

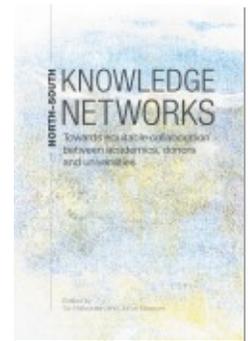


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CHAPTER 9

The crisis of higher education in Sudan with special reference to the University of Khartoum, 1956–2014

Fadwa Taha and Anders Bjørkelo

In this chapter, we focus on higher education in Sudan, directing attention to the internal political and ideological factors that have shaped its development and the crisis it is facing. Our focus is on the history of the University of Khartoum since it was founded in 1956. We describe how the political regimes that have held power, and the legislation they enacted from the mid 1950s to 2014, have impacted on the university's independence and integrity, as well as on its attitudes to academic freedom and North–South collaboration. Although we touch on key developments from 1899 to 1956, our emphasis is on the period after June 1989, when the National Islamic Front (NIF) seized power in Sudan through a military coup d'état.¹

Zain Ibrahim (2002: 134, 138) identified three models relevant to university governance in Sudan, which he called: the 'control or military model', the 'autonomy model' and the 'ideological commitment model'. The period we focus on has witnessed the implementation of all three models, with each one clearly related to the nature of different regimes. While we acknowledge that no form of governance is ideologically neutral, these models help summarise what each regime saw as the primary role of higher education, and form our basic tool of analysis.

Essentially, the University of Khartoum was founded in 1956, within the framework of an autonomy model. The control or military model became dominant after the country's first military regime took over, and ruled from November 1958 to October 1964. From October 1964 to May 1969, democracy was restored, and the autonomy model was re-introduced. After a second military coup on 25 May 1969,² the military rule was reinstated, but this briefly shifted towards the ideological commitment model, until an exclusively military model (albeit with an Islamic orientation) was reverted to, until this regime was overthrown via a popular uprising in April 1985. The autonomy model was briefly dominant again during Sudan's second short period of democracy from 1986 to 1989. However, since the National Islamic Front took power in June 1989, the ideological commitment model has been zealously enforced under the banner of the Inqaz (or Salvation Revolution), which is based on the NIF's strict interpretation of the tenets of Islam.

Our work relies on both primary and secondary sources. However, as El Tom (2006) mentioned, few records or statistics have been published on higher education generally in Sudan. Accordingly, little information is available on the number or qualifications of staff, student enrolment rates or library holdings at the University of Khartoum. Nevertheless, Ibrahim's book, *A Hundred Years of the University of Khartoum 1902–2002: The Making of a University*, is very detailed and has informed much of our chapter. In addition, Ali Abdalla Abbas's paper, 'The political and ideological bases of the trends and policies of the National Islamic Fronts in the sector of higher education in the Sudan', touches on several points that we discuss and remains pertinent, even though it was published in 1998.

The chapter has three main sections. First, we describe the development of the University of Khartoum before 1989. Then we examine the implementation of the Inqaz and its policies of Arabisation and Islamisation, as well as crises that have emerged in Sudan's higher education system since 1989. Finally we briefly touch on the history and current status of academic collaboration between universities in Sudan and various international institutions, before offering some conclusions.

The University of Khartoum before 1989

1899–1956: The birth of a university

The history of modern higher education in Sudan goes back to the era of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, which administered the country between 1899 and 1956. The University of Khartoum's predecessor, the so-called mother of higher education in Sudan, was established in 1902 as the Gordon Memorial College. At first, this was basically a primary school, but in 1937 the college began offering post-secondary courses. The Gordon Memorial College became the University College of Khartoum in 1951.³ The period from 1951 to 1956 was a transitional one as the college evolved into a university. According to university calendars published between 1952 and 1954, the institution sought to develop in its students the qualities of mind and character judged necessary for future good citizenship and professional competence. The Act by which the University of Khartoum was established was proposed and drafted by the University College, and the name of the institution was changed to the University of Khartoum in 1956. The university was modelled on British examples, and, for the first few decades, it adopted British curricula and examination systems, and regularly imported teachers and examiners from the UK.

1956 to 1958: Autonomy

When Sudan achieved independence in 1956, a brief period of democracy prevailed in Sudan until the end of 1958. In this time, the University of Khartoum adopted the autonomy model. A statutory research committee was established to design research programmes under the supervision of the university senate, and the university was generous in allocating funds to this committee and in giving it wide discretion in many respects (Ibrahim 2002).

Meanwhile the government relied on its own research capacity and did not expect the university to provide it with services in this regard. This gave the university the freedom to design and conduct its own research programmes. The university's financial affairs, and the

allocation of government funds, were handled by the Ministry of Finance rather than the Ministry of Education, indicating the importance accorded to the country's only tertiary education institution (Ibrahim 2002). Meanwhile, links with universities in the UK were maintained, and scholarships were given to masters and doctoral students who wished to study abroad.

1958 to 1964: The military model

On 17 November 1958, Sudan's armed forces staged a coup d'état, suspended the country's constitution and assumed political power. The military government introduced relatively minor amendments to the University of Khartoum Act. However, they gave the education ministry authority over the university and reduced the size of the university council to guarantee that government representatives would form a majority. No member of staff was denied the right to teach or to do research, and postgraduate training in the UK continued. In addition, staff considered extended debates held at the Students' Union Club as an integral part of the teaching, practical training and preparation for a responsible life offered by their institution (Ibrahim 2002).

In this instance, military rule was relatively short-lived. The first signs of resistance came from University of Khartoum students, led by the Students' Union (El Tayeb 1971). The Union organised demonstrations and strikes and opened its doors to critics of military rule in a bid to promote a return to democracy. After two years of confrontations with the students, the military rulers decided to intervene and impose state control over the university (Ibrahim 2002). During this period the institution's external collaborations were allowed to continue because the regime's position on foreign policy was to enhance relations with both the East and the West. The military regime was deposed by a popular uprising on 21 October 1964.

1964 to 1969: Autonomy returns

After military rule was brought to an end, the University of Khartoum's autonomy and independence was quickly enshrined in the National

Charter of October 1964 and the University Act of 1956 was reinstated (Council of Ministers 1964). Nevertheless, the academic community remained concerned about academic freedom, so the university's new council formed a sub-committee to revise the Act, with a view to including additional guarantees of university autonomy and academic freedom. The sub-committee's proposals were endorsed in 1968 by the University of Khartoum council (University of Khartoum 1968), but before their recommendations could be turned into law, another military coup took place in May 1969. According to Zaki El-Hassan (n.d.), before the coup,

an uneasy understanding was observed where universities were allowed to operate 'freely' and their sanctity was observed. Political interference was minimum [*sic*], and normally covert, and freedoms were allowed to flourish. The appointment and dismissal of staff, appointment to heads and deans, and other decisions were left to the University and its senate and political correctness was not an overt factor in recruitment.

1969 to 1985: A military-ideological model

The situation described by El-Hassan stands in stark contrast to how things developed after what became known as the May Regime, led by Jaafar Numayri, took power. Political interference in higher education was clear and political compliance was expected. Political upheavals spilled onto campuses, and staff were dismissed for political reasons. Academics on both the left and the right were purged at different times, 'depending on the prevailing political mode' and Numayri's 'fleeting alliances' (El-Hassan n.d.). On 2 July 1969, barely two months after the coup, the ruling Revolutionary Council appointed itself as the 'custodian of the University'.⁴

Four months later, on 4 November 1969, Numayri set up a ministerial and technical committee to look into the structure, objectives and laws of the University of Khartoum with a view to making it participate

effectively in the national drive for socialist transformation (Ibrahim 2002). In a statement about the establishment of this committee, Numayri stated that the university in a socialist state 'is destined to play a vanguard role as a nursing home for socialist leaders and progressive thinkers,'⁵ and that the University of Khartoum should be transformed in ways that would enable it to perform this role. The main feature of this transformation was the orientation of the university's educational activities towards socialism, pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism. It was evident that the government's aim was to control the university.

The ministerial committee appointed by Numayri decided to divide its work into two major tasks. The first task was to tie the university into the state machinery, which required the urgent drafting of a new Act. Accordingly, the University of Khartoum Act of 1970 gave the state tighter control over the university. The new Act also decreed that one of the university's primary objectives would be to organise, extend and improve university education with special emphasis on subjects and activities that were of direct relevance to the needs of the people of the Sudan, and to their aspirations for socialism, national unity and close ties with Arab and African nations.⁶ The second task was to find ways of fully identifying the university with the state. To this end, radical amendments were made to the workings of the university council and senate, and to find ways of bringing the university closer to society (Ibrahim 2002).

The final report and recommendations of the ministerial committee were submitted to Numayri in February 1971.⁷ By this time, however, the communists and Arab nationalists had fallen out of favour with Numayri, and lost influence entirely after an aborted military coup in June 1971. This marked the end of the regime's first attempt at imposing an ideological model of governance on the university (Ibrahim 2002).

Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood (which was formed in Egypt in 1949 and had been active in Sudan since 1954) were also opposed to the changes happening at the university. Their relations with the state became strained early in January 1970 when they protested against the dismissal of university lecturers known for their Islamic leanings.⁸ At

that time, the Brotherhood held 19 of the 40 seats in the Student Union, and the Union's president was a Brotherhood member.⁹

Amidst these upheavals, the university's vice-chancellor established another committee composed of the deans of all the faculties to draft another new university Act. The University of Khartoum Act of 1973 was then adopted (Ibrahim 2002). Although support for socialism, pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism was removed from this Act, it was never really implemented because both the Act and the regime encountered severe opposition. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood organised strong demonstrations against the May Regime on 19 August 1973,¹⁰ and the government responded harshly, not only towards the students but towards the university and the higher education system as a whole (Ibrahim 2002). Three-hundred students from the University of Khartoum were expelled, 90 of them permanently. Some lecturers, members of the Muslim Brotherhood were also dismissed. The University of Khartoum was closed for more than three months and the Students Union was dissolved.¹¹

Numayri then formed a committee to define the role of higher education in Sudan.¹² A new Act was adopted in 1975, under which the University of Khartoum was defined as a centre of learning that had to perform its functions within the limits of the national constitution and state policy. Under the new Act, the chairperson of the University Council was to be appointed by the president of Sudan in consultation with the chairperson of the Higher Education Council. The university's vice-chancellor and deputy vice-chancellor were also to be appointed by the president. The university was thus transformed into an organ of the state.

The 1975 University Act was promulgated along with the Higher Education Act of 1975. The two Acts covered the higher education system as a whole, and worked together to curtail academic freedom in all universities, including the new University of Gezira which was established in 1975 and the University of Juba in South Sudan which opened in 1977. Seen as a hub of political opposition, the University of Khartoum was often a primary target of the regime. While few of the previous University of Khartoum Acts had lasted, the 1975 Act remained in force for a full ten years, much to the detriment of the

university, until a popular uprising eventually toppled Numayri and his regime in April 1985.

To sum up this period, in the 1970s, all universities in Sudan were placed under strict state control. As Numayri's May Regime moved from the left to the centre and then to the right, the military control model replaced the ideological model of university governance. Following a reconciliation between the Muslim Brotherhood and the May Regime in 1977,¹³ Sudan's Islamists were integrated into the country's ruling elite, and Islamist students became a dominant grouping on university campuses. According to Abbas (1991), the Muslim Brotherhood, which later became the NIF, knew exactly what they wanted from Numayri: influence over the economy and education. Numayri's decision to introduce sharia law and 'Islamise' the banking system later paved the way for the NIF to take control of certain levers of economic power in the country (Abbas 1991). In fact, as shown below, after a brief respite, the NIF seized the opportunity presented by the need for national reconciliation to impose its ideological model of governance on higher education institutions generally, and the University of Khartoum in particular.

1985 to 1989: Autonomy returns

After the May Regime was ousted, national elections were held in 1986, and democracy was briefly reinstated. From 1986 to 1989, Sudan experienced a resurgence of more liberal views on academic freedom and less political interference in the internal workings of the universities.

At its first meeting, the new state's Council of Ministers tabled the 'independence of universities' as a prime agenda item. It resolved that the state should not only respect the autonomy of universities, but should also staunchly guard and protect all their traditional liberties (Abbas 1991). The autonomy model of governance was reintroduced at higher education institutions, and the University of Khartoum's Staff (Faculty) Union pushed for a new Act to be developed to replace the 1975 University Act. In particular, they wanted clauses that infringed on the autonomy of the university, and on freedom of thought and

research to be reviewed. A system of elections for the university's top administrative positions was also proposed.

A new University of Khartoum Act was drafted and passed in 1986, turning the university council into a strongly representative body. The vice-chancellor and the deputy vice-chancellor were to be elected by an electoral college, comprised of the council, the senate and the academic staff, with the votes of the council and the senate having a weighting of 30 per cent each, and the staff vote counting 40 per cent.

Three further stipulations were included in the 1986 Act. The first was the redefining of the university as a scientific and cultural organisation. This transcended the crippling provisions of the 1975 Act, which had defined the institution as a centre of learning, performing a function within the limits of the constitution and state policy. The second was the reformulation of the university's objectives such that it was designated as a centre committed to the acquisition, importing and development of learning. The third stipulation related to the independence of the university. Article 6 of the Act clearly stated that 'no police or armed forces are allowed to enter the University precinct for the purpose of or under pretext of effecting orderly behaviour on an accusation of freedom of thinking, scientific research and political action, other than with the permission of the vice-chancellor.'

The democratic inclinations of this period meant that North–South co-operation was approved of in principle, but the Act was in effect for too short a time to allow solid foundations for such co-operation to be laid. However staff-to-staff relationships and co-operation blossomed and flourished at the individual and interdepartmental levels.

1989: The turning point for higher education

The brief revival of the autonomy model at the University of Khartoum ended in 1989, when the army and the NIF seized power through yet another coup led by then-brigadier Omar al-Bashir. The new regime installed itself as the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation, and announced a highly ambitious political, economic and social programme aimed at transforming Sudanese society under the banner of the Revolution of National Salvation or Inqaz. Still in

operation today, this programme has included the transformation of higher education following the principles of the revolution, and motivated by an Islamist ideology (Abbas 1998). In line with this, the state considers centres of learning as incubators for the ‘fundamentalisation’ of knowledge and has enshrined this in legislation and policy documents. It is important to note that Islamist influence on education policy did not emerge overnight in 1989. It had been on the rise since the ‘national reconciliation process’ that took place between Numayri and his Islamist political opponents in 1977.

A new vision for higher education

After a conference on higher education held in Khartoum in 1989, the NIF spelled out their vision in the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act of 1990.¹⁴ The Act introduced various reforms that were widely referred to as the ‘higher education revolution’ in Sudan, and were designed to Arabicise, Islamise and expand the country’s higher education sector in unprecedented ways. As far as the University of Khartoum was concerned, the 1990 Act defined the objectives of the university as ‘asserting the identity of the nation’ and ‘observing religious values’. In an amendment to the Act passed in 1995, these objectives were literally repeated. The Act also confers on the country’s head of state the power to appoint the chairperson of the university council, as well as the vice- and deputy vice-chancellors (Ibrahim 2002).¹⁵ The Act also alludes to the strengthening of relations between higher education institutions and the research centres outside Sudan on both regional and international levels, and mentions the need to request aid from different countries and institutions to support higher education and scientific research (Ibrahim 2002).

The aims of the 1990 Act, and the 1995 amendment, can be summarised as follows:

- To embed the higher education system within the Islamic faith, and within Arab and African traditions.

- The Islamisation of knowledge, and the preparation of ideological leaders who believe in God and affirm their faith and their cultural heritage.
- To foster an interest in Arabic, and in religious and cultural studies at all higher education institutions. This includes the adoption of Arabic as the language of teaching and the development of Arabisation programmes in each institution.
- The amendment of higher education legislation to confirm the identity of the nation and its authenticity.
- To establish Islamic studies departments in all university colleges of education.
- To double the number of students admitted to public universities.
- To provide for the establishment of new universities under the banner of a university for each state.
- To encourage the establishment of new private universities and colleges.
- To provide for the conversion of existing colleges and technical institutions into universities.
- To abolish student accommodation and subsistence allowances, and introduce university fees.
- To encourage scientific research and publishing.
- To redirect teaching and research programmes towards the interests and needs of the local environment and local communities.¹⁶

Arabisation

The ‘higher education revolution’ has consistently aimed to change university curricula in Sudan in ways that reflect the core policies of the Inqaz, that is: to promote Islamic and Arabic values and norms.

In effect, an ‘Arabic only-policy’ was introduced in the early 1990s at all public universities. Some years later, article 3 of Sudan’s 1998 Constitution made Arabic the country’s official language, but noted that the state would permit the development of local and other world languages.¹⁷ Then, after the Nivasha Agreement between the government and the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement, the 2005 Interim

National Constitution upheld both Arabic and English as languages of teaching in higher education.¹⁸ Nevertheless, lectures have to be held in Arabic and Arabic textbooks have to be prescribed as far as possible.

Academic staff were not consulted about the Arabic-only policy and opinion among them is divided, not so much about the principle of using Arabic as a medium of instruction, but about the timing of its introduction and the preparatory work necessary for its effective implementation. The government's approach to the issue has never emphasised the pedagogical arguments commonly advanced by advocates of Arabisation (that students learn better in their own language); nor does the state seem to have reflected on the need to improve the standard of education offered throughout the country, or on the educational and pedagogical challenges involved in this. Instead, the need to inculcate in students the state's version of Sudan's 'culture and traditions' seems to be of paramount importance.

Of course, the use of Arabic as the medium of instruction in higher education was on the agenda at Sudan's older universities well before 1989. In fact, Arabisation was first introduced into secondary schools in 1965, when the then-minister of education decreed that Arabic should be the medium of instruction, noting that, as a matter related to culture and identity, this was considered vital to national sovereignty (Isa 1996).¹⁹ At that time, English was the medium of instruction at the University of Khartoum, and the decree on secondary education was issued without any co-ordination or consultation with university authorities. Consequently, the University of Khartoum was compelled to introduce English as a subject in a preparatory year, to help new students to undertake their university studies in English (Isa 1996). Then, in the early 1980s, the University of Khartoum set up a translation and Arabisation unit. Now a fully-fledged department, this unit has concentrated almost exclusively on teaching translation, not because the members of faculty concerned are averse to Arabisation, but because the university has no clear policy on the issue (*Sudan Update* n.d.).

Arabisation was introduced despite the fact that few textbooks or reference books are available in Arabic (see *Sudan Update* n.d.). In science and technology, especially, almost all the primary academic

reference works are in English, and few Arabic translations or equivalents are available.²⁰ The problem is not so much that teaching has to be conducted in Arabic, but that students have been denied access to English textbooks, thereby reducing their opportunities to learn to read and write in English. This has affected, in turn, research because few postgraduate students are equipped with the English skills they need to be able to grapple with much of the existing research, or with the key reference materials, many of which are available only in English.²¹ After some protests, the University of Khartoum's medical faculty was largely exempted from teaching in Arabic, but the humanities faculty, in particular, has suffered from the effects of the Arabisation policy.

Islamisation

Islamisation has transformed the content of higher education curricula since the early 1990s, with major consequences for universities and society in Sudan. The move towards Islamisation began before the June 1989 coup. In January 1987, the Department of Islamic Studies and Psychology at the University of Khartoum and the Washington-based Institute for Islamic Knowledge held a conference on the Islamisation of knowledge.²² With the implementation of the Inqaz, two institutes for the Islamisation of knowledge were set up, both in 1991: one at the University of Khartoum and the other at the University of Gezira. Subjects such as Islamic economics and Islamic accounting were introduced, and it became compulsory for students across all disciplines to pass a course on Islamic civilisation.

A department for the Islamisation of knowledge was established within the Ministry of Higher Education, and in May 1995, Ibrahim Ahmed Omar (who was minister of higher education from 1990 to June 1996 and from December 1996 to 2000 and has since been a presidential advisor on higher education) made a statement indicating the government's attitude towards higher education and the centrality of Islamic knowledge. Omar argued that science 'ought to stem from religion in the first place. We want to see the universe as it is described

by the Qur'an because the Qur'an's vision is the basis for building Islamic sciences.²³

In May 2012, at a conference on the Islamisation of education curricula organised by the National Ribat University in Khartoum, Omar denied that the state had any plans to move away from or deviate from policies of Islamisation and Arabisation (Khalifa 2012). Omar added that Arabisation is crucial for Islamisation because the Qur'an 'as a source of knowledge needs a language that enables its understanding'. At the same conference, the deputy director of Ribat University added that the humanities, as well as the social and applied sciences, must be built on Islamic foundations and be 'entrusted with new purposes' (Khalifa 2012).

Since the 2011 referendum, and the division of the country into Sudan and South Sudan, the government of the north has proceeded further down the Islamist path, intensifying its Arabisation and Islamisation programmes.

Academic freedom in teaching and research

Academic freedom is integral to the culture of universities in many parts of the world. Like Kilase (2013), we define academic freedom as the liberty and obligation to study, investigate, present and interpret findings, and to discuss facts and ideas concerning people, society, and the physical and biological world in all branches and fields of learning. In our view, the policies pursued under the Inqaz, including Arabisation and Islamisation, violate this definition.

The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics of 1990 defines academic freedom as 'the freedom of members of the academic community, individually or collectively, in the pursuit, development and transmission of knowledge, through research, study, discussion, documentation, production, creation, teaching, lecturing and writing'.²⁴ As Teferra and Altbach (2004) have noted, ideally, academic freedom ensures that academics are able to teach freely, as well as undertake research, and communicate their findings and ideas, openly and without fear of persecution.

In terms of legislation, article 6 of the University of Khartoum Act of 1995 stipulates that: teaching staff and their assistants, and students ‘enjoy freedom of thought and scientific research within the limits imposed by the law and the constitution’; and that ‘no Sudanese shall be forbidden to belong to the university, as student or employee, on the basis of belief, race or gender’.²⁵ Article 25 of Sudan’s 1998 Constitution provided for freedom of opinion and expression as long as this was done without prejudicing public order or security.²⁶ The 2005 Interim Constitution stated that the government would provide for academic freedom within the higher education institutions, and protect the freedom of researchers as long as they complied with the ethical regulations related to research.²⁷ Thus the only piece of legislation that placed no limitations on freedom of research was the University of Khartoum Act of 1986. Article 6 of that Act states that the university is an independent body enjoying freedom of thought and scientific research.

In his paper, ‘Promoting academic freedom in the Sudan: Constitutional daydreams and legal nightmares’, Mustafa Babiker (2008) examined the issue of academic freedom and university autonomy in Sudan since 1989. He stressed that the reforms included in the 2005 Interim Constitution never became legal realities. He described the University of Khartoum and Ahfad University for Women as being ‘nightmares’ as a result of the Inqaz, and noted that there has been no political will to address the deplorable state of affairs that has developed since 1989. He argued that references to academic freedom and university autonomy in the Interim Constitution were simply empty promises that were never meant to be implemented, and pointed out that, since 2005, academic freedom has been severely restricted by several other laws, Acts and amendments to Acts. For example, the constitutional right to register staff associations was severely restricted. In addition, Sudan’s police and the security forces have also continually undermined the Interim Constitution by subjecting academics and students to threats of beating, arrest and torture.

As noted, social scientists, who conduct fieldwork among society at large, are subject to tighter controls than natural scientists who conduct research in laboratories on university premises. Babiker (2008)

cites stories of undergraduate and postgraduate students attempting to conduct fieldwork for projects or dissertations being denied access to sensitive research sites (such as camps for people displaced by war), or having their questionnaires confiscated by security officers.

In the early years of the Inqaz, academics had little freedom to design their own teaching programmes. Just a month after the 1989 coup, Dr Farouq Mohamed Ibrahim, a biologist in the science faculty at the University of Khartoum, was imprisoned and tortured for 12 days for teaching Darwinian theory. He was told by his captors that the theory of evolution is inherently anti-Islamic. Days after his release, on 20 January 1990, Ibrahim lodged a complaint with the Sudanese president. He drew attention to the fact that the university senate is the only body legally authorised to decide on the content of courses taught and their suitability. On 13 November 2000, Ibrahim sent another letter to the presidency asking for justice and redress in respect of his complaints. When this went unheeded, he lodged a case with Sudan's constitutional court, challenging the legality of the immunity and prescription laws that blocked investigations and prosecutions in his case. The constitutional court dismissed the case on 6 November 2008. On 6 May 2010, Redress, a human rights organisation based in the United Kingdom, lodged an application to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on behalf of the applicant, alleging a violation of articles 1, 5, 6 and 7 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Redress 2010).

Another example of the limits placed on academic freedom was the intimidation of a professor of veterinary science after he wrote an article for one of Sudan's daily newspapers entitled, 'Rift Valley fever and the prospects for meat and livestock exports'.²⁸ State security officials considered the article to be potentially damaging to the country's meat export industry and arrested the professor. In another episode, a fatwa was issued by 14 prominent members of the Muslim community, including two University of Khartoum faculty members, decreeing that all members of the leftist students' organisation, the Democratic Front, are 'apostates'. The background to this was an article that appeared on the university campus that some found insulting to Islam (El Tom 2006).

Of the tertiary institutions that have persevered with research in this context, the University of Khartoum has long been the main one. From 1973 to 1999, almost 90 per cent of the research findings published by Sudanese universities emanated from this one institution. And from 2000 to 2004, the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) recorded a total of 448 publications from Sudanese universities; the University of Khartoum's share of these was 293 publications (66.8 per cent) (El Tom 2006: 81). Nevertheless, the quality of research has deteriorated as access to periodicals and books has become increasingly limited. Funding for resources such as equipment and infrastructure, as well as technical assistance, has also declined. In addition, opportunities for Sudanese academics to communicate with (and take sabbaticals in) other countries have been reduced.

In addition, declining levels of proficiency in English among (especially younger) university staff has drastically diminished their chances of publishing their research in English-language journals. The University of Khartoum's ranking among international research institutions has declined accordingly. However, this means little to a government that takes no interest in international standards or ranking systems.

Massive increases in student numbers and the growth of new universities

Another reason for the crisis in higher education in Sudan has been the massive increase in student enrolment. Before 1976, the country had three universities: the University of Khartoum, the Omdurman Islamic University (which was founded in 1912 as the Institute of Religious Studies and developed into a full university in 1965) and the University of Cairo's Khartoum Branch, which was founded in 1955. In 1975 and 1977, the University of Gezira and the University of Juba respectively were established to serve the needs of the rural areas in which they were located (El Tom 2006).

Since 1989, Sudan's higher education sector has expanded phenomenally. By 2012, there were 31 public universities, 54 private colleges, 15 technical colleges and 11 private universities – 111 institutions in

all (MOHE 2000–2001, 2004, 2005, 2009). Most of the colleges and universities outside Khartoum operate from buildings that had formerly housed high schools (Kilase 2013). According to the International Association of Universities' World Higher Education, the number of higher education students in Sudan rose from 6 080 in 1989 to 38 623 by 2000 – (quoted in Watson et al. 2011: 142). By 2010, this figure had apparently risen to more than 159 000 (MOHE 2009).

Although the expansion of education provision above the secondary level was undoubtedly needed in Sudan, the sudden proliferation of universities in a country that does not have the resources to sustain more than a few universities, has caused the quality of higher education provision to plummet. The opening of new universities, and the increase in student numbers, led to a radical change in the ratio of teachers to students. For example, in 1997, the ratio of teachers to students in the science faculty at the University of Khartoum was as follows: Botany 1:58; Zoology 1:67; Chemistry 1:72; Geology 1:18 (Mohammed and Jiha 1998: 429–431).

Amidst deteriorating working conditions, high inflation and low pay, academics left the universities in droves. Our research indicates that around 1997, an average of 50 University of Khartoum academics were emigrating annually. For the academic year 2004/2005, the number of teaching staff (from assistants to full professors) in all of Sudan's public and private higher education institutions was 9 299. By 2011/2012, this number had decreased to 3 344 (MOHE various). With too few staff to fill new posts, senior (and even junior) officials from the public service have been appointed as lecturers and professors in some of the regional universities (Nyaba 1998). According to Kilase (2013: 183), nearly 26 per cent of faculty members in 2013 were teaching assistants, and only about 40 per cent were lecturers. Both groups generally held masters degrees or less, which means that almost two-thirds of faculty members at university level do not have doctorates.

Supporters of the Inqaz often claim that they expanded higher education in Sudan to meet the needs of the country and enhance its economic development. Yet, the regime's decision to increase student enrolments and to create new universities at a time of dire economic crisis seems to have been designed more to broaden the ruling party's

support base, and to increase its share of adherents among future members of the elite, with the aim of eventually controlling professional unions and associations (Abbas 1991). In fact, the expansion of higher education has done nothing to boost employment in Sudan, and has simply meant that many of the people now looking for work are graduates who hold degrees and diplomas. Several of the new universities occupy buildings smaller than a secondary school, the students now have to pay fees, and subsidies for board and lodging are no longer available. Essentially, therefore, the proliferation of higher education institutions, with a new university established in every 'state' in Sudan, has more to do with an attempt to enhance the government's image than with changing economic realities for the country's citizens.

The opening of new universities had a highly negative impact on the University of Khartoum as the country's financial and human resources were redeployed to the new institutions.²⁹ As Linda Bishai (2008: 203) put it: 'The creation of so many new institutions of higher education resulted in scarcer resources for all, even the country's premier institution and national pride, the University of Khartoum.'

Furthermore, because the University of Khartoum had been a focal point for political opposition over several decades, the state's decision to establish many more public universities and to sanction the development of several new private universities throughout the country, can also be seen as an effort to undermine the university, while introducing a more practically oriented (high-school type) education into the higher education sector. El-Hassan (n.d.) notes that the

University of Khartoum was, and continues to be, an anathema for the fundamentalists. The university was viewed as the bastion of secularism in the country and its demise and disintegration was viewed to be important for the Islamic Project. Several of the leading fundamentalists made statements to such effect and some of them today are in positions where they can effectively strangle the university.

In fact, the higher education revolution undermined the university in terms of governance, funding and academic freedom. As noted, some

staff were arrested and fired, many chose to leave, and others were expected to take up positions at the many new universities. Several departments lost more than three-quarters of their academic staff. Fewer staff and reduced funding led to a deterioration of research capacity; this in turn added to the severe brain drain, making it virtually impossible to maintain academic standards.³⁰

Policy stagnation

As shown, the government of Sudan radically restructured the higher education sector to advance its political programme, giving no consideration to the disastrous consequences this has had for the quality of learning and for the country's economy. Although various government ministers have expressed reservations, these have been quickly silenced and the regime has made no attempt to revise its policy.

The most serious critique of the Inqaz came in August 1998, ten years after it began, when a conference on 'The State and Future of Higher Education in Sudan' was organised by the Association of Sudanese Academics and held in Cairo (see El Tom 1998). The following observations appear in its report on the proceedings:

A number of decisions were taken including the decisions to double the intake in Sudan's public universities, Arabicise university studies and transform Khartoum Polytechnic into a traditional university. Then other decisions followed. The regime decided to set up a large number of public universities, do away with board and lodging for students at the old public universities, substitute new university Acts for the old ones, force a large number of Sudanese students who were pursuing their studies abroad to come back to Sudan before finishing their studies, allow the private sector to invest in the field of higher education, and force students to enlist in its militia, which is known as the Popular Defence Forces (PDF) and, consequently, to do what it called national service. Furthermore, it decided that students would not get their Sudan School Certificate results or gain access to

institutions of higher education unless they did their one-year stint at the PDF or national services camps or at the front in the South ... Some papers presented at the conference show clearly that these decisions were motivated by political and ideological considerations and that they had little or nothing to do with the welfare of the students or Sudan's needs with regard to trained manpower [*sic*]. (El Tom 1998: 125)

The conference noted that the government had: completely politicised the education process; imposed its policy of Islamisation and Arabisation; rejected the most important values of higher education (as exemplified by the need to approach knowledge critically, to doubt, and ask probing questions); encouraged a herd mentality among young people; and alienated many of the country's best academics (El Tom 1998). Delegates at the conference also pointed out that 'The NIF's philosophy of education is based on a narrow vision of religion (theology) and goes contrary to the essence of modern science' (El Tom 1998: 133).

According to the conference proceedings, the situation at the University of Khartoum had become alarming enough by 1994 to cause administrators and students to launch an appeal for rehabilitation, both inside and outside Sudan. The conference also noted that the universities of Khartoum, Gezira, Juba and Sudan lost between 41 and 70 per cent of their academic staff between 1989 and 1994. Even government reports showed that the new universities were ill conceived, poorly funded and terribly understaffed (El Tom 1998).

There is no documentation or literature on student-led criticism or protests about higher education under the Inqaz.³¹ However, since June 1989, at least 17 students from universities around the country have paid with their lives for peacefully practising or demanding their basic rights (Haj-Omar 2014). What is clear is that conditions for students in Sudanese universities have deteriorated dramatically. Although the University of Khartoum's student union was intensely involved in overthrowing two dictatorships (in 1964 and 1985), it has not functioned since 2010. Nevertheless, and despite the collapse of their

union, students at the university went on strike in April 2014 in a courageous protest against the murder of a fellow student, and to demand justice and a violence-free campus. The authorities responded by closing the university for five months (Haj-Omar 2014).

Signs of dissent within the state were evident in 1996, when Abdel Wahhab Abdel Rahim was appointed as minister of higher education, and seemed to be quite critical of aspects of the higher education policy. Three committees were formed: one to study the situation at the new universities, another to examine the private universities, and the third to examine state policy on scientific research and identify how it could be enhanced. Rahim then used the recommendations from the three committees to draft a comprehensive report that was critical of many aspects of the higher education revolution. The report was presented to the National Assembly in December 1996. Rahim was promptly sacked, and the former minister, Ibrahim Ahmed Omar, was reinstated (see El Mubark 2008).

More than a decade later, the then-minister of higher education, Peter Adwok Nyaba, criticised the Inqaz in a statement made to Sudan's daily newspaper *Al-Rayaam* on 20 October 2008. Noting that the revolution had produced 'students of little use', he described the general situation as 'miserable' (see Abu Shouk 2008). In 2011, Nyaba informed the National Assembly that the higher education budget was less than 2.5 per cent of total government expenditure. He emphasised that the disruption of universities was linked to the emigration of university staff, and revealed that 625 staff members had emigrated in 2011, allowing Saudi Arabia's universities to absorb 180 Sudanese university staff in just one month of that year. He noted also, that despite rising living costs, the salaries of staff at public universities had not increased since 2007.³²

Nevertheless, in 2009, Sudan's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research published a report about its achievements for the period 1989 to 2009, in which not a single reference is made to any disadvantages or shortcomings of the higher education revolution (MOHE 2009). The report does mention that one of the problems with the higher education sector before the Inqaz was meagre resources.

The Inqaz has also affected the schooling sector, and was designed to change the outlook of Sudanese children to encourage them to value their Arab and Muslim identity (Breidlid 2005). This should have meant that the universities would then be able to recruit students who had the ‘right’ knowledge, values and attitudes, and little interest in politics. As Beny (1998) has noted, however, a good higher education system must be able to rely on policies and plans that help to strengthen primary and secondary schooling.

International standing

Until the mid 1980s, the University of Khartoum was among the top ten universities in Africa and the Arab world. Since 1989, the institution has been terribly undermined and its international ranking has suffered accordingly. Of course, international organisations rank the world’s universities using criteria that may not always be appropriate. Even so, the University of Khartoum’s decline is undeniable (Abdel Rahman 2011). Webometrics, for example, measures the quantity of research, scientific and academic information made available via university websites.³³

Table 9.1 shows selected Webometrics rankings for the University of Khartoum and the Sudan University for Science and Technology. Although some improvement is evident, the rankings are low, and the improvements probably reflect an increase in research being published, rather than increased resources, staffing levels or international

Table 9.1 Rankings of two Sudanese universities for 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2015

Ranking	2008	2012	2014	2015
Among African universities	UoK: 41	UoK: 13 SUST: 24	UoK: 24	UoK: 27 SUST: 56
Among Arab states	UoK: 51	UoK: 11 SUST: 35	UoK: 20	UoK: 18
Worldwide	UoK: 6 213	UoK: 1 216 SUST: 2 517	UoK: 2 070	UoK: 1 918 SUST 3 176

Note: UoK = University of Khartoum; SUST = Sudan University for Science and Technology
Data source: Webometrics

collaborations. No other Sudanese universities featured in the top hundred Arab or African universities or anywhere in the first 10 000 universities worldwide in the years shown.

North–South collaboration

From 1956 until the early 1980s, the University of Khartoum sent its junior lecturers abroad to obtain masters and doctoral degrees, and their costs were covered by state funding. During these years, the university enjoyed strong relations with international institutions, and particularly with several British universities. As mentioned, European academics (again, mainly British) were also employed at the university during this time. Others, including anthropologists, archaeologists and historians, often used their holidays to carry out fieldwork in Sudan (Boe 2009). In this way, solid links were established between individual academics and institutions, and Sudanese researchers were often given scholarships by universities abroad. Capacity building was seen as a key element in more formal institutional relationships.

In the case of the University of Bergen in Norway, formal co-operation agreements were set up, and European funding was used to the benefit of both institutions (Boe 2009). From 1976, the two universities launched a number of joint research projects, including the Red Sea Rescue Programme, which was initiated in the 1980s. Relations also developed between the dentistry faculties of the two institutions. Naturally, findings were published jointly where possible (Boe 2009).

This atmosphere of mutual co-operation and trust changed dramatically after 1989. Some Sudanese academics who had been involved in projects with the University of Bergen were removed and replaced, and several staff at the University of Khartoum, who were critical of the new regime, were fired and/or jailed. This made the Norwegian government reluctant to continue supporting projects in Sudan, and in 1991, official collaboration between the University of Bergen and the University of Khartoum came to a halt. Since then, contact has been maintained mainly via academic fellowships and student scholarships,

several of which were made possible via Norway's Quota programme (Boe 2009).³⁴

Various other Western universities also withdrew from formal co-operation agreements with institutions in Sudan. What remains is limited staff-to-staff and some intra-departmental collaboration. For instance, the anthropology department at the University of Khartoum is involved in two collaborative projects with the University of Bergen's anthropology department.

The first is a project funded by the Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED), which began in 2014 and is expected to run until 2018. NORHED brought together the anthropology departments at the universities of Khartoum, Bergen, Addis Ababa (in Ethiopia) and Makerere University (in Uganda). The project aims to build capacity by providing post-doctoral fellowships, PhD and MA scholarships, and by organising refresher courses for supervisors, student and staff exchanges, as well as national and regional conferences. By early 2016, the project had supported two post-doctoral fellowships (both from Sudan), seven PhDs (four Ugandans and three Ethiopians) and 13 masters students (three Sudanese, five Ugandans and five Ethiopians).³⁵

The second project, known as ARUSS (Assisting Regional Universities in Sudan and South Sudan), has created links between the anthropology departments at the University of Khartoum, the University of Bergen, the Chr. Michelsen Institute and the Ahfad University for Women.³⁶ ARUSS grew out of an earlier project called Micro-Macro Issues in Peace Building, which ran from 2006 to 2012. It organises training for junior staff members at regional universities in Sudan (Kassala, Red Sea, Gedarif, Diling, Blue Nile and Nyala universities), and provides modest funding to help junior and senior academics to conduct research and publish their work. According to the University of Khartoum's Professor Manzoul Assal, who is involved in ARUSS, very little happened between 1989 and 2005 in terms of collaborative projects, although some individual initiatives continued during this period. It was only after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 that this began to shift.³⁷

Ahfad University for Women is an interesting example of the potential for North–South collaboration. In January 2010, Ahfad University was involved in the Regional Institute of Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights, funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. The university has partnerships with gender institutes at Makerere University in Uganda and Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia to build capacities in higher education in Africa, and to promote gender equality and human rights in a range of contexts.³⁸ This point is mentioned here to show that although international collaborations are declining at Sudan’s public universities, Ahfad University has stepped into the vacuum and made some gains.

In 1997, the US imposed comprehensive economic, trade and financial sanctions against Sudan, claiming Sudan’s support for international terrorism, ongoing efforts to destabilise neighbouring governments, and the prevalence of human rights violations. Since then, Sudan’s relations with China have strengthened, but we do not have any reliable data about academic co-operation between Sudan and China.

Conclusions

Between 1956 and 1989, the University of Khartoum survived a series of legislative and administrative experiments, all related to regime change, few of which had time to take root. Sudan’s three military regimes (from 1958 to 1964, from 1969 to 1985 and from 1989 to the present) have all imposed strict controls on the higher education sector, aimed less at improving academic standards than at curtailing and preventing the growth of political opposition. The model of university governance adopted after the 1989 coup was a major turning point for higher education in Sudan. Reforms implemented in the higher education sector since 1989 have been designed to bring tertiary institutions in line with the Islamist ideology adopted by the government, and have done little to improve academic institutions or enhance education levels.

Sudan’s experiments with higher education affirm that expansion in the tertiary sector must be done cautiously and gradually. The rapid

expansion of the number of higher education institutions and student numbers has resulted in the collapse of existing infrastructure, the use of untrained teaching staff, little staff development and low levels of motivation. While the expansion of higher education was important, and an increase in the number of universities with a fair geographical reach was essential, this should have been carried out after careful study of available resources and the use of sound methods to ensure the most effective deployment of those resources.

For decades, the government has, to a great extent, succeeded in implementing its policy. The crisis in higher education in Sudan is the direct result of a carefully planned policy inspired by Islamist ideology. The government has turned a deaf ear to calls for change, and universities have been forced to comply with state decrees. For universities to function at high levels of excellence, academic staff require the freedom to think, research and teach, while enjoying job security. For much of the period under discussion in this chapter, Islamised knowledge has been taught in Sudan to legitimise the regime and discourage citizens from questioning authority. Unless the University of Khartoum is freed from the state's ideological straitjacket, it cannot be expected to play a leading role in the development of the country.

Research-based knowledge contributes to a deeper understanding of the world around us, of both the physical world and the socio-cultural world; in principle, no area should be excluded from the scrutiny of research. And new knowledge should not be rejected or censored *a priori* on moral, religious or political grounds. If truth is the goal, then who can decide which truths people should and should not hear? Of course, many regimes around the world, past and present, have been afraid that scientific, historical or political truths will undermine their hold on power. Authoritarian regimes are particularly vulnerable to criticism from the academic community.

In the Republic of Sudan, tension between the universities and the regime have grown since Sudan's independence in 1956. More than once, student demonstrations have contributed to the fall of an unpopular military regime. This is why students and staff are kept under strict surveillance. In this context, the combination of academic freedom and democratic values is seen as politically dangerous.

The Inqaz set about creating a new generation of Sudanese with an Islamist world view. To achieve this, the education system had to change from bottom to top. Secularism in society and in the schools was out. This had many consequences, not least of which was to intensify the conflict between the north and south of the country. The bold project of Islamising knowledge has created severe restrictions on freedom of research and freedom of speech. Islam was made the guiding principle of research and teaching, and because Islam is believed to have already provided many truths, the fields left open to legitimate and serious research have been limited.

What were the practical effects of Islamisation, Arabisation and the other reforms? First, because academic freedom became restricted, and many academics were thrown into jail or just disappeared, many others chose to leave the country – an option that remains relevant today. The loss of nearly half of the professors from the old universities, combined with the rapidly increasing numbers of students, put pressure on the authorities to fill the vacuum. They did this by appointing a small number of professors from other Arab countries, along with many locals who are loyal to the regime, even if they hold no more than a bachelors degree and have no experience of teaching at or administering a university.

Secondly, the value placed on Islamised and Arabised knowledge and research has prevented postgraduate students from consulting much of the Western literature, from obtaining scholarships to Western universities, and from communicating with universities and colleagues at the forefront of research worldwide. In addition, low budgets and a lack of proficiency in English mean that literature and course material that is available only in English is no longer accessible in the public universities. As Nyaba noted, the Arabisation and Islamisation of higher education added another dimension to the downward plunge of education standards, and this has been exacerbated by the acute shortage of textbooks and reference material in Arabic. The exodus of able Sudanese academics to universities abroad is partly attributable to the phenomenal decay in the state of higher education but it has also contributed to that problem (Nyaba 1998).³⁹

Thirdly, the reforms have tended to exclude non-Arabic speaking and non-Muslim Sudanese citizens from obtaining a university education. Students are forced to learn classical Arabic (to be able to read the basic academic texts) and in this way, education has become an instrument of identity construction, with Arab–Muslim identity portrayed as the most genuine and the most useful of the many Sudanese identities for anyone wishing to pursue a career. Furthermore, the removal of subsidies (particularly board and lodging) means that many students from lower-income families have been deprived of higher education.

If Sudan’s public universities and colleges are to have any hope of functioning effectively and helping to build a knowledge society, they desperately need additional financial and human resources, new infrastructure and organisational restructuring. Wide-ranging reforms are needed in all aspects of academic and student academic life. However, the Inqaz look set to continue to shape Sudan’s higher education sector for the foreseeable future, and the road ahead for the country’s universities is unlikely to be easy.

Notes

- 1 As the bulk of this chapter deals with the period from 1956 to 2014 when Sudan was one country, its separation into two states in 2011 is not covered in any detail. The effects of the war on higher education institutions in Sudan are also not discussed because no higher education institutions were established in areas such as Kordofan, Darfur, eastern Sudan and the northern provinces before the Inqaz higher education revolution. The University of Bahr el Ghazal and the Upper Nile University were established in 1991, and these were temporarily housed in Khartoum.
- 2 The regime that followed has become known as the May Regime.
- 3 The change was gazetted in the *Sudan Gazette* No. 833, Supplement No. 1 of August 1951, which brought the University College of Khartoum Ordinance (Ordinance No. 13 of 1951) into effect.
- 4 Revolutionary Command Council Decree No. 41, University of Khartoum General Archive, National Records Office, Khartoum.

- 5 Address of the President of the Revolutionary Council on the occasion of the Setting up of the Ministerial and Technical Committee on the Revision of the Structure, the Objectives and the Laws of the University of Khartoum, 1969, p 2. Copy available in the Sudan Library, University of Khartoum.
- 6 The University of Khartoum Act was Act No. 1 of 1970. See *Sudan Gazette* No. 1093, 15 January 1970, Supplement No. 1, Khartoum.
- 7 The Final Report and Recommendations of the Ministerial and Technical Committee of the University of Khartoum, February 1971, Khartoum University Press, 1971.
- 8 Republican Palace Archive (2), 15/3/8, Security Report, 4 January 1970, National Records Office, Khartoum.
- 9 Republican Palace Archive (2), 16/4/5, Analysis of the Election Results of the University of Khartoum Students' Union, National Records Office, Khartoum. See also Ahmed (n.d.).
- 10 This was known as the Sha'ban uprising – Sha'ban being the eighth month in the Islamic calendar.
- 11 Republican Palace Archive (2) 5/4/16, University of Khartoum, General, National Records Office, Khartoum.
- 12 This was reported in the daily newspaper, *Al-Sahafa*, No. 4208, 13 September 1973.
- 13 For more information on this, see Aloub (2010).
- 14 The Higher Education and Scientific Research Regulation Act of 1990 (as amended in 1993 and 1995) is available online in Arabic on the Republic of Sudan's government website.
- 15 It is interesting to note that, in 1991, the chair of the National Council of Higher Education was given to Ibrahim Ahmad 'Umar, a high-ranking and long-standing member of the ruling party, and professor of philosophy at the University of Khartoum. 'Umar later became the minister of higher education.
- 16 Article 12 of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act 1990. The Act is available online in Arabic at <http://www.moj.gov.sd/content/lawsv4/5/3.htm>.
- 17 The 1998 Constitution of the Republic of Sudan is available online in Arabic at <http://www.aproarab.org/Down/Sudan/Dostor.doc>
- 18 Sudan's Interim National Constitution of 2005 is available online.
- 19 For more on the issue of choosing a national language, see Coombs (1985).

- 20 By 2009, the University of Khartoum had published only 123 Arabic textbooks (Adam 2009); see also *Sudan Update* (nd.).
- 21 Postgraduate studies have been possible at the University of Khartoum since 1958. In 1972, the university also established a graduate college, to promote postgraduate studies related to national development and to train people in high-level skills.
- 22 Human Rights Watch 1992: 6.
- 23 This statement appeared in *Ataseel Magazine*, No. 1 of 1995, which was published by the Administration of Islamization of Knowledge, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in Sudan. See also MOHE (2009).
- 24 On 19 April 1990, 12 delegates from autonomous staff associations of six higher education institutions in Tanzania adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics. The Declaration was formulated at a time when African higher education systems were in a serious, multi-dimensional and long-standing crisis. Chapter 1 of the declaration stated that institutions of higher education should be critical of political repression and violations of human rights.
- 25 The University of Khartoum Act of 1995 is available online in Arabic at <http://www.moj.gov.sd/content/lawsv4/7/5.htm>.
- 26 The Constitution of the Republic of Sudan of 1998 is available online.
- 27 The Interim National Constitution of the Republic of the Sudan, 2005 is also available online.
- 28 The article was published in *Al Sahafa* on 10 October 2000 (cited in El Tom 2006: 27).
- 29 As Isa (1996: 161) points out, this was a repeat of what had happened when Juba University and Gezira University opened in the late 1970s.
- 30 After the country split in 2011, the universities of Juba, Bahr el Ghazal and the Upper Nile were absorbed into South Sudan. This has had little impact on funding and student numbers in Sudan as these institutions were relatively small. In addition, the new University of Bahri has taken the place of Juba University's campus in Khartoum. The establishment of Bahri University reflects the willingness of Sudan's government to absorb academic staff, students, and other employees who wish to transfer from institutions in what is now South Sudan (Kilase 2013).
- 31 Balsvik (1998) tackled the issue of student protest in Africa but she did not refer specifically to Sudan.

- 32 This was reported in *Huriyyat Online*, 6 June 2011 . After the separation of Sudan in 2011, Nyaba served as minister of higher education in South Sudan until 2013.
- 33 For more information, see <http://www.webometrics.info/en/Methodology>.
- 34 The Norwegian government's Quota scholarship programme covered expenses for students from collaborating institutions in the South who wanted to study in Norway. Sudan was never excluded from the programme, and the Sudanese institutions that took part in it included the University of Khartoum, the Ahfad University for Women and the Sudan University of Science and Technology. The aim of the programme was to build capacity in the South, so students were encouraged to return home when they had completed their studies. The programme was terminated in 2015, and alternative programmes are now being explored.
- 35 This information is derived from personal communication with Professor Manzoul Assal, of the Department of Anthropology, University of Khartoum on 6 March 2016. Prof Manzoul is the co-ordinator of the NORHED project. The ARUSS project is co-ordinated by Abdel Ghaffar Mohammed Ahmed, who was also the first Sudanese scholar to obtain a PhD in anthropology from the University of Bergen in 1973.
- 36 Personal communication with Prof. Manzoul Assal, University of Khartoum, 6 March 2016.
- 37 Personal communication with Prof. Manzoul Assal, University of Khartoum, 6 March 2016.
- 38 For information on Afhad University's masters programme on Gender and Governance, see <http://www.ahfad.net/index.php/gag.html>
- 39 Interestingly, Nyaba was made minister of higher education in 2005 within the Government of National Unity but, while he made one or two statements that were critical of government policy, he implemented no reforms while he was in office.

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