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"DISPLACED" WOMEN SPEAK:

A COUNTER DISCOURSE ON
THE DROUGHT "DISPLACED" IN UMDURMAN, SUDAN

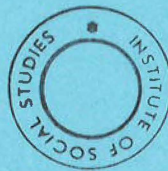
*ish al-Mericeen akaloho al-Muazafeen...
wa samona al-Naziheen. (Arabic version)*

*The food of the Americans has been eaten by the state
officials...And named us the "displaced."
(Translation)*

A Research Paper presented by

Saadia Izzeldin Ali Malik

(Sudan)



In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Obtaining the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

WD

Members of the Examining Committee

Dr. M. Doornbos
Drs. K. Willemse

The Hague, December 1995



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the displaced share with the established urban population the already deficient and meagre municipal services and constitute an obstacle to appropriate planning...Being far from security check points, squatters living in shanty towns and slum areas commit all kinds of crimes which threaten the security of other citizens.

Minister of Housing and Public Utilities, 1993.

al-Hakoma (the government) called us Naziheen (displaced) because we are strangers to it. But we are not going to leave our land in Umdurman. Here we have a living but in Kordofan there is jafaf (drought) and insects which ate our harvest.

"Bakhita" a working "displaced" woman in Dar-al-Salam Area, Umdurman, 1994.

CHAPTER I

I.1 INTRODUCTION:

Sudan since the 1970s, like many other African and Middle Eastern countries, has experienced a continuous mobility and movements of its population from rural to urban areas within Sudan and from Sudan to other countries, as well Sudan is the main receiving country of refugees¹ from neighbouring countries, specially from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Chad. The movement or migration from rural to urban areas in Sudan reached its peak in 1983 as a consequence of drought and famine in Western and Eastern Sudan and as a result of war in Southern Sudan. The mass and forced migration from these affected areas to urban areas in Sudan is referred to in the literature as displacement. Accordingly, displacement in Sudan is resulted either from drought the 1984/ 85 in Western Sudan or from war in the South.

¹"The major difference between a displaced person and a refugee is legal. The former is a citizen of the Sudan and possess the rights of a citizen. For example he/she has freedom of movement and can travel without requiring passes or permits which the refugee must have. The dark side of this citizenship is that when these rights are violated by the very state which should be their protector they have no where to turn. By contrast, although the refugee's rights in his/her country of asylum may be limited, UNHCR is mandated to protect those rights" (Quick, 1990:16)

The former type of displacement is the focus of this paper.

Drought displacement² as a process has both a spatial aspect and a socio-economic and political aspect. While its spatial aspect may be self-evident, i.e. the movement from rural to urban areas in Sudan, its political and socio-economic aspect derives from the unequal relations of production between urban and rural areas and regional disparities. In Sudan, these unequal relations of production have been largely related to the broad "development" process adopted by the Sudanese state which favours urban areas in Sudan and marginalizes rural areas which as a result became vulnerable to droughts, desertification, and famines. The population affected by famine and drought in Western Sudan (in Darfur and Kordofan) moved to different urban areas including Greater Khartoum³.

This study analyses displacement as a continuous process within the confines of the urban areas in which the "displaced" people settle. The study argues that "displaced" people are facing an urban or state discourse which restricts and controls them within the boundaries of the label Naziheen (displaced). The label "displaced" has different meanings to the state and to its 'bearers' (cf Chapter III). The focus will be on the discourse of the "displaced" women on the term "displaced" and their discourse on the state and the urban setting in which they live. In addition, the study examines the coping strategies developed by the "displaced" women living in Dar-al-Salam Area in Umdurman. The main argument of the work is that the dominant discourse on drought/ "displaced" in Sudan which is represented by the state is not the ultimate "Truth", i.e. it does not reflect the actual reality(ies) and perception(s) of the "displaced" of themselves. "Displaced" women have their own knowledge of their own reality(ies). They have an "Other" discourse on themselves as "displaced" which emanates from their experience(s) and which represent an "other" part of the "truth".

²Chapter II deals with the concept (displacement) more specifically.

³Greater khartoum is the capital of Sudan. It includes three towns: Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Umdurman. Mass migration to Greater Khartoum, specially to Umdurman is the focus of this paper.

Displacement is analyzed through discourse analysis which views knowledge and 'truth' as constructed (Harding, 1991). Through discourse analysis the study aims at shaking and deconstructing the term Naziheen ("displaced") by making the voices of the "displaced" women the centre of the analysis of the study.

Focusing on drought "displaced" women is motivated by a political standpoint. My intention is to make the voices of those women heard through highlighting the hidden experiences and hidden views of the displaced women towards the dominant discourse on them which includes their perception to their "urban" environment. In this manner the research will be a political act.

My emphasis on "displaced" women rather than on displaced men and women is consistent with a general feminist politics which believes that women throughout history were contributing in the process of history making of their own societies but they have been marginalized from the process of giving meaning to these his(tories) (Harding, 1987). The focus on "displaced" women is an act rejecting the homogeneity and victimization of the "displaced" women.

The study deals with four interrelated questions:

- (1) the state discourse on the "displaced".
- (2) the discourse of the "displaced" women on the term "displaced", i.e how they perceive the term Naziheen ("displaced") ?
- (3) The relationship between the two discourses?
- (4) The extent to which theorizing from "displaced" women's lives and experiences help in formulating a new perspective of the term "displaced".

These questions fall in the mainstream of the broad issue of shifts in the identity of the "displaced" women. The issue of identity is one of the most important aspects or areas in feminist scholarship. Identity as , for instance, Harding argues, "arises from social locations and can be chosen to legitimate social locations"(Harding, 1991:p 275). Being socially located and identified by the state's discourse as "displaced", the "displaced" women adopted certain strategies which can be regarded as a discursive struggle in which they try to find a space for themselves as

they perceive themselves.

My research on the issue of shifting identities of the "displaced" women is based on interviews made in 1994 with nine displaced women. The interviews are open-ended and include our dialogue, some songs and poems which the displaced women formulated to express their situation and their social location as Naziheen ("displaced") and comments from individuals who appeared during the interviews and joint our discussion. Although the number is not representative, the research is not concerned with a quantitative analysis. Instead it reflects the views and experiences of some "displaced" women through indepth interviews. It is a qualitative research which can be considered as a step towards a new perspective on displacement as a labelling process.

I.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM:

The term or the label Naziheen ("displaced") was taken by different studies as an unquestionable term. That is to say no studies have examined what the term means to its 'bearers'. No available research considers what Naziheen ("displaced") means within the urban boundaries of Greater Khartoum. Moreover, while there is a huge amount of data available on the situations of the "displaced" people in Greater Khartoum, these studies approach "displaced" people homogeneously. Drought "displaced" women are either conceived by these studies as represented by displaced men or entirely overlooked. The few studies that mention "displaced" women can be classified as studies or researches about "displaced" women. What I mean by research about women, is researches which deal with drought displaced women as **objects** of study. No studies examine the displaced women's perception of themselves and their perception of the state's discourse on them.

Accordingly, what I intend to do is to take the experiences of the displaced women as a point of departure and deal with the displaced women as **subject** of study, i.e as knowers. Focus will be on drought displaced women's perception of themselves and their perception of the state and the urban discourse on them. As such, coping strategies developed by the "displaced" women to cope with the urban structure are regarded as a discursive field which reinforces the discourse(s) of the "displaced" women

on themselves. Coping strategies are approached as processes which have direct relation to the development of positive self images by the "displaced". Accordingly, these strategies are dealt with from a qualitative perspective. Quantifying the effort and time spent by the "displaced" women in their work is not the concern of this paper.

I.3 LIMITATIONS AND PROBLEMS:

This study is dealing with a very complex issue which includes many agents and necessitates the discussion of different issues which all interact in bringing about displacement as a socio-economic and political process and displacement as a labelling process within the urban structure in which the "displaced" settle. Due to this complexity the study was faced by many problems. First is the problem of limited information and research about the situation of women in Darfur and Kordofan in Western Sudan where the "displaced" women were living. In addition, there is only limited information on the situation of the "displaced" women in Umdurman. Most importantly, is that the attempt to reflect the verbal his(tories), views, and voices of the "displaced" women and translate them into written his(tories) is not an easy process. I tried with all possible means to reflect on the insightful meanings of the songs and poems of the "displaced" women into an understandable form for the readers. By taking an ethical and political standpoint of making the voices of those women heard I got involved in a personal debate with myself of the consequences of taking such a responsibility. My personal fear is that I do not present these voices as the "displaced" women and I would wish to. This what has made the whole research as a difficult process.

I.4 METHODOLOGY:

Criticizing the discourse and attitudes of the Sudanese state towards the "displaced" from the "displaced" women's perspective and lives is part of the recognition that empirical knowledge which is part of human lives is important to be included in the scientific research. However, "human lives are not homogeneous in any gendered stratified society. Women and men are assigned different kinds of activities in such societies; consequently, they lead lives that have significantly different contours and patterns" (Harding, 1991). As such experiences, even displacement is a gendered. Women's perceptions and experiences have been devalued and neglected as a source of knowledge emanated from day to day experiences. Accordingly, taking some women's lives and perceptions as a ground to criticize the

dominant discourse on the displaced in this research is a way to examine the aspects and areas which women perceive as important in their lives and to examine the areas of silence in the dominant discourse.

I.5 RESEARCH METHODS:

The research will depend on two sources of data. The secondary data will be consulted in the process of theorizing drought displacement and in examining the state discourse on the "displaced". In this respect, emphasis will be on magazines and Sudanese news papers which represent the state view of the "displaced". Besides (this secondary data) I will use primary data. The primary data includes the interviews I developed with nine "displaced" women in Dar-al-Salam Area in Umdurman in 1994, in addition to songs and poems formulated by the "displaced" women in the process of identifying themselves and reacting to the term "displaced".

I.6 THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH:

Although the study is mainly concerned with bringing to the surface the voices of nine "displaced" women in dar-al-Salam Area, Umdurman, these voices will be presented in the last chapter of the study. This is due to the realization that understanding and conceptualizing these voices requires knowledge on how I approach women's experiences and knowledge as two important aspects to be included in the process of 'scientific' knowledge seeking. Besides, I perceive discourse analysis as a means through which the aim of highlighting the voices of the nine "displaced" women can be achieved. This is the concern of Chapter Two.

Moreover, understanding the voices of the "displaced" women requires going back to the rural areas in western Sudan from which the "displaced" women came. This act is important in conceptualizing displacement as a process and in examining the position of the "displaced" women in the rural areas before they came to Umdurman. Chapter Three will focus on these relations in the rural areas.

When the "displaced" women moved to Greater Khartoum they faced a state discourse which perceives them from what is problematic from the state's point of view. What is the nature of this discourse and whom the state discourse is representing will be the concern of Chapter Four.

Chapter Five is the main focus of the work and is concerned with the "displaced" women's discourse on them the term "displaced". The interviews I held with nine "displaced" women in Dar-al-Salam Area in Umdurman, songs and poems will be included as the main source of data for analysis. The chapter will also describe Dar-al-Salam Area as a context in which knowledge as a process took place.

The Conclusion will sum up the whole discussion and will end up with a perspective to displacement from the perception of the "displaced" women of the term "displaced".

CHAPTER II:

CONCEPTUALIZING DROUGHT "DISPLACEMENT" IN SUDAN:

There are two dominant approaches to "displacement" in Sudan. One approach perceives "displacement" as a phenomenon that resulted from natural events which affected Western Sudan. The other perceives displacement as a complex process which entails the impoverishment of the rural areas in Western Sudan.

II.1 DISPLACEMENT AS A PHENOMENON CAUSED BY NATURAL EVENTS:

This approach is highly influenced by the dominant paradigm⁴ in Sudan's urban studies. The paradigm adopted a dualistic vision of urban and rural structures of the Sudan. This approach perceives "displacement" as a phenomenon or an event which resulted from natural causes: desertification and drought. Drought through this approach is always referred to as shortage of rains; thus it is a natural event. According to this approach, the "displaced" people are victims of natural disasters who migrated to towns or urban areas for searching for non-farm activities to support themselves (Abdel Gader, 1991). Those migrants are also perceived as moving to urban areas because of income differentials between the rural and urban areas. Thus displacement is viewed as a spatial phenomenon.

The approach contributed in the proliferation of data and rich information on desertification and drought. Yet, it views urban and rural areas as two distinct structures. It does not focus on the relations of productions between the two areas and how these relations of productions helped in the creation of processes such as: desertification and famine in Western Sudan. Moreover, the approach confuses "displacement" as mass involuntary movement by the affected people, with rural-urban migration which used to be a voluntary and in most cases an individual migration. This approach figures heavily in the Sudanese state definition of the "displaced" and greatly influences the state's approach and policies towards the "displaced".

⁴Several studies analysing social research in Sudan have shown that it is predominantly empiricist. This empiricism stems from a modernization theory or approach which informed "development" in Sudan since 1960s. Modernization theory interprets and perceives reality in binary opposition: urban/rural, modern/traditional, etc. The state in Sudan as a prime mover of "development" equated "development" with modernization. For further information please refer to (El-Bakri & Kameir, in El-Bakri & Ruth, 1989).

II.2 DISPLACEMENT AS A PHENOMENON CAUSED BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROCESSES:

The other approach is a political economy approach. This approach is a negation of the previous one. The political economy approach deals with the set of social production relations binding classes in society (El-Shazali, 1985). This approach views "displacement" as:

not simply a question of the number of people who involuntarily leave the places of their original domicile. It is also, and more significantly, a phenomenon which results from a socio-economic process whereby otherwise self-reliant people are reduced to destitution and as a result become vulnerable (El-Shazali, 1989:124).

The political economy approach to "displacement" perceives "displacement" as a complex process which resulted in drastic changes in the economies of the self-reliant population who were transformed from rural food producers to food consumers in the urban areas to which they moved to seek a living.

"Displacement" is conceptualized, largely, as a manifestation of proletarianization which is the divorcing of domestic agro-pastoral producers from the means of production. The approach emphasises that "displacement" as a process has two aspects: a spatial and socio-economic. It argues that the two aspects should not be conflated because some of those who experienced spatial "displacement" (the movement from area to area) have not been impoverished. According to this approach the socio-economic processes which led to the impoverishment of the rural areas in Sudan are largely related to the state's agricultural policies. The 1970s agricultural strategy through which Sudan was supposed to be the "food basket" for feeding the Middle East is viewed as one main cause of food shortages and food insecurity in Sudan (Eltigani, 1995). The policy was adopted through the expansion of cash crops, for exportation, on the expenses of subsistence production, especially in Eastern Sudan (Hassaballa, 1995). The marginalization of the economy is perceived as the main factor in food problems in Sudan who became unable to feed its own population.

Neither of the two approaches has tried to examine what the term "displaced" means to the "displaced" people. I can argue that neither approach is concerned with what is "being a displaced" means. As such the two approaches can be regarded as "outsider" approaches which give no value

to the experiences of the people who practice "displacement". These approaches are concerned with cause-effect analysis. They emphasized on the causes behind the movement of the affected people from Western Sudan to urban areas whether these causes are natural or socio-economic.

Studies and approaches about the situation of the "displaced" after their movement are few and quantitative. In the sense that emphasis is on how the "displaced" people cope physically with the urban environment. In this stream fall few studies which adopt gender analytical approach in analysing the situations of the "displaced" women's in Greater Khartoum. Health, economic and social aspects of the "displaced" lives have been tackled by these few studies (Reference to the study taken by the National Research Council in Khartoum (1992) on the coping strategies of the "displaced" women in Al-Shaikh Abu-Zeid Area, Umdurman). This study does not examine how the "displaced" women perceive the urban environment and how they perceive themselves as "displaced". The study reported the situations and the "realities" of the "displaced" women in that area as the researcher views them. Largely, these researches are dominated by positivism which is mainly concern the binary opposition of object and the subject of the research. In a positivist perspective research the researcher should be invisible and just let the "facts" speak for themselves.

II.3 APPROACHING DISPLACEMENT THROUGH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: DISPLACEMENT AS A CONTINUOUS LABELLING PROCESS:

The approach adopted in this study is a feminist approach which deals with "displacement" as a discourse; as labelling process. "Displacement" is perceived from a neglected and marginalized standpoint: The "displaced" women's standpoint(s). In this respect the "displaced" women experiences will be taken as a point of departure. The approach argues that power strategies are important in the understanding of "displacement" as a continuous process or as discourse.

State power in naming and labelling is very important in examining the dynamics of "displacement". The state is perceived by this approach as an important agent in the process of "displacement" because of the centrality and hegemony of the Sudanese state over the civil society. The state plays an important role in restricting the accessibility of the "displaced" to social, economic, and political resources in the urban areas. This in turn

helped in the creation of another discourse(s) adopted by the "displaced" women on the state and the urban structure at large. Moreover, the research will be, to a large extent, in consensus with the political economy approach to "displacement" in its discussion to the factors behind drought "displacement". "Displacement" is perceived by this study as a dynamic process resulted from socio-economic and political factors which largely led to the impoverishment of rural areas in Western Sudan. Yet, the study will go a step further to examine and understand the ongoing process(es) of "displacement" within the urban boundaries in which the "displaced" settle.

The underlying assumption in this theoretical framework is that "displacement" as a concept and as a process should be analyzed and approached from historical not from ahistorical perspective. "Displacement" should be freed from empiricism and objectivism that "scientific" researches and the dominant discourse of the Sudanese state are adopting. "Displacement" in this paper is viewed from a feminist perspective which criticizes objectivism and scientism. Objectivism according to feminist discourse(s), specially postmodern feminist discourse is equated with relativism. Both are 'god-tricks' that promise the vision from everywhere and nowhere. In this respect, feminism criticized conventional sciences in that they do not recognize that all human beliefs and knowledge are socially situated. As such, objectivism and relativism both deny the stakes of location, embodiment, and partial perspective; both are twin of totalization in the ideologies of objectivity (Haraway,1991). Conventional sciences have also been criticised by feminism as "assuming that they could tell one true story about the world that is out there, ready-made for their reporting" (Harding,1991:141).

As a result of this criticism, feminism started searching for ways to bring women's voices and perspectives from women's lives to knowledge-seeking. Knowledge from a feminist point of view does not only exist at the theoretical and abstract level, knowledge is also practical, it is part of daily life experiences. The paper adopts this feminist standpoint of knowledge in analysing the discourse of the displaced women on the term "displaced". Discourse analysis will be adopted in order to place and locate the views and perceptions of both the state and the displaced women in a specific historical moment in which both sides view "reality" as it

was at that historical moment.

In this part I am going to define three concepts which represent the backbone of the discussion of the paper. The three main concepts are: discourse, power, and knowledge (situated knowledge).

II. 4. DISCOURSE:

Discourse according to Foucault is

a historically, socially and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories and beliefs. Discourse is a site where meanings are contested and power relations are determined. The ability to control knowledge and meaning, not through writing, but also through disciplinary and professional institutions, and social relations, is the key of understanding power relations in society (Parpart, 1993: 440).

Discourse as an analytical tool has been developed by post-structuralist school. It has different meanings and different usages. For instance in the work of Michel Foucault, discourse refers to different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice (Fairclough, 1992). On the other hand, Fairclough (1992) tried to extend that notion of discourse to cover symbolic forms such as visual images and texts. Text according to Fairclough refers to any product whether written or spoken. Language and intertextuality are then the centre of discourse analysis. By referring to discourse as social theory Fairclough, argues that language is changing as along as social relations are changing. He argues that people can resist the structuring of discourses coming from above, as well as merely go along with them. Accordingly, the approach provided by Fairclough is useful to this research in the sense that it gives room for resistance.

Central to this research is the relation between discourse and power. According to Foucault discourse is always power: the power of truth, of knowledge, of knowing and defining what is truth (El Ahmadi, 1994). Important to this work is to view discourses as not existing in simple 'bipolar' relations of power and powerless. As Weedon argues, discourses are tactical elements operating in the field of force relations. Force relations are relations of power which are organized, in a specific society, through relations of class, race, gender, religion and age (Weedon, 1987). The field of force relations is the site of the discursive

conflict over how subjectivities and social relations should be constituted and social control exercised.

Discursive fields according to Foucault are fields which consist of different and competing ways in order to organize social institutions, structures and processes (El Ahmadi,1994). The state's policies towards the "displaced" can be regarded as a discursive field which translates the state discourse on the "displaced" into practice. In this sense discourse is perceived as composed of ideological (language) and materialistic (policies, strategies, and attitudes) forms.

Perceiving discourses as sites of power and power relations means that there is no one homogeneous discourse. A discourse, as a tactical element, is a site of different meanings and messages. These meanings and messages can be in opposition or in consensus to each other. Differences and heterogeneity of meanings within a discourse are related to the internal power relations among the subjects of the discourse and between these discourses and the dominant discourse.

Weedon argues that not all discourses have social power and authority which comes from a secure institutional location. In this case I would argue that the displaced women's discourse(s), unlike the state discourse although lacking an institutional location, but can offer a discursive space from which resistance to the dominant discourse can take place.

discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it but also undermines and expose it, it renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. In like manner, silence and secrecy are shelter for power, anchoring its prohibitions, but they also loosen its hold and provide relatively obscure areas of tolerance (Foucault,1981:101 in Weedon,1987:111).

The two discourses: the state's discourse on the "displaced" and the "displaced" women discourse(s) should be understood as discourses in interaction not in isolation. Discourse analysis is in fact a rejection of single-cause analysis. It focuses on the reciprocal effects of power and knowledge that discourses ensure.

II. 5. POWER:

Power is the central concept in this paper. It stands as a bridge that relates the two concepts: discourse and knowledge (situated knowledge).

Foucault argues that power has been viewed and identified with its negative effects such as repression. In this sense only the juridical conception of power is adopted. Power is taken as carrying the force of a prohibition (Foucault,1980). Foucault calls for a positive perception of power. In this sense the mechanisms of power should be analyzed:

power relations are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, family, kinship, etc) for which they play at once a conditioning and conditioned role; that these relations do not take the sole form of prohibition and punishment, but are multiple forms; that their interconnections delineate general conditions of domination, and this domination is organized in a more- or- less coherent and unitary strategic form; that dispersed, heteromorphous, and localised procedures of power are adapted, reinforced and transformed by these global strategies, all this being accompanied by numerous phenomena of inertia, displacement and resistance. (Foucault,1980:142).

Accordingly, power should not be perceived in a binary structure of 'dominators' and 'dominated'. Power is not something that can be possessed. Power is diffused. It is a relation. "It is a dynamic of control and lack of control between discourses and subjects, constituted by discourses, who are their agents" (Weedon,1987:113). I would like to say that power through out this paper should be understood in its stated above complex structure. Power will also be referred to as what structures relations between different subjects within and across discourse(es).

II. 6. KNOWLEDGE & SITUATED KNOWLEDGE:

"All knowledge is a condensed node in antagonistic power field" (Haraway,1991:187).

The point of departure of situated knowledge is that the ideological doctrine of scientific method about epistemology were made or cooked up to shift our attention from getting to know the world effectively by practising the sciences (Haraway,1991)."Scientific" knowledge is moulded with empiricism. As such, "scientific" knower seeks the subject of position not of identity, but of objectivity (Haraway,1991:193). According to

Althusser, empiricism is any knowledge that divides into subject/object; any theory or knowledge that establishes for the dichotomy subject/object and the relevant dichotomies (Hamid,1995).

Situated knowledge requires that: "the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not a screen or a ground or a source, never finally as a slave to the master that closes off the dialectic in unique agency and authorship of 'objective' knowledge" (Haraway,1991:198). Situated knowledge is also defined by Haraway as feminist objectivity. Feminist objectivity is about limited locations and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. "Only partial perspective promises objective vision. Being partial is locatable, critical knowledge" (Haraway,1991:190). Accordingly, situated knowledge is about different and partial visions of "truth".

By dealing with "displaced" women as knowers I would want to unmask the veil from the hidden knowledge and experiences of those women. It also means to start from what is problematic from the perspective and the lives of the "displaced" women and from the subjugated knowledge of the "displaced" women. According to Foucault, Subjugated knowledge are "those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory and which criticism- which obviously draws upon scholarship- has been able to reveal" (Foucault,1980:82). I am aware that the positions and standpoints of the subjugated are not 'innocent' and are not the "Truth". However, the standpoints of the subjugated can provide better understanding of a historically located reality because they were/are historically denied the right to criticize and interpret the core of all knowledge. Accordingly, by perceiving knowledge as situated, i.e through the application of feminist politics of location and positioning, I aim at providing a theoretical perspective to displacement from the practical and partial knowledge(s) of the displaced women.

II. 7. LOCATING MYSELF WITHIN THE DISCUSSION:

According to the feminist approach I am adopting in this paper, as a researcher I insisted in making myself visible in the discussion and the dialogue with the interviewees. At that moment I identified myself as a

researcher and as a woman that came to share some of views that I have about the "displaced". It was not the first time for me to come close to the displaced women. I have my own experience as researcher with the displaced women and men. As such I consider myself as having my own personal knowledge emanating from some discussions and observations to the daily lives of the displaced.

I faced many difficulties in identifying, placing, and locating myself within the discussion with the "displaced" women. I had been identified by them as an "urban", elitist, upper middle class woman. To them I was an "outsider" who belonged either to one of the governmental departments or to one of the NGOs in the capital. To me, I consider myself as an "outsider within". I do not belong to the "category" of "displaced women". However, I am an urban woman who is a part of the dominant discourse adopted by the state on the "displaced". From that position I tried to hear the voices which have been marginalized by that dominant discourse. I am a woman who is trying with the "displaced women" to bring to the surface other parts of the "truth" about the "displaced". I am part of a wide range of Sudanese researchers and other feminists in the globe who believe in the non-victimization of women. Moreover, I support the feminist approach of rewriting history through making use of women's experiences and knowledge.

From that location, I tried to go deep in the discussion with the displaced women. By sharing our experiences and views, the discussion, I think not only helped in reaching the main identified objectives of the research but also helped in widening my horizons and knowledge about the world as I perceive it as woman.

Finally, a better understanding of the voices of the "displaced" women and better understanding of "displacement" as a discourse and as a labelling process entails a general review of the rural structures of Northern Darfur and Northern Kordofan and the position of women there and factors which led to impoverishment of these areas and the "displacement" of its population. The following chapter will be concerned with these two areas.

CHAPTER III:

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO DROUGHT DISPLACEMENT IN WESTERN SUDAN:

III.1: NORTHERN DARFUR AND NORTHER KORDOFAN: GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, ECOLOGY, ECONOMY, ETHNIC GROUPS, AND GENDER RELATIONS:

Darfur and its neighbouring region Kordofan deserve a separate classification in Sudan: the 'West' (De Waal, 1989). Darfur region borders on Libya, Chad, and the Central African Republic. The geopolitics of the three countries influences Darfur's economic and social structure. The civil war in Chad led to the influx of many Chadians to Darfur. Many of these Chadians share the same tribal origins with Darfurians. The increasing pressure of the Chadians on Darfur especially in 1970s led to the emergence of the phenomenon of the Armed Robbery⁵ which emerged as a consequence of the deteriorating economic situation in Darfur.

Unlike Kordofan, Darfur was an autonomous empire till 1916 when it came under the condominium rule (British and Egyptian) which lasted until 1955 ; Sudan gained its independence in 1956. Darfur was the main supportive region to the Mahadist Revolution⁶ in 1884 and specifically for the Mahadi successor: Khalifa Abdullahi who came from Southwest Darfur. Kordofan, in fact, used to be a part of Darfur empire (Hassan, 1977). This interaction

⁵Many studies relate the origins of Armed Robbery in Darfur to some Chadian tribes. The first incidence of Armed Robbery in Darfur was reported in 1970s. However, Darfur is known with a tradition called Hambata. Hambata in the Darfurian context is a tribal tradition. It refers to the ability to take by force a possessions of another tribesman. It is a tradition that was appreciated by the tribe and it is an indicator of strength and honour. Hambata is also widespread among the tribes of Eastern and central Sudan. While hambata is a peaceful tradition, i.e it does not require killing and does not indicate an economic reason behind it, Armed Robbery is a business of organized gangs. It is an economic phenomenon which is motivated by the satisfaction of basic needs (Malik, 1991). The transformation of Hambata tradition into Armed Robbery in Darfur is a consequence of the economic marginalization of Darfur. Armed Robbery should be understood as an early warning indicator to the deterioration of the economic structure of Darfur which thus makes Darfur vulnerable to famines.

⁶The Mahadist Revolution (1881-1885) is a social revolution against the British colonialism in Sudan. The Mahadi is the leader of the revolution. He believed that he was sent by God in order to end up injustices on Earth and to spread justice through the spread of Islam.

between the two regions can help in understanding the similarities of the economic modes of production between the ethnic groups of the two regions.

The climate and ecology of Darfur varies between its different parts.

The Northern part of Darfur, from which some of the "displaced" women came, is generally "a part of semi-desert zone with predominantly sandy soils [goz] and is threatened by the encroaching desert from the north.

Vegetation is reported to be concentrated around the Wadis⁷ and clay depressions" (Pyle & Abdel Gabbar, 19: 6, brackets added). Because of its sandy nature goz is low in fertility and low in its capacity for holding moisture. One of the major problems in Northern Darfur is water. Water is available seasonally. Sources of water are: rahads (water-filled depressions in the rainy season), hafirs (excavated groundwater pools), and shallow wells in Wadis (Pyle & Abdel Gabbar, 19). In the rainy season (June to September) the dry and dusty landscapes of Darfur becomes very green (De Waal,1989).

Kordofan's ecological structure is similar to that of Darfur. Soils in Kordofan varies from poor sandy types in the North to reasonably fertile light and cracking clays in the South (El Sammani, 1986). Sources of water are: rainfall, surface water, and ground water. Ground water is particularly the only permanent source of water in Kordofan Region. Water from rainfalls is scarce. Kordofan region suffers from water deficit of some 800 in the South and to 1400 mm/annum in the North (El Sammani,1986).

Darfur and Kordofan compose of different ethnic groups which are shared by the two regions. The dominant ethnic groups of Kordofan, in the extreme north are: Kababish, Hawawir, Kawahla, al-Berti. Besides other ethnic groups such as: Gawamaa, Dar Hamid, Bidiriya, Baggara. In Southern Kordofan are the Nuba. The tribes of Northern Kordofan are predominantly nomadic pastoralists. While other groups are either pastoralists or peasants or mixing the two activities.

In Darfur the dominant groups in the North are: Ziadiya, Meidob, Zaghawa, Mahariya. The Fur are found around Jebel Mara. The "displaced" women with

⁷Wadis are seasonal water courses.

whom the study is made came from the tribes of the Northern parts of the two regions, specially from: Kababish, Dar Hamid, ad-Dawaleeb, Al-Hamra, Kawahla.

Economically, Kordofan and Darfur are characterized by the dominance of two main economic activities: agriculture and livestock raising (pastoralism) which is practised through nomadic system or practised as village based activity as in the case of Kordofan. Trade is undertaken in a narrow and a limited space. The two main economic activities are largely overlapping each other. The leading form agriculture in both regions is rainfed agriculture . Millet (dukhun) is the staple food in the two regions. In Northern Darfur, besides millet, other crops such as sesame and watermelons are grown in goz soil. Watermelons are planted at the end of the rainy season and harvested as a source of water in the dry season (January to March) (Pyle & Abdel Gabbar).

Most of nomadic pastoralists in Darfur do not grow enough grain to feed themselves, accordingly they buy it from the market with the money obtained from selling animals and largely from selling milk. As such, pastoralists depend on the market and the economy at large for their food, besides their dependence on the health of their animals. De Waal (1989), argues that, pastoralists by doing so aim at "the 'sustainable off-take rate': the proportion of herd that can be sold annually to provide a cash income, without depleting the herd or distorting its composition" (De Waal, 1989:51).

The dependence of pastoralists on the market with regard to their food is what caused them to be badly affected during famine times comparing with those depending on agriculture as an economic activity. During famine the prices of livestock went very low while the prices of grain and other staple food went very high as the analysis will show. However, this does not mean that peasants grow enough grain for their subsistence. In many cases (reference here to the Berti in Northern Darfur) those tribes who depend entirely on agriculture for their subsistence depend also on the market for their food. Drought conditions and some times shortage of family labour makes the growing of enough food a difficult job. This category of peasants are vulnerable to drought conditions and in many cases they depend

on seasonal wage labour as a source of cash income to support their living (Holy, 1988).

Pastoralism in both regions is nomadic. There is seasonal migration with livestock searching for good pasture and water. These migrations always move from the Northern parts to Southern parts of each region. The Southern parts receive more rainfall compared to the sandy deserts of the North. In many cases disputes between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary peasants occur because in many cases pastoralists enter the areas of the peasants in their attempt to find ways for satisfying the needs of their herds. Nomads in both regions are referred to as "Arabs", and the term "Arab" thus indicates the economic mode of production of the group to whom the word refers, rather than indicating an ethnic connotation.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN NORTHERN DARFUR AND NORTHERN KORDOFAN:

Women's participation in agricultural work in the subsistence economies of Darfur and Kordofan is reported to be high. In Kordofan females constitute 72% of the agricultural work force (El Sammani, 1986). Women are entirely responsible for the provision of food to the household members. In Northern Darfur, for instance, women work both at home and at the market. At home they are the main providers of millet and other rainfed crops to maintain the subsistence of the households (Grawert, 1992). At the market, women sell vegetables and fruits as retailers and sell craft products. They spend the cash immediately for their household's basic needs. Pastoral women sell butter and yoghurt in the market. Women are also responsible for fetching water and wood for household consumption. Putting into consideration the scarcity of water in these areas, water fetching is the most tedious work done by women specially in dry seasons.

In Northern Kordofan, the staple food (millet and sorghum) are grown by women in small agricultural plots, while vegetables and cash crops are mainly grown in the family farm which is owned by the husband, father or brother. Female relatives contribute in these farms as unpaid family labour (Mustafa, nd). In relation to land ownership, women in the two rural settings of Darfur and Kordofan by customary law are not allowed to own land. Ownership of agricultural land is possible through inheritance from parents and husbands. However, women especially in Northern Darfur can own

trees. The ownership of a specific number of trees by a woman can allow her to the land (Interview with Willemse, Leiden, November, 1994).

Women, also work as unpaid labourers specially in the horticulture gardens. They do planting of vegetables, irrigation by hand, weeding, and harvesting. Growing fruits, specifically date cultivation, is the only garden work mainly run by men (Grawert, 1992). On the other hand, men are responsible for providing money for the payment of school fees for their children, payment of taxes and are also responsible for providing households' needs which are brought from the market such as: oil, soaps, tea, etc.

Women's work in these societies is important both for sustaining the subsistence style of living and, most importantly, is vital for the gender identity of women there. A "displaced" woman, I interviewed, who came from Northern Kordofan said that: "The woman who does not work in their rural area called khamlla (lazy). And the woman who works is active and good mother who is responsible for her children and the household" (Interview with a "displaced" woman in Dar-al-Salam Area, Umdurman, 1994). Women's work in western Sudan is an extension to motherhood (Interview with Willemse, Leiden, November 1995).

Women are responsible for providing food to households and have control over the decisions concerning what to produce and what to store or save for the next season. However, women have limited power on deciding on public issues such as marriage of their daughters when their husbands are absent and decision over migration or movement to other areas. Most of the women I interviewed stated that the decision of the movement to Umdurman was a tribal or male decision.

III.2 FACTORS BEHIND DISPLACEMENT:

The famine, drought, and desertification are the factors behind the distress rural-urban migration ("displacement") in western Sudan. These factors are related to socio-economic and political processes which link the rural economies of Western Sudan, discussed above, and National economy at large. This part is meant to examine traditional and commercial agricultural in both regions as interacting through the government

agricultural policy which favours commercial agricultural which then helped in the production of famine.

Sudan's government since 1956 inherited "development" paradigm which is characterized by a dualistic vision of "development" and which directly resulted in regional disparities in Sudan. "Modern" schemes are those which are directed to the production of cash crops for exportation. The "modernized" economic sector in Sudan is based on irrigated and mechanized agriculture, agro-industry, and urban based enterprises. These schemes, unlike the "traditional" sector, were developed under the auspices of the Sudanese government which provided credit, pesticides, and agricultural extension. No development plans were directed to improve the production of "traditional" sector.

The central area of Sudan remains the most developed area in relation to the agricultural schemes implemented there. The Gazira scheme -in Central Sudan-for instance is the largest irrigated scheme in all sub-Saharan Africa for the production of cotton for export. Moreover, it is the biggest employing scheme which hire seasonal labour from the economically marginalized parts of Sudan, specially Western Sudan. Due to the establishment of this scheme the central area of Sudan gained prosperity. Educational, health, and transportation facilities are all centred in this area. Moreover, this part dominating the political arena. Almost all the political leaders of Sudan came from Central and Northern parts of the country. Other parts of Sudan: the extreme North, the South, the West, and the East are all marginalized in terms of economic, social, and political development.

Although the "traditional" sector in Kordofan and Darfur concerns itself with subsistence and food production and accommodates more than 70% of the population of the Sudan, 80% of the livestock, and all the nomads in the country (Abu Sin, 1995), the combination of shrinking areas for subsistence farming and the lack of government attention to it have allowed drought to exact a disproportionately high toll on the population. For in instance in Kordofan, as in many parts in Sudan, the links between the "modern" (small mechanized) and the "traditional" sectors have remained extremely weak; the two sectors compete for arable land and water.

In Kordofan "Traditional" and mechanized farming are both used to produce staple food (sorghum and millet) as well as cash crops such as groundnuts, gum arabic, watermelons and kerkade are produced (El Sammani, 1986).

"Traditional" farming is widely practised in both the Northern and Southern parts of the region. "Traditional" farming depends on family labour for the cultivation of staple food and cash crops in small plots. The sector still predominantly depend on rains and traditional agricultural methods such as shifting cultivation.

Mechanized farming in Kordofan is practised under small holder tenant system of production and large scale mechanized farming. This type of farming is introduced as a commercial farming activity in Southern Kordofan (El Sammani, 1986). Moreover, almost all land under the rainfed sector in the region is categorized as a government land⁸. These mechanized schemes, (reference here to Habiyla scheme for the production of groundnut and sesame), developed at the expense of subsistence production and in many cases led to the performance of intensified subsistence farming in marginal lands which are characterized as infertile. In Northern Kordofan the expansion of groundnut on large areas led to the excessive cutting of trees in the process of preparing the land for cultivation. Both processes of overcultivation and deforestation contribute in the loss of vegetation cover and loss of the land's fertility. The intensive cultivation of marginal lands played an important role in the process of desertification⁹ which accelerates crop failures and famine.

Darfur, on the other hand, is marginalized with regard to economic development to the extent that there are no large agricultural schemes which can stand as a resort and as providers for cash income for farmers in times of crop failures (De waal, 1989). This is what increases the waves of

⁸"This was a result of the implementation of the 1970 Unregistered Land Act. Under this act all unregistered land in Sudan before 1970 now belongs to the government, which can, of course, transfer its right of use and exploitation to citizens by lease in accordance with certain rules conforming with the local customs and administrative regulations" (El Sammani, 1986:54).

⁹Desertification is defined as: "the destruction of the biological potential of land which can lead ultimately to desert-like conditions" (El Sammani, 1986:65).

migration by the rural population of Darfur in search of sources of income to satisfy their basic food needs. Migration to Central Sudan and abroad (to Libya and the Gulf states) is the norm. The marginalization of the "traditional" sector in both regions made them vulnerable to famine.

For the Sudanese government the 1984/85 famine was defined as a 'food gap' in aggregate food balances. "The donors insisted on naming the crisis a 'famine', arguing that without food relief there would be mass starvation" (Gray & Kevane, 1993:159). Gray & Kevane (1993) argue that by narrowing the definition of famine to mass starvation, the donors enabled the military government at that time (Nimeiri's) to take the stance that if there were no evidence of mass starvation there could be no famine (Gray & Kevane, 1993).

Drought is one of the important factor behind famine. Drought badly hit Darfur in 1984, Kordofan and other areas in Sudan (the White Nile Area). De Waal argues that drought should not be reduced to shortage of rains. It has been a repeated process since the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Drought in Darfur, especially in the north, means that the climate generally is getting drier. "The wet season in Darfur had shortened and become more unreliable. There were more heavy thunder-storms and larger gaps between showers" (De Waal, 1989: 81). De Waal argues that the north desert wind continued when the rain-bearing south wind should have come. As such drought is more than rain shortage, drought is a chronic process in Northern Darfur. It entails that the climate become unreliable to the people there. "People of Darfur see worsening climate not as a falling average yearly rainfall, but as a changing pattern of good years and bad years: good years becoming scarcer" (De Waal, 1989: 81). In fact, for regions that depend entirely on rains, such as Darfur and Kordofan, drought is an important factor in crop failures and thus famines.

Secondly, the 1984/85 famine also a political construct. The issue is that the 1984/84 famine in Western Sudan is not about starvation resulted from scarcity of food at the national level. It is the failure of food crops at the regional levels of Darfur and Kordofan, and most importantly it is the scarcity of cash by which food can be purchased is what produced hunger and starvation in the Northern parts of Darfur and Kordofan.

In the mid 1970s and 1980s Sudan's economy was in economic crisis. The civil war¹⁰ in Sudan, debt problems, and the unreliability of the Sudanese pound affected both exports and imports. Cash crops in Darfur and Kordofan were declining in the 1980s. The production of groundnut which is the major cash crop in Darfur was declining because of the high cost of seeds and relatively high cost of labour for groundnuts. Problems of failure of credit, transportation, and marketing all contributed to the instability of groundnuts prices (De Waal,1989). Gum arabic, another important cash crop in Western Sudan, also witnessed a severe decline due to the ecological crisis of the area and thus was unable to provide an economic return. The decline of these economies affect the flow of cash income which the rural population need to cope with the instability of the ecology and economy of their settings.

Problems of transportation and corruption of government officials broaden the circle of starvation in rural areas of Western Sudan. Grain is largely grown in Eastern Sudan and it was available at famine time. However, the long distance between Western and Eastern Sudan in addition to the shortage of diesel in 1981/ 82 led to the total isolation of Darfur and thus its people were left to deal with the consequences of the crisis by their own means. Corruption on the other hand is an important factor in increasing the suffering of the people in these areas. Public funds were embezzled, trading licences were sold during famine time (De Waal,1989).

The small farmers and herders were badly affected by these changes. The

¹⁰The civil war in Sudan began in 1955. The reasons behind this civil war are complex and diverse. Regional disparity, uneven distribution of National wealth, ethnicity, and religion are the striking reasons behind the war. The civil war developed in the 1983, specially after the declaration of Sharia Islamic laws in Sudan in September 1983, into an ideological movement under the banner of secularism through the development of Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLA: the political wing) and Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLM: the military wing). The SPLA/SPLM include elements from both the Southern and Northern parts of Sudan. Since 1950s the Sudanese government tries to solve the civil war through military action, the thing which led to the deterioration of the national economy of Sudan in general and the economy of Southern Sudan in particular. (Malik,1992). The affected people of Southern Sudan started moving from their insecure areas to the urban areas, specially Greater khartoum. Those people were labelled as "war displaced". The 'war displaced' and 'drought displaced' came to interact with each other in the "displaced" camps in Greater Khartoum.

most affected category is the nomads who entirely depend on the market in their food. The prices of livestock decreased and the prices of grain increased. Nomads and pastoralists were forced to sell their livestock in order to buy food. Further more, women were obliged to change gold for grain.

Famine in the Darfurian context, according to De Waal, means to its people "not merely starvation but also hunger (that is, all manners of suffering), destitution, and social breakdown" (De Waal, 1989: 76). Famine is a process which involves destitution. The 1984/85 famine as a process is well described by a poem that was recited by a "displaced" woman:

Allah igidik matarik katiroh habaib...dallaiti as-Soroj min al-Sidais wal-Naib..Wa nassaiti al-Banat laban as-Sion al-Raib.
(Arabic version).

God curse you...[Year of famine]
most of your rains [the supposed to be rains] were storms...
You have killed the strong camels... and you have let the girls
forget making yoghurt. (Translation, brackets added).

Famine in this poem was seen as a consequence of drought which is viewed as a process which led to changes in climate. The winds which are supposed to hold rains became the source of storms and thus led to the expansion of desert. Famine in the poem entails destitution¹¹. The death of livestock such as camels means the loss of means of production of herders. Famine and its resulted health hazards caused many deaths. It was reported that 250,000 people were killed during the famine of 1984/85 (De Waal, 1991). Famine also changed the gender roles of the affected societies. The loss of herds shifted women in pastoral households from their gender ascribed role such as the making and selling yoghurt to other activities such as working as housemaids and selling food in the markets of the urban areas.

¹¹Destitution as has been defined by De Waal is the threat of the inability of the people to feed themselves in the future. "Destitute people are those who were initially producers able to sustain their lives but have become poor, dependent and relied on a seasonal dispersal and long-term separation of spouses" (De waal, 1989:143).

During famine time rural people developed different types of coping strategies in order to avoid destitution. Farmers started to diversify their cropping systems and their income resources through their incorporation in income activities such as selling water and selling wood in urban areas. Moreover, People shifted to wild food to feed themselves. These strategies were taken in order to preserve way of life and in order to minimize the effects of drought (De Waal,1989). I would argue that the rural people tried through these strategies to find means through which they could survive in their areas. As such they did not move to urban areas because they are searching for better income opportunities. On the contrary, they moved because there was no other option for them to save their lives other than migration to urban areas.

Migration from rural to urban areas was not a sudden movement. These areas as I mentioned before have suffered drought since the 1970s. Migration for earning income to support the difficulties of living in these areas was normally taken by males. Females are always left behind to cope with the difficulties of the rural areas. Grawert (1992) argues that women's work load increases as a result of male-out migration. It can also be argued that non-migrating females are more affected by drought and its resultant famine than are males. In many cases male migrants do not send remittances to their families in rural areas. Accordingly, the only benefit that the non-migrating females can get is that they get rid of one food consumer in the household (Grawert, 1992).

Drought and famine affected population (small farmers and herders) were forced to migrate to urban areas. They were concentrated around the towns of Al-Obied (the capital of Kordofan), Al-Fashir (the capital of Darfur), and Greater Khartoum (the capital of Sudan). The largest number of the "displaced" people migrated to Greater Khartoum, because the opportunities of living and work are more plentiful in the capital than in other cities in Sudan.

However, this is not the ultimate stage in the discussion to "displacement". "Displacement" is also part of labelling.

Labelling refers to a relationship of power in that the labels of some are more easily imposed on people and situations than those of others. It is therefore an act of politics involving

conflict as well as authority. Certainly it has to be a dimension of any understanding of the state and the struggles which surround it (Wood, 1985:347).

Labelling as a process means many things. It means that a group of people are being defined or categorized. It means, accordingly, the subjection of this group to certain policies and procedures which define to what the group is entitled or not entitled (Zetter, 1985). By and large labels affect resource distribution by defining eligibility and exclusion. As such they come to be sources of differentiation. Accordingly, being labelled as Naziheen (displaced) is a question of what identity the 'bearers' of the label are have acquired? within the urban boundaries. The questions are: what does "displacement" mean within the confines of the urban structure? How does the state as an agent in the process of displacement perceive the "displaced"?. The discussion of these questions and others is the theme of the next chapter. The discussion of Naziheen (displaced) as a label is a part of the general discussion of the discourse of the state on the "displaced". Policies and procedures taken by the state towards the displaced are considered as the material part of the discourse.

CHAPTER IV:

THE STATE DISCOURSE ON THE "DISPLACED"

The discussion in this chapter will cover the state's discourse on the "displaced" since 1985 onwards, i.e. since the declaration of famine by Nimeiri's regime. Emphasis will be on the recent government and its discourse on the "displaced" women. Discussion of the process of labelling and naming the displaced (Naziheen) will be dealt with as an important part of the discourse of the state. I would like to mention here that the two terms: government and the state will be used interchangeably in this discussion. This is due to the argument that discursive fields which consolidates the state discourse on the displaced includes: policies, strategies, the police, and the government. That is to say the government is a tool used by the state in implementing its public policies at large.

The chapter will be divided into two main parts: (chapter IV. part 1) The state and its formation. This part will be mainly concerned with how ideology and ethnicity play role in Sudanese male biased¹² politics. And how the state's economic policy _ as part of the state's role in development_ played a role in widening the gap between Khartoum, the Capital, and the peripheries of Sudan. (chapter IV. part 2) The second part will be concerned with the state's discourse and its attitude towards the displaced. This part will be further divided into two parts: (a) The first part is about the general attitude of the state towards the displaced as a homogeneous category. (b) The second part concerns itself with the state's discourse and its attitude towards the "displaced" women.

IV.1: GENERAL REVIEW OF THE STATE FORMATION IN THE SUDAN:

the state in the African context took the role of prime mover in all development efforts. The state was to direct the economy, and through product marketing and other mechanisms, seek to extract a surplus which it would direct partly for the maintenance and expansion of its own apparatus, and for the redistribution to other sectors (Doornbos,1989:)

¹²By male bias politics I am referring to the state policies (economic, agricultural,etc) which favour men as (who are,) largely), the decision makers and the beneficiaries of these policies more than women who are mostly neglected and unrecognized.

Sudan, like many African countries, inherited a ready made form of a state which was created by the colonial system. As such the state initially developed as an alien institution; a legacy of the colonial system. This type of state and its economic structure was originally meant to meet the demands of the international capitalist market and not to meet the demands and the expectations of the people (Awad & Bush, 1991). The post-colonial state in Sudan, after getting its political independence In 1956, started playing its role in economic "development" which then reflected state biases towards specific categories in the Sudanese social formation, and which resulted in enlarging the gulf between the urban and rural areas in Sudan. It is important to note here that Sudan since its independence is characterized by an unstable state which is shifting between democratic and military rule.

The political instability of the Sudanese state first and foremost is related to the identity crisis of Sudan accompanied by other factors such as the weak economic structure of the state and its class biases. Since its independence in 1956 Sudan has been searching for its identity and a form of political structure that ensure stability and economic well-being of its citizens (Eltigani, 1995). The concentration of political and economic power in the hands of a minority "Arab"¹³ riverain elites from economically developed areas in Northern and Central Sudan led to the identification of Sudan as an Arab muslim state. Thus the marginalization of non-Arab and non-muslim groups in Sudan_ from economically marginalized areas, specially in the South_ from the contribution in the process of cultural and political identity of Sudan directly resulted in civil war between the North and the South (cf. P.19).

In order to understand the state discourse on the "displaced" and to understand who are represented by the state discourse, it is important to discuss the dominant "classes" in the Sudanese socio-economic structure and the state's biases towards them.

There were four dominant social groups in the Sudanese socio-economic and political structure in the 1956: a weak bourgeoisie, a tribal and religious

¹³"Arabs" here refers to ethnicity rather than to economic mode of production as has been discussed in Chapter III.

aristocracy, a state bureaucracy and the military. Beside other less politically powerful categories; a petty-bourgeoisie and a small working class in urban areas and a heterogeneous peasantry and pastoral groups in rural areas (De Waal,1991). These categories or classes were divided along ethnic lines which are represented by the two religious sects: the Khatmiyya and Mahdist Ansar. The Khatmiyya¹⁴ finds its political support from the Northern and Eastern Sudan, while the Ansar find their support from Northern and Western Sudan. Having their support from Western Sudan, the Ansar have a close political relation with "displaced" and other categories who migrated from western Sudan to Greater Khartoum as was mentioned in Chapter III. The 1986 elections showed the improved performance of the Umma (Ansar) party in Khartoum as it mobilized the migrants from Western Sudan who settled in Umdurman (the city of the Mahadi) in order to gain political support and to find larger rooms for legitimacy (Chiriyankandath,1991). Woodward argues that " one of the ironies of Sudanese politics is that, while debate and activity of a national character remained predominantly an urban activity, the base of support necessary for electoral success remained the rural areas, where sectarian support was overwhelmingly the largest single factor in elections"(Woodward,1990:98).

There are two important features of the Sudanese state, be it democratic or military. The first feature is that ideology either sectarian, ethnic, or religious is the concomitant feature of the Sudanese state. As I mentioned earlier the hold of power by a minority of the "Arab" riverain group is one of the factors that led to the use of ethnicity and religion as a political manoeuvre to give legitimacy to the state. Religion continued to be the most important mobilizing factor in moulding the Sudanese national character and solving the historical crisis of identity in the Sudanese politics. The proliferation of the Islamic movement and the emergence of the National Islamic front (NIF) as an active party in the Sudanese politics since 1978/79 gave the state another role as a safe guard of Islam beside its role in monitoring "development" (Malik,1992). The hold of power by the NIF in 1989 contributed to adding another dimension to the state/civil society relationship. The role of the state in "correcting" and

¹⁴Khatmiyya are largely merchants, while the Ansar are owners of large agricultural schemes in Sudan.

"purifying" the behaviour of its subjects, led to the emergence of gender and culture as two important elements in the discourse of the state.

The second feature of the Sudanese state is that it has no independent role in monitoring the economy for the national interest. The state as an "overdeveloped" institution, compared to other institutions in Sudan, remains the political power through which economic power can be maintained. The state bureaucrats and officials, since Sudan's independence, benefited from their position within the offices of the state as bureaucratic bourgeoisie to generate economic strength and political activity as owners of land and schemes in the most prosperous irrigated schemes in the Nile valley (Kaballo & Bush, 1991). Ali (1989) argued that the Sudanese state between 1955-1969 became the direct representative of the owners of the private pump schemes on the banks of the two Niles. The owners of these schemes were religious leaders, big merchants and retired bureaucrats. As such the state lost its supposed "autonomous" role as mediator in disputes rising between the tenants and the owners of these schemes (Ali, 1989). In this respect it can be argued that the state used to, and continued to be an apparatus that is directed to the satisfaction of the interest of the bourgeoisie and merchants in Sudan. As such the state is a representative of bourgeoisie. The development and expansion of irrigated and cash crop schemes under the auspices of the state as part of "development" and modernizing scheme is what directly led to the problems of food insecurity and famines in the rural areas of Sudan. As showed in chapter III .

The two discussed above features of the state have led to the emergence of different discourses and resistance by political movements from the politically and economically marginalized groups in Sudan; the Beja movement in Eastern Sudan, the Fur movement of Darfur and the Nuba movement of Southern Kordofan in Western Sudan and the SPLA/SPLM in Southern Sudan (Niblock, 1987). This is beside the hidden discourse(s) of other marginalized groups such as the "displaced" people. The state emerged to the these less recognized political groups in Sudan, as a distant and alien entity. Those groups have very limited access to the benefits of "development": education, health, infrastructure, etc. "Their main contact with the state was through state organs which sought to tax, administer and control them" (Niblock, 1987:146).

The use of ethnicity and religion in Sudanese politics and the economic deterioration of Sudan obscured the role of the state as prime mover of "development". The role of the state thus was transformed to crises management and then to the resort to coercion to safeguard the security of the state not the people (Salih, 1990). The following part will show the latter "roles" of the state during the 1980s and 1990s.

IV.2. THE STATE DISCOURSE ON THE NAZIHEEN (DISPLACED) AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THEM:

(a) THE STATE DISCOURSE ON THE DISPLACED AS A HOMOGENEOUS CATEGORY:

I would like to state that the term Naziheen ("displaced") dominated the media in Sudan since 1984/85 with the increasing waves of the distress migration from Western Sudan to Greater Khartoum. The term in itself, as an Arabic term, refers to the movement from place to place. As such the term has no other connotation or degrading aspect. The usage of the term and the category of the people to whom the term is applied is what gives the term different aspects, meanings and interpretations by the state and the Naziheen (displaced) themselves. As such what is at stake is Naziheen ("displaced") as a label and not as a word.

Labelling is a political process which involves the decomposition of the story of the labelled into separate cases. That is to say, labelling is the delinking or the separation of the people from their story and their representation as a 'case'. This process of separation takes place through the emphasis on one aspect of the person's total situation or a story which is then institutionalized over time through labels, mostly through stereotyping (Wood, 1985).

possessing political, economic and ideological power, the state played an important role in labelling, naming, identifying and obscuring the initially political processes and movements in its peripheries. In order to analyze the state discourse and its attitude towards the displaced, I think it will be of great help if I classify the discourse into two periodical stages. The two stages are: the 1980s and the 1990s. Worth noting here is that the two stages represent two political systems in Sudan, a democratic system and a military Islamic/Islamist system respectively.

The 1980s period is the most important one in the state identification to the "displaced". Nimeiri's regime (1969-1985) at the beginning was very reluctant to declare famine. The regime was obliged to recognize famine when it was faced by the influxes of the "displaced" into the peripheries of Umdurman. Nimeiri's government, initially, classified the "displaced" as Murtazaqah (mercenaries) who were supported by Libya's government in order to demolish the regime. This reaction was based on a previous experience of Nimeiri's government in 1977 which aimed at taking over Nimeiri's power and which was supported by the Opposition at that time (Interview with a member of Student Union in the University of Khartoum in 1984, The Hague, 1995). As such the discourse and identification of Nimeiri's government is important for the discussion to other state's discourses. In "fact" the view of Nimeiri's regime and what was problematic from the state perception to the "displaced" (as source of political and social insecurity) remains to be the dominant discourse of the state on the displaced as the analysis will show. In fact, famines both of 1983/84 and 1990 stand as a source of insecurity to the state. It has been a tradition in Sudanese politics that famines directly lead to the fall of political regimes. The overthrow of Nimeiri regime in 1985 took place directly after the uneasy declaration of Famine by the regime¹⁵.

In the 1985/86 the term "displacement" was defined by the democratic government (1986-1989) as "a deeply rooted process which resulted from political and economic factors. The displaced (Naziheen) are the victims of these processes who were left with very limited options, the last among them is mass migration to urban areas and especially to Umdurman" (Sudanow, 1985). The discourse of that period of time was motivated by factors related to the exposure of the malpractices of Nimeiri's regime. This is one of the traditions dominating the Sudanese politics. For the new government to find further legitimacy and acceptance by the civil society, blaming the previous government for bringing about all problems that Sudan suffers from is the easiest political manoeuvre.

¹⁵The prime cause of the overthrow of Nimeiri's regime is the increase in the price of bread. The demonstrations which led to the overthrow of the dictatorship role of Nimeiri in 1985 were initially sparked by the shamasa (Vagabonds). The displaced some times are classified by the state officials as shamasa (Salih, 1990).

The 1980s witnessed the proliferation of many International organizations working in relief and aid support to the "displaced" and the affected destitute population who did not move to Greater Khartoum. In 1986 the government established the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC). The government at that time was working with the international organizations to provide assistance to the displaced who were viewed by the government as victims of hunger.

The government in 1986, started "using" the "displaced" who settled in the peripheries of Umdurman as a category that can be manipulated for achieving certain political ends. In the elections of 1986, the Umma party treated the squatter settlement of the displaced in Umdurman as circles of election. As a result of the support of the migrants and "displaced" from Western Sudan, Umma party won 65 per cent of the votes and 6 seats in Khartoum, including 5 of the ten in the old city of Umdurman (Kaballo & Bush, 1991). Accordingly, it is not surprising that the Sadiq al- Mahadi (the leader of the Umma Party) government planned an area for the displaced to settle which was then called Dar- al-Salam, West Umdurman (Interview with a displaced woman, 1994, Dar-al-Salam area, Umdurman). As such, the "displaced" were, implicitly, considered by al-Mahadi's government as citizens who can be useful in the election process.

The 1990s discourse on the "displaced" and the state attitude(s) towards them witnessed some shifts. These shifts in perception of the displaced (Naziheen) can be related to the nature of the new government which is a military government directed by Islamic ideology. Terms such as: culture, urban values, rural values, "Our" cities, Sudanese values, behaviour, etc. dominated the 1990s state discourse. This discourse has its special impact on the displaced women in terms of freedom in mobility and other aspects of their lives as the second part of this chapter will show.

It can be argued that there is no one homogeneous discourse by the state on the Naziheen (displaced) in the 1990s. Some times the "displaced" have been defined or identified as "people who are forced to leave their home lands and settle in another area of their country. They move because of insecurity resulting from the war in the South or as a result of natural disaster and have no secure housing or occupations to move to"

(Sudanow,1990:19, emphasis added). In this respect the war and drought displaced people have been referred to as one category. Moreover, when drought displaced were considered separately, they were defined as people who have been affected by "natural" causes. Accordingly, by this definition the state is not responsible for the whole process of "displacement". In fact, the Minister of Relief and Refugee Affairs stated very clearly that " displacement is not the a **problem** of the government alone, but of the society" (Sudanow,1991, emphasis added).

The "displaced" have been also conceived by the state discourse as unproductive, beggars, a source of diseases, a source of insecurity to the cities and a source of pressure on health and educational services in the capital (Sudanow,1990). According to this perception the state has different strategies and attitudes towards the displaced.

The Ministry of Social Welfare in 1992 carried a study to the "problem" of begging the "displaced" and street children were the direct target group ('case') of this study. The Ministry suggested introducing vocational training to the beggars (displaced) in order to make them independent and productive category (Sudanow,1992). Moreover, the state already initiated campaigns for repatriating the displaced to their original areas or to other secure areas in Sudan. The displaced, especially the displaced men, have been used by the state as cheap seasonal labourers in agricultural schemes in the Blue Nile area. This perception may be related to what Abbakar Ibrahim, 1987 has argued about the ideology of Arab riverians which confuses "westerners", i.e those Sudanese people who come from Western Sudan, especially those of non- Arab origin, with migrants from West Africa who settled in different areas in Sudan and who largely work as wage labourers in the Gazira scheme for the production of cotton (Ibrahim,1987). Those migrants are perceived by the Sudanese, specially those from Northern Sudan, as second class citizens.

One of the most important strategies developed by the state since Nimeiri's regime is kasha policy or street cleaning campaigns which were/are largely directed towards the displaced (war and drought displaced) and street children. Kasha policy includes the demolition and bulldozing of the houses of the displaced, beside the appropriation by the state of the means of

production of the displaced, especially women. Kasha policy, as has been argued by Salih (1990), is an indicator of the failure of the state in addressing the immediate problems of underdevelopment and an indicator of the failure of the state in "assisting those incapacitated by drought and famine, the state had only coercion at its disposal to impose its legitimacy and assure its survival" (Salih,1990:124). The assumption behind kasha policy, especially in relation to the demolition of houses, according to the recent government is the preservation of public and government land from illegal possession. The Minister of Housing stated that "a show of power by the local authorities is very important to discourage land speculators from selling government lands" (Sudanow,1993:29).

The discourse of the state on the "displaced" is dominated by an urban view which perceives the rural population as a negative "Other". This view is clearly interpreted through the 1993 housing policy adopted by the recent government of Sudan. The "displaced", according to this policy, are conceived as migrants who were affected by natural hazards and insecurity in war zones. Accordingly, their settlement in Greater Khartoum should be a temporary one. After having good seasons of rain fall those migrants should return to their homes. According to this perception, the Minister of Housing and Public Utilities stated that "the displaced are allowed to erect their houses provided that they do not use permanent materials" (Sudanow,1993: 27). According to the classification of residential lands in Greater Khartoum, the Ministry of Housing classified the displaced residential lands as fifth class. Fifth class houses should be build of temporary wood, grasses, carton (Sudanow,1993). The assumption behind this housing policy is that the houses of the "displaced" or the shanty towns in Greater Khartoum are indicators of "underdevelopment" because of their poor materials and because their dwellers are always accused of being carriers of diseases (Interview with Minister of Housing and Public Utilities, Sudanow,1993:29). Moreover, according to this housing policy the government accepts the construction of houses by the "displaced", but it does not accept their construction inside the cities. They should be in the margins of the cities because the structure of their buildings does not suit the urban housing structure.

The continuing changes in the form and name of the apparatus or the

institution which is supposed to be concerned with the "displaced" is implicitly indicating the authoritative power and control of the state over the social and economic affairs of the "displaced". In 1986 the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) was directly responsible for providing services to the "displaced" and assisting the International organizations which fall under its control. In 1988 the Foreign Voluntary Activity Act was passed by the government. Through this act the Department of Social Welfare was responsible of controlling relief efforts. In 1990, the RRC came under the Ministry of Relief and the Displaced which then has been modified to include refugee Affairs and renamed the "Ministry of Relief and Refugee Affairs" which is responsible for undertaking tasks formerly done by the RRC (Sudanow,1990).

In fact combining refugee and "displaced" issues together means further marginalization of the "displaced" as Sudanese who are moving within the boundaries of their own country. The change and shifts in naming the institution which would be responsible for the "displaced" is also indicating two important points. The first one is the difficulty of naming and identifying the "displaced" by the state who through this act objectified the displaced and displaced them from the process of identifying themselves and their needs in their new environment.

The second point is that these shifts are directed towards more control of the state to the International organizations. This is part of the perception of the state on the International organizations which are always being accused of spying and of being intelligence agencies which are aiming at producing instability in the country. The government always stresses that it is targeted by Western countries because of its Islamic orientation. In this respect the government repeatedly denied the existence of famine, denouncing reports of famine as the work of Sudan's enemies"(De Waal, 1991:122).

The role of the state within these organizations is strengthened by the increasing role played by the Islamic Dawa Organization (IDO) and the Islamic African Relief Agency (IARA). The two organizations are predominantly responsible for education and the inculcation of Islamic beliefs among the displaced children, specially the war "displaced".

(Sudanow, 1993).

One of the most striking aspects of the debate and discourse on the displaced is the uncertainty of the government and its statistical units about the actual number of the displaced in the peripheries of Greater Khartoum. The National Population Council (NPC) stated that in 1990 the number of the drought displaced in Greater Khartoum was 84500. On the other hand the Council of Ministers mentioned that the number of the displaced in 1990 was 70700 living in 39 camps around the capital. In 1992 the Commission of Displaced estimated the number as 71200. In 1988, in fact, the number of the displaced was estimated to be 2,5 million (the National Population Council, 1994). The decreasing number of the displaced is portrayed by the government as a result of the voluntary repatriation of the displaced to their areas of origin. The conflicting estimates of the actual number of the displaced can be seen either as negligence and marginalization of the displaced or as political act used to give good reputation to the government_ vis-a-vis the International community_ as succeeded in maintaining stability in the affected areas in Western Sudan.

The discussion of the state discourse on the "displaced" on which the labelling process is the most striking part, has shown the abolition of time as an important aspect of the 'story'. Accordingly and consequently, the "displaced" were viewed as a static category. Moreover, the separation of the "displaced" from their 'story'_ i.e dealing with the "displaced" as a label_ entails the restriction of their access to social services as citizens as the discussion of Housing Planning in Greater Khartoum has shown.

The general of view of the state to the "displaced" is interpreted and reinforced through different discursive forces which are reflected in the government strategies and attitude(s) towards the "displaced". These strategies, in essence, are processes of negligence, marginalization and further displacement of the "displaced". While these strategies have been applied on the war and drought "displaced" indiscriminately and also been applied on "displaced" men and women homogeneously, there is an other discourse and other strategies undertaken by the state which were directed towards the "displaced" women as part of the category "woman". Accordingly,

the drought "displaced" women are facing two discourses: as "displaced" and as women. This is the concern of the following part.

(B) THE STATE DISCOURSE ON THE DISPLACED WOMEN:

The recent state's discourse on the "displaced" women is part and parcel of its discourse and perception of the category "woman" in general. This discourse has not emerged in a vacuum. It has emanated from the Islamist orientation of the recent Sudanese state. The Islamic orientation of the Sudanese state appeared since late 1970s and then culminated in 1983 through the declaration of sharia Islamic laws adopted by Nimeiri's regime. The process of Islamization¹⁶ adopted by that regime can be attributed to the economic and political crises surrounding the state at that time. The civil war in South, the debt crisis, and the increase in food prices during Nimeiri's regime all led to the shift to Islam and the Islamization process as a new character to Sudanese politics. As Hale argued "the move to Islamise provided Nimeiri some continuity with the Islamic character of Sudanese politics and culture" (Hale,1992:30). It is important to note that during Nimeiri's regime the Muslim Brothers¹⁷ (the Ikhwan) had achieved a visible and recognised political power base within the state apparatus. Since that time the sectarian religious politics of the Sudan witnessed a great shift to Islamism.

El Ahmadi (1994) referred to the term Islamism as: " the militant ideology of contemporary Islamic movements or more directly the dogmatic politicization of the religion which its main end is power" (El Ahmadi,1994:19). Moreover, Islamism is the politics of identity which

¹⁶On September 1983, Nimeiri declared Sudan as an Islamic Republic. The following year, harsh hudud (Islamic Criminal Punishments) were applied. Income tax was replaced by Zakat, an alms tax, attempts to Islamise all banks,etc. For further information please refer to Hale, S. (1992).

¹⁷The Muslim Brothers in Sudan initially were influenced by the Egyptian Muslim Brothers movement which was developed by Hassan Al-Banna in the 1940s. The Muslim Brothers movement in Sudan found support from urban elites and University students since 1940s. The prominent figure of the movement is Hassan Al-Turabi. The main principle of the movement was/is the building of an Islamic state in Sudan on the basis of the first Islamic state of prophet Mohammed (The Medina state). The Muslim Brothers Movement developed into the National Islamic Front which is now the de facto government of Sudan (Malik,1992).

presupposes that the core of religion is doctrine, rather than ritual (El Ahmadi,1992). Islamism sees a "pure" and authentic Islam as Sudan's only defence and cultural salvation against the West and the only solution to Sudan's economic crisis (Hale,1992).

Central to the Islamic ideology of the National Islamic Front (the de facto ideology of the recent government of the Sudan) and cultural authenticity¹⁶ is the family and "woman". The family is viewed by the NIF as a nucleolus of the "ideal" Islamic society. Women are perceived by that ideology as having an "essential" role in the socialization process of children which pertains to the inculcation of Islamic values and "authentic" culture to the children. Women as the safe guard of culture should be committed to the "ideal" Islamic image of women. Accordingly, "in the name of the "ideal" woman, as morally central to the "ideal" family, women's behaviour is thus ideologically manipulated by male-controlled religio-political institutions" (Hale,1992:28, emphasis added). The essentialization of women's role as socializers by the Islamic ideology emphasized their social productive role and then their domestication. In fact this ideology is interpreted by many rules formulated by the state to "regulate" women's conduct and "behaviour".

The 1992 year witnessed the issuance of the Khartoum State Public Order Act (KSPOA). This act has a specific impact on women in general on the displaced women in particular. The Act meant, by the state, "to develop the legal power of establishing total discipline in all aspects of life to the regions of Sudan including Khartoum" (Sudan Human Rights Voice,1994:2). By this Act, men and women in public are segregated. It was argued that segregation is a religious obligation that must be upheld to ward off any provocation caused by the intermingling of women with men in public. According to this Act the non-compliance with Islamic dress and the use of perfume by women are violations of the law, and thus warrant punishment depending on the type of dress and the intensity of the perfume (Sudan

¹⁶"Cultural authenticity, portrays the West (mainly its culture) as the "other". This discourse is a product of the antagonism between Islam and Christianity, especially when the Christian West colonized the Muslim states...Muslim rejection of Western colonialism manifest itself in restoring their culture as an authentic identity in the confrontation of the cultural invasion" (El Ahmadi, 1994:14).

Human Rights Voice,1994). Worth noting here is that the determination of the type of dress and the intensity of the perfume is done by men who are responsible for regulating the street or public order. Accordingly, the accusation of a woman because of wearing an unIslamic dress (hijab) or being accused of prostitution is subjected to the personal evaluation of that man.

The regulations related to women's work are also directed towards limiting women's opportunity in the public sphere. Women's paid work is viewed as important only when a woman is economically in need of the job because of her sole responsibility for her family (Hale,1992). However, due to the deteriorating economic situation in the country at large and due to the increasing out migration of men, women's attendance in the formal and informal work places is also increasing. The state thus formulated other rules to regulate the working hours of women in the informal sector, specially the street vendors. Article 17 of the KSPOA strictly prohibits women from selling food and drinks between 5 O'clock in the evening and 5 o'clock in the morning. This act directly affected the displaced women who depend on the informal sector in their livelihood. Some studies (Al-Rasid Bulltine, 1995) showed that the period from 5 o'clock to 11 o'clock pm used to be the peak hours of trade in Khartoum.

Al-Rasid Bulltine (1995) argued that the motivation behind these Kashas can be related to the inability of the state to pay salaries to its officials who then appropriate the means of production of those women in order to find a source of living. The study also showed that some times the authorities gave the tea sellers women a work licence for only two days. In many cases those women face difficulties in renewing the licence and then they become easily subjected to Kasha as out laws (Al-Rasid, 1995).

Displaced women are also facing a state discourse which perceive them as a rural category which has its own rural values and culture and which is fascinated by urbanization. The discourse is portraying urbanization as a threat to those women. In Sudanow (1992) it was argued that displaced women are highly incorporated in urban life style. In this respect: "The young displaced women, adopted a new style of dressing, so that they look like any urban dweller. The traditional wear consisting of a long dress tied

beneath a tob¹⁷ has been rejected in favour of a blouse and skirt covered by tob" (Sudanow,1992:35). Moreover, it has been argued that the displaced women started calling their new babies with urban names which are not used in the rural areas. "Having lived in a **transient** environment in the urban setting, the displaced lost their cultural ties with their home cultures and when they return back to their own communities they will become social misfit in their own country" (Sudanow,1993:33, emphasis added). The assumption of this discourse is that displaced must return back to their home in rural areas, in order to safeguard their own rural culture.

The discourse on the "displaced" women and their incorporation in the urban culture or urbanization, took for granted that the displaced through their settlement in the geographically identified urban area, are thus incorporated in urban life and urban culture. In fact, the displaced are living in the peripheries of the urban environment. Moreover, the discourse assumes that urban culture is viewed by the displaced, especially the displaced women, as something good and fascinating. The discourse does not place these changes in values, if there is any, within the context of the coping mechanisms and strategies which have been developed, consciously, by the displaced women.

From the discussion of the state discourse on the "displaced" in general and the "displaced" women in particular, I would argue that there is no one homogeneous discourse of the state on the displaced. There are different conflicting discourses which in some times view the "displaced" as "victims" of "natural" disasters or as "victims" of socio-economic and political processes. In other times the state discourse portrays the "displaced" as a category which can threaten the urban environment through the spread of diseases, or through the introduction of new "phenomenon" such as begging, or through increasing the rush on social services such as schools, health services, etc and increasing political votes. The shifts and changes in these discourses is a conscious political manoeuvre by the state directed towards manipulating the "displaced" in order to achieve political aims: either to gain political legitimacy, or for receiving International

¹⁷Tob is the National dress for women, especially in Northern Sudan. It covers the whole body.

fund and aid. I would further argue that though there are some shifts in the state discourse on the "displaced", there is one dominant discourse of the state. This discourse is an urban based one which perceives the "displaced" as a burden on the government who tries to distance itself from the taking the responsibility of the whole process of "displacement".

The "displaced" women are facing two discourses: as displaced and as women. As women, the displaced women are facing an Islamist state discourse. This discourse is adopting a partial and distorted analysis of gender and women's social activities. It falsely suggested that social reproduction is the only important role of the "ideal" muslim woman. This androcentric¹⁸ and Islamist vision obscures the meaning and perception of women of their contribution to private and public domains. Work for the "displaced" women not only important as a coping strategy but also important in formulating and constructing positive self image(s) and identities as independent citizens who do not move from their areas to be entirely dependent on the state. Moreover, work for the "displaced" women coming from western Sudan is important for their gender identity as women and mothers (cf Chapter III). According to this discourse, the state through its discursive forces (police, security, etc) started launching campaigns which are explicitly directed at regulating the public order. Displaced women are the direct victims of these campaigns. They are, largely, been accused of prostitution, beer brewing and as uncommitted to the proper Islamic dress.

The two discourses which the displaced women face are not only entirely objectifying the displaced women but also assumes the possession of the "Truth". Being a discourse advocated by the state, especially a military non-democratic state, which possesses the powers of ideology, coercion, naming and giving meaning, the displaced women's voice(s) are suppressed and objectified. The following chapter is an attempt to highlight these voices.

¹⁸Androcentrism, as has been argued by Harding, is related to the explanations by men to what men find problematic in the world around them (Harding, 1991). In this respect what is problematic from the perspective of the Islamists in Sudan is the domestication of the Sudanese women.

CHAPTER V:

DISPLACED WOMEN'S ¹⁹ DISCOURSE(S) ON THEMSELVES:

This chapter is an endeavour to bring to the surface the voices of nine displaced women from Dar-al- Salam Area, in Umdurman. This chapter deals with the "displaced" women as agents of knowledge. "An agent is the one who participates in the communicative structures of self-interpretation and legitimation" (Yeatman, 1990:281). The chapter aims at examining the discourse of the "displaced" women on themselves and at examining the relationship between the state discourse on the "displaced" and the discourse of the "displaced" women on themselves. The chapter will depart from what is problematic from the view(s) of the "displaced" women. As such three questions will be the focus of this chapter: What is the perception of the "displaced" women of themselves and their perception of the term: Naziheen (displaced); what is their perception of the state & the city (urban environment); and how do they cope with the urban environment.

The first part of this chapter (V.I) will be concerned with (a) a general description of Dar-al-Salam Area. (b) The interviews as a process. The second part (V.2) concerns the discourse(s) of the nine "displaced" women on themselves. This part will include two texts as part of a general discourse of the "displaced" women. (a) concerns the interviews I held with nine "displaced" women. (b) concerns songs and poems developed by the "displaced" women in their attempt to interpret their situations and their daily struggle.

Discussing and analyzing interviews and songs as two, analytically separate, texts is a political act. The interviews concern a certain level of identity politics. The "displaced" women through the interviews try to speak to the public through me, as "stranger within". This level reflects identity as a tactical process which involves the "displaced" women and me. On the other hand, songs and poems are also reflecting identity politics. However, at this level songs are developed for the public for everybody to hear and not only for me. By making this division I also aim at providing a large space as possible for the "displaced" women to speak about themselves.

¹⁹please note that when I use the term "displaced" women, I am referring to the nine "displaced" women I interviewed.

IV.1.(a) GENERAL DESCRIPTION TO DAR-AL-SALAM (LAND OF PEACE) AREA:

As this chapter concerns with knowledge as practice. It is important to knowledge as a process to identify the context in which cognition took place. Accordingly, a general description of Dar-al-Salam Area in which the nine displaced women are settled is necessary. Dar-al-Salam also represents the new community which constitutes an important part of the process of identifying the displaced women's selves as "subject-in community".

As I consider myself a visible part of the discussion in this paper. The general description to Dar-al-Salam Area is largely made from my own observation. Some written information about Dar-al-Salam has been consulted when available.

Dar-al-Salam Area is located 6 miles west of Umdurman. It is composed of twenty two (22) blocks. Each house in these blocks is about 200 square meters. This area is only sufficient for two small rooms, a kitchen, and a bath room. The majority of the houses in dar-al-Salam have no built entrance doors. All the houses of Dar-al-Salam are built with temporary materials like: cartoon, sacks, and wood as mentioned in Chapter Three. There is a considerable difference between the houses of the "displaced" from nomadic background and those from peasant background. The houses of the "displaced" from nomadic background seems to be poorer, in terms of assets, than those of peasant background. This difference has originally emanated from the difference in the impact of drought and famine on the two categories as it has been mentioned in Chapter III.

The infrastructure in Dar-al-Salam is very poor. Health services, water, transportation and sanitation are very poor. In relation to water there are no pipes for water. Water is available in reservoirs and wells in far places. Dwellers of Dar-al-Salam receive water through donkey men who sell the water. One barrel of water costs about 150 LS. The consumption of water per day for a family reached 2-2.5 barrels in 1994 when I visited the Area. In relation to education there were primary schools in each block and only one intermediate school in block no.17. Health services are almost non existent. There was one clinic which was not operating at that time. Transportation is available from Dar-al-Salam to Libya market in Umdurman. Dar-al-Salam is connected with Libya market through one long unpaved road

without other latitude sub-roads which would help in narrowing the long journey from Dar-al-Salam to the city of Umdurman.

Markets are very rare and very poor. I came across one market in block no.22. It consisted of scattered huts (rakoba) made of grass. The commodities in the market were: onion, dried okra, Sudanese been, etc.

Dar-al-Salam is one of the two main "official" camps of the "displaced" in Greater Khartoum. The other camp is in Jebel Aulia, southern Khartoum. The "displaced" people were subjected to continuous forceful movements from area to area inside Greater Khartoum. Part of drought "displaced" settled in Dar-al-Salam, for instance, were first settled in al-Mulih Area in Umdurman in 1984/85, then they were forced to move to al- Shaikh Abu- Zeid Area, in Umdurman then to al-Gilea Area, south Suq Libya²⁰ (Libya Market, Umdurman). In 1990 the sudden movement of the "displaced" to the newly-established "official" camps of Jebel Aulia (Khartoum) and Dar-al-Salam (Umdurman) took place during a cold winter. 12 people reportedly died during the transportation to the camps (Sudan Human Rights Voice, 1994).

The forced movement of the "displaced" from one area to another is, largely, motivated by the housing plan developed by the government in 1992 as discussed in Chapter IV. The Ministry of Housing announced in 1993 "that the areas which were previously inhabited by the displaced will be distributed as planned areas for settlement to government employees, citizens and Sudanese expatriates" (UN Report, 1994, emphasis added). This quotation is explicitly regarding the "displaced" as non-citizens.

There is no exact statistical number of the population of Dar-al-Salam. However, it is reported by a study on Dar-a-Salam that it is inhabited by 14,000 families (History of the Khartoum Displaced, 1992).

²⁰Libya Market is an "informal" market in Umdurman city which emerged since 1960s. It emerged as a place where smuggled commodities from Libya are sold. It is open for the whole week without consideration to holidays and week ends. It represent the backbone of the daily life of the "displaced" and urban poor in Greater Khartoum. The majority of the "displaced" women who settle in Dar-al-Salam Area work in this market as tea and food sellers or as sellers of spices and beans. Displaced men and children largely work in whole sale trading, or as butchers and as show shiners and sellers of vegetables respectively.

Dar-al-Salam is inhabited by different categories of the "displaced" with different ethnic, tribal, religious, and economic backgrounds. In terms of ethnicity, there are some tribes of "Arab" origin and other tribes of African or non-Arab origins. In this respect a quite large number of war "displaced" from Southern Sudan are living in Dar-al-Salam together with drought "displaced" from Northern Kordofan and Northern Darfur. The main tribes from Western Sudan which inhabited Dar-al-Salam are: ad-Dawaleeb, al-Kababish, Dar Hamid, Zaghawa and Fur. Besides the two 'categories' of the "displaced"; from Western and Southern Sudan there are other "displaced" from White Nile Area which was hit by drought in 1983/84. Moreover, Dar-al-Salam Area is inhabited by some urban poor who have been forced to leave their shanty towns inside the cities of Khartoum and Umdurman. With regard to religion, there are two main religious believes: Islam and Christianity, the latter is adhered by the "displaced" from Southern Sudan.

The economic activities taken by the "displaced" in Dar-al-Salam are complex and diverse and they influence gender relations among the "displaced". It has been observed by some studies in 1985 that 37% of the male heads of the households in the outskirts of Khartoum depend on females for their livelihood (El-Shazali, 1985). In fact, most of the economic activities taken by "displaced" women and men take place in the "informal" sector (Suq Libya).

In such a heterogeneous map of Dar-al-Salam, ethnicity plays a very important role in the process of self identification by "displaced" women. Accordingly and consequently, the discourse(s) of the "displaced" women on themselves will be viewed as discourse(s) of subject(s)-in that heterogeneous community.

V.1 (b) THE INTERVIEWS AS A PROCESS:

Between Dar-al-salam and Suq al-Naga in Umdurman the interviews with nine "displaced" women took place. I carried out these interviews in the period from 1st to 15th of July, 1994. I used to go every day of the fifteen days to Dar-al-Salam Area which is really a very far place from where I live in Khartoum. I decided to go to Dar-al-Salam by bus in order to know and to feel how do the "displaced" struggle every day in their coming to the city of Umdurman and returning back to Dar-al-Salam. I used to spend 30 LS ever

day as a travelling cost to Dar-al-Salam.

I visited the first interviewee "Shaikha" with a friend working with Concern organization (Irish organization) and who knew the "displaced" women in blocks 18 & 17 in which I did the interviews. Then through Shaikha I reached other women. The "sample" of nine "displaced" women include five paid working women and four housewives. Four of the nine "displaced" women came from nomadic background and the other five were from peasant background. I chose the nine "displaced" women mainly in relation to their economic activities. The motivation was that the economic experiences of women (being a housewife or a working woman) mould different life experiences and thus influence the process of self identification.

I introduced myself as student carrying out a research on the "displaced", and explained that it is very important to my study to discuss and chat about the problems of the high cost of living in Sudan and how we all try to cope with it. And most importantly, I want to know their perception of three main areas the term "displaced", the government, and the urban environment.

Interestingly enough is that the process of interviewing was a two sided process. In fact the research is a joint project between me and the "displaced". I had been interviewed by some of the nine "displaced" women. In this respect, "Saadia" a housewife "displaced" woman said to me:

We should first ask you some questions before you ask us. We are tired from questioning. People from Khartoum always come and ask us without giving us a chance to ask you (Interview with a displaced woman, 1994, Dar-al-Salam).

In fact this statement encouraged me to stick to the aim of the paper which is directed towards presenting the views and voices of the "displaced" women from non positivist point of view. The "displaced" women are aware that they became subjects or objects of many case studies done by the urban researchers. Moreover, the "displaced" women criticized these researches as not giving them a chance to speak about themselves and a chance to ask those researchers as well.

"Hig Mina", a housewife "displaced" woman talking to me:

I want you to eat with us in order to strengthen our relationship with you. We did not forget about our generosity in the rural areas. We are more generous than the people of the city although we are poor, not like you (the people of the city).

In the process of identifying herself before me, Hig Mina based her argument on cultural values which distinguish the rural people from the urban people. By perceiving herself as generous not like the greedy people of the city, including me, Hig Mina acquired power in controlling the discussion. She did not place herself as a mere passive receiver of questions.

HOW I AM GOING TO DEAL WITH THE NINE INTERVIEWS?

In the discussion of this paper I will write out three interviews completely in the text in the process of highlighting the hidden views and the suppressed voices of the "displaced" women. There are three factors which motivate this act. First, the research perceives the "displaced" women as part of a 'story' and thus not a mere label. Secondly, I believe that knowledge and "truth" are situated. Thirdly, the aim of bringing about a new perspective to "displacement" from the practical experiences of the "displaced" women is not an aim that can be reached through reporting and summarizing a "reality" that is out there. On the contrary, dealing with experiences and subjectivities/ identities²¹ as shifting and not static necessitates putting these experiences and views in their historical moment and in the context in which the process of knowledge took place. The

²¹Subjectivity and identity will be used interchangeably in the discussion to the discourses of the "displaced" women. Subjectivity as used by McNay refers to "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her way of understanding her relation to the world" (McNay, 1992:32). Subjectivity will also be used in the discussion to refer to the power to identify the self and the world as a subject of a discourse. Identity on the other hand is "constructed through a process based on the interaction and cognition of differences between the self and the other" (McNay, 1992:168). Moreover, the self is sustained by continuous redefinition of the boundaries of the self and other. In this respect, the other is perceived in this discussion as an extension of the self rather than as an independent being or another self.

Accordingly, the two concepts will be used interchangeably. Both subjectivity and identity are shifting and unstable as the boundaries between self and other are dynamic.

surroundings of the interviews, sudden incidents, and interruptions which happened while the interviews were taking place, the reaction of the "displaced" women to the questions and the ordering of the words used in answering my questions are important to be reflected as long as they affect and legitimize the location which an interviewee takes at that moment.

Finally, the experience of carrying out indepth interviews with a group or a "category" to whom I did not belong is not a simple or an easy process. I went through many difficulties in the process of gaining the confidence of the "displaced" women. As such I consider the findings of the whole work as a product of a hard process of shifting of identities including my own identity and the "displaced" women's identities which, then, deserve a detailed writing.

All these motivations necessitates writing out the interviews or part of them inside the text. I could not write out the nine interviews completely because of limits of the paper. Accordingly, I chose three interviews. Two of the three interviews represent the voices of two housewives and the third one is a voice of a working "displaced" woman. One of the two housewives "displaced" women was not a settler of dar-al-Salam. I meant to include her discussion inorder to show a different voice of a "displaced" woman who is not part of dar-al-Salam and who has a different discourse on the term "displaced". The three women share the other six "displaced" women many opinions and share the same strength and confidence in speaking up. Dealing with three complete interviews in the text dose not mean, in any way, the marginalization of the other six "displaced" women I interviewed. The views of the other six "displaced" women concerning the three main themes of the interviews will be included and quoted in the discussion.

IV.2. THE DISCOURSE(S) OF "DISPLACED" WOMEN:

(a) THE "DISPLACED" WOMEN SPEAK THROUGH INTERVIEWS:

SHAIKHA

Shaikha is a housewife "displaced".

-Saadia (my name):

Shaikha, can you talk a little about yourself? your tribe, your land in Western Sudan, your life here in Umdurman, etc.

5 -Shaikha:
I am from al-Hamra, in Kordofan from a tribe called ad-Dawaleeb. I came to Umdurman with my husband and children since 1984, immediately after al-Jafaf (drought) in Kordofan. We first settled in al-Mulih, then al-Shaikh Abu-Zeid, then in Dar-al-Salam. We settled here in
10 Dar-al-Salam since 1992.

-Saadia:
What is your opinion on the movement from a place to another and what is your opinion about Dar-al-Salam?

-Shaikha:
15 The worst thing in the world is to see "kharab al-Diar" (the destruction of your home). When our houses were destroyed by the government in al-Mulih and al-Shaikh Abu-Zeid I cried so much that day. We built our houses with our sweat and our labour and we lived there, but the government is always destroying our living.
20 About Dar-al-Salam, I can say: "katalok wa la jok jok" (it is better to die than to be threatened with death).

-Saadia:
How? could you please elaborate in this?

-Shaikha:
25 Although Dar-al-Salam is a very remote place, far from the market and without any services, however, I feel comfortable. This is my home and no one has the right to force me to move from this area because it was registered on official documents.

-Saadia:
30 What about Umdurman and your life here?

-Shaikha:
I heard about Umdurman before I came because my husband came to Umdurman several times searching for work. In Umdurman there is electricity, a variety of food, and water in pipes.

-Saadia:
35 But you do not have water in pipes and you don't have electricity in Dar-al-Salam?

-Shaikha:
One day we may have electricity. Electricity lines will be connected with Umdurman in the near future.

40 *During this dialogue, a neighbour, a man, talked to Shaikha from his house*
through the wall separating the two houses. He asked me who are you? and
from where did you come?. I said I am a student who is doing a study and I
came from Khartoum to chat with women here. The man said that Dar-al-Salam
45 *will be the new Umdurman and Umdurman will be the old Umdurman. He said*
this is what have been said by Omer al-Bashir himself (The President of The
Republic of Sudan) when he visited Dar-al-Salam.

-Saadia (to Shaikha):

Why didn't you tell me about the visit of Omer al-Bashir?

-Shaikha:

50 I forgot it and I did not go to see al-Bashir because I was not
interested in doing so. Al-Sadiq al-Mahadi's government stood beside
us and gave us the right to own the land of Dar-al-Salam. But it gave
us the land without giving us any financial resources to build our
houses. We established our houses by our own effort and resources. We
55 built those houses by our sweat and our blood. We will stick to our
land till death. If the government would ask us to leave the land we
would struggle till death. Death is better than leaving our land.

-Saadia:

What is your opinion and reaction to the term Naziha (displaced)?

60 -Shaikha:

I will not accept this word from anybody. It is a negative adjective
which entails that we moved to another country. But we are inside our
country (Sudan). Sudan is the land for all Sudanese and we all have
the right to settle in any place in this country. In the first years
65 when I settled in al-Mulih in 1984/85 I had no objection to the term
Naziha (displaced) because at that time the term was new to me and
the term itself was expressing the events of al-jafaf (drought) and
al-Majaa (famine) in 1984. But ten years after the events and after
ten years of settlement in Umdurman, I can never accept the word
70 Naziha.

-Saadia:

Do you have any interest to go back to Kordofan to live there?

-Shaikha:

No. Because in Kordofan we depend entirely on rains for our
75 livelihood. Rains have been unstable and very poor since the 1970s. I
can never guarantee a completely stable life if I returned back again

to Kordofan. The events of 1984/85 may be repeated again and then I will find myself returning back to Umdurman.

-Saadia:

80 Then living in Dar-al-Salam is better than living Kordofan.

-Shaikha:

85 "Baladan taishak wa la baladan taizak" (it is better to live in a place or a country in which you can find living than to live in a place where you can have dignity). In Umdurman food, water, and wood are available despite that fact that they are very expensive. But in Kordofan we can not survive because all our means of production were destroyed: our herds died and our harvest failed, nothing was left to us and no option left, except al-Raheel (to travel or to depart) to Umdurman.

90 -Saadia:

How do you cope with the rise in the prices of food? do you know the reasons for the increase in prices of food?

-Shaikha:

95 Al-ghla min Allah (rise in prices caused by God). The increase of prices of food and living in Umdurman equated the rich and poor. Both are facing difficulties in finding access to food. But we try to cope with these difficulties. I used to work as a washing woman but now I stopped because I am taking care of my newly born child. My husband is now working as a middle man in Suq Libya. One of the strategies we developed is to cut food consumption. We don't eat meat although we used to eat it in Kordofan and we stopped eating millet. Now we eat fatarita²² (sorghum).

100

-Saadia:

105 What about your relationship with other women and with other people form other tribes in Dar-al-Salam?

-Shaikha:

Our relationship as neighbours is very good. There is no tribal disputes among us, except some conflicts between Nuba people and some Arab tribes. Nuba are thieves and they are accustomed to steeling.

110 ²²Fatarita is one the types of sorghum . It is a degrading food in Western Sudan and other areas in Sudan. It is only eaten by the poor. While millet is perceived by people from Western Sudan as a very good type of food. It is seen as a source of energy, fitness, and good health.

Steeling is one of their habits.

115 -Saadia:

That is why the "Arabs" have conflicts with Nuba people?

-Shaikha:

Because we know that they are thieves we do not want to develop any relationship with them. When they see us isolated from them, they try to develop all kinds of problem with us. In relation to the war
115 "displaced", I am really afraid of "Southerners". I am afraid that one day they come to kill me.

During our discussion another woman came to visit Shaikha and then I started talking with her. Shaikha started talking about the sugar they received through the ration card that week. She provided me with a cup of tea. She said that the sugar has a very strange colour and smell. She gave me some to taste it. To me it was the first time to see a reddish sugar with a very strange smell. The I started chatting with Shaikha's friend Mardofa.

120

MARDOFA

125 Mardofa is a working "displaced" woman.

-Saadia:

Are you living in the same block of Shaikha in Dar-al-Salam and are you working?

-Mardofa:

130 No. I am not living in Dar-al-Salam. I am living in another camp called Jabarona also in Umdurman. I am working in exchange. I exchange the sugar that some organizations bring to us for utensils from Suq Libya which I then sell in the neighbourhoods of Umdurman.

-Saadia:

135 What is the difference between Jabarona and Dar-al-Salam?

Mardofa:

We, in Jabarona do not own our land and our houses. In Jabarona, however, we are still supported with the aid of the international organizations, Islamic Dawa Organization, The Organization of African Muslims. In Dar-al-Salam you just own land without any support from
140 these organizations.

Mardofa, Shaikha, and I discussed whether it is more important to own land

or to have part of your living supported by Organizations.

-Mardofa:

145 I cannot eat land. It is better for me to guarantee some sources of food than to own land.

-Shaikha:

It is better to own land because land means **right**. It means the right to settle.

150 -Saadia:

Then, Mardofa what is your opinion about the word Naziha (displaced)?

Mardofa:

155 I do not get angry with the word because I am really Naziha. I moved from area to area because of al-Jafaf (drought). Why should I get angry with the word?

-Shaikha (to Mardofa):

160 Actually, the word means the movement from country to country. As far as I am depending on myself in my living and since the government does not provide any help to me, no one has the right to call me Naziha. Since I am doing my work by this arm {she raised her arm}, what do they want from me?

-Saadia (to Shaikha):

how have you come to perceive the term Naziha as someone who move from country to country?

165 -Shaikha:

From our experience with the government. If we are considered by the government as Sudanese, we would not have been treated as strangers. "Al-Arab nihna min hum wa bari min hum" (we are part of the Arab in ethnicity but not in deeds.).

170 *Then we returned back to our discussion about Jabarona. I asked Mardofa about her relationship with "Southerners" living in Jabarona and other groups?*

-Mardofa:

175 The "Southerners" are trustful not like the Nuba. Stealing is a characteristic feature of the Nuba not the "Southerners".

The discussion turned to the story of the resistance of the "Southerners" to move to Jabarona.

-Mardofa:

180 At that day Suq Libya was full of "Southerners" who refused to move
from their houses in Suq Libya Area to the area which was called by
them "Jabarona". They stood up for the whole day as an opposition to
the decision of the movement. They stuck to their position till al-
Ziber, the Vice President came to convince them to move. Finally,
185 they submitted to the order and moved. They called the area Jabarona,
which means (They forced us).

-Shaikha:

190 If they would force us to leave Dar-al-Salam, we will do the same as
the "Southerners". We will crowd here and we will never submit to
their orders. We will never go back except when we are sure that our
living will return to its pre-drought status. The next step from Dar-
al-Salam is either death or to our land as we want it to be. No
movement will be taken within Umdurman.

FATIMA

Fatima is a housewife/ mother.

195 -Saadia:

From where did you come Fatima and can you tell me about your life in
your area before you moved to Umdurman?

-Fatima:

200 I came from Hamrat al-Wiz, Northern Kordofan. Our life was nomadic We
depended on herds in our living and our life depended very much on
rains. All seasons, except the summer, were good. In summer the water
becomes very scarce and the pasture becomes very poor. In fall season
our Dar (land) becomes like paradise. It becomes green and generous.
We depended on milk, fats, millet, and yoghurt in our diet. We never
205 went through experiences of illness and diseases in our Dar. We
experience illness like malaria here in Umdurman. I never heard about
malaria except here. In our Dar we used to eat meat but here we never
eat it because it is too expensive. Here we just eat fatarita
(sorghum) We eat fatarita with stew, if possible, or with plain
210 water. We used to live with our richness and dignity. But al-Jafaf
(drought) destroyed everything. We just jina (came) saving our lives.

-Saadia:

What about your situation and your position in both your Dar and in

Dar-al-Salam?

215 -Fatima:

In ad-Dar I am with my tribe. But here in balad al-ghurba (The alien land) life is very difficult and we do not have any source of living except what is provided by my son, who is working in construction and sometimes works as a herder.

220 -Saadia:

Then how do you cope with the economic situation here?

-Fatima:

We do nothing; we just depend on the son.

225 *Then her son interrupting the discussion and said: "I will never allow my mother to work. I am able to provide my mother and the family with a living. There is no need for my mother to work".*

-Saadia (Asking Fatima and her daughter Aisha):

How do you perceive women's work? Is it eib (unacceptable)?

-Fatima:

230 Life is very difficult and it needs struggle of both sexes. Then she asked me: Is it true that women and men in the city work and help each other in living?

-Saadia:

235 As you said life is very difficult and men and women try to find access to living and coping with the rise in prices of food. Women's work is not eib.

-Saadia:

What is your perception of the term Naziha?

-Fatima:

240 Yes I and others, we are all Naziheen. There is nothing wrong or degrading with the term. We are really Naziheen because we moved from our Dar after drought and we came here. And those who get annoyed with the term are just narrow minded.

-Saadia:

If you are asked to go back to your Dar will you do so?

245 -Fatima:

No I will not go back to ad-Dar. I am murtaha (feeling comfortable) here although my son and my daughter are working very hard. But in ad-Dar I was shaqiana (working very hard and tediously). I cannot fit

250 into the that structure any more. Life here is difficult, but the
alternatives and means to cope with it are many not like in ad-Dar
(Kordofan). In ad-Dar we just depend on rains which became very
scarce recently. Above all the government has no right to force us to
move as it did in the previous cases. Now, we have the right to say
255 No because now we own our house in Dar-al-Salam. But if the
government tries to force us to move, we will not move to other areas
within Umdurman, we will move to ad-Dar (Kordofan).

-Saadia:

What is your perception of the state?

-Fatima:

260 al-Hakoma (the government) did not provide us with any services. Al-
Hakoma on the contrary takes from us. It takes part of our monthly
amount of sugar as a support to the Popular Defence.

-Saadia:

What about Omer al-Bashir's visit to Dar-al-Salam?

265 -Fatima:

No, Omer al-Bashir did not visit Dar-al-Salam in his entire life,
maybe he does not know where it is. The police only come to Dar-al-
Salam to take people from here to Khartoum when there is a political
occasion. Those people are taken to increase the crowd in Khartoum to
270 show the support of the people to the president.

-Saadia:

what about your relationship with other women in Dar-al-Salam?

-Fatima:

275 Our relations as neighbours are very good. But we visit each other
rarely.

-Saadia:

Why?

-Fatima:

280 I don't know why, but I don't like being out of my home and I don't like
visiting others regularly.

DISCUSSION:

The interviews with the nine displaced women are direct examples of
shifting identities of the "displaced" women and my own identity. To the
"displaced" women, I belong to the category of the "other": the city, the
government, the International Organizations, etc. This other plays an

effective role in favouring one identity at a specific moment among other identities.

I can argue that there is an overwhelmingly critical and oppositional view of the state policies towards the "displaced" by the nine "displaced" women. Yet, the strategies taken by the "displaced" women in their opposition or acceptance to the term "displaced" is conflicting. This depends on the social location that a "displaced" woman takes in relation to the term. Identity is fluid and tactical. The different experiences (housewives, mothers, workers, etc.) of the "displaced" women moulded their different perceptions and knowledge to the world around them. This will be clear in the following discussion of the main three themes which the interviews tackled: the term Naziheen (displaced), the state, and the coping strategies developed by the "displaced" women.

ON THE TERM NAZIHEEN (DISPLACED):

In lines 239-244, "Fatima" talked about the term Naziheen (displaced) as an acceptable term to her. "Fatima" by taking an identity of a "displaced" mother from a nomadic background, can take the label "displaced" as a source of financial support or aid.

One of the definitions to the term Naziheen taken by a "Shaikha" (in the lines 64-69) is that at first she accepted the term because it was a part of the process of drought and famine in 1984/85 and because the term for her at first was strange. Yet after ten years of settlement in Umdurman she will not accept it at all. The term from her perspective is expressing a situation which no longer exists. For the term to be used after the context was changed is something unacceptable to her. In that sense the term is perceived as ahistorical. Moreover, by saying that the term was alien or strange can also be interpreted that the term "displaced" is a scientific term which is part of the scientific discourse used by researchers and international organizations in their reference to the mass movement from rural to urban areas.

In the same line of reaction to the term Naziheen (displaced) is the following two quotations representing two strategies taken by two women favouring the National identity, i.e. being Sudanese:

"Rugaiya" a housewife "displaced" woman says:

This word is very humiliating. Sudan is for all Sudanese. We are all Sudanese with the same riasa (Presidency). Every Sudanese has the right to settle and live in whatever place he wants. We are not strangers. We are Sudanese. If an enemy attacks Khartoum will he distinguish us as Naziheen from the people of Khartoum? On the contrary he will kill us first because we are in the periphery of the city. Now we are protecting the urban people. (Interview with a "Rugaiya" a "displaced" housewife woman, 1994, Dar-al-Salam).

"Um Ballina" a seller of barbecued meat in Suq al-Naga (Camel Market), Suq Libya says:

The word means I am a stranger in this country. It means this is not my land. But, the word never makes me annoyed. What can I get from anger. It is better for me to keep silent. I need work not talking. (Interview with a "displaced" woman, 1994, Suq al-Naga (Camel Market), Umdurman.)

Both women are attacking the term "displaced". They were locating themselves within the boundaries of Nationality as an identity. Albeit, they differ in their strategies and reaction to the term. Um Ballina is a working woman, unlike Rugaiya a housewife and she has a different strategy in reaction to the term. Silence for Um Ballina, could be a tactical strategy to cope with the continuous harassment by the government of the livelihood of a working woman in an "informal" sector which is a direct target of the government. On the other hand a housewife who is not in daily contact with the police and its bulldozing campaigns, can take speaking as a strategy to express herself and her image as she perceives it: "We are Sudanese and we are protecting the urban people". In this respect, "Rugaiya" perceives herself as a Sudanese. The only difference between her and the people of the city is that she lives in the periphery but at the same time, she and other "displaced", are doing a great favour to the people in the city because they are protecting them from external enemies.

One of the most interesting areas in the process of self identification taken by the "displaced" women is the restoration to ethnicity as a unifying factor between the "displaced" and the state. This is clearly expressed by Shaikha in lines (165-169). Shaikha was criticizing the attitudes of the government towards them by saying that although we (the "Arabs") are sharing the same ethnic background with the government but the government treat us as strangers. Moreover, she was criticizing these

attitudes as not part of the traits of the Arabs, i.e the government is not a "true" "Arab" while she is.

The reference to ethnicity as a unifying factor among "Arabs" within Dar-al-Salam and thus as a distinguishing factor between "Arabs" and non "Arabs" in Dar-al-Salam is a strategy taken by many of the "displaced" women during the discussion. With reference to Mardofa in lines (174-175) when she talked about the Nuba (non Arab tribe) in Dar-al-Salam, she referred to them as thieves. In this respect she was trying to give the "Arabs" a good self image and to tell the people who came from the city (including myself) that the "displaced" are not a homogeneous group, there is a group of the "displaced" (the "Arabs") who are part of the dominant ruling group and that linkage requires a special treatment of the "Arabs" "displaced" people. Nevertheless, what is important in the discussion about ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in Dar-al-Salam is that largely the "displaced" with their different ethnic backgrounds are living in a peaceful relationship. Ethnicity is used in the discussion as a strategy which can help in ending the bad treatment by the government of the "displaced".

The discourse of the "displaced" women about themselves is not only influenced by the state as an "Other" which is an extension of the self, but by many "Others". For instance the "displaced" from areas other than Western Sudan, the urban poor in Dar-al-Salam, etc. are all "others" which influence the "displaced" women's perceptions of themselves. Interestingly enough the statement is given by a migrant woman who also came from Western Sudan (from Kordofan) since 1970s. She first settled in a shanty town around al-Thowra Area in Umdurman city, and was then obliged to move to Dar-al-Salam. She said: "We have been classified as part of the Naziheen; because we live with them now. what shall we do? we should accept it". This woman do not perceive herself as part of the Naziheen, she considers herself as a migrant, although she came from the same area in Western Sudan, because she migrated to Umdurman before the "events" of 1984/85 drought and famine in Western Sudan. I think this is not surprising as far as the term Naziheen is concerned. The term as I mentioned before is applied to the waves of migrants from Western Sudan who came to Umdurman in the year of drought and famine and it was not existing before the 1984/85.

A "displaced" woman who came from White Nile Area which was affected by drought in 1984 did not consider herself as Naziha (displaced):

We (Those from the White Nile Area) have been classified as part of the Naziheen. What shall we do? We should accept it. The Naziheen are very peaceful and all my friends are Naziheen... What it has been said about the Naziheen is that they are sick and a source of diseases.

ON THE STATE AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE "DISPLACED" WOMEN:

In lines 15-20, Shaikha talked about the government and how it destroyed their houses. It appeared from her discussion of the bulldozing campaigns that, the "displaced" went through difficult psychological stresses when they saw their houses destroyed before their eyes. "Kharab ad-Diar" (the destruction of homes) is used in the Sudanese literature as the worst thing that an eye can see.

"Hafsa", a laundry "displaced" woman said that:

We are the most masakin (poor) people in the world because we first left our homes without having the power to stop al-Jafa (drought), which is Allah deed and we do not have any objection to it, and then we are poor because we could not stop the destruction made by humans against humans.

The same point of criticism was supported by Um Ballina who talked about the government and how the police treats them in Suq al-Naga (part of Suq Libya). She said:

We moved from our area in Kordofan to Umdurman. We fought to find access to work, and when we depend on our selves al-Hakoma (the government) did not leave us to do so. Every day we are facing Kasha in this market. Although I have a permit, but I am also treated as an illegal worker.

"Fatima" also in her discussion of the government, in lines (259-261), mentioned that "the government did not give us on the contrary it takes from us". This statement criticizes the role of the state as a provider of services to its citizens. In the same line of critique Um Ballina mentioned to me while we were chatting in Suq al-Naga (Camel market):

I am now putting my purse around my neck because I do not want them (the police) to steal my money. This money I need it for purchasing food for my children and for buying other means of production if my means of production are been stolen by the

police during the kasha.

These two quotations support the argument in Al-Rasid (1995) I discussed in Chapter IV (p.36). The study argues that kasha policy is taken as a source of income for the police who implements the policy.

ON THE COPING STRATEGIES AND DAR-AL-SALAM:

Economically, the "displaced" women developed different strategies to cope with the rise in prices of food in Umdurman. Cut in food consumption is the dominant economic strategy developed by the nine "displaced" women. Moreover, there are some women who work and others who are not. Some "displaced" women used to work but they stopped because they were having babies and others are not working because their sons were not allowing them to do so. Reference here to the interview with Fatima when her son (in lines 223-225) stated that he will not allow her to work. It is clear that the son was influenced by the dominant Islamist values of the state which restrict the public space of women. Fatima may have a positive opinion about work because she asked me about women in the city and do they work in order to help their husbands and families?. But in actual reality she does not work.

When the discussion with the "displaced" women turns to their economic situation and how do they cope with rises in prices of food, the "displaced" women shifted to the identity of 'poor'. For instance, "Shaikha" (in lines 95-97) mentioned that the rise in prices of food in Umdurman equated the rich (the people of the city) and the poor (the displaced) people. That is to say being poor from the perspective of Shaikha is the only difference between "displaced" and the people of the city. Shaikha in this respect used the economic difficulties in the city as a strategy through which she can support her citizenship. While "Um Ballina", for instance, who works in selling barbecued meat in Suq al-Naga (Camel Market) which is considered as an activity which generates good flow of income has another strategy. When I asked her about her work, she said: "I am miskina (poor). I don't own the rakoba (hut) in which I receive my customers. I rent it every day and rent is very expensive." "Um Ballina" shifted to the identity: 'poor' in her attempt to express that the "displaced" need financial support and special treatment as 'poor'

Most importantly, besides the economic strategies, the "displaced" women try psychologically to cope with the urban environment. The interviews are a direct example of showing how the "displaced" women's power in exploiting every chance possible in presenting positive self images about themselves. Moreover, the pressure on abolishing the power hierarchies in the interviews, through asking me questions is also a strategy showing power and control over what should be said and should be silenced by them. This I really consider as the most important part of the coping strategies is Dar-al-Salam. My consideration stemmed from the stress that the "displaced" women themselves put on Dar-al-Salam during the discussion.

Dar-al-Salam is taken as not only as an area to settle on, but also as their RIGHT. Dar-al-Salam is the right to settle, to be entitled to citizenship, and above all it is the right to say No to the government policies which are directed to the further displacement of the "displaced" people. Dar-al-Salam is the discursive field of struggle taken by the "displaced" women. The struggle to give a positive image about the self and to make other people understand this self. The discussion between me, Shaikha, and Mardofa (in lines 136-149) about Dar-al-Salam is an interesting discussion about the comparison between having food or having land. Dar-al-Salam for its settlers is more important than food because it means right and ownership.

Dar-al-Salam within the discussion is viewed as homeland, while Umdurman (the city) is viewed as the "other", balad al-ghurba (the alien land. Please refer to line 215). It is the alien because it is the place where the police, the government, the elites, etc. exist. The view to Umdurman and the people of the city and the view of the self requires a wider space for the public to know and to understand these selves. Poems and songs formulated by the "displaced" women are another discourse about the self and another discursive struggle.

(b) "DISPLACED" WOMEN SPEAK THROUGH SONGS AND POEMS: THE DISCOURSE OF THE "DISPLACED" WOMEN TO THE PUBLIC:

While I was interviewing the "displaced" women, I asked them if they knew any poems and songs about al-Nizoh (displacement) and about the city. They first refused to recite the poems because they considered them irrelevant. "Bakhita" a working "displaced" woman said to me: "these songs are ten years old. They describe a situation which no longer exists. They describe

our situation when we were affected by al-Majaa (famine) at that time".

However, poems and songs are important in the discourse(s) of the displaced women. They represent a discourse about the self and the external level of politics. Worth noting here is that the songs which will be included in this text are including both old and one recent songs formulated by the "displaced" women. This is due to the fact that recently in Sudan there is much more repression of counter views. Songs and poems whether old or recent are important to the discussion on "displacement" because the research views displacement as a process. Dealing with the "displaced" women as part of a 'story' necessitates reference to past which undoubtedly played an important role in moulding the present self images of the "displaced" women. Songs and poems are representation of human experiences and his(tories). Histories does not only mean chronology but most importantly, histories are crystallization of events and human experiences.

Abu Lughod argues that: "Personal poetry has led us to an expanded vision of politics, to include not only the system by which external relations are ordered but also the system that organizes internal relations of domination" (Abu Lughod,1986:256). Moreover, by framing personal experiences in poetic terms, individuals proclaim their similarity to others and assert the universality of their experiences (Abu Lughod,1986). Poems are important in the creation of a self image. They are not only expressive but they also contribute to coping, psychologically, with the new community which the poems try to explain and to find space for their subjects.

Songs have the same function that poems do in framing personal experiences. Moreover, songs are always connected with the loss of something; lose of property, of someone dear, etc. (Abu Lughod, 1986). The songs and poems of the "displaced" women are dealing with the same problematic areas which the interviews dealt with: The state, the urban people, the term Naziheen, and the image of the "displaced" on themselves which is created through the comparison between the two settings: rural and urban. Accordingly, the analysis of the songs will be through their classification in relation to these problem areas.

250 "Reagan²³ al-hanin...akaloho al-Muazafeen... wa samona al-Naziheen"
(The Arabic version).

Reagan the kind...have been eaten by the state officials and named us
Naziheen (displaced) (Translation).

255 "ish al-Naziheen akaloho al-Muzafeen...nihna rikibna mudrikeen... fi
shan al-Naziheen" (The Arabic version).

The food (ish) of the displaced have been 'eaten' by the state
officials... After we faced with many difficulties and risk along the
road to the city... we found our share the term: displaced.

260 (Translation).

"Can ma Reagan jana...can al-Ju tafana" (Arabic version)
If Reagan did not come... We would have been died of hunger
(Translation).

265 "Nas al-Lajjna ijoloh...lel miskeen ma bidoroh...Al-Mutgushshed le
shotoroh...bagi al-Mukhzan holoh". (Arabic version)

270 The people of the committee do not like the poor...The belly-god and
greedy man...owned the residue of the store. (Translation)

These songs reflect the "displaced" women's vision of the term: Naziheen.
It is clear from the above songs that the term was an urban and state
construct. The word 'eating' in the Darfurian context is used idiomatically
to mean "enjoying money, power, sex, and other good things" (De Waal, 1989:
72). Accordingly the word 'eaten' or 'ate' in the songs are used to refer
to how the state officials benefited from the proliferation of
international aid and how they used their power and authority and
distributing the aid for satisfying their own personal interests. These
songs in fact not only refer to economic corruption of the state and its
officials but also refer to the state's power in naming. It refers to the

²³ Reagan, the American President at the time of famine in Sudan
(1984/85), is taken as a symbol of the international aid relief provided by
many organizations to Sudan at that time.

state as an ideological apparatus that uses its power (here power is equated with repression) to classify, identify, and label these people as Naziheen. In line 263-265, the term nas al-lajna (people of Popular Committee) is referring to the Popular Committees formulated by the recent government of Sudan. The song refers to corruption as a concomitant feature of all successive governments of Sudan. As such, the term "displaced" was seen by the "displaced" women as an urban construct. It is for the benefit of the state to use the "displaced" as a 'case' not as a 'story' which can produce new resources to the state. Thus the "displaced" were left to deal with the label.

The songs also indicate the disappointment that the "displaced" faced. When they moved to the city, they just found the label (Naziheen) as their share in the city. Moreover, the songs also reflect an external level of politics and power relations. "If Reagan would not have come we would have died of hunger". From the perception of the "displaced" women, it was International aid, which was symbolized by Reagan, and not the state that rescued them from death. "Reagan" played the role which the state was supposed to perform in satisfying the urgent needs of the "displaced".

Worth noting here is that the international organizations monopolized a very large space in the consciousness of the "displaced" women. The international organizations are not only an active agent at the external level of power relations, but also an active agent at the intra level of power relations: the household level:

280 Min yomak al-fazate...
 Care biga seed bate...
 Kull ma shahar hallate...Shawal wa bagat zate. (Arabic version).

 Since you have fled...Care become the head of the household...
 Every new moon... A sack and a gallon of oil (Translation).

285 Ar-Rgil al-Kuwaiti...Nassani seed baiti (The Arabic version).
 The Kuwaiti man... has made me forget my husband (Translation).

The above two songs are referring to "displacement" as an up rooting

process which resulted in many changes in the rural household structures. After being impoverished and destitute, rural people started searching for another source of living. Men moved to search for work either in the urban areas or abroad. Women were left to cope with these difficulties with the help of the International Organizations. Care Organization, being very active in Dar-al-Salam Area, is taken as a symbol that refer to other international organizations.

The term Fazzate which is used in the song usually expresses a danger from behind, it is also used to blame someone as being "coward" for rescuing himself/herself and leaving the others behind. Interestingly enough is that the term fazzate was used in the song to describe how the husband left (fazza) his house and his wife who came to favour Care organization on her migrant husband. That is to say the wives are blaming their husbands for rescuing themselves through their early movement to urban centres.

"Care", in the song in line 271, played the role of the absent husband. It is taking care of the household. The role of the husband as a head of household, i.e who is responsible of providing the household with basic needs which are usually brought from the market such as: oil, tea, soap ,etc. (CF, P.17) have been successfully taken by the International Organizations to the extent that the wives forget their husbands. If food is available there is no need for the husband. This song is highly questions gender as a social relation and as a cultural meaning given to these relations. Gender relations are shifting and the power hierarchies of these relations are not static. The position of the husband at the top of power hierarchy can be denied and replaced by an outsider agent: International Organizations.

The last area which the songs and poems of the "displaced" women tackle relates to the self image of the "displaced". Self image (or the self and its construction) has been constructed in relation to the urban setting: the Other. The "displaced" women in the following songs speak to the urban people.

A "displaced" woman working as a laundry worker in Umdurman²⁴ says:

280 Tagate al-bab al-garih...
Galo le gassallnna umbarih...
Ahal al-Rig²⁵ al-marih...
Giatahum ma min salih.(Arabic version).

285 I knocked at the strong well- built door... They said 'we washed
yesterday'... The owners of herds (rich people)... their coming was
not for their benefit (Translation).

This song has many indications based on the words that have been used by the "displaced" woman in expressing her image and her situation in Umdurman. The term "al-Bab al-Garih" in line 280, in a metaphorical term is not only a mere description of the door of the house in Umdurman as big and strong. It is an indication of the barrier between the urban people and the "displaced" people. The urban people are protected by big strong doors, while the "displaced" initially have no entrance doors for their houses. They are exposed to the street; they are not protected and on the contrary they are the protecting the urban people from any external attack as it was mentioned in the interview with Fatima p.55. The strong door is a symbol of the urban structure which is not welcoming the "displaced". The other part of the song is attempting to make the urban people, who are closing their doors before the "displaced", to understand that the "displaced" are initially rich people who are obliged to come (*jiah*) to Umdurman as a last resort. The song says that, unfortunately, the rich people (owners of herds) discover that being in Umdurman is not for their benefit because the people of Umdurman failed to understand them.

Following the same line in criticizing the urban setting, the following song says:

²⁴Umdurman and the people of Umdurman in the songs are used as symbols of the urban setting and the urban people at large and do not necessarily refer to Umdurman as a city.

²⁵The word: "Al-rig" refers to young sheep, camel, etc. Having a large number of specifically young livestock, i.e "rig" is an indicator of richness and fortune.

290 Bakhita um saraih...
fog lugdan faih...
Gismatana um lonan zaih... *forggah* wa omran raih. (The Arabic
version)

Bakhita (a typical Kordofani female name), the fortunate...
295 In the evergreen pasture with nice smell...
Our dim-coloured luck (destiny)...Alienation and loss of life.

The song can be read from two angles; it is either a comparison between two situations of two women, one whom is living in a rural setting and the other of whom has moved an urban area, or it compares two situations of a "displaced" woman before she leaves and after she has left the rural area. The song refers to the rural life as a life of richness, while life in the urban setting is alienation and loss of life. The terms "*forggah*" (being apart or alienated, in line 211) and *ghurba* (alienation, in line 215) were used by the displaced women in our dialogues more than once. Alienation is always related to the loss of herds and the loss of the rural life at large. The Marxist concept of alienation: the alienation from means of production have the same meaning to the term *ghurba* in the discourse of the "displaced" women. Yet, "*ghurba*" (alienation), as used in the discourse of the "displaced" women is a continuous process within the urban setting. "ghurba" is used for criticizing the urban setting which moulded the "displaced" as a label which has no right to be absorbed within the socio-economic and political boundaries of the urban setting.

295 Fud sajaika min as-Sajaik tahod al-Hum...
Labanaha isheel aj-Ju al-Mukhaltah jahum...
Ishat han...seedaha ma binjum...Mahanah wa amraha hakum. (The Arabic
version).

Only one female camel erases solicitude (worry)...
300 Its milk releases one from hunger and the need for meat...
Life here (in Umdurman) its seeker never relaxes...
Humiliation and ever lasting humiliation. (Translation, brackets
added).

The song is describing the difficulties that the "displaced" face in their search for making living and finding food in Umdurman. While they were accustomed to a certain type of food in the rural areas (milk and meat), in Umdurman they couldn't eat that kind of food. The seeker of livelihood in Umdurman never relax (line 301). Life in Umdurman is humiliating because the people of Umdurman do not know who the "displaced" are. They do not know the past of the "displaced", they just know the "displaced" as a label.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION:

From the above discussion of the discourses of the "displaced" women on themselves, I can argue that these discourses are reactions to the dominant discourse on the "displaced". The discourses of the "displaced" women are motivated by the need to give positive images of the self. The "displaced" women are conscious that the self which they are trying to present has been obscured by the dominant discourse which is actively directed towards the production of negative images of the displaced: beggars, sources of diseases, unproductive, etc. By saying to the public that we are seeking our livelihood by our selves and by saying that they never went through experiences of diseases except in Umdurman (reference to lines 204-206), the "displaced" women are trying to oppose the dominant discourse by deploying images of themselves as independent people trying to find access to food through their own labour.

The term Naziheen was never used by the "displaced" women in their discourse (The interviews). The term entered the discourse only when I asked them about its meaning and its implications. When they talk about their lives in Northern Kordofan and Northern Darfur and how they have been obliged to move to Umdurman they use terms such as: rikbna mudrikeen (we took the risk), jinah (we came), forqqah (being apart) , al-Raheel (travelling) . They never say nazahna (became displaced). The five terms used by the "displaced" women in reference to the movement from the rural areas to Umdurman are very specific to the rural context. The terms express situations of long departure from the homeland. The term: "Forqqah" has a deep psychological connotation. It is connected with grief sadness, the feeling of being lost, of being a part. The term or the sentence rikbna mudrikeen (we took the risk) refers to the risk they took during their travel to Umdurman. Al-duruk (the risk) is always taken by the person when

he/she expecting something worth the risk. Accordingly, the term was used in the song to express the state of disappointment that the "displaced" felt when they reach the city.

The two terms: Jinah (we came) and al-Raheel (departure) are "neutral" terms which have no deep reflection and connotation to how the movement from place to place happened and what are the consequences of that "departure", or "coming."

The term Naziheen (displaced), in the songs and the poems, to the "displaced" women is an urban construct. After the state officials 'ate' the Aid of the people who took the risk to reach Umdurman, they named them Naziheen. As such, the "displaced" women are opposing the term Naziheen as an ideological term which labels, classifies, and mould them as a category that is subjected to continuous processes of marginalization.

The term Naziheen was exposed in the discourse(s) of some "displaced" women as subversive to their national identity. "We are Sudanese and not strangers". By taking this location or position in their discussion to the term Naziheen, those "displaced" women are exposing the state as an isolated or alienated entity in relation to civil society. The discourse of the "displaced" women, as I argued in Chapter I, although it lacks an institutional basis, it has the power to oppose and to expose the dominant discourse.

CHAPTER VI:

CONCLUSION

VI.1.THE POLITICS OF INTERACTION AND EXPOSURE:

THE DISCOURSES OF THE STATE AND THE "DISPLACED" WOMEN

Approaching "displacement" through discourse analysis opened the door for examining power as a relation and as diffused. The state in the Sudanese context is an overdeveloped entity which is a direct representative of the bourgeoisie. The state possesses economic, political, and ideological powers which then legitimizes its power in naming and labelling different processes which emerged at the peripheries of Sudan.

The term Naziheen ("displaced") became a widespread term through the media which is dominated by the government. It was clear from the discussion with the "displaced" women that, through labelling, the "displaced" were delinked from their story and appeared as a 'case'. That is to say, "displacement" as a process and the "displaced" as a part of this process were reduced to a category or a 'case' that can be manipulated by different agents for the satisfaction of different interests. This labelling process obscured the realities of the "displaced" as they see them. As such, the "displaced" appeared as a concept or as a label and disappeared as a 'story' or as a collectivity of experiences. In a nutshell, the "displaced" were not only displaced from their means of production in the rural areas in which they used to settle but also displaced from their stories. They were denied the right to settle in the urban structure and were denied the right to speak up and to tell their own stories and experiences.

The "displaced" women were marginalized by two discourses; the state discourse on the "displaced" and the state discourse on the category "woman". As such they were facing two processes of displacement and marginalization. These processes of marginalization helped in creating voices that possess the hidden powers of knowing, exposing invisible areas of the dominant discourse and its agents, and the power of silence.

Discourse analysis helped in examining the relationship between the dominant discourse on "displacement" adopted by the state and the "displaced" women discourse on themselves. The two discourses operate in

interaction and reaction to each other. The state discourse on the "displaced" is perceiving the "displaced" as a negative "Other". The "other" who commit crimes, produce diseases, and obscure urban planning and urban development. The interest behind presenting a negative image about the "displaced" is to deny the responsibility behind "displacement". The "displaced" women's discourse, on the other hand, also perceives the state as a negative "Other" who benefited from the process of "displacement" as a source of generating aid for the satisfaction of the government and its officials. The "displaced" women through this perception aim at representing the state and the urban people at large as responsible for the whole process of "displacement", especially that within the urban boundaries. The two discourses reflect power relations between the two discourses and among the subjects of each discourse. The state discourse through its institutionalized power, e.g media and press became the dominant one and presented its view of the "displaced" as the ultimate "truth". The "displaced" women's discourse although lacking the institutional base it has the power to shake the concept Naziheen ("displaced").

The "displaced" women criticize the term Naziheen by taken different positions and conflicting locations. The shift of the identities of the "displaced" women during the discussion is partly indicated by the psychological level of coping strategies. That is to say by the saying that "we are Sudanese not strangers" some "displaced" women favour national identity as a strategy in their attempt to present themselves from an angle that the government hardly recognizes. Moreover, because of the shift of the identities of some "displaced" women in their criticism of the term loses its absolutism. The term can be approached differently depending on the location the "displaced" woman was taking during the discussion.

The "displaced" women showed the power of criticizing the term as ahistorical. By saying that the term during the first years of settlement in Umdurman can be acceptable to some "displaced" women because the term at that time expresses famine and drought. However, the continuity of the term after years of settlement is totally rejected as invalid. Other "displaced" women never use the term in their expression of their movement from rural areas in western Sudan to Umdurman. They used terms that have been used in

the rural setting and which express the reasons behind different patterns of movements. In this respect, the term Naziheen ("displaced") for them was an urban scientific term which was strange to the "displaced" women. This view was supported by the perception of the "displaced" women to the urban structure as balad al-ghurbah (alien land).

What is problematic from the point of view of the "displaced" women is the 'time' factor which renders the argument of the state and the scientific discourse about the "displaced" fragile and static. Again what is problematic to the "displaced" women is Dar-al-Salam Area in which they now settle. Dar-al-Salam can be regarded as the discursive field of the discourse of the "displaced" women on the urban structure as citizens. Dar-al-Salam is taken as a material power to resist any attempt of further movement of the "displaced".

VI.2. LESSONS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE "DISPLACED" WOMEN:

A PERSPECTIVE OF TERM "DISPLACED":

Thinking from the "displaced" women's lives and experience(s) opened different levels of thinking about and approaching the term "displaced". The "displaced" women's knowledge originated from their own socially devalued lives. As such they named different areas which were obscured by the dominant state discourse on them. Adding the experience(s) of the "displaced" women, i.e knowledge as a practice, in the scientific discourse on the "displaced" necessitates first approaching the 'category' 'displaced women' as heterogenous and not an ontological category. The conflicting positions and locations that the "displaced" women took in their discussion on the term "displaced" reflect that the category 'woman' is multiple. Accordingly, as Harding argues, feminist thought or knowledge is not just one unitary and coherent "speech" but multiple and contradictory knowing (Harding, 1991). These contradictions and conflicting knowledge exposed 'other' parts of the "truth" about the "displaced".

Moreover, taking the "displaced" women's lives as a point of departure on approaching the term "displaced" highlighted a new area of questioning. Self reflexivity is important in the process of viewing displacement differently. Researchers, for instance, should ask themselves before theorizing on the "displaced" an important question: What is being an urban citizen?. The critique that the "displaced" women launched on the urban

people and the urban structure at large means that it is important first to ask a question about what does citizenship and being an urban mean?. That is to say the question of location and positioning in relation to the dominant discourse on the "displaced" and in relation to the "displaced" discourse is vital in the process of theorizing about the "displaced". Approaching the term "displaced" differently, requires many epistemological adjustments in relation to the process of inquiry. These adjustments related to the power relations between the self and the "other". The process of identification of the self implies that the "other" is an extension of the self rather than a negative "other".

My own personal experience with the "displaced" women throughout this research thought me many lessons. It showed me the importance of losing authority as a researcher if I aim at approaching the 'reality' differently. The "displaced" women since the beginning of the dialogue abolished the power hierarchies between me as a 'researcher' and them as 'researched'. They showed their power of speaking and silence. They can tell what they want at a specific moment of time. Moreover, the "displaced" women strengthened my belief that research is an important political strategy and a tool for achieving change. Change at the levels of society, political systems, epistemology and most importantly change inside ourselves. When I found myself labelled by the "displaced" women as an "urban" researcher, part of the category "urban" which is criticized by them, I went through the same experiences that the "displaced" women go through every day. That is the attempt to tell my 'story' and the attempt to identify myself as I want them to know. The experience was hard because it is an experience of freeing the self from the grips of the 'label', it is an experience of making "others" understand you.

I can argue that the term "displaced" can be approached from four interrelated angles. Displacement is not only cause or effect, it is a **process** which initially decomposed the "displaced" from their means of production and from their own stories. Thus displacement can be approached as a **label** which reduced its bearers into a "category" or a "case" that can be manipulated for the satisfaction of different needs. This entails the understanding of displacement as **power relation** between the state and citizens. Displacement and its dominant meaning is a product of the state's

discourse which through its repressive power consolidated the dominant urban view of the "displaced". Displacement is a **discourse** which entails the possibility of viewing power as diffused. As a discourse, displacement means that it is constructed and could be deconstructed by a counter discourse. Displacement is not an absolute term.

Finally what I want to say to every researcher, research is an important tool in the process of political change. The research which sees knowledge as partial and locatable can help in naming the unnamed things and can help in contextualizing the concepts which were approached as static. Naming is the first step towards addressing issues and achieving change. For a researcher to be open and exposed by the 'researched' does not mean to be fragile and weak. Exposition and opening the door for criticism means strength and confidence.

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