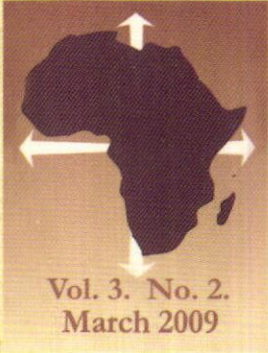


TINABANTU

Journal of African National Affairs

Volume 3. Number 2. 2009



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R120 / 2 issues

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£15 or US\$25 / 2 issues

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£6 or US\$10 / 1 issue

R60 / 1 issue

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Prices include postage

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TINABANTU

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Cape Town, South Africa

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Fax no. +27-21-685-0332

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First Published 2009

ISBN No. 978-1-920294-57-1

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Typeset by CASAS

Printed by *SED* Printing Solutions

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Towards a Civil Society Conception of African Unity/ Integration¹

Kwesi Kwaa Prah

Introduction: Elements of Civil Society

The term civil society enjoys a degree of conceptual elasticity, which is both helpful and unhelpful. Because the term refers to a wide range of social phenomena, which vary in constitution and societal expression, looseness in this respect advantageous since it permits the accommodation of variation. On the other hand, its shifting conceptual borders makes the notion sometimes inchoate and terminologically indeterminate. Some may say that it is neither fish nor fowl. Another way of fathoming this problem is to realize that definitions of “civil society” are seriously manifold and the conceptual divergences are ultimately based on contrastive philosophical positions, which cannot be easily unified.

There is also a type of disciplinary compartmentalization, which comes with different usages of the term. The analysis of civil society in the contemporary world depicts two leanings in usage from a disciplinary social science point of view. One is distinctly political in attention and the other more sociological. The political formulation of civil society appears in two strands, one closely associated to the Western-derived tradition of liberal-democratic theory affiliated to the ideas of de Tocqueville and Adam Ferguson; which identifies civic institutions and political activity as essential components of the emergence of a particular type of political society, based on the principles of citizenship, rights, democratic representation and the rule of law. The other strand, which is ideologically to the left, conceives of the notion of civil society, in the language of Marx, as an expression of the institutions of class society; in our times bourgeois society and bourgeois democracy. The sociological conception of civil society also pans out in two philosophical directions. To the right, it is ahistorically constructed

as the intermediate associational realm located between the state on the one side and the basic sociological building blocks of society on the other (individuals, families, lineages and firms), inhabited by social organizations with some degree of autonomy and voluntary participation on the part of their members. To the left of this position, the idea of civil society agrees that it refers to non-state social structures which order the transactions of everyday life, but that, such socio-structural formations are essentially historically defined phenomena and therefore in terms of ideals are of limited time span.

Be that as it may, the concept generally addresses the reality of the plethora of non-state institutions standing in contradistinction to the coercive structures of the state and which allow the accumulation of social capital and the creation of voices independent of *etatiste* narratives. They thus include structures like NGOs, church and other religious groups, the media, academia (at its best), community-based organizations, free trade unions, charities, etc.

Today, there are those who want to suggest that civil society organizations should represent positions, which are necessarily critical of the state. Many would not agree with this, but may suggest that civil society institutions should be able to maintain an independent voice. In other words, civil society organizations must be fearless towards the *diktat* of the ruling political elite without necessarily being confrontational or subversive. Experience, especially in the Third World, has sometimes demonstrated that where they are inspirationally confrontational and/or subversive, they may easily lend themselves to the artifices of interested external parties or regimes, especially in conditions where the wherewithal for existence is totally dependent on externally generated largess. Even in Putin-era Russia and China today, we do not infrequently hear voices of dismay about externally funded NGOs, which tread on the sensitive toes of the guardians of the state.

But we can also say without fear of controversy that in the contemporary world, strong civil society institutions are enabling factors for good and democratic governance. They allow the populace to press their wishes into existence without censorship or the strait-jacket of state approval and supervision. For the purposes of this paper, I wish to formulate the idea of civil society thus: It is ideally a social field located between the state and the household, structured around organized groups or associations of various sorts, which are relatively autonomous and stand outside the ambit of the state, and are volitionally created by members of the society to protect, celebrate or extend their interests, values or identities.

Wherever and whenever social groups undergo integration processes, essentially and ultimately, it involves the development of greater and easier people-to-people relations, which translate existentially as an enhanced face-to-face capacity in the practical workings of the relationship. Integration means freer movement and easier social engagement both at the group and individual levels of social life. It means greater

sharing of resources, ideas and ideals. It also means greater and increasing unity of the conceptualization and implementation of collective purposes.

The Pan-African Axis

How does this idea relate to African unity as a Pan-African Project? Let us also scrutinize the ideal of Pan-Africanism. We know that as a political goal, its roots lie in the late 19th century when Henry Sylvester Williams coined the term and organized the first conference at the turn of the century. At that stage it was not conceived as a project to unify African people. It was rather seen as an attempt to address what was regarded as general injustices to people of African descent in the Western imperial world, specifically in the British imperial world.

When, in June 1897 the first Pan-African Association was formed in the Diaspora through the organizational leadership of Williams, its constitutional mandate was to enable Africans and their global descendants, to achieve “their true civil and political rights, to ameliorate the condition of our oppressed brethren in the continents of Africa, America, and other parts of the world, by promoting efforts to secure effective legislation, to encourage our people in educational, industrial and commercial enterprises, to foster friendly relations between the Caucasian and African races, to organize a bureau, a depository, for collections of authorized writings and statistics relating to our people everywhere, and to raise a fund to be used solely for forwarding these purposes.”²

Right from its emergence, African Nationalism or Pan-Africanism has straddled both sides of the Atlantic. Through all stages of its evolution and development, the Diaspora has been a key reference point. As the saying goes, “you never see Africa whole until you are out of it.” The Diaspora connection is therefore vital for the historical understanding of the ideal and its practical implications for the present, and the future.

In the decades that followed Henry Sylvester Williams’s pioneering sponsorship under the leadership of W.E.B. Du Bois, the idea slowly evolved into a fully-fledged anti-colonial project. By the time the Manchester Conference of 1945 took place, that is, within half-a-century of its inception, the Pan-African project had become the basis for the struggle for colonial freedom. It is in some senses significant that leaders like Kenyatta, Nkrumah, Banda in cooperation with Du Bois, Padmore, Makonnen, etc. were instrumental in formulating the strategy for colonial freedom from the Manchester meeting. After Manchester, within 10 years, colonial freedom was emerging on the African continent and the 1960s became the decade of African independence when more than 20 African countries gained their independence.

In 1963, under the auspices of Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, the Pan-African ideal was limitedly reached, under the circumstances of the time, in the form of the Organization of African Unity. The Organization of African Unity represented in its protocols all that

could be achieved at that point as a representation of African unity. As it turned out, it was a merely regional, geographical organization, which had nothing to do with the cultural or historical unity of the African world. It was what I have called a *continentalist* organization. The continentalist view of African unity has been the bane of African attempts to achieve unity.

It is an argument which starts with the geographical unity of Africa as the basis for the definition of Africans. Such definitions leave little space for the African Diaspora and end up categorizing as Africans a whole range of non-Africans who live on the continent, albeit rightfully, as citizens of various African countries. I have elsewhere (*Beyond the Colour Line*) suggested that in some cases these include people who, volitionally and with repeatedly-stated conviction, do not want even to be regarded as Africans. The confusion of citizenship with historical and cultural roots is most unfortunate, and remains the prime cause of the confusion regarding “who is an African.” It is this confusion, which in part is responsible for the directional and strategic paralysis in the OAU/AU today.

The Afro-Arab National and Cultural Divide

In broad terms, two principal groups occupy the African continent. These are the African and Arab peoples. In the words of Amre Moussa, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, “around three quarters of Arab countries are in Africa, and most Africans who are not black are Arab.”³ This acknowledgement of the composition of peoples on the African continent made by Amre Moussa is interesting and revealing in different ways. On the one hand it implicitly admits that there are people who are not Arab on the continent. He initially desists from calling them Africans; he prefers “black.” He does this because he wants to suggest that Arabs are also Africans, who are not black. A few lines down the road he writes that, “Arabs and Africans consider human rights and basic freedoms an indivisible whole.”⁴ Elsewhere, he writes; “just as the Arab world supported Africa in the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the Arab world and Africa are supporting Palestinians in their struggle.”⁵ Amre Moussa ties himself into a knot. In one breath he denies by implication the existence of a category who are Africans; who are not Arab. At the same time he wants to argue that Arabs are Africans by dint of the fact that some live on the African continent in Arab countries. What about the Arabs who do not live on the African continent? I presume, from his logic, those are Arabs who are not African. In other words, being African is purely a geographical designation. For Amre Moussa, it has nothing to do with nationality, culture, language or history.

In his thinking, being Arab is more profound than being African; the former is cultural, historical, linguistic, ultimately national, while the latter is mere geography. This sort of reasoning denies us, as Africans, history, language, culture as reference points for our identity as Africans. For him we are simply creatures of geography. This crafty logic

denies also the African connection with the Diaspora outside Africa, because if Africans are, simply and solely, those who live on the continent, Africans outside are excluded from the definition of Africaness. But more important for us to remember is the fact that this reasoning of Amre Moussa makes it possible for the Arab world to claim space amongst us, and quietly and often violently, expand this space at our expense. I have described this elsewhere as the attitude of “what belongs to me belongs to me, but what belongs to you belongs to both of us.”

Historically, the Arabs entered Africa in the 7th century AD through Egypt under the leadership of Amr Ibn el Aas. Today, the Arab world includes almost a third of the African continent. My argument here needs little further explanation, except for the important fact that from Mauritania to Somalia and through the Sudan, expansionist war against Africans continues to the present day. Darfur is currently the flashpoint of this.

On Tuesday, the 24th of October 2006, in the wake of his expulsion from the Sudan by the National Islamic Front government, the incumbent overall UN representative in the Sudan, Jan Pronk, in an interview on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), expressed the view that with 200,000 Africans slaughtered and 2 million displaced effectively, “Darfur has been cleansed.”⁶ The reason for Pronk’s expulsion was that he had noted on his website that Sudanese soldiers had been humiliated and demoralized by two major defeats on the battlefield by Fur insurgents. Adwok Nyaba writes that, “fourteen centuries of perpetual conflict and war with the Arabs have weakened and broken the backbone of African resistance. Southward migration, especially after the fall of the Christian Kingdom of Alwa at Soba in the 15th century, was meant to succeed in escaping the Arab onslaught. However, some submitted to Islam and acquiesced to Arab dominance in return for keeping body and soul together under conditions of bondage and slavery. Those who refused either retreated deep into the jungle and swamps (South Sudanese) or into the hills in central Sudan (Nuba). Those who submitted lost their African heritage – their language and culture – and became ‘black Arabs’ (Berti, Zaghawa, Burgo, among others) in Dar Fur.”⁷ The Fur are up in arms, fighting for their freedom from Arab thralldom. Freedom lives and so in the end they will triumph, but at what cost?

The droughts of the 1970s and 1980s seriously affected the stability of large communities in Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina. The economic degradation which followed stimulated the emergence of armed conflicts which have been called the “Tuareg rebellions.” Salam Diakite writes that,

Urban centers in the north were quite often attacked by ‘armed bandits’, and tens, if not hundreds of thousands of people were killed or forced to migrate to neighbouring countries. Inter-community tension rapidly grew among the different ethnic groups. In its handling of the consequence of these long years of

drought on the one hand, and of the rebellions of the 1980s and the 1990s on the other, the government of Mali, with the assistance of its bilateral and multilateral partners, tended to favour the communities of white origin, mainly the Arabs and the Tuaregs, to the detriment of sedentary black communities. These groups had initially suffered from the drought and the incessant attacks of the combatants of the different Azawad liberation movements, and of the 'armed bandits' later on. This favouring of the white communities was – at least – the impression that the layman had of all the food distributions organized by local government authorities with the assistance of non-governmental organizations.⁸

If the Sudan has been the flashpoint of Afro-Arab confrontation in the East, Mauritania on the Atlantic coast, has been the flashpoint in the West. The legacy of Arab slavery of Africans to the present is not fully grasped by many. The depth of the crisis in Mauritania and the weaknesses of civil society in its inability to confront the authorities is well captured in the work of Garba Diallo;

Racism in the vast desert nation is first of all based on the ideology of the denial of denial. As such, government policies are based on persistent denial of the very existence of the black African community in the country. From this position successive regimes have routinely denied their discrimination against the persecution of black citizens. Accordingly, people who do not exist cannot be discriminated against, persecuted or banished. Nor can they have any claim to human, cultural, civil or political rights. The tens of thousands of Mauritanian refugees who were deported to Senegal in 1989-91 at the height of the racist government pogroms against the black African community do not exist either. Thus Mauritania continues to deny them the right of organized return to their homes under international auspices as has been the case with other refugees.⁹

In the past, African understanding of these problems has been confused. Most of the Pan-Africanists of the 20th century laboured under *continentalist* misconceptions. Du Bois, Padmore, Nkrumah, Toure, and many others, could not unravel the Afro-Arab conundrum, and see it for what it is. Its reality can be best understood as a historical process. Colonel Khaddafi could without worry about the global African audience, stand in Amman, at a meeting of the Arab League in March 2001, and voice the plea that “the third of the Arab community living outside Africa should move in with the two-thirds

on the continent and join the African Union ‘which is the only space we have’.¹⁰ This is a cry for *lebensraum*; a prospect about which Africans cannot be indifferent.

The Zanzibar Manifesto

I shall end my address with a summary of the final chapter of my book, *The African Nation*. At the close of the penultimate month of the 20th century, a group of concerned people of African descent, met in Zanzibar to consider the prospects and the route to African advancement in the 21st century. The findings of this meeting captured the scope of the challenges, which lie ahead of us.¹¹ The group noted that, despite the considerable progress Africans have made on the road to emancipation and development, Africa and her peoples both on the continent and the Diaspora, have yet a longer and more perilous road to travel towards these objectives. The difficulties and tribulations that lie ahead will possibly eclipse the trials of the past fifty years. Democratic institutions and processes were identified as key elements for the achievement of these objectives.

The meeting agreed that the larger picture on the continent today is of an Africa at war. Almost three-quarters of the continent are engaged in either civil or inter-state war, or both. The proliferation of wars in Africa is threatening the future of Africans as a whole. The conditions of increasingly generalized war is opening Africa up for subterfuge and exploitation by narrow local and international, exploitative interests, in ways which have been unseen and unheard of since the end of the 19th century, and the early part of the 20th century. In some parts of Africa, warlordism and brigandage have overtaken the political process. Prolonged conflicts and wars are destroying the weak and scanty infrastructure that exists in most of Africa.

Noticeably, African economies are cruelly debt-ridden. Poverty, hunger and disease, have blanketed the social landscape of African life. Many of the gains, in education and health, won in the early stages of the post-colonial era, are being steadily reversed, as economic stagnation and graft blight the productive potential of African societies. Political dictatorship, by inept elites, has for decades as one-party, no-party, and military-bureaucratic states, trampled underfoot the human rights of the citizenry. In collusion with economically rapacious, international interests and institutions, African elites have betrayed the trust of the masses who supported the struggles for colonial freedom.

At the level of culture, indiscriminate affectations of Western habits and usages threaten to usurp the status of the cultures and languages we have inherited from our fathers and mothers. This is undermining pride in our cultures, damaging their fundamental role in African development and systematically misleading the youth, the inheritors of tomorrow.

Africa’s development will have to be reflected on all areas of social, economic, political and cultural life. With regards to culture, for example, African art and musical expression needs to engage with the challenges of our times, and reflect the feelings and

perceptions which characterize the lives of the larger majorities of Africans. In other words, art and music must emotionally touch the teeming masses, without this being taken to mean a sterile neo-realism, which succeeds only to imitate nature. Art must speak and answer to the culture of Africans. Discussions about African music tend to treat the subject as if the only music we have is the contemporary bar, nightclub and largely urban street music. While the vitality of this genre cannot be denied, it cannot be celebrated to the exclusion of the traditional classical forms of African music. If literacy in the area of reading and writing is to be cultivated, democratized and developed, the same must be said for education in the writing and composition of African classical music, geared towards development into orchestral forms, in which the whole range of universal musical instruments, including African traditional instrument are used for the performance of such music and written compositions.

It was observed that in the long run, Africa will survive and flourish, as it has, indeed, done in the millennia of the history of *homo sapiens sapiens*. Africa, the cradle of humanity, and the bearer of human culture for most of this history, is not about to lie down and die. Africa will stand up, and for this, Africans will need, with resolution, to put their shoulders to the wheel and push forward. We need always to remember that we are the sole architects of our emancipation and development.

The Zanzibar meeting identified the need for people of African historical, and cultural origins to work towards the creation of an organization to serve the distinct interests of Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora. It was the consensual opinion of the cohort that while the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union), should be supported for whatever progressive and peace-promoting work it engages, since it is a regional body and not an organization defining the interests of Africans (the way the Arab League defines the interests of Arabs, or the European Union defines the interests of Europeans), it is unable to sufficiently bring to the fore, the championing of African interests as a single-minded objective. There is urgency about the need to canvass support and advocacy for this.

The need to advance the use of African languages and cultures as the only realistic basis for African development was recognized. It was the finding of the meeting that if Africans are to advance in a way, which lifts society from the mass level, and empowers mass society with knowledge, such advancement would need to be premised on the languages and cultural usages of mass society. It is therefore imperative that African languages are made to assume centrality, in all areas of social life, including education (at all levels), judicial practice and the media. Indeed, our indigenous languages are the key, and only viable instruments for opening up African cultures to development.

Inter-African economic efforts, at both macro and micro levels, are identified as areas of activity, which should be actively encouraged. Such people-to-people relations are crucial for the economic and social advancement of Africans. Labour and capital need to be able to move freely, if we are to make economic headway. Advocacy for this

idea needs to be urgently and diligently pursued.

Trade and politics should be conducted on a Pan-Africanist basis. Hitherto, the segmented nature of trade relations and international politics of African states have opened Africa up for the application of the policy of divide and rule, between African states, by the imperial powers of the world. The meeting was of the view that concerted activity should be initiated to unify and create linkages for co-operation among African states, in the areas of trade and politics, with respect to the relationship between Africa and the metropolitan powers of the contemporary world.

Participants at the meeting agreed that, given the difficult and troubled history of Africa and the Western world, enacted over centuries, good reason alone would suggest that it is in the interest of Africans to forge strong links with the Far East, in order to benefit from the imminent advancement which countries in the Far East have registered over the past few decades. Many are countries with a Western colonial experience, not altogether dissimilar to the African case. Africans need to find alternative international linkages, which would be in their strategic interest, instead of relying on the old imperial world, which had for so long kept her under thralldom. However, we need to exercise caution and wisdom in how these linkages are cultivated. We would need to ensure that, as the saying goes, we do not let the leopard out through the front door to welcome the lion in through the back door. These new trade linkages and relations should not be allowed to entrench our status as purely raw material producers. We also want the scientific know-how and technology to produce and add value to our products.

It was recognized that, one of the effects of colonialism in Africa has been that it has succeeded in creating an elite, conscious and attached to the post-colonial state as a basis of its material and social interests. This consciousness cannot be defined as national, in the sense that it does not represent an awareness of African nationalism, in a wide historical and cultural sense of the term, transcending the colonially created borders. Rather its focus is directed towards the articulation of the post-colonial state as an instrument of collective, "national" feeling. Thus the post-colonial state which is, itself, a structure created primarily to protect metropolitan interests in partnership with African elites, has usurped the aspirations of mass society in Africa for emancipation and development, which recognize African culture and history as bases for development. Democratic groups and social elements should support, as a primary objective, the emergence of a "united African nation", achieved through democratic processes in and out of the political arena. The requisite, national consciousness for this needs to be assiduously cultivated. What this means (as earlier stated in this text), is that we should not be less Gambian, Kenyan, Tanzanian or Zambian etc., but be more African.

Linkages should be actively forged between Pan-Africanist civil society organizations, outside statist structures, working in their specific countries, but linked through organizational structures working for the shared objective of African unity. An

organizational structure would need to be established for this purpose.

The meeting took the view that, in order to strengthen the bases of the linkage with the Diaspora and halt the erosion of this linkage, it was necessary to help the consolidation of the cultural, historical and social features of the Diaspora, which assert and affirm its African roots. It was agreed that pressure would need to be put on African governments to recognize the fact that Diaspora Africans should be given the right to African citizenship, on demand.

We agreed that in order to move beyond speculation, theorization and conjecture to practical and organizational tasks in pursuit of African unity, democracy and development, positively inclined African minds need to organize. The initial direction of this organization should be towards the development of a political and cultural movement, which is all-African, which shares commonly articulated ideals, which provides scope for adherents in separate states, to pursue the shared objectives according to the specific conditionalities of the states in which they live. In other words, an approach, which strategically converges but tactically allows individual, state manoeuvrability. The whole approach needs to be managed along supremely democratic lines, in which transparency, openness, consultation and probity govern practice. But there is a need for us to make a commitment, to use all means possible, to defend democracy and advance the freedom, development and the unity of Africans.

Notes

1. This paper was originally a Keynote Address presented to the *Nordic Africa Institute's Research Network on NGO and Civil Society Roles in African Development*, at the Inaugural Workshop on the topic *Civil Society and African Integration*. University of Aalborg, Denmark. 6-7 November 2006.
2. See, J.R. Hooker. *Henry Sylvester Williams: Imperial Pan-Africanist*. Rex Collings. London. 1975. P.23.
3. Amre Moussa. Why Africa Matters to the Arab World. In, *AFAN. African Analyst Quarterly*. Issue 1, 3rd Quarter. 2006. P.10.
4. Ibid. P.11.
5. Ibid.
6. BBC World News. 24 October 2004.
7. Peter Adwok Nyaba. Arab Racism in the Sudan. Its Historical Source and Modern Manifestation. In, Kwesi Kwaa Prah (ed.). *Racism in the Global African Experience*. CASAS Book Series No. 23. Cape Town. 2006. Pp.178-179.
8. Salam Diakite. Racial Prejudices and Inter-Ethnic Conflicts. The Case of the Afro-Arab Borderlands in Western Sahel. In, Kwesi Kwaa Prah (ed.). Ibid. P.201.

9. Garba Diallo. The Triple Crisis of Slavery, Racism and Dictatorship. Mauritania and the Afro-Arab Borderlands. In, Kwesi Kwaa Prah (ed.). Ibid. P.205.
10. Khadafi Invites Arabs to Join the African Union. *Panafrican News Agency*. Dakar. 28 March 2001.
11. See, The New Manifesto: Towards the African Century. Africa and the Challenge of the 21st Century. 11 November 1999. *African Opinion Series*. Cape Town. No.11, 2000.

In My Time

An Interview with Cab Kaye

Augustus Kwamla or *Kwamla Nii-lante Quaye*, better known as *Cab Kaye* (3 September 1921, London - 13 March 2000, Amsterdam). Kaye's father, Caleb Quaye (b. Ghana, 1895 - 1922), performed in London under the name Ernest Mope Desmond and led an ensemble called the Five Musical Dragons, in which *Arthur Briggs*, *Sidney Bechet*, and *George "Bobo" Hines* played. Kaye worked as an assistant to *Billy Cotton* from age 14, and sang with this group on record in 1936. He started on drums the following year, and played with *Ken "Snakehips" Johnson* for a time before working as a merchant marine. His ship was torpedoed in the Pacific Ocean in 1942; he was not injured and was rescued by airplane, but the plane crashed and he was hospitalized in New York City as a result. Upon his return to London late in the year he sang with *Harry Parry*, then formed a group briefly in 1943 which included *Ronnie Scott* among its members. Kaye played with *Jiver Hutchinson's* All-Coloured Band on troop tours in 1946-47, then with *Ted Heath* (1947), *Tito Burns* (1948), and *Jazz at the Town Hall*. He led his own bands from 1948, including the Ministers of Swing, in which *Scott*, *Denis Rose*, and *Johnny Dankworth* played. Other bands he led include The Cabinettes (with *Ronnie Ball*) and his own All-Coloured Band (with *Dave Wilkins* and *Sam Walker*, this ensemble toured Europe). Early in the 1950s Kaye accompanied *Don Byas* in Paris; he recorded copiously as a leader in the 1950s and worked as a sideman with *Keith Bird*, *Ken Moule*, *Gerry Moore*, *Norman Burns*, *Wallace Bishop*, and *Rob Pronk*. He made an appearance in the 1953 film *Blood Orange*. In 1960, he recorded in London with *Humphrey Lyttelton's* ensemble. Soon after this he worked for the Ghanaian government in Accra, Lagos and New York. He moved to Amsterdam in the 1980s, he opened his own club, Cab's Jazz Piano Bar. Cab Kaye is the father of *Terri Quaye*, *Finley Quaye*, and *Caleb Quaye*. (From *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

(The Editor conducted this interview with Cab Kaye in his piano bar in the heart of old Amsterdam sometime in the 1980s.)

Question: You are a man of great experience and history ... a musician and public figure of the 20th century with specific reference to Black people. Can we review some of your remembrances, your reminiscences, in relationship to some of the prominents of our time; some who have died already, some who are still alive in old age. Let's go back to your earliest memories. Could you give us a description? When were you born; and could you give a picture of life in those days, and the issues which were burning in those days?

Cab Kaye: Thank you very much. I was born in 1921, I first came into association with prominent members of our African society in the 40s, 1940s. In the 1940s in London, England I met Dr. Du Bois, I met Ras Makonnen, Kwame Nkrumah, Seretse Khama and Freddie the Kabaka of Buganda. These were historical days, because I was a young man that time, ... and I didn't realize, except that I was told by people that these are people that are going to do something for Africa. Well, history has proved that the names I have just mentioned ... made their contributions.

Question: When was this?

Cab Kaye: This was in 1945, 46. At that time, Kwame Nkrumah was studying in England, ... Jomo Kenyatta was the caretaker of WASU, that is the West African Students Union Hostel, at that time, and Seretse Khama, before he married his wife Ruth, used to come and visit me at the Paramount Dance Hall, in London where I was a drummer in the band of Ivor Kirchin, that's in 1947, Seretse Khama, this was before he went home to lead his people. Freddie the Kabaka, I know so very well, I knew his problems, when he went into exile, he was honoured by the British government, given lavish apartments at the Dorchester Hotel, until they decided they were in favour of a future alternative leadership of Uganda, and Freddie was out, and he died in poverty. He was on social relief, welfare, a nobody, but to me, spiritually, the Kabaka of Buganda, this is where the whole issue lies,

Question: Shall we go back a bit?

Cab Kaye: Yes, okay.

Question: You said you met Du Bois in the mid-40s...?

Cab Kaye: Yes...that is right.

Question: ...how did he strike you, and can you remember the first time you met him and where; what circumstances, do you remember any of the things he said?

Cab Kaye: I do, I do. We had a meeting at the St Pancras Town Hall in London; African unity...

Question: In 1945?

Cab Kaye: 1946. At that time, Dr. Du Bois was the leader of Pan-Africanism, and the other names like Seretse Khama, were all members of this circle. His ideology that he spoke registered to me to say that we are not just symbols of mankind, we are mankind, we Africans are mankind, and he was speaking of the past history of the great empires of Africa that existed many years ago, but they were there. Now, we have to do something about it, and it was from Dr. Du Bois, I'm sure, great inspiration came to Kwame Nkrumah, and came to all those who believed that we should rise above the level of non-existence and be recognized that we do exist predominantly.

Question: Now, in those days there was also some sort of a debate, public private debates between the ideas of Du Bois on one hand and Marcus Garvey on the other hand.

Cab Kaye: Marcus Garvey, from Jamaica, Marcus Garvey, he had revolutionary ambitions, which could not succeed in that period of time. Marcus Garvey, would be today, I would compare Marcus Garvey to Jessie Jackson of today, or Malcolm X of yesterday, but he was way ahead of his time. With regard to the difference between Dr. Du Bois' and Marcus Garvey; ... Dr. Du Bois was intellectual enough to fathom the reasons of all people, Marcus Garvey was only on one point and that was the Black Star.

Question: Did you ever meet Garvey?

Cab Kaye: No. I met his wife, but I never met the man himself. I would love to have met him, but no I never did meet Marcus Garvey, but I still respect his ideals, because he was trying to tell the Black people that was, in America, of West Indian, and originally African descent, your home is Africa, that's what it's all about.

Question: Now, there was also, I remember in one of the books of E.W. Smith, his biography of Aggrey, when I grew up, there are quotations, a sort of triangular discussion at that stage, between Du Bois, Garvey and Aggrey, and apparently Du Bois had criticized some of Aggrey's opinions and he felt that Aggrey was pandying too much to the colonial authorities, and to the Western world. Were you familiar with this discussion too?

Cab Kaye: ...I think I can refer to what you are pointing to, a statement that Professor Aggrey made:

"You can play a sort of tune on the black notes of the piano, you can play a sort of tune on the white notes of the piano, but if you play them simultaneously together they will produce harmony". And to me that is still logical.

Question: So Du Bois came and went...?

Cab Kaye: By the way, Du Bois was buried in Accra, at Christianborg Castle. I was there for his funeral service, I was there, I was in Accra, and before he died, three months before he died, I was in close contact with Dr. Du Bois.

Question: What sort of man was he, I mean could you say something more about his life...?

Cab Kaye: Yes, you know Dr. Du Bois was a light-skinned man, light-skinned. He had a Van Dyck type of beard, grey hair, but he only thought of his origin from the Black race of Africa, conservative, humble, no aggression. The fact that people have said before, that he was branded in America as being a member of the Communist Party, is irrelevant to me, because at that time, the Black people in America, had nobody to turn to, they had no ... authorities they

could turn to, there was nobody. So, if somebody came and said I think we can help you, and we can offer you this and offer you that ... there were a few brave people, pioneers, Black, Du Bois and Paul Robeson who accepted these offers, they were condemned in their own country for doing it, but to me they served a very vital purpose of exposing to the world, that the Black man ... that all he needs is equal education, that is all, and we see who we are. Du Bois was one of these men that fought for it, and he died in Ghana. America has forgotten, but not the militant black people of America, they will never forget Du Bois, and they will not forget Marcus Garvey.

Question: Now, what were the circumstances under which he came to Ghana?

Cab Kaye: First of all, he was sick, he was ill. He was on his last moments of life. The oppression that he had in America ... he had his difficulties also with the NAACP. As you know, the NAACP of which he was also one of the founding members had difficulties with him. His views were controversial to other members and Du Bois as a Professor said, "I quit", and as you say, he went freelance. Before Dr Du Bois died, Ras Makonnen and George Padmore, were some of the prominent figures in advisory capacity to Kwame Nkrumah. George Padmore, from the West Indies ... he was originally called Malcolm Nurse, right. George Padmore he had a prominent position, but Dr Du Bois, and Ras Makonnen were not altogether in complete total agreement. George Padmore, ... was the man who advocated that it should be put on a statue of Nkrumah in Accra, these words, "Seek he first the political kingdom ..."

Question: Who said this?

Cab Kaye: George Padmore; "Seek he first the political kingdom and all other things will come to pass." And those words to me was the ruin of the nation; of Kwame Nkrumah.

Question: How? Could you expand a little more on that?

Cab Kaye: Well, just imagine yourself as a Westerner, a non-African and look at a newly independent country which puts up a notice to say, "Seek he first the political kingdom and all other things will come to pass." ... In America they say, when you play poker you show your whole hand, and once you showed your whole hand the one you keeping down flat, and once you show it, they know how to deal with you. ... Padmore, I'm quite sure would have been rewarded to be Vice-President of Ghana, or Vice-Premier of Ghana, but Padmore died in Ghana. His wife Betty, I knew very well, and she told me, she said Cab they poisoned him, he was poisoned. Now who poisoned him? Nobody knows, I certainly don't think it was from Nkrumah's side. What has come to light, after when you shift it all around, Nkrumah knew that if you going to do business with the outside world you must know how

to play ball, he learnt that in England, he learnt that in America, if you don't know how to play ball then you not in the game. People who were elected into office as ministers, first and second secretaries, ambassadors, they had ability to present themselves with the personality that says, we represent Ghana, but they did not have the background, they did not have the experience, they did not have the political background, they were careerists. And it was too late for Kwame, to turn the clock back, it was too late.

Question: Do you think people like Du Bois advised him about what to do?

Cab Kaye: Oh yes, oh yes, and Makonnen, Makonnen was, I think, the best adviser Nkrumah had.

Question: In what sense?

Cab Kaye: And I remember one time a meeting of ministers for a financial grant of 5 million pounds for a project.

Question: Which year was this?

Cab Kaye: This was in 1962. Krobo Edusei was the Minister of the Interior. All that Makonnen asked Krobo Edusei was, "can you let us have on paper, where this money was going to be used and spent?", that is all, and there was pandemonium. Krobo didn't want to be defied, he said that this money is necessary, we need it for the country and all Makonnen says is "please just put it in black and white on paper; then we can study it". And of course, the deal didn't go through, it was a contract deal, like a Lockheed, or one of these deals, it didn't go through, so Makonnen in Ghana, when he was in the African Affairs Centre, had to look very, very carefully after himself because he was the man who sincerely, for no monetary gain, and saw things as they should be, could tell Kwame, "no, don't do it." That was Ras Makonnen, and Ras Makonnen, well as I told you ..., yes I knew him, not just as a passing acquaintance, I knew him as a very good friend, I call him a buddy and I am so grieved to hear of his passing, but so happy and proud to say that I knew him, and to me, I repeat, he was a Black saint. There was no evil in that man, there was only goodness, and his advice that he could give to anybody, you should value and treasure it. That was Ras Makonnen.

Question: You new him from his Manchester days or before?

Cab Kaye: From Manchester, well I knew him before. He used to come around when I was playing in bands etc in dance halls.

Question: Where?

Cab Kaye: In London, in London, the Paramount Dance Hall, in London, oh yes it has a big history itself, because when I first went there, no member of the Black race was allowed into that Paramount Dance Hall at Tottenham Court Road. I went there with Ivor Kirchin's band, after I was there, two or three months, some friends of mine came to see me there, and they were refused

entry and I told the manager of the Dance Hall, if they can't come in I'm finished right now, I don't play, this was 1947. He allowed them in...by 1949, the Paramount Dance Hall was the Harlem of London, oh yes, that's where all the jazz started, right from there, and 75 per cent of the customers were Black, from 1947 to 1949, ... I think somewhere round about 1949 or 1950, because residents in that area started to complain to the police that they were afraid to go on the streets after ten o'clock at night because of these Black people who were coming out of the dance hall. And this is the same dance hall where Seretse Khama, that's where he met his wife, that's how I know him so well. He always used to come there, Lamptey, my nephew from Ghana, he was a student, a law student, at that time used to come there, they were days, unforgettable days, I was a drummer in the band, drummer, singer, comedian, everything else, but it was during the war years when I became a seaman, and I met a man a crewman together with me on the sea, his name was Kari Kari, Prince Kari Kari from Ghana, and he told me, Quaye, your father's house is in Bannerman Road at Jamestown, opposite my own house, this was in 1941, when I was a fireman and trimmer, down below, a coal burning ship, and Kari Kari and I were on watch together, he said, you have to come home, and through Kari Kari, when he eventually made his connections, then my family and me were reunited, but it took me another 20 years until 1960, before I could return.

Question: Now let's go back a bit. So you said it was in the Paramount that you first met Makonnen...

Cab Kaye: Oh yes, in the West End of London, I was very popular in the Paramount, so everybody came there, but we met afterwards in the other clubs, the Sunset Club, the Caribbean Club, the Sugarhill Club and the Westhill Club, but everybody was thinking of, the future ahead; for our independence.

Question: Who are the leaders of Black opinion at that stage in Britain?

Cab Kaye: Now, well, apart from the names I just mentioned there was the League of Coloured People which was headed by a Dr Moody from Guyana, West Indies, they had foundation grants from the British Council, supposedly for the assistance and help of Black people of African descent in the United Kingdom, but, there is not one Black family, ever, which could say that they ever received any help, whatsoever, from the League of Coloured People, that was the first corrupt thing that thing that was ever issued, put down, amongst the people there, and it was only referred to by the British Council "or go and contact the League for Coloured People," ... it had no progressive ideas for the people, it had no political ideas for the people, it was just money come, money go for them, that's all.

Question: Were there lots of Blacks in Britain at this stage?

Cab Kaye: There were no leaders, really, ...there were no leaders, there was nobody that you could say, "turn to this man, and follow his leadership", there was nobody, everybody was divided, it was divided because of the legacy of colonial rule that we should be divided, you know, it was no question of just Africans alone been in the United Kingdom. There was the West Indians, who are divided in their own hemisphere, the Trinidadian, he doesn't trust the Jamaican, Jamaican says a Barbadian is a thief. But he didn't learn that from the indigenous people, he was only told that by the former colonial rulers Don't trust that man, and they did the same thing in Africa, and they do it in Africa, and in America, and they tell the American that the African is not ready yet, he is a 100 years behind time, he just came down from the trees with a tail between his legs; and they told the African watch for the American, because if they come to Africa, one day, they will take over. But, the good, the happiness that I have inside of me is that we are now in 1983, we only became independent in Ghana in the 50s. We had, in the nation of Ghana, practically 90 per cent illiteracy amongst our people, but today, 1983, we have many learned scholars of all forms in education, and all I'm praying for, that we can find the right leader to use the potential, educational value that we have now, that we didn't have on the days of our independence, and use it now to build up Ghana again, and it will only be through our people, not outside help.

Question: What was Makonnen doing in Manchester in those days?

Cab Kaye: Well, Makonnen..., was a man who opened a restaurant and a bar as a social club for people of African descent, in Manchester, it became very popular, but on the week of the opening, I was appearing at the Hippodrome theatre, there was a show production called that was called ...

Question: Which theatre was it?

Cab Kaye: The Hippodrome, in Manchester. The show was Memories of Jolson (1953), in that show Shirley Bassey was a chorus girl, and fortunately I was one of the stars in there, and Mr Makonnen appeared at the theatre, and asked me, would I come with him, I said okay, because I knew him already, and he took me to a place, the place wasn't open, the people were hammering things on the wall, carpenters etcetera, etcetera, etcetera; so he asked me, "Cab can you play for me for the opening of the place for African people and all of that community of Manchester," and I said, "wait a minute, hold on, when?" It was two days ahead, and I said to him, "oh my goodness, okay", I cancelled other engagements. I opened Makonnen's place for him, and I stayed with him for two weeks. And that is how, I learnt to know from the people, from the local community, how they regarded him.

Question: Was he living on the premises?

Cab Kaye: Yes. ... he slept in the premises, and I slept in his apartment. That's right, I don't forget. And then I learnt from the local people, that this is the only man they could turn to when they had any kind of trouble; when they were harassed by the police or anything like that ... he had no office, no portfolio of who he was, but he was a saint. He went out of his way, anytime...

Question: Now lets just for a few minutes follow some of these ideas through. Yes. So who were there, who do you remember came to the opening of this place in Manchester. What is the name of the place?

Cab Kaye: Ah, the name of the place, that I can't remember, no I can't.

Question: Do you remember some of the people who came to the opening.

Cab Kaye: Not really, not really because it was just a happy party time, everybody enjoying themselves, in those days, no I can't remember any faces there. I didn't meet Ras Makonnen again, until in Accra, in 1960. And then, when I arrived I was appointed as Entertainments Manager for the Ghana Hotel and Tourists Corporation, and that is when I met Makonnen, I said, "my goodness you are here, yes", by then he was at the Flagstaff House, adviser to the president, and we became as old buddies, old friends again, and he showed me his work that he did for people, for the freedom fighters, that their only place of hope was Ghana in those years, that was the only place, and they came there. But Makonnen's position was so precarious, because he was only concerned fundamentally in the foundation of Ghana to pivot for United Africa, that's what he was talking about, and we spent many nights up to three, four, five o'clock in the morning talking about these things, and he was aware of all the dangers, all the dangers, and he had to walk with a pistol on him, in case he had to defend himself. I've never carried a pistol, I've never carried nothing, I wouldn't wish to, it's not in my blood to do so.

Question: Well, were there people who were sort of working on the inside?

Cab Kaye: Oh yes, there were infiltrators, you know, who came in under disguise as freedom fighters, and there were people in other African countries who were being made aware by some sources that a single voice, a single power, would diminish their own powers in their independence, but one of the most admired things that I respect from Kwame Nkrumah is his declaration at the United Nations, in New York, he told the world that he was prepared to give up his own leadership, and serve under an elected president of the United Africa, so to me, that is golden words to me, and when I think and look of how the misrepresentation was presented by the Western world to say, this man he wants to be King of Africa. He never did wish to be King of Africa, he never did. What his dream was to see was a United Africa, and a United Africa as a continent would bring us into focus on an equal level of

power to anybody in the world, and up until today, this jigsaw that is going on with South Africa, which is supported by America, supported by the Western powers, and everybody, no its a joke, but why, only because everybody in their own individual right, say if Africa should become united, we will have to now deal with them on their level, but, this could be the salvation of the world, this could be the salvation, the other side of the world is destruction.

Question: You knew Jomo Kenyatta too?

Cab Kaye: I did.

Question: When did you meet him first, and what was he doing?

Cab Kaye: In London, I met him, at the time when I met Jomo, he was Caretaker and Secretary for the Social Welfare Club for West African students, WASU (West African Students Union) in London.

Question: Which year was this?

Cab Kaye: In the 1940s. He was a student at that time, a very humorous man, loud voice, very – nothing pretentious about him, very down-to-earth man. Nobody, and I'm one of the people who never dreamed that this man would one day become the first prime minister of Kenya. Never dreamed it ... at that time, I was running an agency for film, pictures, and – for making movies where I recruit the crowd artists, Black artists for movies, and Jomo Kenyatta with the students there, I used – “students come on you can earn some extra money, just be in the camera”, and I remember going at five o'clock in the morning to Russell House, and Jomo coming down in his pyjamas, and asked me, “why do you come at this time to bother me”, and I asked, “please Jomo, I am sorry, but I want these people at the studio by eight o'clock in the morning”, and they were there ...

Question: Oh, yes?

Cab Kaye: But, I never saw him in his presidential days. I know that, Makonnen was there for the Independence Day celebration, I was in America at the time, but I never saw him, but I've looked, I've watched to see what is happening for the country, and it still has a long way to go, because that legacy is still there. That colonial legacy is still there, and for me, what I want to see is a Black African man, a leader, to reveal the truth of our, of our suffering, and all it takes is to take down that white Jesus from the cross, and if you still wish to believe in the life of one, Jesus Christ, then please put him in your own image. When that white Jesus is taken down from the cross in Africa, Africa will come into their own and know who they are.

Question: Let's briefly look at Seretse Khama also, what do you remember of him?

Cab Kaye: Seretse, who was educated in England, in Oxford or Cambridge or Trinity, and he was, on the face of it, strictly brainwashed to the English way of life,

he carried his tradition back to his country, but after his uncle, who was then the ruling leader ... yes in his absence, he took over, he had to gamble because his territory is bordered on South Africa, Rhodesia, is on the other side. He carried forward is principles, not as an Englishman, as an African, and his people, under him survived.

Question: What was he like in his young days? What do you remember? What sort of man was he?

Cab Kaye: He was flamboyant, ... he was a show boy, he enjoyed life, but he knew what his inheritance was to be. I knew, before he returned home, I knew all about him, got to know him very well, and he always used to wear a carnation, red carnation in his buttonhole of his suit, immaculately dressed. But at Oxford, he was educated at Oxford, I think. But, in his own traditional way, he had to come into his own when he would return to his people, with his wife.

Question: Ruth?

Cab Kaye: Yes Ruth, I know Ruth, she was a secretary, she used to come to the Paramount Dance Hall, I even danced with her long time before Seretse and me got together, but not – nothing bad to talk about anybody, no, no, no, this was living with people, ...he went back as ruler to rule his people, but still under British protectorate, and that is why South Africa just couldn't take over his country like that. But now, Seretse is gone, look at – what is happening now in South Africa, into Angola, unto the surrounding areas.

Question: Mozambique?

Cab Kaye: Yes, look what is happening, and they take it in a sense, that they are protecting the innocent people of those countries. Now, who the hell is going to believe that?

Question: Okay, lets get to some of the musicians too. Who are some of the people you have met, who in your very early days inspired you. Well, you knew Robeson too?

Cab Kaye: Yes, Paul Robeson, yes Paul Robeson came to England, with the revue called Showboat, ... a tall man, immaculate shining figure, and in the theatre, that's when I first heard the song "Old Man River", "Old Man River", that is the song that came from that show...But, I met Paul Robeson in New York, this is after he had returned from Russia, where he had been in exile, in Russia, and when I met him in New York, Paul Robeson then was an aging man, still had charm and personality, but the tragedy was, that on returning to New York in Harlem, in a misused – used car spot where you parked your cars, he was mugged by fellow Black men, and beaten nearly to death, that's Paul Robeson, returned from Russia, came to America, as they say back in your own backyard, and his own Black people beat him just to

rob him for money, junkies, winos, just to rob, Paul Robeson, he had been such a man for them, but this brought on his first stroke ... I met Malcolm X, I have a programme, I could show you a programme, I have here, where I am on a programme to raise funds for an open air theatre in Harlem, in New York, this is 1964, 1964, 65 in Harlem. Max Roach, the drummer, Abbey Lincoln, his wife at that time, myself, Malcolm X, oh, lot of stars were there, it was a charity concert for them, but Malcolm introduced me as one of Africa's great musicians. Now Malcolm I got to know intimately, and one day I had a phone call from him and he said Cab, "I have something I want you take care of," and it was a tape recording of FBI agents in his office who were trying to buy him off, to quit his Islamic movement which he founded when he broke away from Elijah Mohammed, and those recordings were delivered to me, and it was sent to Accra, this was only two weeks before he was shot.

Question: Sent to whom in Accra?

Cab Kaye: To Kwame, ...

Question: So it should be in the archives now?

Cab Kaye: Yes. Oh yes. Oh yes. And it went by diplomatic pouch, I said don't worry about it. This is Malcolm, and now, I met Dr Martin Luther King, and that was a surprise of my life, because he was such a small man in stature. I met him on the street, Broadway, introduced to him by Malcolm. I said, "You are Dr Martin Luther King, I am happy to meet you, you've done beautiful work...". But look, two leaders, they are dead, they are gone. Malcolm, his arrogance was too much for the outside, he had to go. Martin Luther King, his humbleness, was still too much, because the poor white people of America started to join his movement, and when the white people joined his movement and supported him, then it became a national threat to the other people, you know who I am talking about. There is of course, Jessie Jackson. Have you done any research on his case history?

Question: No.

Cab Kaye: (laughter) Oh, he is beautiful. He is beautiful. He conducted a church service by flying in with a jet onto campuses and colleges, this was years ago and told everybody in the universities and in the ghetto, "You want to have a jet like this, man, go out and get one, just make up your mind that you want it, I have got it, why can't you get it, its is there for everybody", look today what he has done, and the black voters in America they are having heart attacks. What he did to get that Goodwin released, the airman, which we could not do, so they told him until you take all your troops out, he remains in, but he got him out....

Question: You knew Charlie Parker too?

Cab Kaye: Charlie Parker. I certainly did. Very well from – 41, 42. First of all Charlie Parker, we talk about New York, you know, Monk, Dizzy, Max Roach, Curley Russell, at the back of the Apollo theatre was a little club, even smaller than what I have downstairs, its called Mintons’s Playhouse, and few people understood what they were doing, but to me, when I heard this music, on the first instance it was, part of me, there was something that said this is your language it was called Bebop. Now today, of course, that musical experience from Charlie Parker has gone right up until today through musicians, if you want to know what they say on the horn, it’s Charlie Parker. He’s an intellectual man, a man of taste, of good character, his drug habits and problems started when he was a very young boy of 15 years of age, you can’t give him any personal conviction for that, no, this was forced on him by people who abused his youth, that is all, but in his 36 years of living, Charlie Parker has given the world a generation of beautiful music, and he was a buddy. I remember him not only from Mintons, in Stockholm, in Sweden, I am playing with my group with Dizzy Reece, who is now also playing big in New York now, Dizzy Reece, Sammy Walker, Georgie Tyndale, Cyril Jones, Cliff on drums, he became a boxer, yeah. But, it was a swinging jump-up band, all Black band, we played in Stockholm, opposite the biggest Swedish band, the Arne Domnerus Orchestra, and in comes Charlie Parker and he walks straight up to my band stand ... looks at Sammy and says, “Can I borrow your horn?”. “Yeah”. We played “Cool Blues” at the time which was one of his compositions, and that is when Charlie Parker played in my band in Stockholm. He had a hotel arranged for him, but he stayed in my apartment, and I was there for two months in ... I had an apartment, I cooked for him, I cooked rice, I cooked African food for him and people came knocking at the door. “Oh Bird we’ve got a party for you”, so he just looked at them and told them, “if you can’t show me something like this roll of bills”, and he always carried about 500 or 600 dollar roll of bills in his hand, he would say, “if you show me ... something like this I would know what you talking about.” Yes, and he told me, “they invite you to a party and have a microphone hidden somewhere to record you, and after that they ...” after he died records are now released for Charlie Parker’s concert in Stockholm.

Question: Did he have any ideas about people of African descent and Africa and so on?....

Cab Kaye: Very much.

Question: What were his views?

Cab Kaye: You know Charlie Parker, he looked upon Africa as his source of inspiration for his music. He was only waiting for the time to transport him to Africa,

he wasn't a man to say I am first an American, no not Charlie Parker. Charlie Parker was always searching for his roots. You know if say for instance when, Alex Haley wrote his book *Roots*, and I knew Alex Haley very well, when he was a commercial writer for newspapers, and he's got his subject right, but if he had written his book 30 years ago, people like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, they would have been back to Africa long time ago, but you must remember that in America, Americans are very nationalistically proud to be American, whether they are Black or White, if you speak to an American, if you speak to Black Americans and you tell him that you are an African, and he will shake your hand, happy to meet you, and he will socialize and do everything else, and if you start to tell him that "you know that your roots are from Africa" he will quickly remind you, "Yeah man I know that, but I am an American Negro". So to me, it is only musicians who really get under the skin to let the people really know where it's from. If musicians like Charlie Parker, and Dizzy Gillespie, had been politicians, to lead the people, not with music, but if they had the same following in that world of living, different story, different story.

Question: Who are the others you know from the early years?

Cab Kaye: Well, let's say Fats Waller.

Question: You knew Thomas Fats Waller?

Cab Kaye: Fats Waller, I played drums with Fats Waller...

Question: Where?

Cab Kaye: In London... this is 1938, Fats Waller, we did a tour of the Mecca Dance Halls of England, I was a drummer with the trio with Fats Waller, I went everywhere with him...

Question: Who else was with him?

Cab Kaye: Oh, Lennie Harris was the bassist and myself drums, and Fats Waller piano. We went everywhere together, I remember one time, waking up, in bed, next to this mountain of a man, and his wife, Ethel, she was asleep on the floor, this was all after the show, we got out to nightclubs, and then Fats one day, we were running through some things, we were playing, and I was introducing him to some African, West African rhythms and drums, and he said to me, in his most unforgettable voice, he said; "Cabby, if you could use your feet, like you use your hands, one day you gonna be a mess of a drummer". That's Thomas Fats Waller; served the world, with beauty in music, and as you know his recent Broadway production, *Ain't Misbehaving*, was sold out on all occasions, and a new generation of people, who had never heard of Fats Waller before, are now aware of Fats Waller.

Question: What sort of man was he? Was he humorous, I mean what was his character?

Cab Kaye: Humorous, completely humorous, careless, live today, and forget about tomorrow, that was Fats, he died at the age of 39, heart attack, on the train near Kansas City, Missouri, Sante Fe Railway.

Question: Did he also have views on African, Black people?

Cab Kaye: No, no, no, not Fats Waller, actually at the stage, I'm talking about 1937/38, at that stage, I wasn't really myself, conscious of my own belongings, it took sometime to grow up as a man, and then to realize where you are, and who you are. Louis Armstrong, if you take Louis Armstrong, I met Louis Armstrong also, but look at Louis, he went home, he went to Ghana. He was feted by the people, he was given land from the chiefs, he didn't do anything with the land. He went back to America, and he was strictly an American boy.

Question: You knew him also well?

Cab Kaye: Not as a fond friend, but as an acquaintance, musical acquaintance. I met him maybe on three occasions, but when he came to Ghana, and looked in the Makola Market and he told one woman, "oh, you remind me of my mother", everybody loved him, but he could have done something for Ghana, but he didn't do nothing, he went back to America.

Question: Who are the others?

Cab Kaye: Well, Dizzy Gillespie, I would say as a Black American, he is one of the most Afro-American that we have, that is Dizzy. He is from South Carolina, we know that, but he strictly knows who he is, and from where he comes, and to respect Africa. He doesn't commercialize on Africa. Randy Weston, another great example, who has been living Tanzania for a long time, his gone back to America now, but he has a home and a school, a music school in Tennessee, but his music is strictly back to the roots, and his roots are New York, West Indies, Africa. His father born in the West Indies, his grandfather from Africa, but he recognizes it ... many of the others have names – not corresponding with African connections, they are names of plantation owners, so they don't – have any idea of which part of Africa they maybe came from, that's the trouble.

The Arab Congregation and the Ideology of Genocide in Darfur, Sudan

Abdullahi Osman El-Tom

Introduction

This article presents six documents related to Al Tajamu Al Arabi, loosely translated here as the “Arab Congregation”. Other translations are: the “Arab Coalition”, “Arab Gathering”, “Arab Alliance” and “Arab Congress.”

The Arab Congregation was probably formed in the early 1980s, but gained momentum in the latter years of the same decade. Darfur has been a major site of operation for the Arab Congregation. This basic fact disguises the broader aim and geographic spread of the organization. Within Sudan, the Arab Congregation aims at displacing and controlling the indigenous populations of the entire country, though modestly starting with the six states of the western regions, or provinces, of Kordofan and Darfur.

At the broader regional level of Sub-Saharan Africa, the tentacles of the Arab Congregation spread as far as Chad, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Niger and, possibly, beyond. The geographical spread of the organization indicates that the Arab Congregation of western Sudan is but a small cog in a wider network of national and regional dimensions. At the national level, the Arab Congregation of western Sudan is sponsored by, and operates as a conduit for Kayan Al Shamal, hence “Kash”, or the “Northern Entity” in English (El-Tom, 2006). Kash was formed in 1976 when the government of the dictator, Nimeiri, was nearly toppled by a Kordofan army officer who in today’s language in the Sudan, would be classed as “Black” and non-Arab. Kash was then formed to ensure that irrespective of the ideology behind the government of Khartoum – democratic, fascist, military, socialist, religious fanatic or otherwise – the leadership remained in the hands of the northern region. But Kash is an exclusive club, open only for the three elite ethnic groups of the northern region. This is what various

circles, including the Arab Congregation have referred to as Al Thalooth, i.e. the Tripartite Coalition. The Tripartite Coalition, which has been ruling the Sudan since independence, encompasses three ethnic groups: the Shaigiya (former President Sir Alkhatim, current Vice-President Taha), the Jallayeen (President Albashir) and the Danagla (former President Nimeiri, former Prime Minister Almahdi and former Vice-President Alzibair). For the last forty years or so, Kash has spearheaded the project of Arab-Islamization of the Sudan and in the pursuit of their project, they have needed foot soldiers supplied by various bodies, including the Arab Congregation. The hegemony of the northern region over Sudan is very clear-cut and requires no rerun in this article (see JEM, 2004; El-Tom, 2003 and Ibrahim, 2004).

The might of the geo-political dimension of the Arab Congregation was chillingly demonstrated in Darfur in the early 1980s. Following the collapse of Nimeiri's regime, the Khartoum government connived with Gaddafi and his disastrous gamble in Chad to turn Darfur into one of their daring crusades, to push the so-called "Islamic belt" into Black Africa. Having been kicked out of Chad, Gaddafi proceeded to locate his Islamic Legion under the command of Acheikh Ibn Omar in the Massalit land, western Darfur. The Legion, whose recruits were sourced in Chad, Mali and Niger, but also as far away as Mauritania, devastated the area and its indigenous inhabitants. Later, settlers of the Islamic Legion in Darfur were to play a prominent role as Janjaweed, effectively executing Musa Hilal's call: "Change the demography of Darfur and empty it of African tribes" (Flint and de Waal, 2005; see also Flint and De Waal, 2006). Attempts to change the demography of Darfur are still going on to this day. As recently as July 2007, Bloomfield accused the government of Sudan of "cynically trying to change the demography of the whole region." Monitoring the Chadian-Sudanese borders, Bloomfield wrote:

An internal UN report, obtained by the Independent, show that up to 30,000 Arabs have crossed the border in the past three months. Most arrived with all their belongings and large flocks. They were greeted by Sudanese Arabs who took them to empty villages cleared by the government and Janjaweed forces. a further 45,000 Arabs from Niger have also crossed over (Bloomfield 2007).

At least three conclusions can be drawn so far, each of which connects with a general misconception about the current conflict in Darfur. Firstly, the Darfur conflict cannot be reduced to a strife that is internal to Darfur and the outcome of an environmentally-generated scarcity of resources. Rather, the conflict is part and parcel of the national and regional dynamics and aspirations.

Secondly, the Janjaweed are not a by-product of the present Darfur conflict. Their current involvement in the Darfur war is simply a culmination of decades of atrocities in this region as well as in other parts of the Sudan, like Abeye in southern Sudan.

Thirdly, the reading that the Khartoum government unleashed the Janjaweed following the rebellion in Darfur is factually incorrect. On the contrary, the Darfur rebellion took place for several reasons which include atrocities of the Janjaweed against indigenous Darfurians.

The Documents

In the following pages, I will present several documents, all of which have been translated by myself. Notes made by the author on the text are placed between angle brackets, while official translations of Qur'anic verses have been used throughout. Some of these documents have been commented upon in English in other sources, but they have never been made available in their entirety to the English reader. Therefore, the value of this article lies in the inclusion of the documents and not in my own analysis as such.

Document No. 1

“Arab Coalition

Foundation Statement/ *Bian Assasi*

October 1987

‘In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful’ (Holy Qur’an).

Sayed (Mr) Prime Minister Sadiq Al Mahdi,

The Arab race known today as Arab tribes in Darfur entered the Sudan together with the Arab waves that arrived in the 15th century. Despite their division into numerous groups, these tribes belong to one origin.

These tribes settled in two areas in the Darfur region. One faction settled in an area constituting 88 per cent of the province of South Darfur. The other faction settled in the province of North Darfur; namely, the greatest part of its northern, middle, eastern and western territories. In the province of North Darfur, Arab settlement constitutes 55 per cent of the province. The Arab tribes now form more than 70 per cent of the population of the Darfur region.

Over the centuries that followed their entry into Sudan and their settlement in Darfur, these Arab tribes played a pivotal role in the formation of the identity of the region. In this part of the nation, the Darfur Arabs have been the makers of civilization that have formed the real and actual existence of this region. This they have done through their involvement in politics, religion and language, and in a manner that has led to the moulding of present Sudan.

Darfur Arabs have also been instrumental in the Mahdist Revolution, having fought, excelled and died in defence of Sudan. Throughout other periods, Darfur Arabs have contributed to the political, economic, social, civilizational and cultural advancement of Darfur in particular, and Sudan in general.

We reaffirm that we have defended and we will continue to defend the unity of Sudan, and with utmost faith and strength. We will remain united and avoid any fragmentation and guard the wholeness of Sudan at all times.

Sayed Prime Minister,

Scholars of political systems define regional governance in different ways. However, they all concur that regional governance calls for the handing over of power to the people of the concerned region to undertake political, administrative and economic reforms. Regional governance stipulates that the tribes of the region take over the running of the region and manage their affairs using their available capable cadres. In this regard we state with regret that we have been deprived of our right of leadership, representation and participation in decision-making in this region. We have become a majority, but with no weight; and subjects, but not citizens. This has been the case despite the following:

1. We represent 70% of the population of the region.
2. Our educated members constitute 40% of the total educated members of the region. We have hundreds of university graduates and tens of others who have obtained Masters and PhD degrees in numerous specializations.
3. Our contribution to the national budget amounts to no less than 15%.
4. Our contribution to the Darfur region exceeds 90%.
5. We contribute a lion's share to the army, and in sacrifice to the nation.
6. We have contributed 14 representatives to the Constitutional Assembly (*Jamiya Taseesya*) who have effectively represented us, the Arabs. We have equally contributed 18 members to the Constitutional Assembly (*Jamiya Tasseesia*).
<Note irregularity in the last two sentences>

Mr Prime Minister,

All that we have said confirms the political, social and economic weight of the Darfur Arab tribes. We therefore demand to be represented at a minimum of 50% in regional constitutional posts and in the regional representation to the central government. We are worried that, should the neglect of representation of the Arab race prevail, things may get out of control and matters may pass from the hands of the wise to the ignorant. The consequences of that will be unpalatable. Injustice visited by kin is more painful than the stab of a sword.

Finally, we assure every Sudanese citizen that we are not callers for fragmentation and disunity. We are callers for justice and equality. Long live Sudan; united and under freedom and democracy.

Interim Committee, mandated by the Arab Congregation:

Signed: 1. Abdalla Masar; 2. Sharif Ali Jagar; 3. Ibrahim Yagoub; 4. Hesain Hasan Basha; 5. Nazir Hanid Beito; 6. Tajeldin Ahmed Alhilo; 7. Ayoub El Baloula; 8. Mohamed Khawif Alshitali; 9. Zakaria Ibrahim Abu Leahao; 10. Mohamed Zakaria Daldoum; 11. Nazir Alhadi Eisa Dabaka; 12. Altayib Abu Shama; 13. Sindika Dawood; 14. Haroun Ali Sanusi; 15. Dr Omer Abdel Jabbar; 16. Abdalla Yahia; 17. Sulaiman Jabir Abbaker; 18. Nazir Mohamed Yagoub Alumda; 19. Hamid Mohamed Kheiralla; 20. Mohamed Aldouma Omer; 21. Abdelrahman Ali Abdelnabi; 22. Ahmed Shahata Ahmed; 23. Abubaker Abbo Amin; 24. Jabir Ahmed Alreyyah.” <End of text>

Document No. 2

(Document undated; possibly 1987; Flint and de Waal 2005 refer it to 1998/99)

“Qoreish 2

Extremely Confidential.

‘In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Say: O God!

Lord of Power

To whom Thou pleasest

And Thou strippest off Power

From whom Thou pleasest

Thou enduest with honour

Whom Thou pleasest,

And Thou bringest low

Whom Thou pleasest:

In Thy hand is all Good.

Verily, over all things

Thou hast power’ (Qur’an – Ali 1983:129)

God, the Almighty, is Most Truthful.

In Qoreish 1, we covered the birth of the new Qoreish and some of its programmes. However, new political realities, with internal and external dimensions, necessitate taking a moment of reflection to recall objectives, review plans and consolidate achievements for the realization of your noble aims. As you know, the Jaalyeen, the Danagla and the

Shaygiya have prevented us from ruling Sudan for almost a century. Despite their adopted Arab cloak, these three ethnic groups are nothing but a hybrid, both racially and culturally, and are part and parcel of the Nubian Egyptian fabric. These groups intend to cling to power forever. As we have just learnt, they have vowed to retain power and rotate it among themselves.

Qoreish is currently passing through a difficult period. All of us, and especially the two partners in Kordofan and Darfur, are requested to rise above opinionated and sectarian divisions so that we can achieve our noble objectives and retain gains that have been realized to date. To achieve our objectives, it is necessary to hold fast to the following:

- a. Aiming at the year 2020 as the latest date
- b. The objectives are those stated in Qoreish 2020 (i.e. to control Sudan)
- c. Provisional objective: to control the six western states of Sudan
- d. Plans, programmes and methods:

1. Internal-to-Sudan Recommendations:

- Giving special attention to education, both vertically and horizontally; and preparation of highly qualified cadres in all specializations, including politics, economics, media, security and military professions
- The establishment of an economic institution/foundation
- Enlightened recruitment into the army and security apparatus
- The continuation of the plan of pretended cooperation with the current regime
- The retention of established working relations with some of the central figures who belong to the ruling Tripartite Coalition <Jaalyeen, Danagla and Shaygiya>
- Co-ordination with our cousins in central and eastern Sudan
- The affirmation of the tribes of the north-south intersection zone, their support, armament and training; making use of the Popular Defence Force <at the time, pro-government militias>, Mujahideen and Peace Forces.
- The encouragement of all those who are able to fight to join the Sudan Peace Force
- The retention of channels of communication with the Dinka
- Complete commitment to principles enshrined in the Shaheen Operation of south Kordofan.
- The containment of friction between Nuhood and Alfula townships (Kordofan) and urging of relatives across the nation to avoid internal strife, which depletes energy
- The avoidance of raising the oil issue before its actual extraction
- The containment of consequences of Nyala inter-Arab conflict as far as possible and working for release of detained – Arab – cavalries

- The securing of scarce pastures for nomads in Sudan, Chad and Central Africa
- Fighting traditions of land rights, like *hawakeer* (indigenous traditional titles to land) and *Dar* (tribal land), by all means
- The projection of our strife against non-Arab tribes in the west as a national defence against the extension of southern rebellion into the west
- Widening the gap and demolition of trust between the centre and the non-Arab tribes. This can be done by pushing leaders of the non-Arab groups to the extreme in expressing their grievances regarding the injustice of the central government in the west (Darfur and Kordofan) and by enlightened collaboration with them in their racist and regionalist tendencies
- Working for an increase of our constitutional posts in the centre and in the states.
- The securing of achievements of the Jamous (Bafalo) Programme in western Darfur with all its calculated consequences
- The continuation of Teraifi 1 and Reraifi 2 in their aim of entrenching members of Qoreish in Darfur
- Adequate preparation for elections in the six western states
- Remaining vigilant regarding discipline and avoiding callous behaviour like talking about the Nation of the Baggara
- The payment of attention to positive media by our leaders
- The necessity of upgrading the financial performance of Qoreish
- Prominent leaders of Qoreish shall remain within the National Congress, three from Qoreish <?> and make decisions as necessitated by daily events.

2. *External Recommendations:*

- The strengthening of co-ordination and consultation with members of Qoreish in neighbouring countries
- The promotion of strategic thinking as founded by Albaqalani Aseel and Sheikh Ibn Omer
- The promotion of the Camel Race programme and using it to strengthen relations with Arab brothers in the countries of the Arab Gulf, and with the help of God we will succeed.

‘And we wished to be
 Gracious to those who were
 Being depressed in the land
 To make them leaders (in faith)
 And make them heirs
 To establish a firm place
 For them in the land,

And to show Pharaoh, Haman,
And their hosts, at their hands,
The very things against which
They were taking precautions' (Qur'an – Ali 1983:1002-1003)

God, the Almighty is Most Truthful." <End of text>

Document No. 3

“The Arab Congregation
Administration of Military Operations

'In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
And hold fast,
All together, by the Rope
Which God (stretches out
For you), and be not divided
Among yourselves' (Qur'an – Ali 1983:149).

All corporate members who have taken an oath under leadership of the Arab Congregation are instructed to convene intensive meetings in order to embark on the execution of all commitments/ resolutions that have been made and implemented by the leadership of the Executive Committee. The first meetings shall include all Arab tribes that reside near the areas designated for extermination/*ibada* and burning. Umdas and Sheikhs are to commit their subjects under oath of secrecy, so that the matter remains completely confidential. Following initial contacts, general meetings shall be convened to include Arab and non-Arab tribes and volunteers from other groups. Assistance of non-Arab tribes like the Zaghawa, shall be commissioned, thus making use of them in war procedures, military training, and geographical knowledge < original word: studies> of the area. In this way, the matter will not be evident for those targeted for extermination/*ibada*.

The following recommendations have been endorsed:

1. The dispossession of the Fur of all their cattle and other animals through the use of all available means
2. The assassination of Fur leaders, representatives and intellectuals, and the restriction of the remaining Fur in cities and jails, and murdering all those who can be killed

3. The destruction of all means of transport, including fast ambulance services, in order to prevent the reporting of incidences to the police and to disrupt communication – of the victims – with the government
4. The establishment of the camps of Arab fighters on top of mountains so that they remain beyond reach or entry of the attackers
5. Starting military operations in larger and more fortified areas, using disproportionately large number of fighters
6. The posting of those who have arrived from western nations or Chad, in particular members of Idris Jamous and Hesain Habri, in the following areas: (a) Wadi Salih, (b) Mukjar and (c) Wadi Kaja.
7. The posting of fighters of the Popular Defence Force who came from Kordofan, i.e. the Miseiriya, in the following locations: (a) Jabal Mara, (b) south and south-west Kas and (c) Wadi Bari.

All under-oath members are hereby instructed to firmly commit themselves to all agreed resolutions until we achieve victory. You are to know that our enemies are drawing on the support of the unbelievers and that is why we have assigned our forces to different locations and in a way that fits the military situation.

Committee of the Arab Congregation in the Region
Administration of Military Operations, 1992.”

Document No. 4

(This document appeared in a circular letter format intended to be sent to several officials. No date was affixed to the document, possibly 1993?)

“The Arab Congregation
Strictly Confidential

Mr.

The Executive Committee of the Arab Congregation has held a meeting for the purpose of evaluating the activities of all members and for reviewing the situation following the appointment of ministers of regional government from among the Zurga/Black population. The meeting agreed that we never obtain a position in Darfur without recourse to – armed – struggle and unity among ourselves. This is a difficult and critical time and can only be endured by determined men. To achieve the objectives of the Congregation, the Supreme Committee of the Arab Congregation has made the following decisions:

Committed members of the Congregation and those who are under oath, are to:

1. Incite troubles for the regional government and use all possible means to subvert the implementation of its policies and reform programmes
2. Work to paralyse the delivery of public services in the areas of the Black population and to agitate them and make them feel that the government is impotent and incapable of delivering even the minimum life requirements
3. Double the number of our volunteers in the areas of the Blacks. Our duty necessitates the creation of insecurity in these areas, the halting of production and the liquidation of Black leaders
4. Work to create tribal conflicts among the Blacks/Zurga so that they will never unite
5. Those members of the Congregation who occupy leading positions are instructed to:
 - a) Ensure the concentration of public services in the areas of influence of the Arab Congregation
 - b) Not to appoint children of the Zurga in important posts, and at the same time to work as opportune as possible to obstruct the work of the members of the Black community who occupy executive and administrative positions.
 - c) Work by all ways and means to disrupt the stability of schools in the areas of the Blacks/Zurga)."

Document No. 5

“The Arab Congregation
Coordination Council of the Arab Congregation
Political Committee

Date: 15/11/2003

Subject: Report on visits of the Political Committee to the localities of Buram, Tulus, Reheid Albirdi and Iddalfursan

The committee left for Buram, Monday 10/11/2003, and reached its destination at 10:30 pm. The committee started its work immediately by holding meetings with relevant community and local administration and tribal leaders, politicians, executive officials and notables

Members of the committee started the meeting, clarifying the mission and objectives of the visit. An exploration of the views of the hosts followed. Host speakers

related their satisfaction with the visit and affirmed their agreement with the mission, even though the initiative was somewhat late.

The discussion focused on ambiguous issues that needed some clarification by the committee members. The committee was able to make all necessary clarifications.

The following recommendations and points were agreed upon:

1. That the project of the Arab Congregation must proceed with resolute and effective power so that the end result will be wholly achieved
2. Making maximum use of learned people/scientists who command wisdom, prudence and knowledge of economics
3. Ensuring the just allocation of resources and access to power at both local and national levels, especially under the expected peace agreement <Later to be the CPA, Comprehensive Peace Agreement>
4. Working to overcome inter-tribal conflicts speedily among Arab groups.
5. Considering the issue at hand within the framework of religion, *sharia* and reconciliatory Islamic goodness
6. Propagating the plan across the Sudan
7. Changing the name of the state <meaning the Darfur region or the state of South Darfur> to a suitable one
8. Being attentive to the importance of the media, documentation and research.

After the issuing of the recommendations, Brother Omer Ali Alghali, Deputy Nazir of Buram Locality was chosen to coordinate between the people of his locality and the Coordination Council of the Arab Congregation.

That was followed by the appointment of the Secretary of the National Congress (the ruling party) to collect signatures of members of the Local *Shura* (Consultation) Council and to send them to Nyala at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of the meeting, all present attested under oath to work together for the success of the unification concept.

On the following day, the committee paid a visit to Nazir Salah Ali Alghali to explain the concept in detail and with which he was fully in agreement.

The committee also paid a visit to the house, also headquarters of the Commissioner of the Local Council, who gave the project his absolute support. The Commissioner was asked to assist the Secretary of the National Congress in the collection of signatures and in the provision of transport for members of the Consultative Commission, whenever requested.

On 11/11/2003, the committee visited Tullus Fallata Nazirite and held a meeting with tribal administration, politicians and government executive officials. The Commissioner addressed the meeting, thanking the Coordination Council represented by the visiting committee. He further elaborated on the dangerous state of affairs and

the necessity for unification before presenting the committee members to the meeting. After elaborate deliberations, the following recommendations were agreed upon:

1. All agreed on the idea of unification and the necessity of its implementation.
2. The setting up of an information committee
3. The necessity of working for extended presence in the Republic of Chad
4. Publicizing the idea among university students
5. The opening up of migratory corridors and resting areas/seasonal camping zones for nomads
6. The integration and organization of executive and political work
7. The establishment of strong and good relations with the Federal Government
8. The formulation of a system of exchange of security plans and intelligence – with the government
9. The institution of appropriate economic planning to secure unity
10. The activation and development of native administration
11. The preparation of a clear memorandum of association/congregation.
12. Abiding by strict secrecy.

Umda [Mayor] Yousif Omer Khatir was appointed Coordinator for Tullus Local Council. The Secretary of the National Congress was nominated to collect signatures of the members of Consultative Commission (*Shura*) and send them to Nyala as soon as possible. The Commissioner of Tullus was urged to provide transport for the Consultative Commission members whenever demanded. The Committee then met with Nazir Ahmed Alsammani Albasher who affirmed the unity project, but added further recommendations:

1. There is a need to bring together all Arab leaders, expose them to the idea of unity and commit them to its implementation.
2. Urge Nazir Madibbo of the Rezeigat to take this matter seriously with all other leaders in the area.

On 12/11/2003, the committee visited Reheid Albirdi Locality where they met with tribal leaders, politicians and notables. The hosts pledged their unanimous support to the unity project and affirmed their willingness to work for its full realization. The following recommendations were made in the meeting:

1. Advertise the unity to the public, since it is a noble project.
2. Commit to the secrecy of information, particularly with regard to internal local plans.
3. Give a clear name for the unity.

4. Give a clear goal/target and work for its implementation.
5. Switch from a defensive to an offensive stance and take initiative to refute gossip, lies and rumours – that harm the Congregation.
6. The careful study of events in order to secure the success of actions.
7. Cleanliness (self denial, steadfastness) in dealing with others.
8. Remove the Popular <Defence?> Police Force from the states of Darfur, as they are involved in numerous violations.
9. Work out a well-studied economic plan to support the project.
10. Complete taking over authority in South Darfur using a mechanical majority.
11. Change the name Darfur to a suitable one.
12. Review the issue of the National Service with Khartoum in all aspects.
13. Encourage the sons of the Arab tribes to get recruited into the armed forces, the police and the security bodies.

After taking oath, Brother Yousif Mohamed Yousif was elected to act as the coordinator for the locality, while the Secretary of the National Congress in the area was nominated to collect the signatures of the Consultative Commission and send them to Nyala. It is worth noting that the meeting was attended by all – Arab – families and clans, especially the Salamat who reside in Reheid Albirdi.

On Thursday 13/11/2003, the committee held a meeting with tribal leaders, notables and politicians in Iddalfursan. After explaining the purpose of the visit, the committee listened attentively to views of their hosts. The following recommendations were then made in the meeting:

1. The employment of – Arab – University graduates in government institutions.
2. the setting up of information and research committees
3. The guarding and development of the principles embodied in the project
4. The protection of politicians of all – concerned/Arab – tribes by all means
5. Changing the names of Darfur states into more logical ones
6. Strengthening the social fabric of the Arabs and the arrangement of exchange visits among them
7. Laying down clear economic foundations and principles
8. Publicizing Arab actions/achievements without reservation
9. Organizing the Janjaweed for benevolent actions and for protection – of the tribes.
10. Unreserved obedience to the Arab leaders, especially the Coordination Commission
11. Arbitration to solve interstate problems between all races to attain harmony and gain the respect of others
12. Paying attention to external and particularly border trade

13. Committing to secrecy of information
14. The utilization of university graduates and research results
15. The employment of graduates in government institutions [repeated, 1]
16. The improvement of the administrative and executive system in the capital of South Darfur and the strengthening of native administration at all levels
17. Reviewing the planned settlement <not clear of whom> to Goz Dongo and also reviewing the water project approved in the name of Iddalfursan
18. Reviewing immigration to Nyala.

This was followed by taking an oath and by the nomination of Dabaka Isa Dabaka to act as coordinator for the locality. The Secretary of the National Congress to the locality was asked to collect the signatures of members of the Consultative Council and send them to Nyala.”

Document No. 6

“The Light, the Fast and the Fearful Forces.

Top left is a stamp bearing name ‘The Light (*El-Khafifa*), the Fast (*El-Sariya*) and the Fearful (*El-Murija*) Forces’, 28/8/2004; Top right is a stamp with an official government emblem [head of a bird?], inscription not legible and no date.

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Subject: Intelligence Report No. 310

Sayed [Mr] Head of the Intelligence and Security Department
Greetings of peace and Allah’s blessings

With reference to your message marked “top secret”, dated 6/8/2004 and concerning the removal of nine mass graves (*maqabir jammaiya*) in the Darfur states; the killing of any who poses a threat to the content of this instruction; and the possibility of giving evidence to the UN, EU and AU delegates coming to investigate mass graves, we hereby inform Your Excellency of the following:

- Eight mass graves have been unearthed, removed and completely burnt under the supervision of a committee of the National Security System, an Arab Congregation committee and the Secretary General of the state of North Darfur. The operation was conducted under protection of our forces and for whom nothing under the sun is impossible.
- We have not been able to reach the ninth designated mass grave in Wadi Salih, state of West Darfur. We appeal to Your Excellency to address the

Administration of Military Operations to approve an airplane so that we can remove Wadi Salih mass grave, possibly containing 1,200 – one thousand two hundred – remains

- We salute Your Excellency, the National Salvation Revolution and the Arab Congregation.

(Repeat of military stamp as above left – no date inscribed; signed in left corner as follows)

Lieutenant: Hajaj Ahmed Rabih

Head of Field Division of the Light, the Fast and the Fearful Forces, and member of Implementation Mechanism of the Arab Congregation.

(On the bottom right hand margin, a commentary with different handwriting reads):

For information of Military and Security Intelligence Instructions:

Graves in Wadi Salih were unearthed within 24 hours using a plane, Nyala Airport to Wadi Salih. Relocation and burning shall proceed under utmost secrecy and shall not include

Intelligence Division, 29 August

Discussion

The question of authenticity must arise in handling clandestine documents such as those presented in this article. Document 1 which appeared in the form of a letter addressed to Prime Minister Almahdi went public and was published in national newspapers. All other documents were meant to be secret and were marked so. More often than not, participants in the meetings were sworn on the Qur'an to ensure just that.

It is hard to doubt the authenticity of the presented documents. Excellent, though brief, comments on some of them appeared in Flint and de Waal (2005), and Harir and Sulaiman have also referred to some of them, although the latter writer relegated his comments to the footnotes of his publication (Harir, 1993; Sulaiman, 2000).

It is difficult to discern the consensus of the Arab Coalition on these documents, particularly the inflammatory and racist Documents 2, 3, 4 and 5. While it is obvious that these documents reflect the work of the supremacist sector of the Arab Coalition, it is not easy to comprehend the conspicuous absence of their public condemnation among Arab groups. Moreover, racist principles contained in most of these documents seemed to have enjoyed wide support in the current Darfur conflict and are well in tune with the perception of Black people in the Arab culture of northern Sudan (see Mukhtar, 2006 and Ibrahim, 2005). I will return to this issue after some comments on the documents.

The appointment of Dreige as a governor for Darfur during Nimeiri's rule in 1983 caused a stir among the Arabs of Darfur. As Dreige belongs to the Fur, the ethnic group that gave the region its name, the Arabs of Darfur saw his appointment as a setback to their dream of dominating the region. Clandestine, inflammatory cassettes circulated among members of Darfur Arabs; some of them were blatantly militant and racists. But the Arab groups were yet to organize into a coherent political force. That came during Almahdi's presidency later in the decade.

In October 1987, a coalition of 27 Arab groups sent an open letter to Prime Minister Almahdi, addressing him as one of their own and one who had in some way betrayed them. The letter, which was signed by 27 people, with three names later withdrawn, referred clearly to the background where the Arabs assisted the Khartoum government in its war against the South, only to be let down by passing over Darfur governorship to their opponents under leadership of Tigani Seise. The letter stated that the Arabs constituted a 70 per cent majority in Darfur and demanded control over the region, together with adequate representation in the central government. The Arab groups ended their letter with a clear warning that, should their demands be ignored, matters might pass from the wise to the ignorant and with dire consequences.

In some ways, Document 1 can be said to have marked the official inauguration of the Arab Congregation. An exaggeration of the size of the Arab population is very clear. If the Arabs constituted 70 per cent of the Darfur population, they would have simply controlled the region through the same election that had given power to Almahdi. Ibrahim, a formidable scholar who has monitored Darfur people over several decades, reverses the figures, giving the Arabs 30 per cent as opposed to the 70 per cent of African ethnic groups (Ibrahim, 2005:11). But what is more ominous is that the letter indicates a worrying sense of superiority, a divine right to monopolize power and a readiness to use all methods to achieve the stated objectives. Moreover, the letter implies that the support of riverine Sudan had been secured, but was not delivered (see also Qoreish 2 in Document 2).

Since its letter to Amahdi, the Arab Congregation has gone from strength to strength, but has passed its leadership to the "ignorant" if we are to use the Congregation's own expression. Subsequent communications of the Arab Congregation became steeped in a discourse of racial purity, a term that has long been relegated to the dustbin of history. Remarkably, and despite its intellectual inaccuracy, race has become central to understanding the Darfur conflict. In his thoughtful article on Darfur, Lumamba challenges analysts not to avoid the issue of race like the plague, but to face the ultimate truth that, although race is a social construct and has no biological basis, it has been the backbone of the ideology that has underpinned the conflict in Darfur and Sudan. Both, the Arab Congregation and their surrogate parents, the riverine Arabs, share this ideology (Lumamba, 2007).

At another level, Almahdi's second democracy (1986-1989) shattered the Congregation's dream in a different way. Their claim to constitute a clear majority in Darfur was falsified and did not translate into parliamentary seats. To add insult to injury, Almahdi proceeded to appoint a non-Arab Darfurian (Seise) to the governorship of Darfur. Although organized attacks by members of the Arab Congregation were reported as early as 1982, they became more incessant during the late 1980s (Flint and de Waal, 2006:52). At the same time, the Arab Congregation intensified the release of its edicts, which provided an ideological backing to their violence. This period also witnessed renewed emphasis on Arab racial purity coupled with lumping together all indigenous Darfurians under the rubric of "Zurga" (Black). So intense was the campaign of the Arab Congregation in this regard that non-Arab Darfuris began to see themselves as an undifferentiated mass of Zurga. The hybridity of race that was once alluded to by many indigenous people was finally laid to rest.

The ideological campaign of violence by the Arab Congregation became less clandestine in its operations, using the available technology of cassettes, photocopying and faxes. As the documents show, the edicts regularly called for the destruction of public services aimed at the Zurga, the killing of Zurga elites, the mobilization of Arab militias, the occupation of land and of inciting conflict.

At an organizational level, the Arab Congregation elected its offices in the guise of high councils, executive, political and military committees. Moreover, links began to be forged among all the Arabs of western Sudan (Kordofan and Darfur), within greater Sudan and at a geo-political level spanning neighbouring countries, North Africa and the Middle East. This is chillingly demonstrated in what has come to be called Qoreish 2, possibly released in the early 1990s, to follow Qoreish 1, which the author has not been able to track down.

Qoreish 2 subscribes to Arab purity which is now exclusively a preserve of components of the Arab Congregation. Riverine allies, and those who championed the project of Arab-Islamization of the Sudan are dismissed in the edict as no more than hybrid Nubians and Egyptians. Even worse, they are guilty of depriving the Qoreishi, and true descendents of the prophet Mohamed, of legitimately ruling the Sudan. In fact, the relationship between the Arab Congregation and particularly the Tripartite Coalition has constituted a marriage of convenience characterized by love and hate. The Tripartite Coalition sees its members as the civilized heirs of the colonial project regarding modernization, for which the Arab Congregation is badly suited. In its most recent form, government propaganda code-named this project "The Civilizational Orientation." In the eyes of the Tripartite Coalition, the Arab Congregation is no more than a bunch of nomads, steeped in savagery and only fit for use as foot soldiers. Nonetheless, they are indispensable in carrying out the full implementation of the Arab-Islamic project. If phase one of this project has been torpedoed by Western powers/the international community in the Christian south of the Sudan, phase two (Dafur) of it

must succeed. It will be accomplished, even if it takes considerable delaying manoeuvres, or to use Condoleezza Rice's term, "Khartoum's cat and mouse tactics" with the international community.

In a recent development, Hamdi, guru economist and Albashir's former Minister for Economy and Finance advised that future investment and development in the Sudan should by-pass Darfur and focus on the northern Dongola-Sennar-Kordofan axis. Hamdi concluded that this triangle represents the hard core of historic and future Arab-Islamic Sudan. Following the segregation of the South, taken as a given by Hamdi, this triangle guarantees power for the National Congress Party of Albashir in a future, democratic Sudan. The Arabs of Darfur have much to contemplate in their alliance with the riverine people of Sudan (Hamdi, 2005).

In examining these documents, one must avoid the temptation of treating them as the work of a lunatic fringe that has little impact on what has happened and is still happening in Darfur. For any nation to be able to massacre anything between 200,000 and 550,000 people, mostly non-combatants and in just over four to five years, requires a sustained ideology and discourse capable of turning a substantial sector of its population into conniving killers. It is within this context that we should read these documents. As long as the carnage in Darfur has called in the interference of the International Criminal Court, it is futile to waste time debating whether we have genocide on hand or not. What is pertinent is that these documents have been part and parcel of a culture that is favourable to the commission of genocide.

Comparing the Darfur situation with other countries that have witnessed genocides, crimes against humanities and other heinous atrocities, one finds similar edicts that were central to the formation of an ideology that sustained the killing. Rwanda, Bosnia, Holocaust Germany, and the Anfal of Iraq were all accompanied by similar campaigns. For the purpose of this article I will restrict myself to Rwanda, whose Hutu ideology mimics, though with some differences, the content of the Arab Congregation documents. The Hutu ideology that had led to the Rwandan genocide was enshrined in what was publicized as the "Ten Commandments of the Hutu." Below are the points of convergence between the Congregation documents and the Ten Commandments:

1. Hutu Ten Commandments:

Point 5 of the Commandments reads:

- All strategic positions, political, administrative, economic, and military and security should be entrusted to Hutu.

The Arab Congregation documents read:

- Enlightened recruitment into the army and security apparatus (Doc 1, point 1.3)
- The encouragement of those who are able to fight to join the Popular Defence Force, Mujahideen Force and Peace Force (Doc 1, point 1.8)

- Not to appoint children of the Zurga in important posts and at the same time ... (Doc 4, point 'b')
- Encourage the sons of the Arab tribes to get recruited into the armed forces, police and security bodies (Doc 5, 13).

2. Hutu Ten Commandments:

Point 6 reads:

- The education sector (school pupils, students, teachers) must be majority Hutu.

The Arab Congregation documents read:

- Giving special attention to education, both vertically and horizontally ... (Doc 1, 1.1).
- Work to paralyse delivery of public services in the areas of the Black population (Doc 4, point 3)
- Ensure the concentration of public services in the areas of influence of the Arab Congregation (Doc 4, point 'a')
- Work by all ways and means to disrupt the stability of schools in the areas of the Blacks (Zurga) (Doc 4, point 'c').

3. Hutu Ten Commandments:

Passages in point 9 read:

- The Hutu, wherever they are, must have unity and solidarity, and be concerned with the fate of their Hutu brothers
- The Hutu inside and outside Rwanda must constantly look for friends and allies for the Hutu cause, starting with their Bantu brothers.

The Arab Congregation documents read:

- Coordination with our cousins in central and eastern Sudan
- The strengthening of co-ordination and consultation with members of Qoreish in neighbouring countries (Doc 2, point 2.1)
- The promotion of the Camel Race programme and using it to strengthen relations with Arab brothers in the Gulf countries (Doc 2, point 2.3)
- Working to speedily overcome inter-tribal conflicts among the Arabs (Doc 5, 4)
- ... under oath to work together for the success of the unification project (Doc 5, point 11)
- All agreed on the idea of the unification project and the necessity of its implementation
- Advertise the unity to the – Arab – public since it is a noble project ... Give a clear name for the unity (Doc 5, points 1 and 4).

4. Hutu Ten Commandments:

Point 10 reads:

- ... the Hutu ideology must be taught to every Hutu at every level. Every Hutu must spread this ideology widely.

Documents of the Arab Congregation read:

- Propagating the thought across Sudan (Doc 5, point 6)
- Spreading the idea among university students (Doc 5, point 4)
- There is a need to bring together all Arab leaders, expose them to the idea of unity and commit them to its implementation (Doc 5, point 1).

5. Finally, the Hutu Commandment restricts its call for having no mercy on the Tutsi. The Arab documents are much more explicit, referring to killings, assassinations and extermination.

Darfur Crisis: From Culturecide to Genocide

The Arab documents contained in this article did not appear from a vacuum. Rather, they are part of a discourse that has characterized the formation of Sudan's nationhood. The very constitution of Sudan as an Arab-Islamic entity presupposes that all other cultures, indigenous or otherwise, have to give way to Arab-Islamic cultures and in the way defined by the hegemonic power in the country. Genocides are not new to Sudan. Ignoring distant history, they featured in the Mahdia rule (Berber), in the south of Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, the conflictual zone of Abyie, and now in Darfur. While genocides in the Sudan have been intermittent, the destruction of African cultures (culturecide) has accompanied the formation of Sudan since the colonial era. British rule protected the south of the Sudan against Arab-Muslim encroachment from the north, but did not extend the same guardianship to other indigenous African cultures.

As far as other parts of the Sudan, including Darfur, were concerned, they were simply handed over to riverine Sudan to oversee the destruction of their cultures. If the European and the Islamic Arab World agree on one thing in Africa, it is their conviction that Black African cultures have nothing to offer, do not merit survival, and that the sooner they vanish; the better.

Leaving the European aside, Sudan's Arab-Islamic project has a regional dimension that transcends national borders. Black Africa, south of the Sahara is all too familiar with the incessant expansion of Arab-Islamic cultures, at the expense of its indigenous counterparts. What is more perplexing is that this process has gone unchallenged for so long. Even worse is that it has been taken as inevitable and desirable and has commanded the support of national and Arab leaders. Writing in this respect, Prunier states:

“... in the 1980s, Colonel Gaddafi and Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi gave an answer: Darfur was poor and backward because it was insufficiently arabized. It had missed out in the great adhesion to the Muslim Umma because its Islam was primitive and insufficiently Arabic” (Prunier, 2005:162 quoted in Lumumba, 2007).”

Flawed as it is, this vision also finds support from far afield. Both Mazrui and Mamdani, otherwise respectable writers, glorify the de-Africanization of Africa in favour of Arab-Islamic culture. In a clearly racist view that admires the Arabization of Black Africans, Mazrui declares in Janjaweed style: “... under genealogical system of the Arab World [they] become subject to upward genealogical mobility. They were co-opted upward” (Lumumba, 2007). One would wonder whether Mazrui would also include reproduction through mass rape in Darfur within his process of upward mobility.

As Darfur is entirely Muslim, it is the Arabization of its populations that has occupied the minds of Khartoum rulers. Let us leave the alleged inferiority of Darfur Islam aside and focus on Arabization. The machinery of the state was used for that purpose: the school, the judicial system, the media, the mosque and, of course, the market. All these institutions played their roles in disseminating Arab-Islamic culture, while at the same time denigrating its rival, the indigenous cultures. Even the landscape itself did not escape this cultural onslaught. Towns had to be renamed to please riverine Arab-Islamic taste. Thus Id al-Ghanam became, Id al Fursan, the town Broosh became Uroosh, Kattal became Dar Alsalam, Khor Mareesa became Zamzam and so forth. The fact that these towns had acquired their names for historical and cultural reasons was immaterial. Part of the process was of course to rewrite history and obliterate local heritage. If the indigenous people needed any history, they could look beyond the Red Sea and retrieve it from the early Islamic period in the Middle East or the like. Not surprisingly, schools and classrooms came to be known as A-Zahra, Omer, Osman, Abubakar, Safa, Marwa, Alhumeira and so forth; names that make these establishments indistinguishable from any school nomenclature in Saudi Arabia. While there is nothing wrong in drawing on Islamic symbols, it is their exclusivity that makes a mockery of local history.

In looking at symbolic nomenclature, Arabism often transcends Islam. This is confirmed by the very fact that the plight of the Muslims in Darfur attracted little sympathy in the Arab-Islamic world. Running the risk of blaming the victim, the locals too have participated in pillaging their culture – a common feature of oppressed groups. Arab politics provided a rich source of names for boys in Darfur, but also for Sudan at large, sometimes commensurate with eras in which Arab rulers and dictators lived. Thus Faisal (Saudi), Najeeb, Jamal, Anwar (Egypt), Sabah (Kuwait) and Gaddafi are now common names in Darfur. As for girls in Darfur, they are not fortunate. Male

chauvinist, gender relations offer them scant opportunity. Arab soap operas, mostly Egyptian, stand ready to fill this void. Hence you have new popular names for girls like Rania, Hanan, Sameera, Shahr Zad and Nabeela, all lifted from Egyptian movie stars. These new names rarely feature among older generations in Darfur – more likely to be Khadija, Fatna, Ashsha, Mariam, Zeinab and Kaltuma and their derivatives. The former category is Arabic while the latter is distinctly Islamic. Those whose names depicted a Darfur accent also had to oblige. Thus Abbaker became Abu Bakr, Isakha turned into Ishag, and Adoama was retuned to read Adam.

The Genocide Connection

The connection between the Arab documents and the Janjaweed genocide actions in Darfur is unmistakably evident. In sociological terms, genocide can be defined as “a form of violent social conflict, or war, between armed powers and organizations that aim to destroy, in part or in whole, social groups and those groups and other actors who resist this destruction” (adapted from Shaw, 2007:154).

In Lemkin’s format, genocide involved the destruction of social groups, a fact that challenges popular perception of mass killing as an essential component of genocide. As Shaw explains, destruction is aimed at uprooting the essential foundations of life for such social groups (Shaw, 2005:19; Lemkin, 1944). Without exhausting the social fields expounded by Lemkin, the assault includes political, economic, social, cultural and moral aspects of targeted social groups.

At the political level, the Arab documents were very clear in the intention of the group to destroy the political system of their enemies. To begin with, the target groups were stripped of their legitimacy to rule themselves. The right to rule the region(s) is seen as a divine outcome of the “biological” descent of the Arab groups; the descent that connects them directly with the Prophet. The right of the Arab groups to political domination is further asserted by their alleged majority status and by having migrated into the area when it was empty of indigenous populations. Both of these claims are factually incorrect. As practical steps towards effecting political control, members of the Arab Congregation are called in the documents to enrol *en masse* in all relevant, strategic institutions like the army, police, Popular Defence Force and Peace Force, Security, etc.

At a different level, the documents call for the assassination of leaders from the target groups, not appointing their members in high offices, and setting them against each other as well as against the government. All these measures are likely to destroy the political viability of the indigenous population.

In the economic field, the target groups are to be attacked at various levels. As the documents show, there is a clear mobilization for seizing the property of the Zurga, appropriating their land, disrupting public services and creating instability that makes economic advancement impossible.

In the social and cultural fields, the documents are again instructive regarding the destruction of the non-Arab populations. Many of the points raised above already point in that direction, i.e. the social and cultural disruption of the target population. The denial of political and economic autonomy poses a formidable threat to the social and cultural survival of these groups. Furthermore, the documents call for setting Zurga communities in conflict against each other, killing their leaders, wrecking their educational system and reducing their populations to a state of utter dependency, in the guise of landless refugees and IDPs. In short, the aim of the documents is to ensure that the Zurga no longer constitute functioning communities.

Those who see mass killings as an essential defining feature of genocide can turn to Documents 3 and 6. The term *ibada*, accurately translated as “annihilation”, “extermination” or “eradication” occurs twice in Document 3. It is noteworthy that the first time the term *ibada* (extermination) appeared in the Arab Congregation communication was in 1992, Document 3. Document 6 refers to a desperate attempt to hide evidence of mass killings prior to a visit of international investigators. Interestingly, international institutions and Western governments have often been accused of doing little to protect the people of Darfur. Document 6 shows that their actions, no matter how feeble, have thrown Darfur genocidaires into a panic. As such, it is possible to conclude that international intervention must have reduced genocide actions and saved human lives.

In reading through the documents, one is struck by the paramountcy given to secrecy. In fact, these documents were anything but secret. The co-ordination of the work with government security, army and political machinery made it difficult for these documents and their contents to remain confidential. Evil as it may be, the destruction of villages and the depopulation of entire areas were openly discussed by both government officials and members of the Arab Congregation. The case of Attal Mannan, former governor of South Darfur is revealing in this regard. Attal Mannan is also reputed to be the head of Kash (Northern Entity), referred to earlier in the article. At the height of the Darfur war, in 2005, the then governor roared in a public rally in Sheiryia town: “The Zaghawa have to look for another planet to live on.” His speech came in open support of attempts by Arab Janjaweed to drive the Zaghawa out of the area.

The actions and movements of the Arab Congregation cannot be kept secret for another reason: The intensity of security surveillance in Darfur makes it impossible for the Arab Congregation to operate behind government eyes. As allies in the Darfur war, at least the need for co-ordination makes secrecy unnecessary, if not totally counterproductive.

Concluding Remarks

This article examines a number of documents issued by the Arab Congregation and its branches over the last two decades. While these documents are available in Arabic, this article presents them to the English reader in their entirety. This is where the value of this article resides. Hence, the article does not attempt an exhaustive analysis of the documents. That job is left to the reader and to a different work in a different space.

Documents contained in this article should be read as complementary to Sudan's discourse of genocide. They provided an ideology that made the Darfur genocide possible. At the same time, the ideology underlying these documents is not a recent phenomenon. Rather, it has been set in motion ever since Sudan was declared an Arab-Islamic state. Moreover, Sudan's project is part of a continental project that seeks to expand Arab influence, expressed as the "Arab belt", further south into Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Rising Violence in Connection with Dam Constructions in the Northern Nile Valley

(This is a Briefing Note produced by the United Nations Mission in Sudan - UNMIS - in June 2007 in Khartoum)

Introduction

The construction of two large-scale hydropower dams in the northern Nile valley, Northern State, has led to protests and often violent clashes between local communities and security forces over the past three years. The more advanced project is the Merowe Dam, some 350 km north of Khartoum, which is due to be completed by 2009 and is one of the largest hydropower projects in Africa. The planning stage for another dam in the Kajbar area, some 650 km north of Khartoum, has been completed and construction is due to begin shortly. Both projects will result in the relocation of tens of thousands of people from the fertile Nile valley to other areas.

There are fears that violence may intensify in the coming months as the deadline for the relocation of thousands of residents from the Merowe area approaches and as construction is scheduled to begin in the Kajbar area where residents oppose the dam. Fundamental disagreements between the implementing government authorities and some local communities have not been resolved, leading to the radicalization of some community members and increasingly violent protests. In the latest escalation of violence in mid-June, four people were shot dead by security forces and others were injured when police violently dispersed a community protest. Some seven people reportedly remained detained by National Security without contact with the outside world at the time of writing. If disagreements between the authorities and the local communities are not resolved, the dam projects may result in further violence and human rights violations, as well as large-scale forced relocations.

Background on the Dam Projects

In the Merowe area, the dam construction requires the relocation of some 55,000 people belonging to three communities; the Manasir, Amri and Hamadab. The largest affected group is the Manasir community which represents 68 per cent of the affected population and remains to be relocated. The second largest group, the Amri community, represents 25 per cent of the affected population and about half of them have already been relocated to a newly constructed settlement in a desert area over 20 km from the river. Relocation of the Hamadab, who represent about seven per cent of the affected population, was completed in 2003. In the Kajbar area, an estimated 10,000 people are expected to be displaced as a consequence of the proposed dam construction; they belong to the Mahas, a Nubian community.

The total cost of the Merowe project is budgeted at 1.2 billion US Dollars. According to reports by observers, the principal funders of the project, in addition to the Sudanese government, are the China Export Import Bank, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and the Development Funds of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and the Sultanate of Oman. The project is executed by Chinese and European companies, including Harbin (China), Lahmeyer International (Germany), Alstom (France) and ABB (Switzerland). According to public information sources, the Kajbar dam is budgeted at 200 million US Dollars and will be funded by the Sudanese government (25%) and China (75%).

Construction of the dams is coordinated by the Dam Implementation Unit, a government agency which was previously part of the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources, and in September 2005 became an independent agency directly answerable to the President. It is headed by Osama Abdallah, a former state minister and influential member of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP). As a technical implementation body, the Dam Implementation Unit has often taken key decisions without consulting, or informing affected communities. Its offices in the affected areas have repeatedly been targeted in violent protests by angry members of local communities, resulting in property damage.

Sources of Conflict

In the Merowe area, community members have expressed concern, among other things, about the unsuitability of some of the areas selected for their relocation, the lack of adequate sources of revenue and a lack of transparency in the planning and implementation process, particularly regarding allocation of housing and compensation for lost property. There have been limited consultations with community representatives which have not been effective in addressing these concerns. Previous relocations have resulted in large numbers of people being left temporarily without food, shelter and medical care.

As a result, part of the Amri community now refuses to move to a relocation site, even though the area is due to be flooded as of August 2007. In the Kajbar area, community representatives oppose the dam construction and are campaigning for an independent reassessment of the project. Both communities are highly mobilized and, as recent developments have highlighted (see below), violence may erupt if the authorities decide to press on with the projects. Security forces have repeatedly used live ammunition during the policing of protests, leading to killings and injuries. On several occasions, community representatives, journalists, lawyers and others have been detained. Security forces have recently stated publicly that some members of the local communities possess firearms.

Recent Violence in the Merowe and Kajbar Areas

Merowe Dam Area

In the Merowe area, opposition to the dam project by the local communities mounted after the relocation of the small community of the Hamadab in 2003 revealed unresolved problems. The government failed to fulfill its promises of providing adequate infrastructure and services in the relocation area, and failed to pay in full the compensations agreed for lost assets. The relocation areas were not suitable for agriculture and the irrigation system was not operational, leaving the agricultural community largely without revenue. These and other problems antagonized the local population. The government failed to address the concerns of the community effectively and has generally responded with repressive measures.

The Amri Community

In the Amri area, violent clashes with security forces occurred in April 2006 when the government conducted a long-delayed survey on requirements for the relocation, which was opposed by the community, amid heavy security force presence. Three civilians were killed and some 12 wounded after the army moved into the Amri area and opened fire on a large-scale community protest against the survey. Although the government set up a committee of investigation three days after the killings, the victims' families have received no information about its outcome and the perpetrators are not known to have been tried. Community representatives have complained about the fact that the survey was conducted in a non-transparent manner and that the criteria for awarding compensation were inadequate. As a consequence, large numbers of residents were not allocated housing or granted compensation for lost land, houses and trees.

In August 2006, the community was reportedly informed by a government official that they would have to start moving after only six days. The day after the announcement, the area began to flood with water from the Nile, reportedly forcing close to 3,000 households out of their homes in the following weeks. Community representatives expressed concern that the flooding occurred because a part of the dam

had been blocked intentionally to force the residents to move. Water flows were increasing as a consequence of heavy seasonal rainfall in Ethiopia, but there were reports that some 1,500 homes were flooded before these water flows reached the area. Thousands of residents were reportedly left without shelter, food and medical care as a consequence of the sudden flooding of the area.

Once the community was relocated to the resettlement area, flaws in the planning process became apparent, as some 800 families were reportedly not allocated housing and were forced to seek shelter with relatives. Some of them have apparently occupied unallocated houses in the relocation area. In addition, community representatives have complained about the poor soil quality and the ineffectiveness of the irrigation system. According to recent reports by community leaders, the housing allocation problems have yet to be addressed by the implementing authorities. Some 45 per cent of the Amri community remain on their original land and reportedly refuse to be relocated, although the area is expected to flood as of late August 2007.

The Manasir Community

The Manasir – the largest group among the affected communities – are also scheduled to be relocated at the end of 2007. Tension with the authorities rose in recent months after the authorities appeared to retract an earlier agreement that the Manasir could be relocated to an area on the shore of the dam reservoir, chosen by the vast majority of them, instead of the desert areas which had originally been designated by the authorities. Only a small minority of the community accepts to be relocated to the sites identified by the dam authorities. During a rally held in the town of Abu Hamad on 20 March 2007, some representatives of the community reportedly announced that they would take up arms against the government.

One week after the protests, armed police moved into the Manasir area to arrest those who had called for armed resistance. Members of the community reportedly surrounded several vehicles and dozens of police officers, and held them hostage for over 24 hours until a provisional settlement with the authorities in Khartoum was reached, in the evening of 27 March 2007. The community claims that they were armed with knives, axes, sticks and agricultural implements, but the authorities allege that the community also possesses firearms. There had been earlier reports that some disgruntled members of the Manasir joined the Eastern Front as *Harakat al-Muhajireen*.

On 29 March 2007, six representatives of the community, three of whom had been present at the rally in Abu Hamad, were arrested in Khartoum and detained by National Security in Kober prison for close to two months without charge. On 6 May, students belonging to the Manasir community organized a demonstration in Khartoum to protest against the detention of the six community representatives. The demonstration was reportedly dispersed by police using teargas and rubber bullets and several students were apparently detained for brief periods of time following the demonstration. The six

Manasir representatives were released without charge on 26 May after an agreement was reached with the authorities that the community would be offered the choice to relocate to the shore of the reservoir. UNMIS Human Rights has received no allegations of ill-treatment, but has yet to meet with the released detainees. The community has initiated a self-help project and, on 1 June 2007, began construction of two villages in the area chosen by them.

On 12 June, the authorities conducted a survey to assess how many community members prefer to relocate to the shore of the reservoir, and how many would relocate to the settlements which have already been constructed by the dam authorities. On 6 June, a group of Manasir supporting the relocation plan of the dam authorities clashed with community members opposing the plan. They were advocating relocation to the areas constructed by the dam authorities, apparently in an attempt to influence the outcome of the survey. Shots were fired during the clash, resulting in four people being injured. Police sources have announced that they discovered firearms held by the local community and a judicial investigation has been opened into the events. The survey reportedly concluded that more than two thirds of the Manasir community prefer to relocate to the shore of the reservoir.

Kajbar Dam Area

Tension has risen in the Kajbar area where a dam is due to be constructed between the hamlets of Kajbar on the western shore and Sabu on the eastern shore of the Nile. Local residents are opposing the dam construction and have mobilized large-scale protests against the start of construction work. Community leaders dispute the economic rationale for the dam project and demand that all construction is halted until a new, transparent assessment is made.

The latest violence was sparked in mid-June when private companies undertook preparatory work for the dam construction, apparently without consulting or informing the local community. Four civilians were killed and some 11 injured when security forces fired live rounds of ammunition into a crowd of protesters. The protests by the local community erupted on 13 June after private companies began taking soil samples and drilling holes in an area near the hamlet of Sabu, which has been designated for construction of the dam, but where the land is reportedly still owned by members of the local community. Angered by the fact that the community had neither been consulted nor informed by the authorities prior to the work being carried out, some 500 men and women set out on a protest march from the hamlet of Jeddi. They were planning to hand over a memorandum to an official of the implementing authorities in Sabu.

Some 7 km before reaching Sabu, the protesters were stopped at a narrow stretch in between hills and the river when some 40 security officers thought to belong to the Central Reserve Police fired tear gas at the crowd. According to eye-witnesses, the security forces, which were posted several hundred meters further along the way, started

firing live ammunition into the crowd after one officer blew a whistle from a hilltop. The crowd was dispersed and protesters fled back towards the village of Jeddi. According to reports by local residents, four men aged between 18 and 45 were killed after being hit by bullets in the head or chest. A further 11 people were reportedly injured by bullet wounds; two of them seriously.

In a statement carried by an international news agency on 14 June, police said they had fired live rounds in self defense after tear gas failed to prevent protesters attacking their positions. This contradicts reports by eye-witnesses who have stated that the demonstration was peaceful and that protesters were unarmed. According to these reports, the protesters were several hundred meters away from the security forces when the teargas was fired, and live ammunition was fired at the crowd indiscriminately and without warning. According to some reports, one of those killed had been followed by security officers and shot dead inside the village of Jeddi. Community representatives have also stated that police fired tear gas at boats crossing the river to prevent people living on the other shore of the river from joining the demonstration.

Immediately after the protests, the deputy governor of Northern State gave a statement to local media condemning the violent repression of the protests, and promising to halt construction work and to bring the perpetrators to justice. The following day, these announcements were retracted by the governor, who had been absent from the area at the time of the statement, and who announced that the dam construction would continue as scheduled. The deputy governor reportedly resigned from office in protest at the governor's unwillingness to address the concerns of the local community. On 19 June, the governor of Northern State announced on Sudanese television that an investigation committee would be set up to investigate the events during the protest. The general prosecutor of Northern State, who was appointed by the Minister of Justice to head the committee, has issued a public information ban on the work of the committee and the Kajbar incident, ostensibly to prevent interference with the course of justice.

In the wake of the protests, some 26 people were arrested by police and National Security in the Kajbar area and in Khartoum. Some seven of them were held by National Security without contact with the outside world at the time of writing. Among them are two lawyers and a local community leader who were arrested in Dongola, the capital of Northern State, in the late evening of 13 June after arriving in the area to investigate the events. Four journalists of national newspapers, who were arrested at the same time, were released without charge on 20 June. They had been held by National Security in Kober prison and were reportedly forced to sit on chairs during the night, depriving them of sleep. In Khartoum, two people, a journalist and a Mahas community leader, were arrested by National Security between 16 and 20 June and remained detained *incommunicado* at the time of writing.

Four residents of the Kajbar area, who were held for up to five days after the protests by police and National Security, have been released without charge. There were allegations of beatings during arrest and transfer to the place of detention. In Khartoum, three people were arrested by police during a spontaneous protest by members of the Mahas community on 14 June, which was dispersed by police using tear gas. They were held overnight, charged with public order offences, but acquitted on 19 June by a court in Khartoum for lack of evidence. On 15 June, a further five people were arrested in Haj Yusif, Northern Khartoum, by officers thought to belong to National Security while distributing information about the Kajbar events. They were held for four days at the State Security Bureau in central Khartoum and have been released pending trial on charges, brought by the prosecutor of state security, for alleged public order offences.

Tensions in the Kajbar area had been rising in the previous months. Two months before the June protests, in late April, two civilians had been injured by bullets during clashes with police seeking to disperse a large-scale popular protest against the dam (see: *Fear of escalating violence in Kajbar area* in Human Rights Unit Consolidated Weekly Report, CWR_05_07_03, 12-18 May 2007). A complaint lodged by community representatives against the police for shooting the two protesters has not been investigated, reportedly because police received orders from superiors not to do so.

After the April protests, community representatives sought in vain to meet with the dam authorities in Khartoum to present their concerns. A Chinese company deployed workers and machinery to the area and the authorities increased the presence of security forces in an apparent effort to press ahead with construction and protect workers and machinery from expected violent protests.

24 June 2007

UNMIS Human Rights

The Dam Building in Northern Sudan: Is it a Tool for the Resettlement of Millions of Egyptian Peasants? Is it a New Darfur Scenario in the Making?

(Mohammed Jalal Hashim gave this lecture in London in 2008 to a Solicitors International Human Rights Group.)

M. Jalal Hashim

Introduction

I will try to discuss the deteriorating situation in northern Sudan that has resulted from the policies of demographic engineering implemented by the government. The components of this policy are as follows: (a) building a series of dams in northern Sudan so as to evacuate the region and resettle the Nubians and Manasir and Amri-Hamdab people (i.e. the indigenous ethnic groups who are affected by the construction of the dams) far away from their home villages; (b) bringing in millions of Egyptian peasants to settle in the areas evacuated by the indigenous groups. The plan is being implemented in collaboration with the Egyptian government – it was the Egyptian government who first engendered this plan in its own Nubian region. It seems that this is not the first time the Khartoum government adopted such a policy – it was implemented in Darfur, leading to the crisis there. In the case of Darfur, a whole Arab nomadic tribe from Chad was welcomed into the region. It was armed and supported by the Sudanese government to eventually wreak havoc in Darfur (cf. Hashim, 2008).

My discussion will focus on four points. The first is to discuss the documents related to the plans of the Sudanese government to resettle millions of Egyptian peasants in the northern region. The second point is to try to answer the question of whether the dams already built (taking the High Dam in Aswan, Egypt, as a case) have brought any development to the affected Nubians after they were resettled far away from their home villages. The question raised here is whether the de-population of the region was the first phase of the present plan, which aims at re-populating it with Egyptian peasants brought from the delta of the Nile. The third point is to try to answer the question; why do the Nubians flatly reject building any more dams in northern Sudan? The fourth point is to see if the government of Sudan is ready to use violence against the indigenous people who defy its hideous plans to resettle them away from their home villages.

The Settlement of Egyptian Peasants in the Nubian Region in Sudan

In late 2003, news leaked out revealing that negotiations at the highest levels with the Egyptian government had been conducted to facilitate the settlement of millions of Egyptian peasants, along with their families, in the triangle of the Nubian basin; Halfa-Dongola-Uweinat. The aim of this move is said to be, on the one hand, to safeguard the Arab identity of Sudan against the growing awareness of Africanism in Sudan, generally and among the Nubians in particular. On the other hand, it is said to serve a very cynical purpose: to help re-populate the Nubian region from which its people have continued moving away for the last half century.

The Sudanese delegation, which was backed by a presidential mandate, was led by an Arabist Nubian, General-Brigadier Abdul Rahim Muhammad Husain (then Minister of the Interior, presently Minister of Defence). A cover-up plan named the “Four Freedoms” which theoretically allows the Sudanese, and the Egyptians as well, to own agrarian lands and settle in both countries, was officially declared. The cover-up plan came out half cooked, as both parties were over eager in their scramble to create a *de facto* situation, before the Nubians become aware of what was going on. There is no agrarian land to be owned by the Sudanese investors in Egypt. But there is land for the Egyptians in the Sudan.

On 31 March 2003 a headline news press release from the state Minister of Agriculture in Khartoum (Dr al-Sadig Amara, an Arabist Nubian as well) revealed that 6.1 million feddans in the triangle of Nubian basin had been sold to the Egyptians (investors and peasants) with long term leases, i.e. investment through settlement (cf. *al-Sahafa Newspaper*, 31 March 2004, No. 3892). There is no mention of the Nubians in all these deals, which seem like they were made overnight.

Online Evidences

On official visits to Cairo, the two ministers mentioned above held meetings with Egyptian scholars and intellectuals who were sceptical about the viability of resettling millions of Egyptian peasants in the Sudan (for Dr Sadig Amara, see: <http://www.ahram.org.eg/archive/index.asp?CurFN=file1.htm&DID=8373>). Such a scheme, applied in Iraq a few years ago during the war against Iran, resulted in the physical elimination of the poor peasants immediately after the war ended. However the two flamboyant ministers chivalrously gave their solemn pledges, reminding their audience that they were backed by a presidential mandate.

The Minister of Defence went out of his way in challenging his audience to bring forward alternative solutions for tackling the population explosion in Egypt, if not through migration to the vast areas of the sparsely populated northern Sudan. Furthermore, lamenting the fact that the Egyptian migration to the Sudan had significantly diminished in the late decades after independence, he pointed out that the migration from West Africa had steadily increased. The state minister on his behalf lamented the hesitation of some Egyptian intellectuals and officials, urging them to expedite moving to the Nubian basin before [*sic*] other people moved there (see: <http://www.ahram.org.eg/archive/Index.asp?CurFN=file5.htm&DID=8359>; see also: <http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/ahram/2001/1/1/CONF20.HTM>).

Pro Egypt, Anti Sudan

The advocacy for this second objective was left to a collection of pro-Cairo writers. In a symposium held in Khartoum and sponsored by the Ahram Strategic Centre (understandably the symposium was presided by an Egyptian journalist) and the Centre for Media Services (CMS, a media arm affiliated to the Sudan security organ), a Sudanese ambassador (Izz al-Din Hamid, cf. *al-Rai al-Am Newspaper*, 18 April 2004, p. 3) said: “The present integration has not gone beyond the bilateral relations. To have it [the true integration] the top priority should go to food security, agricultural integration and the expansion in wheat cultivation in the northern region of the Sudan so as to encourage the Egyptian peasant to cross the border into the northern region in order to achieve the structural demographic equilibrium, which lacks attractiveness with regard to the Arab countries, especially Egypt, while it is attractive to people of West Africa who knew their way to the Sudan since long ago.”

In a newspaper article, Muhammad Sa'id Muhammad al-Hasan, who is fanatically pro-Egyptian, went further to claim that the Egyptian demographic re-population of the Nubian region is not only a necessity, but also a right (cf. *al-Rai al-am Newspaper*, 8 February 2005, No. 2351). In one of his Egypt-loving articles, which was published in a Sudanese newspaper, we read “... the population inter-mix between the two parts of the Nile valley should take the first priority as it is necessary for the South [i.e. the Sudan] in the same way as it is a necessary for the North [i.e. Egypt]; it is the core of the

integrative and unification process ... The acceleration of the 'Four Freedoms Agreement', especially the part that deals with facilitating the move of Egyptian peasants towards the southern part [of the valley, i.e. the northern part of the Sudan], will bring about a wide range of benefits in the Nile valley, not only on the level of agricultural produce and expansion and the creation of new productive areas, but also on the level of realizing demographic equilibrium. ... Thus we come to the role of Egypt in securing Sudan and bringing peace to it, and the reinstatement of the Joint Defence Treaty [signed with the May Regime (1969-1985) and nullified by the democratic rule (1985-1989)] ... As strategic necessity, it [Egypt] should restore its influence [in Sudan] and the Nile agreement along with the restoration of life and population density in the area of Old Halfa. During its rule of the Sudan, the British administration intentionally sent back home the Egyptians who worked in the Sudan, completely prohibiting their entry without a visa that was only granted to government officials. At the same time it opened the door for primitive immigration [*si*] coming from neighbouring African countries... .”

A flow of pro-Egyptian, anti-Sudan newspaper articles began appearing regularly. They were all characteristic with particular discursive clauses, such as “the strategic demographic equilibrium”, the Egyptians are assumed to realize in de-populated northern Sudan “the dire necessity for Egyptian public presence in northern Sudan”, and cynical allusions such as the “free and un-inhibited move of West Africans into the Sudan.”

All these developments lead the Nubians to submit a memo to Kofi Annan (cf. Hashim, 2006) where they raised the alarm and asked to be protected. In that memo, they argued that the Egyptian government, right from the beginning, wanted the area of the High Dam reservoir completely depopulated of its indigenous people (i.e. all the Nubians affected in both the Sudan and Egypt). They further argued that disrupting the Nubian society of northern Sudan and southern Egypt was a target for the governments of both countries, as the Nubians constituted the only indigenous ethnic group with an African tongue on the Nile from Kosti and Sinnar (up the White Nile) down to the Mediterranean Sea.

Is it Flat Submissiveness of Sudan to Egypt?

In fact the plans to evacuate the Nubian region, so as to facilitate the re-settlement of millions of Egyptian peasants to resolve Egypt's chronic problems of population increase on the one side, and the scarcity of resources on the other, seem to be endorsed by political forces other than the present Islamic regime. In 2000 al-Sadig al-Mahdi, the elected prime minister in the last democracy (1985-1989) and the Imam of the Ansar sect and leader of Umma Party, published a book while in exile in Cairo with the title: *Miyāb al-nīl: al-wa'd w'al-wa'id* (The Nile Water: the Expectations and the Menaces) where we read under the heading “The Demographic Map”: “The present demographic map of the Sudan has a defect; the provision of services and the demands of development

necessitates a population improvement by which the dispersed villages, whose number is about 65, are regrouped into bigger villages. The investment map of the Sudan also needs to be fundamentally reconsidered. The demographic map in Egypt suffers also from defects because almost the whole population of Egypt are settled on the Nile bank and its delta, which is about 3 per cent of its land. There have been repeated attempts, since the time of the *Tabrîr* Province, and presently *al-Wādî al-jadîd* (the New Valley) and Toshka, to break away from the known human settlements so as to achieve demographic dispersion – a matter completely contrary to the Sudanese case. The new demographic map [sic] will show the need for demographic injections in various areas in the Sudan. The thought of organizing Egyptian migration to the Sudan is far more feasible than trying to develop lands reclaimed from the desert which cost much water and money.” In a symposium held in Khartoum in 2007, al-Sadig al-Mahdi concurred with his suggestions that it would be wise for the Egyptians to move to Sudan (cf. *Al-Wasit Newspaper*, 29 November 2007). This shows that the threats facing the Nubians may not come to an end with the dismantlement of the present Islamic regime.

The government officials kept denying their intentions of resettling millions of Egyptian peasant in the Sudan, while working for it openly. This was thought by many Nubians to be a way of de-sensitizing the issue. The *al-Masri alyoum Newspaper* [The Egyptian Today] of 3 April 2008 wrote: “Jalal al-Dugeir [Secretary General of Democratic Unionist Party], the Sudanese minister of industry, has revealed that his country had received offers from Egypt, Qatar and the Emirates to cultivate about 6 million feddans of wheat”. When asked about the expected mass migration of Egyptians to the Sudan, the minister resignedly said: “The Egyptians are coming in all cases, whether we like it or not.” This statement is also available online: <http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/articl...rticleID=99842>. The number given by the said newspaper for the Egyptians was only 5,000. However, on 26 May 2008 the *al-Sahafa Newspaper* [Sudan] appeared with the following headline news: “Arrangements for the Resettlement of 5 Million Egyptians Peasants in al-Gezira Region [just south of Khartoum].” The Nubians also took the naming of al-Gezira as a de-sensitization tactic, expecting it to eventually be their own region, as it is their region that has all the lands greedily sought by the Egyptian government.

In the early years of the Islamic government in the Sudan (1989-1995), the relationship with Egypt was very hostile. In 1995, Egypt accused Sudan of plotting to assassinate its president, Hosni Mubarak, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. By the turn of the century, in seeking regional allies, the Islamic government of Khartoum befriended Egypt, but apparently at a very high cost. Since then, Egypt and other Arabs states have begun scrambling into the Sudan to do business, with a host of secretive development projects being hatched.

Sudan has never been this submissive to either Egypt or the Arabs. This has encouraged the Egyptians not to show any bashfulness or diplomacy when dealing with

internal and sensitive Sudanese issues. In a workshop held by the Middle East & African Studies Centre under the title "Towards a National Strategy of Water in the Sudan" at I-Zubeir Muhammad Salih Hall, Khartoum, 2 September 2007, the Egyptian Ambassador went out of his way to attack the Sudanese who stood against building the dams in northern Sudan (cf. Fikri Abul Qasim, "Nadwat al-miyah wa 'uzlat al-safir" [The Symposium on Water and the Isolation of the Ambassador], *Eilaf Newspaper*, 10 September 2007). In a press conference held in Cairo the Egyptian Minister of Investment (Mahmoud Mohyildin) commented on the Egyptian and Arab scramble into the Sudan for investment by saying: "Investment in the Sudan is for the swift who first catches it up" (*Al-Sahafa Newspaper*, 16 April 2008).

This is the same Egypt which has been occupying the Sudanese territory of Halayib on the Red Sea since 1990. It is worth mentioning that in the national census held in 2008, the Sudanese government failed to cover the triangle of Halyib; the Egyptian government did not allow it to go there. The *Al-Sudani Newspaper*, 10 March 2008, appeared with the following headline: "The Egyptian Authorities Impede undertaking the Census in Halayib."

The High Dam and the De-Population of the Nubian Region in Sudan and Egypt

The construction of the High Dam in Aswan was completed, resulting in an area of 500 km along the Nile course (310 km in Egypt, 190 km in the Sudan) being submerged under the reservoir. The reservoir, i.e. the lake, bears two names, Lake Nasser in Egypt, and Lake Nubia in the Sudan. This has led to the resettlement of about 16,500 Nubian families in Egypt (with a similar number of Nubian families on the Sudan side) away from their historical lands. In the case of Egyptian Nubians, the area for resettlement was a barren place called Koum Ambo near Aswan. In the case of the Sudanese Nubians, the area of resettlement was a place called Khashm al-Girba in middle-eastern Sudan, known to be of a rainy autumn, in contrast to the Saharan Nubian region.

Thus the High Dam of Aswan has literally resulted in the submerged area being completely de-populated. Since then, the evacuated area has witnessed no development projects. Only in recent years has the Egyptian government started to re-populate the area, so as to develop it.

The Non-Nubian Re-Population of Nubia

The Nubians in both Egypt and the Sudan did make many attempts to go back and establish small colonies of settlements and agriculture. They farmed the drawdown areas by pumping water from the reservoir (Fernea & Rouchdy, 1991). However, all these attempts were occasionally aborted by the fluctuating water level of the reservoir, a matter the Nubians believe to be intentional by the authorities that never encouraged them to go back.

By the 1990s the Egyptian government began following a policy of repopulating the evacuated Nubian regions. It began encouraging Egyptians, other than Nubians to settle in the evacuated areas around the reservoir lake. It did this while the Nubians were kept away from their own historical lands, living a pigsty life in their barren area of Koum Ambo. However, two economical activities have been available for development in the evacuated area; namely fishery and agriculture. Indeed there are such projects, but with no Nubians among either the fishers by the Egyptian government (for fishery, cf. Lassaily-Jacob, 1990; for agriculture, cf. Fernea & Rouchdy, 1991). The same thing happened in the Sudan, with tacit encouragement from the government to the Arab Bedouin who began settling in the evacuated area. The full and open selling-out of Sudanese Nubia by the Sudanese government was still to wait for a few years to come.

The re-population of the Nubian region in Egypt has become an official policy entrusted to both the Minister of Agriculture and the military governor of Aswan. Villages with full facilities and utilities were built by the Egyptian government and distributed to individuals and families from outside the regions with bank loans to start them off. The latest of this is the inauguration of the settlement at the old Nubian village of Kalabsha, with 150 non-Nubian families, which was opened by the Minister of Agriculture, Amin Abaza (cf. *al-Wafd Newspaper*, 18/05/2006). On 11 July 2006 the *Al-Abram Newspaper* (the unofficial voice of the government) announced that tens of thousands of feddans were to be distributed in the Nubian region to people other than the Nubians themselves. When the Nubians demanded that their lands be returned to them, they got an arrogant reply from the military governor of Aswan: "If you want your lands, go fetch them beneath the water" (cf. Rajab al-Murshidi in *Rousa al Yousef Newspaper*. www.rosaonline.net).

At the same time, the Nubians who ventured on by building their own colonies and farms in their old lands began facing obstacles at every corner. No-one from the international community has come to help the Nubians in Egypt. They began voicing their problem through the Internet, making use of the numerous Nubian websites, which mostly revolve around the home-villages bearing their names (cf. www.abirtabag.net; www.jazeratsai.com; www.karma2.com; www.3amara.com; www.nubian-forum.com/vb and www.nubnubian.com).

This policy was adopted by the Egyptian government in order to contain the discontent among its Arab population who had been negatively affected by the 1992 Agricultural Law, which came into effect by 1997. This law liberalized the land tenure market by abolishing the old land rental and tenure by returning it to its old feudal owners, thus compelling the peasants to re-hire it all over again, with the threat of a rental price increase looming over their heads. During the 1990s, the price actually tripled and by now it has quadrupled (Roudart, 2000/1). This has caused turmoil and unrest among the peasants who began seeking other jobs. Migration of the peasants to other areas of agricultural schemes of reclaimed land, away from their home villages,

was encouraged by the government. The Egyptian government adopted the policy of inter-migration so as to solve; (1) its chronic problem of population explosion, and; (2) to compensate those who have been negatively affected by its land liberalization law. Re-settlement in the reclaimed land of the New Valley in Sinai was officially encouraged, a matter the peasants were not enthusiastic about. Being riverain all through history, such a move was too much for them. That is how the Egyptian government began re-settling them in the Nubian regions which were evacuated four decades ago against the will of its historical people, the Nubians.

The Argument against the Dams in Northern Sudan

The presidential-mandated Dams Implementation Unit (DIU) declared plans to construct more than 20 dams with five of them in northern Sudan; Dagash and al-Shireik dams at the fifth cataract (affecting the Rubatab tribe); Mirwi dam at the fourth cataract (affecting all of the Manasir tribe and part of the Shayqiyya tribe); Kajbar dam at the third cataract (affecting the southern part of the Mahas Nubians and the northern part of the Dongola Nubians); and Dal dam at the second cataract (affecting all Sukkout Nubians and the no Mahas Nubians).

Dams are built either with productive (agriculture and power) or preventive (against floods and draught) objectives. Their functions, however, are not mutually exclusive, as a dam can serve one, two, or even all of the above purposes (as is the case with the Aswan High Dam). However, it is deemed necessary to clearly state the function of a dam when building one. If a dam is built to irrigate land, then the agricultural scheme should necessarily be conceived before the idea of the dam; the same rule applies when the dam is built to generate power for industry. So far, aside from generalizing and saying that these dams are meant for both agriculture and industry, the Sudan government has failed to publicly bring forward the details of any development project in relation to the dams it intends to build.

Below, I am going to discuss the feasibility of building dams with regard to irrigation, industry and duration.

The Argument about Power Generation Claims

The total amount of power to be generated from all the dams in the Sudan will not exceed 5,000 MW (according to Makkawi al-Awad, the Director-General of the National Electricity Corporation, cf. *Al-Ayyam Newspaper*, 16 February 2008). The cost of Mirwi dam has so far exceeded \$2.25 billion, borrowed from China and various Arab states and banks; the dam has not yet come to completion. With such a small amount of power to be generated, the dam is thought not feasible with regard to the high cost. For instance, the non-industrial consumption of power in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, is 8 000 MW. This raises a host of questions such as: If Saudi Arabia, as an oil country, is able to generate all this power (35,000 MW in total), why not Sudan, which has also become an

oil country? What will Sudan do when Khartoum becomes the size of Riyad? Makkawi al-Awad (ibid.) gives us the following options for power generation covering the period up to the year 2030, both thermal and hydro:

- Hydro-power generation: 4 587 MW (28%)
- Thermal-power generation: 18 491 MW (28%)

4.2. The Argument about Irrigation Claims

Dams are often built to provide irrigation for agricultural development projects. However, this presupposes that there is enough water for this irrigation. The total share of Sudan in the Nile water is 18 billion cubic meters (BCM), while its consumption is 14 BCM, with a surplus of 4 BCM only. This means that it can rely on these 4 million cubic meters for its agricultural development projects. But building the five dams in northern Sudan will waste more than its surplus in evaporation, as the region is known for its very hot climate. To make things worse, the region is also known for its relatively flat topography, a matter that results in the dam reservoirs being extensively stretched; thus providing a great water surface for evaporation. Of the five dams, I will consider the evaporation loss of only three of them: Mirwi, Kajbar and Dal. These figures are taken from Dr Seif al-Din Hamad Abdalla (2008), "*al-qudra al-takhsīniyya l'il-sudūd 'ala al-nīl wa rawāfidihi dākhi al-Sudan*" [The Storaion Capacity of the Dams on the Nile and its Tributaries in the Sudan], Workshop of the Middle East & African Studies Centre under the title "Towards a National Strategy of Water in the Sudan." Al-Zubeir Muhammad Salih Hall, Khartoum, 2 September 2007. The importance of this reference is that the writer, more than being a highly qualified person on water resources, is the expert for the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources and in this capacity, he submitted this paper:

- Mirwi Dam evaporation loss of water: 1.5 BCM
- Kajbar Dam evaporation loss of water: 1.7 BCM
- Dal Dam evaporation loss of water: 800 MCM

This shows that the building of these three dams will literally leave Sudan without any water surplus that may allow it to undertake further agricultural development projects. The same author, speaking in the same capacity in a symposium held by the government in Khartoum, stated that only 2 BCM of Sudan's surplus of water will remain after the completion of Mirwi dam (cf. *Al-Khartoum Newspaper*, 24 June 2008); the remaining 2 BCM will vanish into the thin air by the completion of the Kajbar and Dal dams. In a conference of Arab ministers of water resources held in the Sharm al-Shaikh resort in Egypt, the Sudanese minister, Kamal Ali, admitted that the dams of northern

Sudan were being built only for power generation (cf. *Al-Masri ahyoum Newspaper* [The Egyptian Today], 22 March 2008).

But this raises the following question; If there is no water left, from where will the settling Egyptians irrigate the fields of millions of feddans they are allegedly going to cultivate in the Sudan? The millions of feddans are not located close to the Nile – the nearest will be at least 30 km west of the Nile. This is the Nubian basin of Halfa-Dongola-Uweinat, referred to above. About this basin the Arab Organization for Investment and Agricultural Development (AOIAD) writes: “The capacity of this basin is 5,500 million cubic meters with a total of 136 MCM feeding it (from the Atbara and Nile rivers). The feed-up increase when water starts to be pumped from it” (AOIAD, 1983, *Dirasa istita'iyya gi lil-mawarid wal'istithmar al-z'ira'I fil-iqlimayn al-sharqi wal'shimali fi jamburiyyat al-Sudan al-dimuqratiyya* [A Pilot Study about the Agricultural Resources and Investment in the East and North Regions in the Democratic Republic of the Sudan], Khartoum, 1983). Pumping the water from its ground reservoirs in the basin is not expensive, as the reservoirs, notwithstanding that they go deep into the ground, are close to the surface (AOIAD, *Tahdith dirasat al-tawassu' hg-'ufuqi wal-ea'si fi z'ira'at al-qamih bil-iqlim al-shimali fi-jamburiyyat al-Sudan* [The Updating of the Studies for the Horizontal and Vertical Cultivation of Wheat in the Northern Region of the Sudan], Khartoum, 1990). Whereas the Egyptians have exclusively bought over the lands on the western side of the river Nile in the northern region of Nubian land, various Arab states and investment companies have bought lands on the eastern side of the Nile. It is worth noting that there is no water, whether from the Nile (canalized from the dams) or from underground, on the eastern side of the Nile, as the river approximately lies on a rocky mastaba that extends up to the Red Sea Hills. From where the Arabs are going to get water to irrigate their cultivation remains to be answered by them.

The Argument about Dam Duration

Dams built on rivers with high alluvial sediments, such as is the case with the river Nile, are deemed unfeasible (Abdalla, 2007). The dam of Khashm al-Qirba on the river Atbara in eastern Sudan was built to irrigate the agricultural projects set up solely to sustain the Nubians affected by the Aswan High Dam who had been resettled there. It was built at the same time with the Aswan High Dam. The last 40 years have been enough to relegate it into redundancy as a result of the river's annual 170 million tons of sediment (ibid.). This has led to the deterioration of the Khashm al-Qirba agricultural scheme to the extent that it could not sustain the Nubians who have found themselves compelled to mount another exodus, this time to the marginalized outskirts of Khartoum.

The situation of the Aswan High Dam with regard to sedimentation remains a matter for guessing, due to the secrecy enveloping it. However, it is known that the USAID have funded \$154 million in improvements to the High Dam since the late

1980s:(<http://egypt.usaid.gov/Default.aspx?PageID=84>;http://www.usaid.gov/stories/egypt/cs_egypt_dam.html).

More than harming the turbines of the dam, the high alluvial sediments of the Nile water have caused acute problems of salinity in Egypt. In R.J. Oosterbaan (1999) (online <http://www.waterlog.info/>) we read: “The salt concentration of the water in lake Nasser [read Lake Nubia in the Sudan] at the High Dam is about 0.25 kg³ salt/m. The salt import into Egypt’s water use systems thus amounts to about 14 million tons per year (55 billion m³ water/year x 0.25 kg salt/m³ water) or roughly 1.6 ton/feddan/year over 8.7 million feddan of irrigated land, i.e. 4.0 ton/ha/year.” So, if the last 40 years were enough to turn the Khashm al-Qirba dam into redundancy, then it is quite possible that the dams being built in northern Sudan will face the same fate. When the river Atbara joins the Nile, the alluvial sediments reach 270 million tons. All five the dams are down the confluence of the Atbara and the Nile. This brings into question the feasibility of building these dams. Are they built to save the Aswan High Dam from the fate that has befallen Khashm al-Qirba dam? If this is so, then why should the Sudanese tax payers pay for building them? Such were the questions raised by the anti-dam Nubians.

In a newspaper interview, when faced with such anti-dam arguments, the Director of DIU, Osama Abdalla, defiantly retorted back: “The more they attack me, the more projects I will come up with” (cf. *Al-Wifaq Newspaper*, 30 April 2008).

The Government Shoot-to-Kill Policy against the Anti-Dam Villagers

Building dams is a technical matter where transparency is most needed regarding technical qualifications. The unit responsible for building dams in the Sudan used to be under the authority of a technical ministry, that of Irrigation and Water Resources, until it was put under the direct authority of the Presidency in 1999 with a law of its own that makes it immune from litigation and auditing. Since then the building of dams has been politicized to the extent that a number of specialists and experts feared that this might have compromised the professionalism and technicality of dam building.

As the policy of total de-population was adopted in all these projects, it was decided that the people affected by Mirwi dam be resettled in areas far from their historical homelands, at gun point. To make it even worse, the government was very secretive about the project, totally ignoring the need to consult the concerned communities. Those who lived immediately behind the dam, i.e. the Hamdab, were compelled to resettle in an arid area covered by sand dunes about 100 km down the river, far from its shore. They submitted to that because they were not fully aware of the plight to befall them. The people next to them, i.e. those of the Amri region, resisted the plans of resettlement, demanding to be allowed to resettle on the shore of the artificial lake by the dam, just above the contour at which the rising water would stop. The government declined them this right. The Manasir who were the only ethnic group to be wholly affected by the dam, adamantly rejected evacuating the area, demanding, like their

brethren in the Amri area, the right to resettle on the shore of the lake. They were also denied this right. Up to this moment, one third of the Amri people and the majority of the Manasir are there sticking to their home villages notwithstanding the rising water of the dam, as on 16 April 2008 the last gate of the dam was closed. The tragedies of the people who have remained are all over the web. One only needs to google either “Amri” or “Manasir” to find the likes of: http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=B1it_0SSa4k&feature=related.

The Nubians have been traumatized by the dams that have been built on the Nile since 1902, when the first Aswan dam was constructed. Their trauma continued on all through the rising phases of it (1910, 1933) to the construction of the High Dam in 1964. All this has prompted the Nubians of Dongola, Mahas and Sukkout to organize themselves to resist the building of any more dams. The Nubians of the Halfa region who were affected by the High Dam and have long since been resettled in the eastern Sudan, joined their brethren in the fight against dam building. The President announced that dams were not going to be built without the explicit consent of the people in the affected area. The exact maps showing the boundary of the areas to be affected by the dams of Mirwi, Kajbar and Dal were kept secret. However, rumours leaked from the DIU telling that the water reservoir of Kajbar dam would extend 105 km up the river to Dongola city; the water reservoir of Dal dam would extend to 65 km up the river to a small village called Kid Urma, just 6 km down the dam of Kajbar. To curb these widespread rumours, the DIU began speaking about the areas to be affected, every time increasing the size of the reservoir and submerged areas.

The shooting of Amri People

On the 22nd of April 2006 on Amri island, government security forces, militia groups and special paratroops belonging to the DIU opened fire on a small congregation of people who resisted being evicted. Three people were killed immediately, with others injured. The Sudan Human Rights Organization reported the murderous attack with strong condemnation: “As relayed by several witnesses, as well as families of the injured citizens, the attack was planned and executed by the assaulting troop in collaboration with the security headquarters of the dam administration, which had been threatening with ‘severe reactions’ the natives opposing the dam’s location and the resettlement plans for the natives far away from their ancestral land at the Nile bank” (for more details of the incident, see: http://www.sudantribune.com/article.php3?id_article=15235).

Unlike the Nubians, the people affected by Mirwi dam did agree to the project, but not without the condition to remain living in their home areas, i.e. not to be evacuated. However, the government seemed to have other agendas. By then, the regions of northern Sudan were reeking with wild rumours and conspiracy theories telling of secret agreements between the Sudanese and Egyptian governments, upon which Egyptians

peasants would be marauding the region. In fact they were far from being either rumours or conspiracy theories, as they contained a grain of truth; the Four Freedoms has paved the way to bring about and realize these fears and rumours.

The shooting of Kajbar People

Kajbar is a small village in the middle of the Nubian Mahas region about 111 km down the river from Dongola, the capital of the northern state. The most northerly part of the third cataract ends at Kajbar, where the government declared, in 1995, its plans to build a dam. So it was natural for their reaction to the project to be negative and to reject the idea with the intention of resisting it.

Such were the contentions the Nubians had had when they began organizing village-scale demonstrations, especially in Kajbar area. Believing in the presidential and official promises, they wanted to express their total rejection of the dam building. On the 10th of April 2007 they organized a peaceful demonstration in the small villages overlooking the cataract, which was assumed to be the site of the dam. The special security force, which was putting on an army fatigue, opened fire wounding at least five people. Taking the injured people and heading back to the nearest hospital, at a certain river-mountain strait (called *Kidin Takkār* in Nubian) that allows for only one vehicle to pass at a time, the demonstrators came across a group of about 20 heavily armed soldiers apparently meant as reinforcement. Outnumbering the armed men, the angry demonstrators encircled the two vehicles and took the soldiers hostage, after stripping them of their arms, for about two hours, before releasing them.

On the 13th of June 2007 the villagers organized another peaceful demonstration that started from a village called Farrēg and then headed down the river toward the cataract. About 5 km up the river from the cataract, exactly at the same strait where they had held the armed men hostage, the demonstration was ambushed by a heavily armed force that had been positioned atop the mountain. The force opened fire killing instantly four people, with one of them (Muhammad Faqir) a teenager of only 18 years old. More than 15 people were injured. The whole massacre was filmed by a video amateur; it shows the armed men cheering and dancing when shooting the villagers (see: <http://www.youtube.com/user/nabielogr>). In the coming weeks more than 20 people were arrested, among them journalists who tried to report on the matter (see: <http://www.copts.com/english1/index.php/2007/08/07/amnesty-calls-for-release-of-sudan-detainees/>). Leading figures of Nubian senior activists resisting the dam-building were also detained for months (see: <http://platform.blogs.com/passionofthepresent/2007/07/new-arrest-foll.html>). Young Nubian activists were also arrested in northern Sudan and Khartoum (see: http://www.amnesty.org/en/alfresco_asset/55c51b81-a2ba-11dc-8d74-6f45f39984e5/afr540532007en.html).

Conclusion

The situation in Nubia and northern Sudan is very critical. There is evidence that both the governments of Khartoum and Cairo are working to facilitate the settlement of millions of Egyptian peasants in the northern region. This policy of demographic engineering is believed by many to be the major factor that has led to the devastation of Darfur, with hundreds of thousands killed in a way that have made the international community look at it as a case of genocide. The Nubians already raised the alarm a few years ago in their memo to the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. The question they raise now is whether the international community is waiting for them to be killed in tens and hundreds of thousands before paying attention. They believe that to stop a war before it begins is far easier than to stop it after it has started. They believe that to wait for a war to be launched and then intervene is a stance loaded with hidden agendas, whereas to come in support of the people afflicted before it is war, shows true human solidarity and spares the afflicted country the trauma of neo-colonial intervention that capitalizes on the calamities of the developing countries.

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Darfur Destroyed: Sudan's Perpetrators Break Silence

A few days before the issue of an International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant for President Omar al Bashir, Khartoum's agents and surrogates revealed the hand of the regime in the genocidal campaign in Darfur.

In a 20 minute film released on the brink of that decision, Khartoum's executioners broke their silence to reveal how Darfur's atrocities were planned, financed and carried out - and who was responsible. **To view the film visit www.vimeo.com/3161513** (Footage and audio available for broadcast. Contact David Brown, david.brown@aegistrust.org)

Since 2003, at least 300,000 civilians have died in Darfur and millions have been displaced from their homes, many of them at the hands of militia nicknamed the 'Janjaweed' ('devils on horseback'). Time after time, survivors stated - and international observers confirmed - that as they murdered, raped, looted and burned village after village, the Janjaweed was backed by the Sudanese army and air force. Yet the Sudanese Government has consistently denied responsibility for atrocities in Darfur and to this day, says it has nothing to do with the Janjaweed.

However, the defectors in this film - some of them speaking publicly for the first time - tell a very different story.

Created by the Aegis Trust with the support of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (Egypt), Human Rights First (USA) and the Society for Threatened Peoples (Germany), the film features interviews conducted by researchers including Phil Cox (Native Voice Films) and Frank Dutton (former deputy head of investigations at the ICTY).

Between them, a senior Army finance officer, a Janjaweed commander, a regular soldier and a Janjaweed fighter explain why and how the Sudanese Government created

and launched the Janjaweed militia; how it disguised the militia, once atrocities in Darfur came to world attention; how it armed and paid the Janjaweed; how the Janjaweed worked with Sudan's regular army and air force, and how rape has been used as a weapon against the civilian population.

The witnesses implicate Sudanese Government figures at the highest level - including Ahmed Harun (Minister for Humanitarian Affairs), Ali Osman Mohammed Taha (Second Vice President), and even Omar al-Bashir himself.

Moataz El Fegiery, Executive Director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) states: "If you don't believe the victims, or if you mistrust the UN, then you should at least listen to the voices of the perpetrators. In their own words, they describe the Sudanese Government's role in killing its own people."

Dr James Smith, Chief Executive of the Aegis Trust, states: "As one-time servants of the Bashir regime, the defectors in this film provide powerful evidence of the responsibility of the Sudanese Government for mass atrocities in Darfur. As they themselves have said: those responsible should be brought to account and answer at the ICC - even if they include the President himself."

Nicolas Burniat, Pennoyer Fellow at Human Rights First noted: "For too long, the international community has allowed the government in Sudan to get away with murder in Darfur. To this very day, many countries continue to sell weapons to Khartoum, allowing the Sudanese army to keep sending fresh arms to Darfur, as shown in Aegis Trust's film. Whether or not the ICC issues an arrest warrant against Bashir, these countries must decide between pushing Sudan to face its responsibility to cooperate with the Court or continuing to support a suspected war criminal."

The defectors in their own words

- Popular Defence Force / Janjaweed commander: "The Sudanese Government, all time he said, no genocide there, no rape there. I am from the PDF - Janjaweed - I want to tell the World the truth."
- Sudanese army paymaster: "As a human being, I'm not able to feel good about this. I am paying them and they're going to kill other people."
- Popular Defence Force / Janjaweed commander: "The President of Sudan, Omar el Bashir, sent four billion Sudanese pounds for the Popular Defence Force in Nyala to be distributed as an incentive."
- Popular Defence Force / Janjaweed commander: "...when you destroy the wells, or when you cut the trees, or when you burn the village, this means you expel the civilians from the village. This is an instruction from...It is came from Khartoum."

- Janjaweed fighter: "Rape can happen. Rape can happen... What would happen is, they took the girls and the women away, just out of sight, and they started to rape them."
- Sudanese soldier: "They shout 'Kill the slaves' and 'Fuck the slaves.' They take girls and rape them. They rape and torture them. They want the children to be different in colour, to be like them."

ENDS

For more information, or to arrange interviews, contact David Brown at the Aegis Trust in the UK on +44 (0)7921 471985, email: david.brown@aegistrust.org or Krista Minter at Human Rights First in New York at 212-845-5207, email: minterk@humanrightsfirst.org.

Notes to Editors

For a full transcript of the film, contact Krista Minter, minterk@humanrightsfirst.org.

- A Video News Release on Mini DV tape is available on request, containing a broadcast quality version of the full film, together with a clean copy of the footage (stripped of music and subtitles).
- A shot list is available to accompany the VNR. This gives full time codes for the film and includes copyright information (all footage and audio of the Janjaweed commander and some of the GVs used in the film are copyright to Native Voice Films. All other material comes cleared for broadcast).
- Audio clips from the film required for broadcast can be made available for download on request.

The film is also available in Arabic, and will shortly be available in other languages including French and German (more information available on request).

BOOK REVIEW

Eric Akrofi, Maria Smit and Stig-Magnus Thorsén (Eds.).
Music and Identity: Transformation and Negotiation.
Stellenbosch, South Africa: African Sun Media (Sun Press),
2007, 414 pages, pp I-X, no price indicated.

Mubanga E. Kashoki

Representing one concrete, tangible outcome of the Swedish South African Research Network (SSARN) on Music and Identity, (a collaborative research partnership between two areas of the world, Sweden and South Africa,) the book under review was to be the culmination of a research project with the main objective “to develop research discourses around music, identity and culture, shared between two areas of the world, Sweden and South Africa” (Introduction, p. iii). However, as the work progressed, participation in the project grew exponentially in geographical terms, with the result that, as the projected book came to fruition, the South African constituency of the Network included inputs from Namibia, Kenya, the USA and Ghana, while the Swedish counterpart included participation from Denmark, Finland and Australia, a dimension that is evident in the contents that now make up the published volume.

Organizationally, the volume consist of a table of contents, a foreword, introduction and 23 chapters, the latter which in turn are grouped under three main themes (or “discourse sites”), these being Concepts of Identity as the first theme, Music and Discourse as the second theme, and Musical Encounters as the third and final theme. As though setting the tone to the volume, Concepts of Identity, as a “discourse site”, claims the largest number of chapters (10), followed by Musical Encounters (9), with Music and Discourse in third place with only four chapters. Providentially, thanks to an excellent Introduction by Professor Christine Lucia, couched in a lucid, incisive and exceedingly informative style, and the fact that the editors saw to it that all the contributors to the volume have consistently prefaced their respective chapters with a brief yet informative abstract, the reader is spared the intellectual ordeal of having to read every single chapter in order to gain a holistic understanding of the issues involved.

The brief notes that now follow have the purpose of giving the reader a foretaste of the pudding that is on the menu in the volume. Thus, among the contributions falling under Concepts of Identity, Thembele Vokwana of the University of South Africa, gets the ball rolling with the lead article, "Resurrecting an African identity through popular music in the post-apartheid South Africa", which, as the central thrust of the issue at hand, focuses on emergent musical styles such as kwaito and hip-hop in order to reveal the significant role being played by black youths in reformulating and developing a post-apartheid African identity in South Africa (pp. 3-4).

In similar vein, in "Singing the nation: Negotiating South African identity through coral music", as the next chapter, Nicol Claire A. Hammond, of the University of the Witwatersrand, examines the construction of South African identities through coral music-making among the choirs of three Gauteng universities by empirically testing the thesis that the university choir provides a productive space for the examination of the politics of identity formation within South Africa because of its position between the creativity of music performance, and the ritualised hegemony of the ideological state apparatus of the university (p. 21).

Regarding the next set of chapters falling under Music and Discourse, Christine Lucia's contribution tantalizingly and provocatively titled "Travesty or prophecy? Views of South African black choral composition" draws on the example of African choral music in South Africa "to show how differently the anthropological view of music in society and the musicological object can affect the way South African music is perceived" and, at the end, proposes "another kind of analytical reading, one that accepts a new African identity in the making of 20th century choral music" (p. 161). As an extension, in some ways, of this line of discourse, the following chapter "The hymnic identities of the Afrikaner", by Elsabé Kloppers, University of Pretoria, attempts to address the hypothesis that "hymns are symbols of the cultural identities of churches and nations" by, among other means, presenting a short overview of the history of the Afrikaner and relating it to Afrikaner religious views (p. 181).

The third and final set of the chapters, Musical Encounters, opens with a contribution titled "Tourism and cultural identity: conservation or commodification?" by Minette Mans, Namibia, whose line of inquiry "interrogates cultural tourism in relation to its impact on Namibian traditional cultures and contemporary music" (p. 235). With "Musicians behind bars: Can music help renew identities?" as the fourth chapter under this theme, the author, Zoliswa Tarani, of Walter Sisulu University, South Africa, sought "to investigate the extent to which music activities subvert the watchfulness of prison authorities", as well as "the way in which music encourages offenders to transcend their prisoner status, while modifying their behaviour for reintegration into the society as reformed citizens" (p. 297).

As a volume which was, in large part, the fruition of a research project involving the participation of researchers and/or scholars from various parts of the world, it is a

matter of more than passing interest that, out of a total of 23 chapters, 10 (or almost 50) per cent are contributions by collaborative research partners from outside South Africa, among them four from Sweden, two from Australia and one each from Ghana, Namibia, Denmark, Finland and the USA. The potential that such a rich diversity of cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences has for adding scientifically validated value to the body of knowledge represented in the present volume is unquestionable.

In conclusion – taking the cue from a key point Professor Lucia draws to our attention and from among several trenchant observations she makes in the concluding remarks of her Introduction; namely that “‘Identity Study’ as a whole is a vast, indeed multiple area of scholarship producing a widely divergent literature, both non-fiction and fiction, and concerning itself with gender, race, the body, the community, the nation, and fundamental issues of repression and domination at all levels of society” (p. iv) – the body of well-researched data resulting in well-grounded scholarship, as represented in the volume that has been the subject of this review, attests eloquently to the cogency of the opposite view. In this regard, in the opinion of this reviewer, the current volume will prove to be of relevant interest to a wide spectrum of social scientists, both those with a professional niche in the Humanities as well as those based in the Social Sciences. There is certainly grit for the mill in the volume for the musicologist, the sociologist, the cultural psychologist, the educationalist, the professional political scientist, and others. More generally, the volume is strongly recommended as bedside, inspirational reading for any world citizen with a modicum of interest in the welfare of the human race and an understanding that each one of us, as human beings, need to seek and secure an identity, a niche, and a role, on the earthly planet of which we are an essential and integral ingredient.

BOOK REVIEW

Patrick Harries, *Butterflies and Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries and Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa*. Oxford: James Currey; Harare: Weaver Press; Johannesburg: Wits University Press; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007. xvii + 286 pp. Photographs. Maps. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. ISBN: 978-0-8214-1777-5 (pbk.).

Felix Banda

The book is rich and dense in detail, covering differing fields ranging from history, anthropology, and the role of Christianity in the creation of ethnicity and tribes in Africa, to the linguistic aspects of colonialism; as well as the onset of unequal power relations among Africans based on formal (written) and oral versions of African languages. The book has old maps of south-eastern Africa as well as illustrative figures and photographs of butterflies, fauna and some of the most influential Swiss missionaries to venture south of the Sahara in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. Of particular interest is how the Missionaries tried and, to some extent, succeeded in changing the knowledge systems of the indigenous Africans in south-east Africa through their writings, actions and practices. The book is also about how Africans undermined and adapted European knowledge systems to suit their conditions. This did not always settle well with the missionaries, who saw their mission as bringing 'light' to the 'darkest' of Africa.

The book mostly chronicles the role of Henri-Alexandre Junod, a Swiss missionary/entomologist/botanist/naturalist. Junod, with the help of other White missionaries and African collectors, identified plants, collected and classified butterflies, constructed languages, tribes and ethnicities through their work on African dictionaries, orthographies and anthropology. He also sought to explain his theory of (African) natural science using Christian philosophy. Drawing on linguistics, and skills in natural sciences from his African assistants and collectors (whose contributions he fails to

adequately recognise), Junod came up with *The Life of a South African Tribe* between 1898 and 1927, which is recognised, as well as vilified, as a classic in South African anthropology. It is vilified for sowing the first seeds of racial segregation and tribalism in the southern parts of Africa. Incredibly, Junod drew general conclusions on African and human culture from his study of how butterflies are able to adapt and thrive in particular habitats. It is seen as a classic for its detail, and the fact that it was one of the first books of its nature to be written at the time.

Patrick Harries, the author, was initially interested in Swiss missionaries and started browsing the archives of the Swiss Mission in Lausanne on how they brought changes to southern Mozambique. As his interest on the subject grew, so did the scope of his enquiry which includes how missionaries generally perceived Africa, and the impact their African experiences had on their lives and others in Switzerland. Particular focus was also on how the activities of the missionaries created tribes out of people who did not see themselves as belonging to 'tribes', manufactured vernacular languages which they then linked to the constructed tribes and particular borders, and more specifically, the imposition of a European worldview and knowledge system on Africans. Harries suggests this was the beginning of hegemony and dominance over certain groups of people based on the 'standard' written language, which was not always the language spoken by ordinary people. This was also the beginning of dominance of Western knowledge systems over indigenous ones.

The book is written in nine chapters of, more or less, equal length. Chapter one looks at the Christian renaissance that swept through western Switzerland in the early 19th century. This saw the emergence of numerous Free churches and mission societies all vying to save the 'dark souls' in Africa. The Christian revivals also added to increasing sentiments felt by missionaries, who wished to be free of government control. This in turn led to the birth of intellectual institutions in church circles whose boundaries went above the duties of evangelism, to African history, anthropology, etc.

In chapter two, Harries discusses how the images, emanating from Africa, found their way into Swiss homes and influenced their way of life. The Swiss mission's work in Africa made them realise that they were a people wracked with factionalisms based on religion, language, region and class. Through sustained campaigns, the missionaries introduced African story-telling techniques, skills in the Arts, and other skill sets to the Swiss. However, the image of Africa as an 'evil, dark continent' in need of salvation persisted in the homes and public spaces of Switzerland. The chapter also touches on the cultural influences that laid the foundation for imperialism.

Chapter three traces early missionary work in what is now called Lesotho and Transvaal, in the 1850s and 1870s. Here Harries focuses on the Paris Evangelical Mission Society, which was later joined by the Free Church of the Canton of Vaud. The society made its base at the foot of Zoutpansberg from where converted Africans fanned out to spread the word of God, and went as far as the coastal plains of

Mozambique. These areas were inhabited by multilingual and multicultural communities quite unlike the kinds of monoglot communities the missionaries were used to in Europe. The missionaries were not aware that the area was populated by polyglot communities and set about transcribing and translating the bible into what they thought was the language spoken by all people in the areas. Harries highlights the important role played by Africans in the spread of Christianity, as well as in the transcribing and designs of orthographic conventions of African languages. The proliferation of missions and evangelists led to friction and competition for converts and territories of influence. The metropole lost control of the Christian movement as well as the content of the message, and where African evangelists were concerned, this led to a dynamic and indigenised Christianity.

Chapter four looks at the manner in which the Swiss landscape influenced the way missionaries perceived Africa. Looking at Africa through Swiss lenses led to misrepresentations of African landscapes, and misconceptions about Africans' and their way of life. Harries argues that African culture, tradition, socio-economic and political make up were distorted as they became constructions of European imagination. The misrepresented information was then used to justify colonisation at a large scale. Through novels, maps, Sunday school texts, medical manuals, history books, an image of an 'evil, dark Africa' emerged; requiring colonisation and evangelisation to bring to order. Maps were drawn and borders erected to bring large spans of land and people under control.

In chapter five, Harries turns to Junod's interests in natural sciences. Junod saw biology and theology as related fields of study. He saw the vegetation as God's handiwork and saw it as his duty to glorify God through an examination of His creation. According to Harries, Junod's understanding and integration of the world of animals and plants in Africa was tempered by "a hierarchy of knowledge ... that created and encouraged imperialism." (p. 123). Harries argues that even though Africans contributed tremendously through observations and data collection, and in terms of ideas on classification, Junod still thought Africans "were unaware of the true system underlying the organisation and understanding of nature." (p. 123). This, according to Harries led to the division of scientific knowledge into racial categories, which in turn justified the seizure of other people's land and what was on it. In essence, it was deemed legitimate and a noble duty to grab land and possessions from Africans since they did not understand the true nature of them. African ways of naming, classifying, organising and understanding nature were thus replaced by Western knowledge systems, and hence the racialisation of the notion of 'science.' This in turn paved the way for the logic of imperialism.

Chapter six focuses on language, or specifically, the invention of African languages, tribes and ethnicities by Europeans. The chapter also captures some of the problems the missionaries faced in the process of creating tribes and ethnicities out of people who

had a different view of community. Of particular interest was the fact that people who lived in a particular community or home did not necessarily speak one and the same language. It was also not uncommon for a homestead to have two or more languages spoken, with the wife speaking one language and the husband another. That these people lived in the same area and communicated among each other effectively means that they were highly multilingual. Migrations had also made the linguistic situation complex in that some of the languages spoken were not understood by all in particular areas. However, the missionaries believed that the languages sounded the same. The Mission of the Free Church of the Canton of Vaud believed seSotho, as transcribed by Paris Evangelical Mission Societies (PEMS), was spoken from 'Lesotho to the sources of the Nile' in the North (p. 155). When the mission set camp in Northern Transvaal, they set about teaching and preaching in South Sotho, a language they had been trained to speak, but the local population did not understand. It was only after a year that one of the missionaries, Paul Berthoud, realised that he had been preaching for more than a year in a language the local population did not understand! To make things worse for Berthoud, he also discovered that the linguistic situation was not as clear cut as his Western mind told him, as the people spoke different languages even though they lived in the same area. Also, they did not see themselves in the European sense of 'community' which shares language and belonging together. It also transpired that the term 'Makoapa' was not in reference to a particular language as the Europeans believed, but was a descriptive term for anybody who had migrated to the area. The people themselves did not share cultural attributes or language. In fact they spoke different languages. Berthoud translated the Lords Prayer and some hymns into 'Sekoapa' anyway! He did this with the help of his domestic 'Makoapa' and his Sotho assistant, Eliakim Matlanyane.

Harries notes that the local people who had learnt to read and write the invented languages, such as South Sotho and Sekoapa, found themselves in very enviable positions in terms of social standing. Thus, Harries notes that the Gwamba, Lemba and 'Pedi', who became literate in South Sotho, became the elite and claimed the written form of language as their own.

This is a classic example of how missionaries created vernaculars where they did not exist, manufactured ethnicity and tribes linked to specific linguistic forms and created borders and linguistic boundaries where they had been none. However, Berthoud did not like the fact that the written form of the language was only understood by a handful of people. He thus set about transcribing and translating the bible into Gwamba, the name he had given to the local dialect. After he began to understand Gwamba, he discovered that his South Sotho assistant Matlanyane, on whom he depended for translation of Gwamba, was in fact 'massacring the language [Gwamba] in an unmanageable way.' (p. 158).

The missionaries' work to identify and locate different African sounds and dialects was hampered by the fact that they did not coordinate their work. As a result, there was a 'proliferation of phonetic systems and orthographies' (p. 157) which made it impossible to record new languages or indeed to know whether a particular language had not already been transcribed by another group. The orthographies were also done by people who did not understand the linguistic landscape or the nature of Bantu languages.

In short, the chapter is packed with valuable information for the linguist, historian, and anthropologist. It is about how the different missionaries set about defining people in terms of what they thought their language and its usage. In particular, Harries shows how missionaries misunderstood words Africans used to differentiate themselves from other groups; and through simplification, these words were to mean 'tribe' or ethnic group, which they later, in 'European fashion', linked to language. They created linguistic boundaries where there were none. They 'standardised', 'systematised' and 'purified' certain dialects so that the mission dialect became the Language, thus elevating the mission dialect to the 'national' or 'tribal' language of prestige (p. 165). This also marked the beginning of the link between language and structures of power.

Chapter seven is about the social engineering that resulted from missionary control of the 'standard', written language. Harries argues that missionaries believed that through written materials and books, the mind, soul and African society in general, would be under the control of missions. The problem, however, was that the power of the spoken word tended to be stronger than the written one at that time, so missionary control was not guaranteed in all situations. Moreover, there were very few writers and people able to read the written word at the time. However, literacy in the created languages elevated the few literate Africans, who took advantage of the situation and adopted missionaries' notion of literacy. These elites in turn adopted the mission-created identities and ethnicities as their own.

Chapter eight looks at the impact of Junod's anthropological work on the political and socio-cultural economy of people in southern Africa. Harries suggests that Junod's writings, particularly *The Life of a South African Tribe*, provided the intellectual foundation of racial segregation. Of interest is how Junod would, through a process of selection, leave out certain details in his descriptions and illustrations to portray Africans as barbarians and primitive.

The last chapter focuses on missionary work in the 1930s and before. Chapter nine depicts Africans as having taken over the mission societies and schools. The African 'tribal' landscape was no longer as first described by Junod. The rapid industrialisation and transformation of Africa had not been envisaged in Junod's writings, but its nature appeared built on the ideas of 'tribal' and 'racial' segregation and inequality, as depicted in Junod's writings. The chapter also discusses how South African anthropologists, under the guise of valuing African cultural practices, supported segregation as a way to

‘stop the educated Native from aspiring to be an imitation of the European, and lead him to take his rightful place as the natural leader of his own people.’ (pp. 248-249). Indirect rule was seen as the way to protect Africans and their cultures. Harries reports that in the 1910s, the International Institute of African Languages endorsed this idea. The idea was to view Africans as ‘tribal natives’ who should not live outside their ‘tribal structure’ but ‘on their own lines.’ (p. 255).

Inevitably, the apartheid government in South Africa fed on such ideas to justify arguments for separate living, and education for Africans suited to their own needs. Africans were then categorised into homogenous ‘tribal’ groupings, living in Native lands under the Native Authority of the Chiefs who ruled by the grace of the colonial government.

The chapter ends with a look at NJ van Warmelo’s influential *Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa* which categorised Africans in South Africa along distinct linguistic lines, which he called ‘tribes.’ The tribe then became the unit of study, which also fuelled the misconception that South African society contained discrete cultures, which should be treated as ‘distinct political communities’ (p. 257). In South Africa, this gave birth to what were to become ‘tribal’ Bantustans, each with its own language and culture.

In conclusion, this is well written book and is a must read for all those interested in African languages and philology, history and anthropology. The book will also be of interest to scholars in the formation of African socio-political economies.

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