



SAND IN MY EYES

Sudanese
Moments

ENIKÖ NAGY

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Oral literature and folklore from Kordofan and Darfur, the Northern Province, east, central and South Sudan presented by the Bideriya, Dar Hamid, Hamar, Jaaliyin, Shenabla, Kenana, Musabbaat, Majanin, Jawama, Halab, Kawahla, Jibal Bahriya, Katla, Kababish, Daju, Kamda, Miseriya, Hausa, Brno, Brgo, Gabero, Atoro, Ngolo, Korongo, Tira, Lofofa, Shat, Katcha, Doloka, Tuna, Kau, Tima, Maalia, Kadugli, Hawazma, Logori, Kawaleeb, Waila, Umbaroro, Jafoun, Ouda, Gamba, Daneyjee, Doga, Dimdima, Bodi, Ngara, Wara, Melfy, Kanoma, Malle, Samkara, Bagarmi, Ragarig, Dinka and Nuer people.

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INTRODUCTION

The first thing that impresses a visitor upon arrival is the warmth of the Sudanese sun – an almost tangible burning heat, followed by the warmth of the Sudanese people. Their gentle manners and hospitality are legendary: distinctly Sudanese, you encounter it wherever you go, in the many cultures that form this diverse nation.

Another overwhelming impression is the physical vastness of Sudan. Bordering the Sahara Desert, sandy dunes drift over a stony landscape in the north. The harsh barren deserts give way to fertile clay plains, rich grass land, swaths of savannah, mountains and forests in the south. In the hot and arid climate, life depends on a short rainy season and the Nile transforming the desert into fertile soil through annual floods. This river of life with its unpredictable temperament is revered. It is central to many rituals, people invoke its blessing and offer food to the deities believed to live in it.

It is said that he who drinks water from the Nile is destined to return. There is sufficient historic evidence to back up the spell it casts. From among the sophisticated ancient cultures and religions that rose along its banks, Sudan is home to hundreds of tribes and languages. The lifestyles

you encounter reflect its different environments, varied ethnic origins and religious beliefs, creating a blend of people and contrasts that stirs you to ask: who are the Sudanese?

A LAND WITHIN ITS PEOPLE

Civilisation in Sudan dates back millennia and is laden with history. Temples, tombs and fortresses tell of ancient Nubian kingdoms and matriarchal societies, followed by the Greek, Roman, and Coptic Christian past that predates the arrival of Islam. You find their traces in Sudanese prose, customs and faces. People of Arab descent have over many generations mixed with the indigenous people in northern areas blending Islam with African roots and traditions, while further south people have retained their African social and religious heritage and some have also embraced Christianity.

Trade has attracted people from India, Libya and Mauritania and they too, over the centuries, have left their footprints on the cultural landscape turning Khartoum into a cosmopolitan place where once, Syrians, Jews, Armeni-

ans, Europeans and Africans rubbed shoulders, intermarried and shared cultures. In today's Sudan, a common Sudanese identity sometimes flickers out from behind the diversity that shaped it, and then again recedes and hides.

Located in the cultural region that spans the entire stretch of land between the Niger and the Nile, across the Sahara down to the savannah, a product of its ancient history and diversity, one can only assume that the Sudanese soul is as spacious as this land. Descendants of pharaohs, the sons of whirling dervishes and the daughters of black African Queens have blended into a space more inclusive and bigger than a mere country or territory, somewhere original and infinite. In that space, within spiritual patterns that each kind of people manifests in their typical behaviour and subconscious memory, their ancestors continue to exist.

ORAL NARRATIVES

The Sudan maintains its cross-generational continuity through the rich and varied ways it speaks and is spoken of by fire-sites. In oral narratives customs, superstitions, ri-

tuals, manners, beliefs and experiences are handed over from one generation to the next, whilst tales and verses have been adapted from the interaction with other nations throughout history, embracing their cultural elements, in an ever-welcoming gesture, absorbing them into a shared Sudanese experience.

Traditional narratives – mythological, historical or modern, have been influenced by centuries of caravan trade, and inspired by religions and pilgrims, but were forged through local circumstances. They are mirrors of society: a multitude of Sudanese moments, fragments of existence. The rest has to be left to the imagination – as only human imagination is capable of grasping, or perhaps sensing, the myriad facets of a people.

Over many centuries their poets have tailored words to bird song and the sound of the hooves of running camels on which they depend for food, drink, clothing and shelter in the desert. Their words abound with veneration for graciousness and courage and their desire to excel in hospitality. Their tribal drums pulse to the beat of fierce longing for pride, love and heroism and tell of the triumph of survival. One can hear the vastness of the land in the

AL SUBUH
becoming

26

AL DUHUR
striving

196

AL ASUR
sharing

326

AL MAGHREB
belonging

448

AL EISHA
transcending

648

Appendices

الصباح
الصيرورة

الظهر
السعي

العصر
المشاركة

المغرب
الانتماء

العشاء
التسامي

الملحقات

رعاة الإبل من إحدى
عشائر المَعَالِيَا دار
حامد مع بضائعهم
وأمّعتهم في
كادُغلي.

الرَّحُولُ عِزُّ الْعَرَبِ

Migration is the pride of the nomad

Maalia Dar
Hamid camel-
herding nomads
with their goods
and chattels,
Kadugli









رَعَاةُ الْإِبِلِ الْكَبَابِيشِ
مِنَ الدُّكَّةِ يَتَقَايِضُونَ
عَلَى السِّلْعِ وَالْإِتْجَارِ
بِبَهَائِهِمْ، وَيَشْتَرُونَ
الْحُلَى الْفُضِيَّةَ
وَالْأَقْمِشَةَ فِي حَمْرَةِ
الشَّيْخِ.

الْفِي وَالْذَكَ يَقَالُ الذَكَ

The features of your father will appear on you

*Kababish
camel-breeding
nomads from
Al Dikka barter
goods, trade
animals, buy
silver jewellery
and material
in Hamrat Al
Sheikh.*





في كل عام يتأهل
جيل جديد لنيل
قرون الجاموس، ويتم
جلدهم بالسياط إثباتاً
لرجولتهم وجسارتهم
وثباتهم أثناء رقصة
الكمبلا التي تسبق
زواجهم. وهم يمثلون
القوة والنشاط
الضروريين لحماية
مجتمعهم من خلال
تشبههم بالجاموس
أثناء الرقص.

*Each year, a
new generation
of young men is
entitled to buffa-
lo horns. To pro-
ve themselves,
their courage
and endurance
they are lashed
while dancing
the kambala,
just prior to mar-
riage. Dancing
like bulls, they
represent the
strength and
vigour needed
to protect their
community.*

رعاة الإبل من قبيلة
الشَّائِلَةِ يَسْقُونَ
قطيعاً من 150 جملًا
من حفير في العيارة
بشمال كُردفان.

رأي الإبل

إِنْتُو مَا سَمِعْتُوا الْمَقَالَ؟؛ قالوا زمانُ كان فيه واحدُ جاتُه ليلةَ القدر، اتمنَّى غنمه يعلفن، وبقره يعلفن، وجماله تعلفن، ويزيدوا كلهم ويبقوا ألف. وبَسَ قَامُ مِنْ نَوْمِهِ لِقَى كَوْمَهُ، والخير جَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ فِجَّةٍ، وسَعَايَتُهُ صَاقُ بَيْفَا الْقَصَا، ونَاسُ زَمَانِهِ حَسَدُوهُ وشكوه للسلطان، وقالوا بَعَايَمُهُ خَرَبَنَ عَلَيْنَا، والسلطان طَرَدَهُ مِنَ الْبَلَدِ، وقال لِيهِ: اللَّيْلَةُ مَا تَصْبِحُ فِي دَارِي.

بَعْدِينَ شَاوُرَ بَعَايَمُهُ، بدا بالمعزات وقال لِيهِ: بنات النَّيْسِ!، البلد أبانا والسلطان جافانا. قالن لِيَهُ: بِي نُصْنَا عَيْشْنَا. جَاءَ لِلْخُرْفَانِ وقال لِيهِ: البلد أبانا والسلطان جافانا. قالن لِيَهُ: بِي نُصْنَا عَيْشْنَا. جَاءَ لِلْأَلِيلِ قال لِيهِ: البلد أبانا والسلطان جافانا، قالن لِيَهُ: أَكَاكَ مَدَّةً أَدِينَا فِي الْبَحْرِ هَدَّةً، وَإِنْ مَا أَدَاكَ مَدَّةً شَيْلٍ وَاتَّعَدَّى.

من الجزيرة

The Vote of the Camel

Have you heard this tale? It is said that once upon a time a man found the Night of Power, so he wished that his sheep, his cattle and his camels should all increase to a thousand, and when he woke up he found his wish fulfilled. Wealth came to him from all around him. But the land would not hold his herds, and the people of the time envied him and complained about him to the sultan, saying that his animals spoiled the land for them. So the sultan bade him leave the country and said, "Tomorrow you shall not abide in my dar".

The man consulted his animals and said to the goats, "Daughters of the billy goat, the land does not want us and the sultan has been harsh with us". They replied, "At the cost of half our number let the rest of us live". So he left them and said to the sheep, "The land does not want us and the sultan is harsh with us". They replied, "At the cost of half of us let the rest of us live". He spoke to the cattle. They also said, "At the cost of half of our number, let the rest of us live". To the camels he said, "The country does not want us and the sultan is harsh with us". They replied, "If he will give us a respite, let us first drink at the river; if there is no respite let us be off at once and cross".

From Gezira

Shenabla
camel herders
water a herd of
150 camels at a
hafir. Al Aiara,
North Kordofan







آني ناجي

رمال في عيونني

لحظات سودانية

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