



### GENERAL CULTURE

#### ETHNICITY

In 1991, Sudan was one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse countries in the world. It had nearly 600 ethnic groups speaking over 400 languages and dialects.

During the 1980s and 1990s some of Sudan's smaller ethnic and linguistic groups disappeared. Migration played a part, as migrants often forget their native tongue when they move to an area dominated by another language. Some linguistic groups were absorbed by accommodation, others by conflict.

Arabic was the lingua franca despite the use of English by many of the elite. Many Sudanese are multilingual.

#### LITERATURE

- AbdAllah al Tayeb
- Tayeb Salih
- Muhammad Ahmad Mahgoub
- Babikir Badri
- Aoun Al-Sharif Qasim
- Mansour Khaled
- Abel Alier
- Ra'ouf Mus'ad, also connected with Egypt
- Leila Aboulela
- Jamal Mahjoub
- Ahmad Baba al Massufi (1556-1627)
- Murwan Al-Rasheed
- Ibrahim 'Ali Salman (1937-)

#### MUSIC

Sudan has a rich and unique musical culture that has been through chronic instability and repression during the modern history of Sudan. Beginning with the imposition of strict sharia law in 1989, many of the country's most prominent musicians, like Mahjoub Sharif, were imprisoned while others, like Mohammed el Amin and Mohammed Wardi, fled to Cairo. Traditional music suffered too, with traditional Zar ceremonies being interrupted and drums confiscated [1]. At the same time, however, the European militaries contributed to the development of Sudanese music by introducing new instruments and styles; military bands, especially the Scottish bagpipes, were renowned, and set traditional music to military march music. The march March Shulkawi No 1, is an example, set to the sounds of the Shilluk.



### GENERAL CULTURE CONTINUED

#### MODERN TRIBAL MUSIC

The Nuba, on the front lines between the north and the south of Sudan, have retained a vibrant folk tradition. The musical Kambala, a harvest festival, is still a major part of Nuba culture. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) include a group called the Black Stars, an unit dedicated to "cultural advocacy and performance". Members include the guitarist and singer Ismael Koinyi, as well as Jelle, Jamus and Tahir Jazar.

#### SPORT

Several Sudanese born basketball players have played in the American National Basketball Association. These include Deng Gai, Luol Deng and Manute Bol.

The Khartoum state league is considered to be the oldest soccer league in the whole of Africa as it started in the late 1920s. The Sudan Soccer Association started in 1954. The Sudan national soccer team, nicknamed Sokoor Al-Jediane is the national team of Sudan and is controlled by the Sudan Soccer Association. It is one of only a few countries to have played since the inaugural African Nations Cup in 1957. Todd Matthews-Jouda switched nationality from United States to Sudan in September 2003 and competed at the 2004 Olympics.

#### CLOTHING

Clothing is an important cultural indication that shows things such as prevalent moral, and artistic values and traditions. Sudan's clothing is mainly Arabic garb, woven clothing made, with the women covering their heads, as goes the tradition of Muslim and Islam. Women in Northern Sudan wear the colorful attire known as the thobe. Many of the men of Sudan wear ankle-long wide gowns called Galabiya, together with the Shaal, the same as a shawl. Many of Sudan's residents do not have enough money to wear clothing on account of their terrible poverty.

#### EDUCATION

The public and private education systems inherited by the government after independence were designed more to provide civil servants and professionals to serve the colonial administration than to educate the Sudanese. Moreover, the distribution of facilities, staff, and enrollment was biased in favor of the needs of the administration and a Western curriculum. Schools tended to be clustered in the vicinity of Khartoum and to a lesser extent in other urban areas, although the population was predominantly rural. This concentration was found at all levels but was most marked for those in situations beyond the four-year primary schools where instruction was in the vernacular. The north suffered from shortages of teachers and buildings, but education in the south was even more inadequate. During the condominium, education in the south was left largely to the mission schools, where the level of instruction proved so poor that as early as the mid-1930s the government imposed provincial education supervisors upon the missionaries in return for the government subsidies that they sorely needed. The civil war and the ejection of all foreign missionaries in February 1964 further diminished education opportunities for southern Sudanese.



### GENERAL CULTURE CONTINUED

Traditionally, girls' education was of the most rudimentary kind, frequently provided by a khalwa, or religious school, in which Quranic studies were taught. Such basic schools did not prepare girls for the secular learning mainstream, from which they were virtually excluded. Largely through the pioneering work of Shaykh Babikr Badri, the government had provided five elementary schools for girls by 1920. Expansion was slow, however, given the bias for boys and the conservatism of Sudanese society, with education remaining restricted to the elementary level until 1940. It was only in 1940 that the first intermediate school for girls, the Omdurman Girls' Intermediate School, opened. By 1955, ten intermediate schools for girls were in existence. In 1956, the Omdurman Secondary School for Girls, with about 265 students, was the only girls' secondary school operated by the government. By 1960, 245 elementary schools for girls had been established, but only 25 junior secondary or general schools and 2 upper-secondary schools. There were no vocational schools for girls, only a Nurses' Training College with but eleven students, nursing not being regarded by many Sudanese as a respectable vocation for women.

During the 1960s and 1970s, girls' education made considerable gains under the education reforms that provided 1,086 primary schools, 268 intermediate schools, and 52 vocational schools for girls by 1970, when girls' education claimed approximately one-third of the total school resources available. Although by the early 1990s the numbers had increased in the north but not in the war-torn south, the ratio had remained approximately the same.

The revolutionary government of General Bashir announced sweeping reforms in Sudanese education in September 1990. In consultation with leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic teachers and administrators, who were the strongest supporters of his regime, Bashir proclaimed a new philosophy of education. He allocated £Sd400 million for the academic year 1990-91 to carry out these reforms and promised to double the sum if the current education system could be changed to meet the needs of Sudan.