricultural employment makes up approximately 38 percent of the total income of petty commodity households, but only 13.8 percent of the lineage non-commodity producers. Labor lost through out-migration in the lineage forms is minimal since most incidences of migration occur to nearby areas such as Kadugli and Dilling.

TABLE 9.7: ALL HOUSEHOLDS; PROPORTIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS SOURCES OF INCOME ACTIVITY TO TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Income sources	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
Crop sales	2.4%	17.4%	20.2%	59.5%	10.8%
Animal sales	1.2	8.3	28.6	13.2	7.7
Businesses	96.4	26.5	3.2	.0	59.8
Ag. labor	.0	1.1	4.3	.0	1.0
DaHwa	.0	.7	2.6	4.1	0.7
Non-ag. labor	.0	45.9	38.0	13.8	19.3
Remittances	.0	0.1	3.1	9.4	0.7
Mean net income (£S)	21,388	1204	587	124	1337
Median net income (£S)	21,388	1018	318	111	315
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)

Analysis of mean and median net household incomes across forms of (re)production discloses the extent of village social stratification. The large disparity between the two measures (± £S 1022) exhibits the wide range in household incomes and the potential towards proletarianization. Without additional

lands for expansion, concomitant to increased commoditization, the trend in off-farm employment can be expected to continue. Although the lineage forms demonstrate greater orientation towards household self-sufficiency, on average income variabilities suggests wider economic pressures necessitating alternative sources of household sustenance; that is, the effects of the reproduction squeeze sundering traditional lineage relations.

The survey data also discloses a different outlook for female headed households, despite the wider range of economic opportunities open to women in general, and is particularly evident in lineage non-commodity households (Table 9.8). Not only are the incomes of female headed households disproportionately less than the total sample, but they enjoy fewer mean sources of income. A primary impediment confronting females is restricted access to land and livestock. Females traditionally inherit their mothers' 'near' farms which are significantly smaller than the main ('far') farms inherited by males.[11] Moreover, cattle belong exclusively to males, although females may own goats and pigs. Petty commodity producers rely significantly on off-farm non-agricultural labor (71.1 percent) and to a lessor degree on household-owned businesses (11.3 percent). Lineage forms, on

[11] Traditionally, females cultivated 'near' farms; lands close to the protective hills of the village. Males, to the contrary, worked the 'far' farms, located on the fertile plains at a distance from the village. Land inheritance patterns thus favors males.

the other hand, depend on *daHwa* labor to help meet cash incomes. Moreover, the lack of remittances reveals the absence of the elder/junior relation in these households.

TABLE 9.8: FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS; PROPORTIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS SOURCES OF INCOME ACTIVITY TO TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Income sources	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
Crop sales	NA	17.6%	21.4%	72.5%	19.8%
Animal sales	NA	.0	.0	.0	.0
Businesses	NA	11.3	.0	.0	7.6
Ag. labor	NA	.0	.0	.0	.0
DaHwa	NA	.0	11.0	27.5	3.9
Non-ag. labor	NA	71.1	67.6	.0	68.7
Remittances	NA	.0	.0	.0	.0
Mean net income (£S)	NA	796	296	32	364
Median net income (£S)	NA	162	132	19	101
Mean income sources	NA	1.7	2.5	1.0	1.8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(3)	(4)	(3)	(10)

Finally, *zakha* (or its Shatt counterpart of communal obligations to the less fortunate in times of crisis) suggests the number of households experiencing difficulty in securing simple reproduction. With the exception of the capitalist producers, 15 percent of sampled households supplement domestic grain supplies with an average of 1.6 sacks of *dura*. Overall, the majority of recipients are petty commodity producers followed by lineage commodity households, a further indication of the reproduction squeeze associated more closely with the process of commoditization. Interestingly, only two

female headed households benefit from this type of assistance. Females generally rely instead on the support of their brothers.

9.4: HOUSEHOLD REPRODUCTION STRATEGIES

A common complaint heard in Shatt Damam nowadays is that people must work longer hours in their fields but for a smaller harvest. Consequently, with the narrowing agricultural production base in Shatt Damam, alternative economic activities have become a necessity for most households in securing their reproduction. Though outward changes are often not as visible as in the other two villages, what is evident is the beginning change from domestic subsistence to cash sales. True, *nafir* labor parties continue to work the majority of fields and much of the *dura* is still turned into *marissa*. Equally true, however, is the sight of *daHwa* laborers composed of women, children, and the elderly laboriously weeding; the multiplicity of small transactions at the general store; and the lorries carrying passengers and goods to Kadugli. Nevertheless, the initial link articulating the capitalist and lineage modes of production came not from the market per se, but in the transformation of production relations. In short, the economy of Shatt Damam did not change by itself, but in relation to the wider forces at work in the Nuba Mountains. Transformations in livelihood strategies thus reflect new structural parameters and the reality of altered conditions for organizing production.

AGRICULTURAL ASSETS

Access to land constitutes a core value in Shatt Damam. Without land of his own a man never really becomes a full member of the community nor can a women completely gain security from want. Moreover, food self-sufficiency is an intended goal of every Shatt household. To be dependent on the grain grown by another is a sign of weakness, of being a poor provider. In the past, acquisition of land was often contingent on the death of a maternal uncle, although an aged uncle might provide a nephew with land when he was no longer economically active. Traditionally, males acquire land around the time of their marriage so that the two are intimately connected. Marriage and land thus demarcate elders from juniors. Females, on the other hand, are often bequeathed small plots by their mothers and sisters, or, less frequently, maternal aunts after they marry.

Table 9.9 (p. 461) indicates the high degree of land pressure currently in Shatt Damam; nearly 29 percent of households do not own a main farm. Three of the men are farming lands borrowed from their fathers and one from a friend. Although each claimed that he would eventually inherit land from his maternal uncle, two privately indicated that they would seek to retain their fathers' lands through arbitration in Kadugli. In addition, the negligible difference between the number of *feddans* owned and cultivated discloses the absolute shortage of arable lands available to

TABLE 9.9: HOUSEHOLD AGRICULTURAL ASSETS: LAND, COWS, GOATS, CHICKENS, SHEEP, AND PIGS BY FORMS OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
LAND					
% who own	100.0%	94.7%	85.7%	100.0%	71.4%
Mean *feddan* own	13.0	6.6	8.2	4.9	6.8
Mean cultivate	29.0	6.5	4.8	4.1	5.6
COWS					
% who own	50.0	47.4	47.6	50.0%	48.3
Mean no. own	35.0	19.3	5.6	3.0	10.1
GOATS					
% who own	50.0	68.4	71.4	44.4	61.7
Mean no. own	18.0	6.2	7.0	3.4	6.2
CHICKENS					
% who own	50.0	89.5	90.5	67.8	85.0
Mean no. own	15.0	7.2	6.5	5.0	6.5
SHEEP					
% who own	100.0	26.3	9.5	5.6	16.7
Mean no. own	17.5	6.4	6.0	2.0	8.1
PIGS					
% who own	.0	9.8	18.4	22.9	17.0
Mean no. own	NA	3.0	3.5	2.7	3.2
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)
Female headed households					
LAND					
% who own	NA	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean own	---	6.3	3.8	3.5	4.5
Mean cultivate	---	5.5	3.5	2.5	3.9
GOATS					
% who own	NA	33.3	50.0	0.0	30.0
Mean no. own	---	2.0	4.0	---	3.3
CHICKENS					
% who own	NA	100.0	75.0	33.3	70.0
Mean no. own	---	3.7	4.3	5.0	4.1
PIGS					
% who own	NA	0.0	25.0	0.0	10.0
Mean no. own	---	NA	2.0	NA	2.0
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(0)	(3)	(4)	(3)	(10)

the community. One of the consequences of this is the over-exploitation of the land which explains, in part, declining yields. A further consequence of the land scarcity is that more and more of the village youth, males and females, are migrating for longer periods of time. Of greater significance, the crisis in land adds to the erosion of the lineage mode. Without the promise of land, young men are less willing to obey the dictates of elders.

Livestock also comprises an important element of agricultural strategies, particularly cattle and goats. Without question, the Shatt prefer cattle. Overall, 48 percent of households maintain cattle with an average herd size of 10, ranging from three to 98. Not only are cattle a currency of brideprice, but they impart a measure of an individual's prominence within the community. The largest herd of cattle, for example, belongs to one of the more influential *sheikhs* of Shatt Damam. A customary means for young males to acquire cattle entails working as herd boys for other Nuba *gabila* or *Baggara* Arabs. As a boy Kuku Anduma received three cattle in this manner and now owns 34. Inheritance is equally common. Tio Gadam received 18 cattle when his maternal uncles passed away. Rarely do Shatt sell cattle. Likewise, loss of cattle through theft is hard felt. In the previous year eight cattle were stolen, ostensibly by Arabs if public opinion is to be believed. Only Said Mohammed, a wealthy merchant, keeps cattle purely for income

purposes. He owns 35 cattle which he routinely markets in Kadugli.

Goats, held by 62 percent of households, are primarily kept for slaughter to mark village celebrations and provide meat for *nafir* parties. Pigs, though declining in popularity, are ritual animals and are slaughtered during momentous Shatt rituals or to signify solemn occasions such as the death of an elder, the birth of a male child, or the return of a family member after a prolonged absence. Currently, just 17 percent of households continue to raise pigs. Sheep, a relatively recent addition, provide ready sources of cash to nearly 17 percent of households and are usually marketed in Kadugli prior to Islamic holy days. Aside from the capitalist households, livestock sales are primarily undertaken by petty commodity producers and, to a lessor extent, lineage commodity producers. Receipts from cash sales enable households to purchase needed goods and hire wage-labor. Chickens are commonly kept (85 percent of households) and are the domain of females, to be sold or eaten at their discretion. Ownership of land and livestock (excluding cattle) are only slightly lower for female headed households. Over all, animal protein does not comprise a large portion of the diet of most Shatt households in spite of the relative abundance of farm animals.

Interestingly, except for the few *Fellata* families, 87 percent of the sampled household heads cite Shatt Damam as their home village. The remainder are Shatt from nearby

villages such as Shatt Safiya who either relocated to be with relatives, accompanied parents while young, or joined spouses. And although 53 percent of household heads had migrated for employment purposes in the past, earlier instances of migration appear to have been exclusively for marriage and household formation. Consequently, no advantage seems to have been gained in ownership of agricultural assets either by time of arrival or through previous off-farm employment of household heads.

An important characteristic in lineage relations in Shatt Damam is communal proprietorship of land. In other words, traditionally land is not alienable and cannot be bought or sold according to capitalist principles. Recent years, however, have witnessed the development of a land market, albeit minor. The two capitalist *Fellata* households, as outsiders, rent village lands through the *omda* who shares some of the rent-in-kind with the *sheikhs* of Kadimiro, although he reserves the greatest share for himself. Other examples include the case of Tutu Kuku who sold 12 *feddan* for 10 cows, and Kuku El Madir who purchased three *feddan* for £S 700. The point is, the initial commoditization of land opens the way for new avenues of surplus extraction and, more significantly, the separation of some residents from the primary means of production. Such occurrences, however, merely indicate potentials in the transformation of the village. Nonetheless, the encirclement of Shatt Damam by surrounding villages as

well as Kadugli to the north, provide the basis for a different valuation of land, predicated not on lineage principles but on capitalist supply and demand. Such a situation bodes poorly for those not connected to the powerful elders and the result may well be to further stimulate off-farm employment and out-migration.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

Although the market is not the essential source of exploitation of juniors and women by elders, or even of the inequality between them, it did facilitate the incremental transformation in mechanisms of surplus extraction. By opening up competition for surplus-labor extracted from the various basic labor groups, surplus allowed certain elders to accumulate greater wealth. As a result, the juniors' position, as well as the position of women, is becoming more dependent and ultimately fixed into a form of wage labor; either directly through cash payments or indirectly through unreciprocated *nafir*. The consequences of the transformation are subtle. The 'logic' of the lineage mode remained unaffected as long as land and labor had relatively low opportunity costs. The increased scarcity of land and out-migration of the youth, however, facilitated a change in production relations. Consequently, lineage obligations and responsibilities have become diluted and their functions altered. To be sure, agriculture in Shatt Damam predominantly remains structured by the lineage mode of production, but it

is precariously poised between personal obligation and impersonal need. The logic of the transformation occurring within the village thus inheres within the contradictions generated by the requirements of the day.

According to the Shatt, *nafir* has provided the primary source of labor for as long as anyone can recall (see Table 1.1, p. 34). *Nafir* is equally important in most other labor intensive activities, especially in house construction. Yet many of the elderly inhabitants proclaim that it is not quite the same as in the past, citing that farmers do not sponsor as many *nafirs* nowadays, that cash or snuff is sometimes used to attract more participants, and that the villagers do not heed the call to labor as readily. Certainly too, the basis of *nafir* recruitment has widened along with the concurrent decline in reciprocity.

As in Somasem, *nafir* helped to define the community and enabled the functioning of a well-ordered subsistence economy. The importance centered on lineage bonds of obligation and responsibility which bound each adult individual to the community, though in accordance to rules governing lineage, seniority, and gender. No rational adult would have entertained the notion of refusing a legitimate call to participate in a *nafir*. To do so would have invited grave consequences, from social isolation to public scorn. Older inhabitants were mildly baffled when such a question was posed to them, at first replying that they had never considered such

a proposition. Even younger people were somewhat surprised, although their range of acceptable refusals was much broader. Interestingly, reasons listed by young men revolve around individual rather than community concerns and include wage-labor commitments, work in household fields, and anticipated absence from the village. In other words, the obligations and responsibilities enacted by *nafir* have ceased to condition the village and household labor process in the same way.

Traditionally, a *nafir* party is composed of lineage members and age-mates. In essence, the system of *nafir* in Shatt Damam operates along the same principles as those in Somasem, with slight variations due to the structuring of lineage relations. Similarly, the timing of a *nafir* is in accordance with seniority and community position. More importantly, each household entered the agricultural season with the intention of undertaking the majority of laborious activities through *nafir* labor. Of course, household labor was necessary, but only for the chores not accomplished by *nafir* (or brideservice). On the surface, little seems to have changed. With the exception of the two capitalist households, only one of the sampled households no longer sponsors a main farm *nafir* during the agricultural season due to the prolonged absence of its adult male members from the village. Closer inspection, however, reveals that on average, households currently sponsor approximately two *nafirs* per season, primarily for the first weeding and harvest. Not

surprisingly, wealthier households are in a better position to sponsor more *nafirs* parties than poorer households.

Although *nafir* is still relatively easy to organize, nowadays its basis of organization reflects the growing difficulties in recruiting sufficient numbers. Now, not only do lineage members and age-mates attend, invitations extend to friends and neighbors even though they are not connected to the sponsor through lineage ties or of the same age-classification. In addition, members of marginal households also freely participate, but without any expectations of returned future labor. Hence, wealthier farmers can expect to receive more labor than the household will expend in reciprocation. Every household in Shatt Damam sponsoring a *nafir* reciprocates an average of 16 times with two members in attendance. Rates of reciprocation, however, clearly differentiate petty commodity producers from lineage forms. Lineage and non-lineage commodity producers contribute a mean of 49 and 43 labor days respectively to other farmer's *nafir* parties, while petty commodity households contribute only 27. Furthermore, whereas every sponsor serves participants *marissa*, only 44.6 percent routinely provide meat and 25.4 percent never do. As elsewhere, meat provides an important draw. The current trend in *nafir* usage thus discloses the potential for rapid social stratification.

Change in the mechanisms of labor recruitment is a powerful source of tension in the community and imparts

profound implications for household reproduction. For those households able to attract large *nafirs*, hire labor or make do with household labor, the erosion of *nafir* bears fewer negative consequences. On the other hand, households dependent upon *nafir* and with few adult household members, frequently experience shortfalls in production and resort to off-farm labor and/or the *shayl*. In the past most farmers would have spoken of the influential elders with awe, increasingly it is with contempt and jealousy.

As mentioned, the increased out-migration of village residents from Shatt Damam has contributed significantly to the erosion of traditional labor arrangements; not only *nafir* but brideservice as well. For example, 21 percent of sampled households were beneficiaries of brideservice labor in the past. According to elderly informants, as recently as thirty years ago most betrothed young men met this condition. The monetization of brideservice also forced the monetization of brideservice and further contributed to the migration of young men. Again, it is the already marginal households who bear the brunt of another diminished source of communal labor.

In this framework, reliance on hiring wage-laborers need not immediately signal the disintegration of traditional labor supplies. Rather, wage-labor often provides relief during peak periods of the agricultural season. Analysis of the survey data, however, point to its differential usage among forms of production. Both capitalist households employ an

average of six labors to undertake all of the field activities while 57 percent of petty commodity producers hire an average of 3.5 workers by the piece for such activities as field clearing, weeding, and harvesting. Because petty commodity households have less cash resources, it is not surprising that an average of 26.8 *daHwa* laborers were also employed since they are comparatively less costly. Only 28.6 percent of lineage commodity producers employ an average of one worker at the piece rate and 11.5 percent at the *daHwa* rate; lineage non-commodity households do not employ wage laborers. Nearly 75 percent of those hired are fellow villagers, particularly for *daHwa* work. The main reason give by those preferring wage labor is the ability to control the work pace with the exception of lineage commodity households who note the difficulty in organizing *nafir*.

Female headed households evidence a slightly different pattern in labor recruitment. *Nafir* labor still provides the dominant source for all but two non-lineage commodity producers who rely instead on the beneficence of brothers. Nonetheless, these *nafir* parties tend to be half as large (six to eight participants) as those held by their male counterparts, despite the fact that on average female households contribute 40 labor days to the *nafir* parties held by other farmers. Only petty commodity households employ an average of two wage labors for their fields, though no *daHwa* laborers.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES

As in most villages throughout the Nuba Mountains, the successful reproduction of households in Shatt Damam requires careful consideration of needs and resources. Access to the means of production by themselves, however, are not always sufficient to reproduce a household as a unit over time.[12] This depends on a variety of factors which can forestall even the simple reproduction of a household; composition may change unexpectedly, meager grain stores may frustrate the sponsoring of a *nafir*, insufficient cash reserves may prevent the hiring of labor, or rains may be sporadic. Any of these can represent the difference between meeting household subsistence requirements and its disintegration through out-migration or chronic indebtedness to the *shayl*.

The type of business household members engage in is based not only on the complex interaction between the household's composition and resource base but by the location of the village in the wider economy. Proximity to Kadugli and the limited monetization of the village economy opens up distinct possibilities for capital accumulation. Yet ownership of a business does not automatically indicate capitalist status but may merely provide the precondition for a household to engage in agriculture by permitting, for example, the recruitment of additional labor or procurement of food during the 'hungry

[12] For some households, the size of landholding is such that successful reproduction strictly through agricultural activities requires optimal conditions.

season' prior to the ripening of grain in the *jubraka*. In addition, household-owned businesses (like off-farm employment) may also provide the household flexibility in the marketing of its crops or livestock, lowering its dependence on the local *jellaba* and village *shayl*.

Table 9.10 provides information on the percent of households owning businesses and the mean number households owned. Although 20 percent of sampled households have businesses, their importance varies significantly by form of (re)production. Both capitalist households derive some 96 percent of their incomes from a variety of enterprises, while household businesses contribute nearly 26 percent to incomes of slightly more than 42 percent of petty commodity producers. Businesses enterprises are less important for lineage commodity producers with just 9.5 percent operating an enterprise, and comprises only 3.2 percent of the incomes of these households. Lineage non-commodity producers own no businesses.

TABLE 9.10: PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS OWNING BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

All households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
% who own	100.0%	42.1%	9.5%	.0%	20.0%
Mean no. owned	3.5	1.4	1.0	---	1.7
(n=)	(2)	(19)	(21)	(18)	(60)

Significant differences also exist in the numbers and types of business activities pursued by households (Table 9.11). The businesses capitalist households engage in stand out in stark contrast to the other two forms of (re)production. All of the capitalist enterprises require substantial inputs of capital, a requirement out of the reach of the other households. Said Mohammed, for example, owns a general store, a lorry, and a flour mill. In addition, he is a *shayl*-cum-grain broker. Most of the 'money lending' activities occur in the form of small grain advances. Ironically, many of the more marginal are forced to sell grain to Mohammed only to have to borrow some at a future date; repayment is not in equivalent amounts. Abdullah Said also owns a general store but he also rents sewing machines to the village tailor whose products he markets in Kadugli. Like his brother, he too is a *shayl*. Another business activity, though requiring more moderate amounts of capital, is tailoring. Kuku Hamdan and Kuku Jama'a both rent pedal operated sewing machines and sew garments by order. They remarked that the income is lower than in Kadugli but that they can farm and sew as well.

Petty and lineage commodity producers, to the contrary, operate a wide variety of low capital enterprises such as thatch cutting, charcoal making, and constructing bed frames. Most of these activities are undertaken during the dry season and do not detract from household member's agricultural tasks

or *nafir* commitments. Only Tia Moju operates his business year round, baking bread for the few wealthy households in Shatt Damam. He places the loaves on a large round metal tray and covers them with a an shallow round cylindrical wash basin.[13] He then covers the top of the basin with hot coals to complete his make-shift oven. On average, low capital pursuits generate little income but the benefits to the household's economic security cannot be discounted.

TABLE 9.11: TYPE OF ENTERPRISE OWNED BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Type of enterprise	CP	PCP	LCP	Total
general store	28.6%	.0%	.0%	10.0%
agricultural broker/*shayl*	28.6	.0	.0	10.0
flour mill	14.3	.0	.0	5.0
lorry transport	14.3	.0	.0	5.0
rent sewing machines	14.3	.0	.0	5.0
tailor	.0	18.2	.0	10.0
bakery	.0	9.1	.0	5.0
make beds	.0	18.2	.0	10.0
cut thatch	.0	9.1	.0	5.0
brew *marissa*	.0	9.1	.0	5.0
make charcoal	.0	9.1	.0	5.0
carry water	.0	18.2	100.0	20.0
sell salt/onions	.0	9.1	.0	5.0
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(Total n of enterprises)	(7)	(11)	(2)	(20)

Businesses activities pursued by females illustrates the restrictive and more precarious position in which women find themselves in petty trade. A noted feature of these

[13] The wash basins are made by cutting the ends from 55 gallon drums and are generally used for scrubbing cloths.

businesses is that they fall within the female domain and thus do not conflict with male operated enterprises. Koshi brews *marissa*, primarily for young males without wives or to farmers needing additional *marissa* for their *nafir*. Three young women from a female headed household reside in Kadugli during the dry season where they pump and transport water for sale to private residences. The work is hard. Throughout the day the women fill and carry five gallon jerry cans; profits are small. Women also contribute to household security through irregular sales of surfeit vegetables and chickens, particularly in the large *suq* in Kadugli. Although the money belongs solely to women, invariably the household benefits from the necessities it purchases.

OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT

Every household within Shatt Damam cultivates a main farm as well as a *jubraka*, ostensibly to satisfy the household's basic food requirements. This is true even for the capitalist households who, nonetheless, are in a position to procure all of their necessities from the market. Hence, a household's access to sufficient land, by definition, determines its ability to meet the requirements of simple reproduction over time. Given both the relative and absolute shortage of land confronting the villagers, not every household attains this goal. Strategies to off set this predicament can assume any number of forms: diminishing consumption levels, but this leads to a decline in nutritional levels and caloric intake

and reduces the capacity of members to labor in the fields[14]; abandoning or reducing the size and number of household *nafirs* along with its provisions, but this adds to the labor load of household members; and, curtailment in sharing *marissa* with age-mates, but at the cost of social prestige. On the other hand, as noted, household members acquire cash incomes through business activities. Of greater importance for household reproduction in Shatt Damam, however, is off-farm employment and is undertaken by 70 percent of all households.

Closer examination of off-farm employment among households suggests the extent of the reproduction squeeze in Shatt Damam. Some 74 percent of petty commodity households, 86 percent of lineage commodity producers, and 56 percent of lineage non-commodity households have at least one member engaged in employment off the farm; no member of capitalist households sells labor-power. Placement of household members in distinctly wage-labor situations connects households to the wider capitalist system and draws surplus labor away from households (i.e., the elders). Off-farm employment also comprises an essential mechanism in current patterns of social differentiation among the Shatt as shown by Table 9.12 (p. 477).

The articulation of the Shatt with the wider capitalist economy presents certain structural imperatives for household

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[14] In this case, reduction in the intake of food is not distributed evenly within the household, but according to age and gender. As a result, females suffer disproportionately.

TABLE 9.12: DISTRIBUTION OF OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT, BY SEX AND FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

MALE	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
Semi-skilled employment				
store clerk	.0	4.0	.0	1.7
flour mill attendant	5.0	.0	.0	1.7
medical technician	5.0	.0	.0	1.7
tailor	5.0	.0	.0	1.7
Unskilled employment				
tend livestock	.0	12.0	7.1	6.8
manual laborer	42.0	48.4	42.8	45.8
agricultural laborer	5.0	8.2	.0	5.1
daHwa	20.0	16.0	7.1	15.3
don't know	15.0	12.0	42.8	20.3
TOTAL	**100%**	**.0%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(20)	(25)	(14)	(59)
FEMALE				
Unskilled employment				
daHwa	92.3	100.0	100.0	97.8
manual laborer	7.7	.0	.0	2.2
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
(n=)	(13)	(23)	(9)	(45)

reproduction. Variations in types of employment reveal nothing if not the manner of that incorporation. In general, occasions for off-farm employment favor unskilled laborers, in part due to the paucity of employment opportunities within the village, but also because the low level of education prevents most Shatt from other considerations. Here we must also recall that outside of this region, the Shatt are 'different.' Consequently, public prejudices discriminate against the Shatt and effectively restricts them to manual labor positions. It is not surprising then that only four males have semi-skilled employment, all within Shatt Damam. Women face an additional barrier to securing employment, even as servants in Kadugli; many have a limited grasp of the Arabic language. Occupations for slightly more than 20 percent of the male household members is unknown, only that they are in Khartoum. In all probability they are intermittent day laborers.

The high incidence of *daHwa* labor demonstrates the extent of economic stress of a number of households. With the absence of other opportunities, females dominate *daHwa* labor. *DaHwa*, as with the other sources of unskilled employment, does not facilitate capital accumulation. At best, off-farm employment merely forestalls the immediate disintegration of the household since nearly 63 percent of males must leave the village to gain employment.

MIGRATION ACTIVITIES

An elder's ability to control juniors and females depends largely on access to and size of landholdings, by far the most important means of production. Not only do landholdings directly influence the stability of household size and organizational structure, but the possibility for accumulation and degree of material well being. Other factors, to be sure, come into play; adherence to the gender and generational division of labor, brideprice and the circulation of women, and local concepts of appropriate patterns of consumption. Yet without the promise of land, little incentive exists to retain young men, ;et alone ensure their obedience. Coupled with limited local economic opportunities, 27.6 percent of male household members migrate (Table 7.13). In fact, almost 62 percent of households have at least one member temporarily migrating. Rates of return, however, do not bode well for the household anticipating a reunion; 87.5 percent of former household members reside outside of Shatt Damam with 47 percent staying in Khartoum.[15] Only 19 percent were able to remain in Shatt Damam and farm.

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[15] The number of former residents living in Khartoum provides an important network for new arrivals and in fact helps determine choice of destination.

TABLE 9.13: PATTERNS OF TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY FORM OF (RE)PRODUCTION

Households	CP	PCP	LCP	LNCP	Total
% w/migrants	100.0%	57.9%	81.0%	38.9%	61.7%
mean number	10.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	2.0
% of household members by sex					
Male	70.6%	21.4%	29.6%	18.9%	27.6%
Female	50.0	2.9	1.2	.0	3.8

Temporary out-migration, as in other Nuba communities, is not new. As elsewhere, Shatt left in the past to amass the necessities of brideprice, either through herding cattle or working as a common laborer in the cities. Reasons behind migration have altered only slightly (Table 9.14). Two exceptions include migration for security and higher education. Both capitalist household heads sent their family to Khartoum during the high point of military activity against the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in South Kordofan, and attendance in a secondary school in Kadugli. Over 75 percent of male migrants continue to leave the village for economic reasons, with 44 percent going only as far as Kadugli and another 29 percent as far as Khartoum and Gezira. In general, females tend to remain in Shatt Damam. So too with former female members who married; 87.5 percent still reside in Shatt Damam.

TABLE 9.14: PRIMARY REASON FOR TEMPORARY MIGRATION BY SEX AND **FORMS OF** (RE)PRODUCTION

	CP	PCP	LCP	WLP	Total
MALE					
employment	.0%	86.7%	83.4%	80.0%	67.2%
seek employment	.0	.0	4.2	10.0	3.3
tend livestock	.0	.0	8.3	10.0	4.9
attend school	50.0	6.7	.0	.0	11.7
visiting	.0	.0	4.2	.0	1.6
fear for security	50.0	.0	.0	.0	9.8
village conflict	.0	6.7	.0	.0	1.6
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(n=)	(12)	(15)	(24)	(10)	(61)
FEMALE					
visiting	.0	100.0	100.0	.0	37.5
fear for security	100.0	.0	.0	.0	62.5
TOTAL	100%	100%	.0%	100%	100%
(n=)	(5)	(2)	(1)	(0)	(8)

Remittances of cash, food, and clothing by temporary migrants augment the incomes of 18.3 percent of households with over 29 percent of male migrants sending an average of fS 57, and food and clothing an average of one time per annum.[16] The small amounts of remittances underscores the types of employment Shatt obtain and not necessarily the rupture in elder's authority. Nearly 21 percent of permanent male migrants also send money, food, and clothing, though less regularly, and the amounts are negligible (an average of fS 7

[16] Temporary migrants from petty commodity households remit an average of fS 25 per year, fS 98 from lineage commodity producers, and fS 34 from lineage non-commodity households.

per annum). Nevertheless, out-migration of young males for longer and longer periods can be expected to further erode the lineage mode, both with the loss of labor-power and the break in the traditional mechanisms of marriage as more young men marry while migrating without the intercession of their elders.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I return to the broad theoretical and substantive issues with which I began in the first chapter and offer some reflections upon them in light of my analyses of the economic context and social life in Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam. The issues raised by this research experience, nonetheless, do not begin and end in the Nuba Mountains. Their is clearly a need for more focussed consideration of what is broadly termed development; specifically, we are sorely lacking in our comprehension of the dynamics and mechanisms associated with the penetration of capitalism into non-capitalist forms of production and social relations. I chose to explore this interaction through the study of households and the livelihood strategies that households formulate to ensure their reproduction, at least in the short-run. To this end, households were differentiated on the basis of capitalist and lineage modes of production. The conceptualization offered here, in these concluding pages, thus begins in the broad sweep of historical forces and ends with a consideration of the impacts of these forces on the everyday lives of people.

My arguments, although centering on household, also address agrarian transformation. Development has proven to be an uneven process in the Nuba Mountains as elsewhere. A visitor to the region is immediately struck by the diverse

ways that people are organized relative to their work and social lives. So too with villagers in Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam. Given the relatively close proximity of these villages to the market towns of Dilling or Kadugli, broader questions arise over the socioeconomic circumstances differentiating them. The villages cannot be viewed as encapsulated entities in themselves. Rather, they must be considered in relation to the regional context and this requires attention to the community level. Further, a comparative perspective, as I have attempted, allows for a more refined understanding of households and livelihood strategies relative to their local contexts, and permits greater appreciation of how the respective villages are incorporated into the wider society. But first some summarizing statements are in order.

10.1: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

The overarching goals of my research were 1) to explain the variations in patterns of households in the Nuba Mountains in terms of livelihood strategies, and 2) to comprehend the conditions for which strategies are formed. The study was carried out in the three Nuba Mountain villages of Somasem, Shair Tomat, and Shatt Damam. These villages are located in a region that has had a long and turbulent history of outside intrusion, first with various waves of slave/tributary kingdoms and empires, and now capitalism. Yet these villages did not exist in some inert state prior to the encroachment of

outsiders. They were structured by a dynamic logic of its own; namely, the lineage mode of production. Thus, in order to understand the present organization of households and activities pursued by members of these households, it was necessary to explore the history of the area, both broadly and locally.

Household is the unit of analysis. As an organizing concept, household represents a universal presence that facilitates comparative inquiry. It is operationally defined as a group of individuals (rarely one) who identify with a specific domicile and whose livelihood efforts, in the broad sense, are focused towards 'mutual' survival. Household thus is a way by which individuals are effectively grouped, and, for the researcher, an especially important one in areas where small-scale agricultural production predominates. This requires an understanding of the internal characteristics of households with the resources and activities of its members, bearing in mind that households are ultimately irresolable apart from the larger social formation. In this way, household serves to connect the individual to the wider environment, relating human agency with structure.

My research agenda necessitated a methodology that takes into account various determinants of household and livelihood strategies at different level of analysis:

First, to comprehend the structural (macro) effects of social change in the Nuba Mountains and the Sudan, I analyzed

secondary documents and conducted interviews with development practitioners and state functionaries. By this, I attempt to bring into focus: 1) the Sudan's historical past, particularly as it impacts the Nuba Mountain communities; 2) efforts by Sudanese government agencies to affect agricultural mechanization and promote commodity production; and 3) the degree of development of local, regional, and national labor and product markets.

Second, an open-ended survey of elders in twelve villages was undertaken in order to establish differences in village structures and social organization, and to clarify present conditions, particularly modes of labor utilization, market activities, land base, and village infrastructure.

Third, in view of the structural transformations occurring within the Nuba Mountains and the variant types of access to land, labor, and other means of production that obtain, I surveyed 150 households in the three villages. In order to better interpret contextual variations among households, I selected various members from 20 of these households for more in-depth focussed interviews. Taken together, this formed a basis for discussing the social organization of households and the types of livelihood strategies they adopt, both currently and in the past.

Fourth, in order to account for both capitalist and lineage modes of production at the household level, I categorized household according to form of (re)production.

While I could have stratified the households solely according to scale indicators such as age(s) of household head, income, size, and landholdings, this tends to homogenize or, even worse, to dismiss the relevance of the wider socioeconomic environment and the impress of history.

A recurring theme of my research is livelihood strategies, not so much as the intended outcome of conscious, purposive decision-making but more the "art of muddling through." Individual behavior per se, in and of itself, reveals little of consequence for social analysis, rather my concern is with social relationships set against the backdrop of structure and process. I argue that structural parameters condition livelihood strategies so that decisions are often arrived at by patterned human behavior, or in response to sudden changes in the actor's environment. And, for present purposes, I am convinced that an important line of inquiry relates to how individuals, as members of households, respond to the new opportunities and constraints presented by capitalist encroachment on everyday life. Either way, actors seldom if ever have complete information and the benefit of hindsight is often lost. The analysis of livelihood strategies, then, is undertaken with an aim to understanding the conditions underlying the formation of those strategies.

To this end, households are differentiated according to forms of (re)production: 1) capitalist agricultural producers with substantial non-agricultural business interests; 2) petty

commodity producers *not* able to withdraw from the market in times of adversity; 3) lineage commodity producers able to withdraw from and enter the market at will; 4) lineage non-commodity producers with minimal 'market' relations; and 5) wage labor producers with supplemental agricultural production. This classification permits a more sophisticated treatment of what is routinely labeled the 'peasantry' and agrarian transition.

10.2: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

The economy of the Nuba Mountains has been increasingly commoditized over the past several decades. Here the process of commoditization refers to the deepening of commodity relations within the reproductive cycles of households (Bernstein, 1977). This process was begun during Condominium rule, but has intensified since the creation of an independent Sudanese state. At first, the spread of cotton production was particularly important in extending commodity relations to the region. The cyclical nature of the world cotton market coupled with marginal growing conditions, however, failed to fully reshape the reproductive cycles of households, and to generalize commodity production throughout the region. The introduction of new technologies, most notably the tractor, have served to further intensify commodity production and reorient the reproductive cycles of households from internal needs of subsistence to external requirements of profit. In short, the shift from simple to expanded reproduction fostered

dependence on commodity production and markets, and most importantly, the securing of wage-labor.

Technology alone, however, cannot account for every change in the patterning of household activities. Certainly other forces evidence equal importance, such as the monetizing of obligations of juniors to elders, the spread of consumer goods, and the increased value of education. Moreover, without the ability to expand agricultural production most households are faced with the choice of either realizing other sources of cash incomes, especially through activities requiring out-migration, or to lag behind the culturally and socially acceptable consumption standards. Most households opt for the former except those nearing a terminal or re-generating point in their 'normal' life cycle. And even then, most of these households are able to secure necessary goods from former household members through the obligations of lineage or through the Islamic institution of *zakha*.

Nonetheless, the intensification of commodity production does not immediately render everything everywhere capitalist, nor does it always lead to social differentiation within the villages--and when it does, it is not necessarily experienced in the same way or with similar consequences. There is no reason why a process that was slow and extremely complex in Europe should be swift and decisive in the Nuba Mountains. Consequently, variations within and between categories of households abound. In this respect I have not constructed

ideal-types that require no further explanation. In the Nuba Mountain case, the capitalist mode of production articulates with the lineage mode. Here, the resiliency of some lineage modes in the face of capitalist encroachment cannot be underestimated. And, since the spread of capitalism is invariably uneven, we should not expect homogeneous results. Further, we must anticipate differential effects for there are significant social and economic variabilities within lineage modes of production. In short, there is no absolute logic of development, no 'iron law' providing for neat unilinear outcomes.

Human responses to complex issues are seldom if ever crafted in isolation from life experiences. Most householders confront the social terrain from different perspectives and formulate livelihood strategies accordingly on the bases of past decisions, present needs, and future expectations. These decisions, needs, and expectations are usually in line with the individual actor's perception of the world (however defined) and his or her position in it. Moreover, past knowledge comes to people as 'tradition' which serves as a type of cognitive map used to interpret every day occurrences and guide daily activities. This can help to explain why some people will find comfort in tradition[1] because not every event

[1] Tradition is not stagnant nor constant but always changes. The traditions of one generation may or may not be those of the preceding one. This in no way invalidates tradition, setting it at opposite end of a 'development' pole, it merely underscores the fact that references change with the

must be processed and analyzed anew. This in no way **diminishes** the value of householder responses, it merely **underscores the fact that actors have limited knowledge of structural parameters at any given point in space and time. And, if the subject is structure, then these very parameters set limits, always reformulated, to the actors knowledge and actions.**

COMMUNITY

Unquestionably, the historical manner of incorporation of the three villages into the Sudanese state structure and the world economy varied. As a result, the distribution of 'life chances' between the three villages reveals significant differences in opportunities and constraints. Yet the articulation of variant modes does not stop with the initial contact; it is a continuing process which at once reflects and embodies changes in the wider environment. In the past, Condominium policies regarding the Nuba Mountains discriminated against the *jellaba* (Arab merchants) and attempted to isolate and 'protect' the Nuba from Arabization. Clearly this was untenable. Nuba contacts with Arabs predated Condominium rule and many converted to Islam on their own accord. Now migrants become exposed to Northern Sudanese lifestyles in urban centers such as El Obeid and Khartoum, and bring new tastes, ideas, and perceptions back to the villages. Still, the heavy hand of government continues to alienate the

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then realities.

Nuba, especially the Islamic relief agency, *Dawa al-Islamia*, which implements the tacit state policy of religious proselytization in return for needed services.

In practice, the forces restructuring the Nuba Mountains are felt by every villager; the effects are real and observable in the routine of village life. Each villager, by virtue of this ongoing process, recognizes malleabilities in parameters to 'behavior' and, in the chapters directly concerned with the villages, I have pointed to some of the cleavages along which differentiation tends to run. In accordance with the views of the villagers, however, power structures lie outside of the control of most households. Nevertheless, each village views its destiny differently; Somasem with indifference, Shair Tomat with hope, and Shatt Damam with rancor.

1. Somasem

The Ghulfan of Somasem benefited from their early conversion to Islam, the abundance of arable lands, and a proximity to state-sponsored mechanized farming schemes such as Habila. Consequently, tractorization proceeded rather quickly, financed by some households converting cattle into cash and some households acquiring money from returned migrants. The sociocultural and economic dislocation wrought by the Mahdist period opened up the area to 'new ways of doing things,' while the availability of tractors in the vicinity provided the means.

2. Shair Tomat

The *Hawazma* of Shair Tomat, on the other hand, were forced to adopt a sedentary agricultural life as a substitute for their earlier habit of raiding neighboring Nuba villages. Given the absolute paucity of arable lands for expansion and the fierce independence of the *Hawazma*, most households strive to balance agricultural needs with off-farm employment. The villagers, however, have accepted some forms of mechanization that have been made available by the Nuba Mountain Agricultural Corporation, though they still cultivate their new lands primarily with household labor. Certainly too, the fact that they are Arabs provides them with some employment opportunities not open to non-Arabs.

3. Shatt Damam

Shatt Damam, to the contrary, has met with a remarkably dissimilar fate than the other two villages. Aside from complications in consolidating landholdings, it is difficult for a Shatt to rent a tractor from *jellaba*. And besides, it would mean abrogating the conventional notion of *nafir* and the subjective benefits of working together. On the other hand, the government is reticent to assist the Shatt precisely because they are not Arab. Lastly, although land scarcity and monetization of brideprice and brideservice has long forced out-migration of the Shatt, as 'Africanized' Nuba, alternatives to agricultural production are significantly limited.

1. Capitalist

Capitalist households generate their incomes in trade and transport, urban property, and moneylending. Most importantly, they function as brokers monopolizing the flow of commodities into and from other households. Differences in this form of (re)production between the villages have to do with availability of land resources, the structure of agriculture, and the character of the regional markets. Capitalist households in Somasem, for instance, have rather extensive landholdings, whereas capitalist households in Shair Tomat operate at a more marginal level with respect to agricultural production. In Shatt Damam the capitalist households have virtually no land holdings and are not involved in agricultural production.

2. Petty commodity

Petty commodity households, like capitalist households, are also engaged in cycles of extended reproduction based on accumulation, but differ in the scale of their economic operations. Nonetheless, they are not fully capitalist in the same sense because of their continued reliance on family labor in agricultural and non-agricultural activities. This allows a degree of flexibility not open to capitalist producers since petty commodity households can intermittently leave the market. Yet, unlike lineage commodity producers, total withdrawal is an illusion and not a fact. Flexibility results

more from the diverse mixture of economic enterprises such that at least one guarantees a household's subsistence. The distinction between capitalist and petty commodity producers, however, is not as clear-cut; indeed, it is more a matter of degree than of kind. So too within the petty commodity category which embraces those households which are easily classified as small capitalists and others evidencing the classic 'reproduction squeeze.'

As with capitalist households, variations in this group between villages concern economic opportunities. Overall, the intensification of agricultural production and commoditization of production relations is constrained by a rigid land market and a constricted labor market. Consequently, petty commodity households turn to a variety of business activities and off-farm employment. Reliance on household instead of wage-labor ironically limits their ability to accumulate and further underscores the exploitative nature of kinship relations. The time spent in non-agricultural pursuits requires redundant labor, however defined. More often than not, those left to labor in the fields, especially females, frequently find that their work hours increase.

3. Lineage

Lineage forms of (re)production substantively differ from those created via capitalist economic activities. Only within Shatt Damam are lineage forms dominant, in part due to the Shatt peoples' ability to resist capitalist intrusion into

their ideological and economic life. Lineage forms within Somasem and Shair Tomat are certainly more marginal and exist through the conscious maintenance of lineage ties to kinsmen residing in other villages. In the case of Somasem, lineage members also live in close proximity, removed from the dominant commercial center of Shardi.

Lineage commodity households, as noted earlier, are similar to petty commodity producers with the essential exception that they are able to withdraw from the market, even permanently. The greater proportion of these households in relation to their non-commodity counterparts, nevertheless, provides evidence of the importance of commodity production in everyday life, at least cyclically. The type and intensity of cyclical mobility portends long term trends in increased differentiation and polarity within the three villages and the dynamics of the Sudanese economy as a whole. In the face of current changes induced by civil war in the Sudan, the long term outlook for these forms is not good.

4. Wage labor

Wage labor households distinguish the end product of present trends in agrarian transformation. Few households in the village willingly withdraw from agriculture on their own accord, although some do after members of the household secure relatively high paying jobs. Not surprisingly, then, most wage labor households are squeezed out of agriculture for a variety of reasons including insufficient household labor,

lack of agricultural surfeit for *nafir*, and pressing cash needs such as to repay the *shail*. Whatever the circumstances, once agriculture is abandoned it is difficult if not impossible to re-enter without the money to hire labor, for wage labor erodes one's village position and hence one's ability to organize *nafir*.

10.3: CLASS PROCESSES

Class, though central to mode of production analysis, has only been referred to briefly in our account of the Nuba Mountains. It has remained tangential to much of our discussion, not because it is of little significance, but precisely because households, particularly in this context, have no class position by themselves; people do. As noted in Chapter VI, class is a processural social relation that looses its usefulness when viewed strictly as hierarchal gradations (Deere, 1990; Resnick and Wolff, 1982, 1979). Thus class differences arise over surplus, with fundamental classes involved in either its creation or extraction and subsumed classes providing certain socially necessary activities that ensure the conditions of existence of the fundamental classes. And, in a complex social formation as the Nuba Mountains, more than one basis for class formation exists, compounding class-based activities.

As with gender, ethnicity, and generation, the class locations of household members affect the viability of households and directly determine the economic opportunities

open to its members. At the concrete level we find that the complexities of people's lives often places them in a variety of class positions, both fundamental and subsumed, even within the same household. For simplicity of exposition, we can safely assume that the more fundamental classes that household members occupy relative to subsumed classes, the greater the accumulation of surplus. The reverse also holds true. Consequently, households are not egalitarian institutions, tranquil islands in the press of change, but are real sites for the struggle over resources. For example, it is one thing for a junior to labor for his father (elder) within the lineage mode, but it is quite another thing when that same junior also creates surplus-value for a capitalist producer in exchange for wages, or when he himself makes saddles to be sold in the local market. When other household members are also engaged in multiple class relations, the potential for internal household conflict increases. Some conflicts strengthen the household, others lead to its disintegration.

Overall, class processes engendered within the tributary mode are passing out of existence. In the main, these types of class relations, when they were the norm, depended upon the relative isolation of village communities and the sanctity of local religions. The penetration of the capitalist economy and the advance of Islam are sweeping away old forms. Lineage class relations nonetheless continue to provide important bases for surplus creation and extraction, though in different

ways than in the past. Elders continue to extract surplus from juniors and women, through such mechanisms as brideprice, *nafir* labor, remittances, and domestic/agricultural activities. Capitalist class processes, however, are intensifying as evidenced by the employment of fellow villagers, government-sponsored agricultural schemes, out-migration, local markets, and the *shayl*.

10.4: SUMMATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

It is often difficult to distinguish social cause from social effect, or for that matter to argue convincingly about the social antecedents of contemporary conditions. For this reason three villages were studied in an effort to understand, at least in these particular instances, the diversity of the Nuba Mountains. Here I present some conclusions regarding salient trends in household formation and the livelihood strategies designed to ensure their survival.

1. Within areas where commercial agriculture and market penetration is greatest, those households that did not or are unable to expand agricultural production find that they must increasingly seek and devote more time to generating off-farm income. This strikes at the core of older lineage relations, bringing into question the social valuation once formerly assigned to agricultural products and cattle. Consequently, the orientation of agricultural production is increasingly for sale purposes and less for domestic consumption. So too with cattle, which are becoming capital investments ('chattel')

rather than a symbol of status and a means to assure that sons are married well. In effect, the privatization and commercialization of production occurs at the expense of lineage relations.

2. The use of *nafir* labor is rapidly deteriorating as external pressures are felt in the villages. The initial monetization of brideprice provided new sources of wealth accumulation for village elders, but it also compelled young men to migrate. This trend continues along with the expansion of a cash-based economy, although now more villagers migrate, thus reducing potential *nafir* labor from the local setting. Increasingly, households are forced to seek wage-labor and the cash necessary for its deployment. All of these individuals bring market forces closer to the village.

3. Households are increasingly forced into both agricultural and non-agricultural commodity production in an effort to meet reproduction requirements, leaving them exposed to market vagaries and the effects of inclement weather. One result is that household members must pursue a variety of income generating activities in order to ensure, at a minimum, household subsistence.

4. Older patterns of inter- and intra-household cooperation and mutual assistance are declining with respect to increased commercialization of the local economy, placing more people at risk during periods of misfortune, such as the drought of 1984. Personal ties of obligation engendered within

lineage relations no longer operate to spread hardships throughout the community during particularly onerous times.

5. Female heads of households, as with females in general, face a different set of constraints than their male counterparts, due in part to the erosion of kinship relations such as brother-sister bonds, inability to meet agricultural labor needs, and greatly limited off-farm employment opportunities. Females in Muslim households face further constraints, though the intensity of seclusion is tempered by the wealth of the household and its reliance on their labor in the fields such that female seclusion assumes the form of a status symbol.

6. The cumulative effects of the changes in the three villages expose new patters of social differentiation and surplus extraction. To be sure, older lineage relations still serve as a basis for exploitation but wage-labor and unequal terms of trade provide yet others. Within these villages, women, children, and the elderly from resource poor households disproportionately bear the brunt of these changes.

7. With the decline in class relations engendered within the lineage mode of production, households are increasingly structured by capitalist class formation. Relations of seniority still persist, but are increasingly restricted to individual households rather than trans-household lineage relations. Access to the surplus of the young is thus becoming more problematic. Moreover, the extent of capitalist

encroachment leads to more households becoming dependent upon wage-labor for their reproduction. Nevertheless, those households with greater access to the means of production such as capitalist and better-off petty commodity households are able to secure subsumed class positions for their sons and daughters, primarily as civil servants/military personnel, merchants, or teachers.

These conclusions make no attempt to argue an irreversible household or village trajectory resembling a predetermined outcome of emiseration for the many and the 'good life' for the few. On the other hand, the conditions in which household livelihood strategies are forged are not voluntaristic in the sense that people have unlimited choices. The trends I have outlined demonstrate clear forces that channel these transformations, but a given village does not one day simply resolve to replace lineage with capitalist relations. The observed trends created by individuals deciding to sell agricultural surfeit to purchase better farming implements, or by individuals migrating to Habila to earn brideprice, or by individuals deciding to employ hired labor for their agricultural enterprises because it is easier to control than the local *nafir*. Exactly how developmental processes will eventually restructure the social organization of rural villages in the Nuba Mountains region remains to be seen.

10.5: EPILOGUE

The history of violent incursions into the Nuba Mountains seems endless; people are still being torn from their villages and must seek sanctuary deeper into the hills. The Beshir/Tourabi regime in Khartoum has intensified the civil war in the Nuba Mountains area of Kordofan. Recent occurrences in the Nuba Mountains continue to bear this out. A front page article in the *New York Times* (9/16/92) reported that "50,000 Nuba had been relocated in the last two months from their homeland in southern Kordofan Province to camps in the northern part of the province. Many Nuba villages had been destroyed by the Sudanese Army." The British and U.S. based Africa Watch (9/8/92) further reported that "men are taken to labor camps in large commercial farms and the women and children to work as domestic servants in northern Arab households."

It is increasingly difficult to find much to be optimistic about in the Nuba Mountains today. The continued conflict is destroying the economy and ripping apart the sociocultural fabric, and has cost the lives of thousands of Nuba. This civil war is different from its predecessor, for it is clearly the riverain "Arabs" against the rest of the population and is fueled by the currents of Islamic fundamentalism now sweeping across North Africa. Now, the Muslim fundamentalist dominated government in Khartoum is actively trying to Arabize the non-Muslim Nuba. Sadly, the

prognosis for their survival is not favorable.

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