

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUDAN

TORE NORDENSTAM
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PREFACE

In 1977, the Department of Philosophy at the University of Khartoum organized a conference on philosophy, religion, ideology and development. Hakan Tornebohm, who was the first professor of philosophy in the University of Khartoum (from 1957 to 1963) and I (who lectured in the same department from 1961 to 1966 and received my Ph.D. from the University of Khartoum in 1965), welcomed this opportunity to re-establish contacts with the university and the country which we have come to like so much. We made a joint contribution to the conference on "Research, Ethics and Development" (printed in the *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftstheorie* in 1979). The conference was very well organized by Dr. Kamal Shaddad and his colleagues in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Khartoum. Moreover, it touched upon an extremely important area – the cluster Research and Development—which has not received much attention so far from professional philosophers in spite of the prominence of ideas of development in the last few decades. We decided to pursue the themes which were touched upon in the conference in 1977, and formulated a joint research project with the somewhat grandiose title "Research, Ethics and Development—Research Policy in the Sudan". Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Head of the Department of Islamic Studies in the University of Khartoum, who was the main commentator on our contribution to the conference, agreed to be our partner in the project. In the initial phase, we got financial support from the Norwegian General Research Council and the Swedish development organization SAREC, and then for the rest of the project period we got support from the Norwegian development authority, NORAD.

The empirical territory which we have investigated—research policies in the Sudan—is a complex field which has not been systematically explored so far. The knowledge about the area exists above all in the form of personal experience acquired by the actors in the field. This mass of tacit knowledge which is shared by the actors in the field, can be approached in a number of ways, using perspectives and conceptions drawn from sociology, social anthropology, history, geography, and so on. Our way of doing it has been to make use of our experience from philosophy and theory of science. We have not had the task of making an exhaustive survey of research activities in the in the Republic of the Sudan. We have not tried to function as a commission of inquiry into the state of affairs in the country. We have felt that philosophical reflection should be geared towards issues of development, and we

have tried to illuminate some aspects of the cluster Research and Development through a number of interviews with researchers from different fields and institutions in the Sudan.

On the whole we have found it more important, at this moment in the development of the Sudan and the rest of the world, to search for the right kind of *questions* concerning development. To the extent that we have managed to find the important questions, others can and will, we hope, go on to elaborate the *answers* to those questions concerning the essentials of development. There are now a good number of well-established research traditions in the Sudan, the histories of which ought to be written while the founding fathers are still around, to mention only one aspect of the cluster Research and Development in the Sudan. It is indeed our hope that the philosophy of development will one day flourish in the Sudan, combining the empirical and analytical approaches of the theory of science with the question-raising and conceptual methods of philosophy. The international conference on "Queries about Developments", which was organized by Hakan Tornebohm in September 1984, was a step in this direction, and there is more to come.

The core of the project consists of talks with twenty-six researchers and administrators in the Sudan, which have been tape-recorded and transcribed. (Most of the transcriptions were made by Hakan Tornebohm, some by Tore Nordenstam.) In the last few years, Hakan Tornebohm, Ibrahim Ahmed Omer and myself have produced a number of provisional reports and working papers; cf. the list at the end of this book. Hakan Tornebohm has concentrated on working out conceptual models for various aspects of the Development Research cluster; a final report on those theoretical investigations will be published separately. The reader will get a glimpse of his work on those lines in the last chapter of this book. And Ibrahim Ahmed Omer is writing a monograph (in Arabic) on the Islamic conception of development.

In the present volume, the empirical material will be presented with an emphasis on the interviews. The project has been a joint enterprise consisting of Hakan Tornebohm, Ibrahim Ahmed Omer and myself as interviewers, on the one hand, and our interviewees in the Sudan, on the other hand. The result is a common product, a series of talks on development and research in a developing country in the Third World (to use the common and by no means philosophically innocent terminology of today).

Together, the talks give a picture of what it means to do research under conditions of underdevelopment. When editing the interviews, an emphasis has been put on the central theme of research and higher education in the Sudan, but enough surrounding material has (I hope) been included to make

the book readable for those who are not familiar with this country. As editor, I have sometimes summarized portions of the tapes and provided the interview texts with introductions. Most, but unfortunately not all, of the interviewees have had the opportunity of reading and correcting the transcripts.

I and my project partners wish to express our gratitude to all those people and authorities who have made it possible for us to carry out these investigations. We are grateful to the secretarial staff of the Department of Theory of Science in the University of Goteborg for their much-appreciated assistance. The publication of this book has been made possible by substantial grants from the Central Research Committee and the Department of Philosophy in the University of Khartoum, and from the University of Bergen, Norway.

Above all, our thanks are due to our colleagues and friends in the Sudan, who have been so generous, kind and helpful to us.

Tore Nordenstam
Khartoum, January 1985

**1. TECHNOCRATIC AND HUMANISTIC
CONCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT**

Tore Nordenstam

1.1. THE IDEA OF A PHILOSOPHY OF DEVELOPMENT

Our actions, thoughts and feelings are like the top of an iceberg. Most of the things which shape our doings lie below the level of articulated discourse in the form of hidden assumptions, concepts and values, needs and hopes. When we feel a need for it, we can try to dig up some of the assumptions and concepts and so on, converting bits of the hidden into explicit knowledge.

In the philosophy of art, one can for instance attempt to formulate the conceptions of art which lie behind the aesthetic activities which have been going on in various places over the centuries. If we refer to the mass of implicit values and concepts and so on which lies behind an aesthetic practice as the "philosophy" embedded in that practice, we can say that it belongs to the task of philosophy as an academic subject to convert existing philosophies in art into a philosophy of art.

Similarly, we can refer to the assumptions that the scientists in a given research tradition have of the nature of their work and of the nature of the aspect of the world which they are exploring as their "philosophy". And to distinguish this more or less implicit and unformulated philosophy from systematic attempts to clarify the assumptions behind the ongoing activities, we can talk about the philosophies in science in contrast to attempts to work out an explicit philosophy of science.¹

And again, in any field of development there are a number of assumptions, conceptions, values and so on, which can be scrutinized, systematized, criticized and perhaps improved upon. We can refer to the underlying assumptions in a field of development as the philosophy in that field, and to attempts to articulate and systematize the implicit philosophy in a field of development as exercises in the philosophy of development. It is part then, of the task of the philosophy of development, as we think of it, to convert aspects of the existing philosophies in development into a more explicit philosophy of development through the articulation of assumptions which are usually taken for granted but not formulated in so many words by the practitioners in the field.

We do not think of the articulation of hidden assumptions as a kind of neutral descriptive work. Already by raising certain questions, you may start processes of change within the field you are interested in. Rather, the articulation of implicit philosophies of development should be seen as a kind of maieutic work belonging to a tradition which goes back to Socrates. In the dialogues which make up the bulk of this book, I and my two colleagues have played the role of Socrates, the ignorant philosopher who thought that

joint reflection might help to shed some light on the assumptions behind our everyday activities.²

In doing so, we have made an assumption which goes against the mainstream of Western philosophy. In the Western tradition, knowledge is usually taken to be the same as knowing that something is the case. Knowledge is taken to be the sum total of all the propositions which we assent to. But this does not do justice to the ways in which we usually use such words as “knowing” and “knowledge”. As we all recognize when we are not reflecting upon what knowledge is in the philosophical tradition, there are many things which we know without being able to describe them in so many words. There are many things which we know without being able to articulate them, viz. all those things which belong to the part of the iceberg which consists of our tacit knowledge. In addition to “knowing that”, there is “knowing how”.³

In fact, we need a division into *three* basic types of knowledge in order to be able to do justice to the knowledge we all have. In a passage in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein reminds us of the existence of knowledge which cannot be formulated in so many words by asking us to compare the following cases : *knowing and saying* (1) how many feet high Mont Blanc is, (2) how the word “game” is used, (3) how a clarinet sounds.⁴ I recognize the sound of a clarinet when I hear it, but the only efficient way of explaining, say, the difference between a clarinet and an oboe is by pointing to the difference by playing the instruments or passages from a recording. Knowing how a word like “game” is used is not only a case of familiarity, as in the preceding case. Normally, it is also a case of practical knowledge in the sense of being able to use the word correctly. One can then, distinguish between three different types of knowledge :

- the kind of *propositional knowledge* which you have when you know that something is the case and when you also can describe what you know in so many words;
- the kind of *practical knowledge* or skill which you have when you know how to do something;
- the kind of *knowledge by familiarity* which you have when you know how something sounds or smells or is.⁵

The tendency to identify knowledge with propositional knowledge is characteristic of what we shall refer to as “technocratic practices”. If somebody cannot articulate his views properly, this is taken to mean that he has no knowledge at all of the subject in question, from the technocratic point of view. Social scientists may then be called for to create knowledge about the area in question. Properly speaking, many of the activities of social scientists and humanists should be viewed rather as attempts to articulate already

existing knowledge, attempts to transform existing practical knowledge and knowledge by familiarity into explicitly formulated propositional knowledge. Sometimes, the efforts of social scientists aim only at the transportation of knowledge from one environment to another, as the cultural anthropologist Kroeber once pointed out. Examples of work which includes a substantial portion of articulation of tacit knowledge can be found over the whole spectrum of the human sciences, from linguistics and social anthropology to art history, philosophy and working life sciences. Our own efforts to transform some of the existing philosophies in development into a philosophy of development falls squarely within this kind of human science.

When reflecting upon the practical knowledge, familiarity and formulated, propositional knowledge which exists in a given field of activity, we have found it useful to operate with the notions of practice and paradigm. By a "practice" we mean any kind of rule-following behaviour. One can distinguish between two types of rules, which can be called "open" and "closed" rules. What a closed rule is can be explained with the help a simple example. I say "2, 4, 6, 8" and ask you to continue. You say "10, 12, 14, 16, and so on". I nod to show that you have grasped the rule. Generally, by "closed rules" I mean mechanical rules which are such that even a machine (for instance, a computer) can be made to follow them. Actions and action-like behaviour of computers and similar machines in accordance with closed rules I shall call "operations".⁶

Most of our actions are, however, not operations. Most of our actions are done under open rules. A necessary prerequisite of rule-following in such cases is familiarity with a number of clear cases, or "models" if you like. In order to be able to grasp and use the word "apple", my little daughter once had to learn the rules governing that word. The way she learned it, was by having a number of clear cases of apples pointed out to her, by grasping and smelling and tasting them, by being corrected sometimes ("No, this is not an apple, this is an orange"); by having clear cases to the contrary pointed out to her ("This is a banana, that is a peach, but *this* is an apple"). After a while she had learned enough of the range to which we apply the word "apple" to be able to continue the given series of examples on her own.

It would be a mistake to think of language-learning as consisting essentially in the learning of a number of labels of things. Sometimes, we do indeed learn new words in that way, but normally to learn to use a linguistic expression means at the same time to learn to act in the appropriate ways in the world. This is where Artificial Intelligence researchers, fascinated by computers, tend to go wrong: they forget how our words and actions are embedded in our practices. Even a label like "apple" is embedded in a number of activities,

and mastering the word means the same as mastering those activities; understanding the word means understanding the activities in question. Similarly, to master a word like "art" means to master a number of activities like learning to look at objects from an aesthetic point, learning to talk about objects not as physical things but as works of art, and so on. Our words and the concepts expressed by them are embedded in our doings. Learning a language is at the same time learning a world of social practices, which are normally guided by open rules.

The essence of the competence required in order to be able to engage in rule-following behaviour is the ability to continue a given series of model examples. In the case of closed rules, this is a mechanical matter, which can be handled by a machine too. In the case of open rules, it is not a mechanical matter but something which requires experience and good judgement on the part of the actor. One could say that the handling of open rules requires a certain amount of creativity on the part of the actors, an ability to adapt adequately to the circumstances at hand. Since most of our activities are carried out under open rules, this means that familiarity and experience and good judgement is something which is part and parcel of our everyday life as well as of specialized activities in such fields as research and development. Experience with previous model examples or "paradigm cases" is an essential aspect of the competence required from every actor in the field in question.

To uncover the rules which are operative in a given field of activity, it is similarly a good idea to familiarize oneself with a number of model examples which are operative in that field. To uncover examples is not only a paedagogical device which can help to make the report livelier and more readable. It is an essential aspect of the uncovering of the rules, which the actors in the field in question have to master in order to be competent in that field. Casuistry, the study of model examples, is an unavoidable aspect of the study of the paradigms which govern the practice in a given field of activity.

The word "paradigm", which we just used to characterize one aspect of practices, has been widely used in recent philosophy of science with a somewhat narrower scope of meaning. Many readers will be familiar with the notion of paradigm which was introduced by Thomas S. Kuhn in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.⁷ In that book, "paradigm" stands both for the exemplary achievements in a research tradition (for instance, a successful experiment, an established theory, a model project) and for certain general assumptions about the nature of the world and about the appropriate ways of investigating the segment of the world one is interested in a given tradition of research. In the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein, the word "paradigm" is sometimes used to refer to model cases, like the cases my daughter had to

familiarize herself with in order to learn the concept of apple. When Kuhn talks about paradigms in the sense of model achievements, he comes close to Wittgenstein's use of the term.

We have found it useful to generalize Kuhn's notion of paradigm. The idea behind the generalization is that research activities are sufficiently similar to all other activities in certain respects to warrant an extended use of the notion of a paradigm. In other words, we have used current thinking about scientific development as a model for thinking about development in general.

Scientific activities in a given research tradition are guided by paradigms both in the sense of model achievements and in the sense of general assumptions about the nature of the territory one is investigating and general assumptions about the appropriate ways of doing so. In all research practices, one will find paradigmatic achievements which serve as models for further work as well as a world view and a view on science and research. In all research traditions, what the researcher can do is determined by his personal competence and the paradigms guiding the tradition. The same applies for all other organized activities: in all fields of activities, the actors must have a certain *world picture* in the sense of a mass of usually unformulated opinions, evaluations and wishes concerning those parts of the world which will be affected by the activities in that field of action. And the actors must hold certain *views on the nature of the practice* in question. The knowledge that an experienced farmer has, includes a world picture and a view of the nature of farming; the competence that an experienced nurse has, includes a number of general assumptions about the nature of man and his diseases, and some views on the nature of nursing; and so on. Paradigms in any field of activity function as determinants of the work done within the field, and may be changed as the result of the experiences of the practitioners, or as the result of the emergence of new tools, which lead to new forms of competence and change the activities in the field (to mention only two sources of change). Paradigms may also change as the result of attempts to formulate them, to criticize them, and to improve upon them.

Our own efforts may be characterized as a piece of active paradigm development. We wish to contribute to the articulation and modification of existing paradigms of research and development. Behind our efforts lies a faith in the value of reflection upon what one is doing. Joint paradigm discussions between the practitioners in a field of development and philosophers playing the role of Socrates are a way of raising the level of reflection and articulation in any field of development. Behind our efforts also lies a general dissatisfaction with the kind of development thinking and the kind of development practices which have spread notably in the post-war period, which may be referred

to as *technocratic practices* of development. In a technocratic practice, the emphasis lies on efficiency in reaching the goals which have been set. The goal may be for instance to get more energy for industrial purposes and general consumption. To achieve that goal, the authorities decide to build a dam and install electricity generators. Engineers, technicians and builders are called in to reach the aims efficiently and economically. In a typical technocratic practice, the emphasis lies clearly on the technical aspects of the enterprise, and the planning procedure takes place above the heads of those who will be immediately affected by the changes in the environment, for instance the herdsmen living around the river. We shall use the term *humanistic practices* as a general name for efforts to break this pattern. In humanistic practices, the emphasis is on the people concerned; human concerns are the focus of development projects; and technical expertise is called in to assist with certain aspects of the projects only.

The contrast between technocratic and humanistic practices of development is the red thread which goes through the dialogues in the following chapters of this book. In the rest of this introductory chapter, we shall therefore focus on this contrast and try to shed some light on what technocratic and humanistic approaches to development might amount to by commenting upon a number of widespread conceptions of development (1.2) and by giving some examples (1.3).

1.2. CONCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

(a) *Evolutionary conceptions.* There is a tradition of thinking about development in biological terms which goes back to antiquity and which was given new life by the Renaissance humanists. According to this tradition, individuals and cultures have to go through the same stages of birth, childhood, youth, maturity, and, after a period of decay, death. In fact, the notion of development has become so firmly tied to the biological metaphor that it is difficult to free oneself from the organismic associations surrounding it. The founders of the modern human sciences (the social sciences and the humanities) in the nineteenth century rejected the prevalent assumption that there is a common human nature which realizes itself in a global movement of "universal history", and emphasized that every people has its own mentality which develops over time ("the national spirit" which is the basis of much of the work done in such disciplines as history and political science, particularly in the last century). But the underlying assumption remained very much the same: development was conceived of in evolutionary terms including a number of stages which were regarded as necessary steps on the way to maturity. Thus, Hegel looked upon the history of mankind as a maturation process of the human mind; and Marx divided history into stages which he and his followers tended to regard as inevitable in the development of all human societies (from primitive society and slave society over feudalism and capitalism to the end stage of communism).

In evolutionary conceptions of this kind, one usually finds two basic assumptions which have coloured much development thinking also in our own century :

(i) the assumption that there is a common goal for all human development (referred to by Christians as "heaven" and by Marxists as "complete self-realization in the communist society", to give two examples only);

(ii) the assumption that all development has to go through the same stages, usually modelled on the history of Western Europe.

To this list we may add a third assumption which follows rather naturally from the second assumption:

(iii) the tempo of development must be a very slow one.

The three assumptions are particularly characteristic of the attitudes of the European powers in the heyday of colonialism. Taking the development of Europe as the model of all development, one felt that development elsewhere might be speeded up somewhat with the help of education and modern technology. But on the other hand, one also tended to think that the time-lag

between the civilized nations and the primitive people in the colonies was so vast that one could not avoid the conclusion that the development of the societies outside Europe must be a long-term affair.

Good examples of evolutionary thinking about development based on those three assumptions may be found in the colonial ideologies of education.⁹ The picture of the African which emerges from the pages of the two so-called Phelps-Stokes reports on education in Africa from 1922 and 1925, for instance, is one of gay and irresponsible children who must be led by their more developed white superiors in the direction of civilization. Above all, one felt that there was a need for character development, and the goal of the educational efforts was a well-known list of Puritan and Protestant virtues :

“The most important ends of education are the character development and religious life of the pupils...The teacher ... should also know the superstitions, traditions, and tribal customs that determine and limit the character life of the Native African. The simple virtues urged as educational ends by mission and government teachers are perseverance, thoroughness, order, cleanliness, punctuality, thrift, temperance, self-control, reliability, honesty, and respect for parents.”¹⁰

And, to give another example, in a British royal commission report from 1945 on the future of higher education in West Africa, it was stated that some of the most advanced colonies might achieve a limited degree of self-government towards the end of this century. In order to prepare for this eventual state of affairs, this report and its companion report from the Asquith commission recommended that amongst other things a number of university colleges and other institutions of higher learning ought to be established in Africa and elsewhere.¹¹

The French authorities at that time did not share the ambition of eventual self-government in some of the colonies. The Brazzaville conference, which was opened by General de Gaulle in 1944, declared that “the eventual constitution, even in the distant future, of self-government in the colonies is to be avoided.”¹² But like the British, the French based their colonial policies firmly on the postulate of a common goal (*in casu* assimilation to French culture) to be approached in the slow tempo necessitated by the limited capabilities of the natives. “It is true,” wrote a French official in the thirties, “that education in the colonies proceeds slowly and that it has to proceed slowly, unless we want to deceive ourselves.” And with reference to Governor-General Carde he went on to emphasize that what the colonial power tried to do was nothing less than making their pupils cover in a few decades a civilization lag of several thousand years.¹³

(b) *Technocratic conceptions.* The actual development in Africa after World War II was not what one could have expected against the background of stage thinking and widespread conceptions of a vast time-lag which had to be covered by long processes of education and assimilation to European culture. The Sudan became an independent country in 1956; the breakthrough for political independence in Africa elsewhere came around 1960. Crash programmes for the modernization of the new states were devised with the help of Western and Eastern experts. The basic idea behind those crash programmes seems to have been the assumption that viable states in Africa and elsewhere could be built only with the help of modern technology. "Nation-building" became the goal, and the means were taken to be the same as those which had been used in the development of Europe since the last century: industrialization and mechanization. It seems to have been generally believed that eventually the benefits from industrialization and mechanization of agriculture would "seep down" from those immediately earning money and status to the rest of the country.

The rapid change from satellites within colonial systems to politically independent states imposed a new order of priorities on the development of Africa. Instead of the previous emphasis on character building and long term assimilation to European culture, the first priority now became to build up national bureaucracies to run the new states and then to embark on the process of modernization. There is, I think, a clearly noticeable tendency towards technocratic thinking and technocratic practices in the last few decades both in the metropolises and in the satellites. The assumptions behind this development are usually not formulated explicitly in so many words.¹⁴ The following list (compiled by Hakan Tornebohm) seems to me to hit the nail on the head:

- (1) Modern industrialized societies are better than traditional societies in the Third World.
- (2) The development of the Third World should therefore aim at transforming traditional societies into societies which resemble the modern societies in the industrialized part of the world.
- (3) This should be done as quickly, efficiently and cheaply as possible.
- (4) To achieve this, the processes of development must be organized as efficiently as possible. Modern forms of organization (for instance planning organs of the Soviet type) are commendable.
- (5) The agents of development should have a solid scientific and technical training. Universities should be developed so that education of this kind can be given. In the meantime, future experts should be trained at universities in the industrialized part of the world.

- (6) Rapid economic growth is the top priority. Rapid economic growth is best achieved by industrialization and the mechanization of agriculture. One should concentrate on products which are in demand on the world market and which give high profits.
- (7) Traditions in the Third World are obstacles to development, which should be eliminated through modern education.
- (8) Elitist schools are necessary for the universities to be able to train the kind of experts needed for the development of the Third World countries.
- (9) To avoid unnecessary delay, one must sometimes take resistance from traditionally-minded groups into account, and find ways of eliminating their resistance. Spreading information might be necessary to get acceptance for development projects in certain areas.
- (10) This set of assumptions about development should be built into the training which the students receive during their education in their home countries and in the developed part of the world.

No one should be expected to agree to all the items of the list, particularly not when formulated in such a brutal way. The list of assumptions delimits an ideal type, which, in various alluring and sophisticated guises seems to lie behind much development thinking in the last few decades.

The list of assumptions above is an example of what we shall refer to as "technocratic conceptions of development". It is characteristic of technocratic conceptions that the emphasis lies on the technical aspects of development, preferably in mathematical form, combined with authoritarian attitudes (like "social engineering"). A good example of what a sophisticated version of technocratic thinking about development might amount to is Herbert Simon's series of lectures from 1968, "The Sciences of the Artificial".¹⁵ We live in a world which has been shaped by man, a world of artefacts rather than a world of nature, according to Herbert Simon, who goes on to propose a new science of the artificial. The new science of the artificial ought to be the core of the education of everybody who is professionally concerned with design in the wide sense of influencing men and environments. Many of us are professional designers in this sense, including engineers, doctors, social scientists, lawyers, teachers, and so on. Now, what ought those of us who are concerned with design in this sense to know? According to Herbert Simon, we must first of all learn to avoid sloppy thinking, and this means learning mathematical logic, decision theory, utility theory, optimizing and satisfying algorithms, and similar things.¹⁶ A basic training in such logical and mathematical techniques ought to be part of the training of every liberally educated man, declares Simon,¹⁷ who says nothing about the rest of the curriculum. But obviously disastrous results would follow if the *care* of the training of,

say, physicians and lawyers would be in such formalized fields. The core of the training of any professional man or woman, a "designer" in the wide sense in which Herbert Simon uses that word, must consist in building up familiarity with an empirical field (for instance, anatomy, physiology and diseases) and a number of procedures based on previous experience. Good judgement on the part of the practitioner cannot be replaced by sharp, logical techniques, though certainly it can be sharpened in some cases by the kind of training that Simon emphasizes (to the extent of excluding the obvious from the field of vision).

The contrast we are trying to bring into focus between technocratic practices and humanistic practices consists above all in the different emphasis which is put on those aspects of development processes which can be dealt with in technical, logical and mathematical terms. In technocratic practices, the focus is on those aspects of development, and other aspects are treated in a stepmotherly way. In humanistic practices, the emphasis is above all on the people concerned; and technical and mathematically expressible aspects of the processes are considered in the perspective of the human needs and aspirations involved in the processes. One should not expect human aspects to be entirely neglected in technocratic practices. "The human component" is inevitably a part of many of the complex systems handled by the technocrat. On the verbal level, the technocrat and the humanist might agree. The differences show up in the ways in which they handle practical problems in specific development projects.

(c) *Humanistic conceptions of development.* The "seep-down" theory of development, with its characteristic emphasis on concentrating scarce resources in selected areas which are regarded as spearheads of development, is clearly visible in the development plans of the Sudan. In the sixties and seventies, there was a heavy concentration of resources on the three central, riverain provinces. In the field of higher education, the emphasis on the central area of the country showed up in the form of a skew distribution of students. In the mid-sixties, 75% of the students at the University of Khartoum, the only independent university in the country at that time, came from the three central provinces, the Northern Province, Khartoum Province, and Blue Nile Province. But only one-third of the population of the country lived in those provinces.¹⁸

Increasing dissatisfaction with technocratic development, not least in the form of "seep-down" and "spearhead" programmes, is characteristic of the seventies. The effect of concentrating the modernization efforts on a few sectors and areas believed to be keys to national development was not the expected one: an increase in general welfare. One learned that an increase in

the Gross National Product is not necessarily identical with an increase in general welfare. Certain groups and individuals tend to be favoured at the expense of others, class differences tend to grow, just as the discrepancies between the rich and the poor countries tend to grow, contrary to official optimism concerning aid to underdeveloped countries. There are *victims of development* as well as beneficiaries of development.¹⁹ The technocratic emphasis on *efficiency* as a criterion for evaluating development programmes stands in need of supplementation with a *sensitivity* criterion which can be formulated as follows:

Development programmes ought to be sensitive to the legitimate interests of the people affected by the programmes.²⁰

The sensitivity criterion might be regarded as a special case of a more general *perceptiveness* criterion which might be formulated as follows:

Development programmes ought to be perceptive in the sense of paying attention to the salient features of their areas of operation.²¹

On the level of international ideological discourse, a number of new concepts or slogans reflecting similar ideas were developed and spread in the seventies through agencies like UNESCO, FAO and the World Health Organization. Here is a list, with brief comments, of such concepts which entered the market in the seventies: ²²

(a) *Redistribution with growth*: a concept built on the conviction that economic growth must be accompanied by deliberate efforts at a more equal distribution of welfare. Main reference: *Redistribution with Growth*, produced by the World Bank and the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex (Oxford University Press 1974).

(b) *Basic needs*: "Basic needs means a concern not just for improving the overall income of the poor, but making sure that they get all the essential elements for a life of dignity freed from absolute need: adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, employment, and the right to participate in making the decisions that affect them."²³ Main reference: *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs*, International Labour Office, Geneva 1976.

(c) *Basic services*: a concept developed by UNICEF and the World Health Organization, based on the idea of low-cost, technologically simple solutions to elementary needs for water supply, sanitation, health, etc. Barefoot doctors, technicians and management consultants should help to improve the lot of the people as far as such basic needs are concerned. Popular participation is an aspect of this conception. See e.g. V. Djukanovic & E.P. Mach, *Alternative Approaches to Meeting Basic Health Needs in Developing Countries*, WHO, Geneva 1975.

(d) *Participation in development*: Participation was included in the United Nations' programme for the seventies ("the Second Development Decade") adopted in October 1970: "every effort will be made to secure the active support and participation of all segments of the population in the development process."²⁴ Two United Nations volumes deal with this theme, *Popular Participation in Development* (New York 1971), and *Popular Participation in Decision-Making for Development* (New York 1975).

(e) *Eco-development*: The ecological trend was taken up also by the United Nations Environment Programme in the mid-seventies. The basic ideas of eco-development are well summed up by Paul Harrison in the following sentences: "Development should respect the local ecosystem. It should conserve resources, using renewable resources wherever possible. It should minimize waste and recycle as much as it can. And it should respect local social and cultural patterns, by involving the local population in deciding on the style and pace of development."²⁵ Reference: the United Nations Environment Programme working paper of the International Expert Group on Environment and Development (UNEP IG/4/3, Nairobi, December 1976).

(f) *Endogenous development*, or development in accordance with the authentic values, aspirations and motives of the people. The concept was launched officially by UNESCO in a plan for the period 1977-82 adopted in 1977: *Medium Term Plan*, UNESCO 19 C/4, Paris 1977. Most development up to then was held to have been "exogenous" - inspired by the values of the West. The so-called Cocoyoc Declaration seems to go in the same direction (United Nations A/C2/292, November 1974).²⁶

The red thread which goes through these various attempts at formulating new strategies for development in the seventies is a concern for the sensitivity and perceptiveness criteria and a reaction against the oversimplified measures of growth which were relied upon until then. On the level of international ideology-production, there is a movement away from technocratic thinking in the direction of what we have called "humanistic conceptions of development".

The views of our interlocutors in the Sudan go in the same direction. The international ideologies are reflected in some of the talks, especially in the interview with Dr. Rasheed, not unexpectedly in view of his close connections with various international organizations.²⁷

But what is above all noticeable in the various interviews is a pragmatic attitude towards development, based upon the personal experience of twenty-five years of independence including a succession of experiments in development. In the seventies and early eighties, the Sudan went through a succession of different periods of development thinking, from a Soviet-oriented attempt at a planned economy over free market ideas to the conception of an Islamic

state in 1983.²⁸ The sobering effects of the experiences over this period seem to vary from fairly pessimistic assessments of the situation to cautiously optimistic attitudes. "We must be very pragmatic", said Dr. Joseph Awad at the University of Juba, "we must listen to the man in the village. This is my motto—I found it in the library, it is from an ancient poet: Go in search of your people, love them, learn from them, learn with them, begin with what they know and build on what they have".²⁹ Similarly, Dr. Ali Fadl, who was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Khartoum in 1979 when we talked to him, emphasized that attempts at development must be based on "the basic culture of the people, their needs, what they think, and their priorities".³⁰ Similar attitudes prevail in the other talks, not least in the interview with Dr. AbdelGhaffar of the Development Studies and Research Centre in Khartoum and in the interviews with the members of the Institute of African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum, where the self-reliance ideology is expressed in research programmes in such fields as folkloristics and ethnology.³¹ But there seems to be a wide gap, in general, between the humanistic ideologies of participation and self-determination, on the one hand, and the actual practices of development, on the other hand, both in the Sudan and other so-called underdeveloped countries and in the Scandinavian countries and the rest of the industrialized part of the world.³²

1.3. TECHNOCRATIC AND HUMANISTIC PRACTICES - SOME EXAMPLES

Big technological projects and resettlement projects are areas which are a goldmine as far as good examples of technocratic thinking and practice are concerned. This, I would say, applies to the three countries where I have spent most of my life: Sweden, Norway and the Sudan. That the examples in the following are all from the Sudan is no indication of a lack of similar examples from other parts of the world; it is only an indication of the scope of this book.

The Jamu'iya Development Scheme

Development without the active participation of those who will be immediately affected by the project has been the rule rather than the exception up to now. One example is the Jamu'iya development scheme outside Omdurman. The site of the scheme is along the White Nile, covering about eight miles along the river. The northern part of the scheme is about sixteen miles from Omdurman, the southern part about seven miles from the Jebel Aulia dam. Proposals for an irrigation scheme in the area were first forwarded in the thirties, among other things to compensate those who were affected by the Jebel Aulia dam (completed in 1937), mainly Jamu'iya people. In 1969, a capital loan for the scheme was negotiated, and the digging of canals was begun in January 1970. The object of the scheme was to provide fruit and vegetables for the markets in Khartoum and Omdurman, at the same time somewhat belatedly providing compensation for those who had been affected by the dam. The government announced at the time when the canals were being constructed that in future it would hold title to the land. The inhabitants of the area could become tenants who would get shares in the Jamu'iya Farming Co-operative. This decision was taken without consulting the inhabitants of the area. The same seems to apply to the whole planning procedure. The inhabitants protested against the plans. When a delegation of ministers came on an official inspection tour, they were met by an angry crowd, some armed with swords and axes. The source of hostility was a conflict between the inhabitants' wants and needs, on the one hand, and the needs that the planning authorities had in mind. Peter Harris-Jones, a social anthropologist who investigated the case in 1970, found that the villagers were by no means hostile to innovation as such. But they had strong opinions on how development should take place. It must not upset existing social relations in the villages, and that is precisely what the government scheme would do. Obviously, the story of the scheme could have been a happier one

had the inhabitants been consulted from the beginning, preferably with the assistance of researchers. 33

The Zande Development Scheme

Before World War II, the Azande in the Southern Sudan were subsistence farmers and hunters with little participation in the developing cash economy in the Sudan. In 1938, J. D. Tohill, an agricultural development specialist, was employed to investigate the possibilities of economic development in the area, for instance by using cotton as a cash crop. Within five years, he presented the administration with a memorandum entitled "An Experiment in the Social Emergence of Indigenous Races." The rest of the story has been summarized by John H. Bodley, whom I should like to quote at some length: Tohill "called for the conversion of the Azande into 'happy, prosperous, literate communities...participating in the benefits of civilization' through the cultivation of cotton and the establishment of factories to produce exportable products on the spot. His plans found support in the government, although, of course, no one thought of consulting the Azande themselves, and in 1944 the civil secretary urged the governor-general's council to approve an intensive economic development policy for the entire Southern Sudan., Blaming the region's 'backwardness' on 'tribal apathy and conservatism', the appealed to the wardship principle as justification for renewed efforts and stated with familiar ethnocentrism:

we have a moral obligation to redeem its [the Southern Sudan] inhabitants from ignorance, superstition, poverty, malnutrition, etc.

The administration decided that the cotton planting could be most efficiently regulated by introducing a carefully laid out, geometrically precise settlement pattern, which would allow the Azande to live in an 'accessible and rational manner, not as beasts in the wilderness'. Consequently, over a five-year period 50,000 Azande families - nearly the entire district population of some 170,000 people - were removed from the roadside locations (where they had been placed thirty years earlier), and distributed along a grid of forty-acre individual household plots covering thousands of square miles of dry scrub forest. Plots were arbitrarily assigned by a clerk escorted by police, with no regard for individual Azande desires to live near their kin, and restrictions were imposed against future moves.

It was felt that as soon as the Azande had learned to desire money they would become eager cash croppers. However, along with these deliberate attempts to increase consumerism, direct compulsion was felt necessary. This took the form of forcing anyone who refused to plant or properly cultivate cotton to do a month of public works labor on the roads as punishment.

When yields declined as a result of low prices and dissatisfaction over food shortages caused by stress on normal subsistence activities, the number of cotton 'defaulters' and the frequency of punishment increased accordingly."³⁴

This classic case of social engineering fulfils the criteria of technocracy listed above (in section 1.2) very well. In the colonial days, the experts needed to supervise development were, however, not recruited from the ranks of the natives; the elitist schools which were necessary for the universities to be able to train the kind of experts needed for development were, with few exceptions, placed in the mother countries, and so were the universities, again with a few exceptions (like the budding college in Khartoum which became a university in 1956).

The Khasm El-Ghirba Scheme

When the High Dam was built on the border between the Sudan and Egypt, the inhabitants of the town of Wadi Halfa and the surrounding area had to be moved. The Nubians living in the area, some 55,000 people, were considered to be farmers by the experts, and a resettlement scheme was planned in the Kassala area further south in the Sudan. Some 33,000 people moved there, the rest decided to try to stay in their home area, according to the young philosopher Hashim Habiballa Mohammed, who has investigated the resettlement project from the point of view of changes in the values held by the people. According to our interlocutor, "The authorities had a very simple idea about the Nubians living in the Northern Sudan. They thought that the Nubians were farmers. They occupied a very narrow land along the Nile, which was not enough for them to practice agriculture as the main part of their economy. So the best thing to do for them when they had to be moved was to build a great agricultural scheme. This was done. The Khasm el-Ghirba Scheme was well planned and well established. Still, none of the Nubians is now working there as a farmer. They get people from the west and from the south to do their work. The production of the scheme is deteriorating all the time."³⁵

Against such technocratic planning practices, Hashim Habiballa has a vision: "I think that one should start a developmental scheme by trying to come in touch with the hopes and desires of the people concerning development. I think that scientists and experts should be employed to help to realize what people actually are dreaming about. Here in the Sudan unfortunately we have it working in the other way. We have the experts knitting their own dreams and sending them to the people." This implies a new role for the researcher: a sympathetic approach to the values, needs, and hopes of the people affected by development.³⁶

The Jongley Canal Project

At the beginning of this century, Sir William Garstin discovered that enormous amounts of water evaporated from the swamp areas in the Southern Sudan, the Sudd, and proposed the excavation of a new canal around the swamps to increase the yields of the Nile.³⁷ The idea has been followed up by a number of successive investigation teams, and now the scheme is being implemented. The project affects a large area inhabited by some two million people (Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk). The Bergen-trained social anthropologist Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed, who is now the head of the Development Studies and Research Centre in Khartoum, has taken part in an interdisciplinary team investigating the implications of the canal for the inhabitants of the area. "Our aim was to find out about the social relations which have been brought about by the new system of transactions. The building of the canal will definitely influence cattle roads and the kind of settlements they have and so on. What can be done to minimize the harmful consequences of the canal for the local population? Our task as social scientists was to list the preferences of the local people and to communicate their views to the higher authorities. Through the social studies that started in 1975 we have been able to change the route of the canal, because we could argue that another route than that which was originally planned would be preferable for the local people. We have learned some methodological lessons from our work in the Jongley area. It is not enough just to collect data. One should engage in what I should like to call 'participant intervention', which means that we should try to do something for the local people by means of our research."³⁸ The role of research which Abdel Ghaffar has in mind is reminiscent of so-called action-research. In a paper published in 1977, he described what he had in mind in the following way: "Intervention programmes have to be designed and implemented in the field at the time of the collection of data intended to be utilized for the suggestion of the strategies that can be recommended for the integrated development project which is finally proposed for the area. The advantage of such intervention programmes is that they act as a demonstration of the commitment and the seriousness of the researcher in the eyes of the inhabitants. The researchers have to act as a link between the inhabitants, the planners and the decision-makers in the central government, and make sure that the inhabitants' views on the development of their area are taken into consideration. The fact that the social scientist in most cases has no power to influence the final decisions should not stop him from advocating certain ideas arising from his commitment to the nature of development and the path it should follow."³⁹

Participant intervention along the lines suggested by Abdel Ghaffar would

indeed be one way of realizing an anti-technocratic, humanistic practice of development.

A Language Project in Southern Sudan

Language policy is indeed a complicated field in a country like the Sudan. There are some 135 native languages in the country. Arabic is the official language of the country, English is the working language in the South, colloquial Arabic (e.g. "Juba Arabic") is the *lingua franca* throughout the country. In the northern part of the country, Arabic is the teaching language in the schools. In the South, plans have been made to prepare teaching materials in sixteen of the local languages. To solve the problems involved in this task, the regional government in the South decided to co-operate with the American Summer Institute of Linguistics. In an undated memorandum, the following goals were specified:

- (1) to establish a department of local languages at the Center at Miridi for preparing primary education materials in local languages, and literacy materials for adult education;
- (2) to train 48 Ministry of Education personnel, selected by the Ministry, in preparing language materials for the first four years of primary education;
- (3) to teach 35,000 primary students to read their mother languages;
- (4) to prepare primers for 16 languages;
- (5) to compile vocabulary lists for 16 languages and a general analysis for the grammar of 11 languages. ⁴⁰

Sudanese linguists have criticized this plan sharply. ⁴¹ More advanced training in linguistics and education is needed, according out the critics, in order to enable Southern Sudanese ultimately to carry on the project on their own. The project was planned to get financial support from USAID. But only 2.5 % of the total budget was reserved for training linguists at a high level (diploma, M.A.) (\$ 35,000 out of \$ 1,400,000). On the other hand, \$ 140,000 had been earmarked for an evaluation of the scheme by an American consultancy firm (the Center for Applied Linguistics). The distribution of funds is criticized in the Sudanese memorandum, and particularly the lack of involvement of trained Sudanese linguists in the project. Among other things, there is a department of linguistics at the University of Khartoum and an ambitious project called the Language Survey of the Sudan at the Institute of African and Asian Studies in Khartoum. (Cf. chapter 4 below for details.)

The language project in the Southern Sudan as outlined by the Summer Institute of Linguistics raises the problem of foreign dominance in development projects in a sharp form. At the same time, it touches upon a number

of fundamental problems about the aims of development: How much of traditional culture should one try to preserve in a country like the Sudan? How should the value of being able to use one's mother tongue and to cultivate one's native culture be placed in the list of priorities in a developing country like the Sudan and other countries characterized by the same kind of cultural richness?

It is a sign of the dominance of technocratic practices and paradigms that these questions have hardly begun to enter the agenda in the field of development.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

- (1) The distinction between philosophy *in* science and philosophy *of* science has been introduced by Hakan Tornebohm. We used the in/of - distinction to explain to our dialogue partners what we were up to. Cf. e.g. the beginning of the talk with Dr. Ali Fadl in chapter 2 below.
- (2) My work on Sudanese ethics, which was presented as a Ph.D. thesis in philosophy at the University of Khartoum in 1965, may similarly be characterized as a piece of maieutic work, a point which some objectivity-ridden positivistic critics seem to have missed. (*Sudanese Ethics*, Uppsala 1968.)
- (3) The distinction between knowing-that and knowing-how was emphasized by Gilbert Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*, London 1949.
- (4) Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford 1953, 78.
- (5) The division into propositional knowledge, practical knowledge and familiarity has been elaborated by my colleague Kjell S. Johannessen. My reading of Wittgenstein has been heavily influenced by Johannessen's writings (most of which are in Norwegian). For brief presentations, see his contributions to Lars Aagaard-Mogensen & Göran Hermeren, eds., *Contemporary Aesthetics in Scandinavia*, Lund 1980; Kjell S. Johannessen & Tore Nordenstam, eds., *Wittgenstein - Aesthetics and Transcendental Philosophy*, Vienna 1981; and Gunnar Skirbekk, ed., *Praxeology*, Bergen 1983.
- (6) Practice in the sense of rule-following behaviour is a key notion in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. The distinctions between open and closed rules, actions and operations and between technocratic and humanistic practices have been developed in my contributions to Bo Göranson, ed., *Datautvecklingens filosofi*, Stockholm 1984.
- (7) Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed., Chicago 1970.
- (8) The reader who is familiar with Hakan Tornebohm's theory of science will recognize reflections from his writings on paradigms on the following pages. Cf. e.g. *Reflections on Research and Practice*, Göteborg 1981; and *Studier av kunskapsutveckling*, Karlshamn, 1983.
- (9) A selection of key documents from the colonial period (British, German, French, and Belgian) has been published by David G. Scanlon under the title *Traditions of African Education* (Columbia University, New York 1964). A survey of the colonial ideologies of education is included in my book *Arikas universitet* (Stockholm 1970).
- (10) Phelps-Stokes Report of 1922, quoted from Scanlon, *Traditions of African Education*, p. 72.
- (11) *Report of the Commission on Higher Education in West Africa* (the Elliott Report) and *Report of the Commission on Higher Education in the Colonies* (the Asquith Report) The first suggestions to establish a university in West Africa do, in fact, go back to the 1870s.
- (12) Quoted in Eric Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian, African* (London 1966), p. 367.
- (13) Paul Crozet, "Education in the French Colonies", *Educational Yearbook of the International Institute of Teachers College*, 1931 (Columbia University, New York 1932), p. 563.

- (14) The hard core of many technocratic practices in the last few years has been neoclassic economic theory. For a survey of attempts to develop new theories of development after World War II, see Bjorn Hettne's excellent little book *Current Issues in Development Theory*, SAREC Report R5, Stockholm 1978. Hettne devotes one chapter to each of the following themes : the Dependence Paradigm, Global Reformism, Self-Reliance, and the Indigenization of Development Thinking. Paul Harrison, *The Third World Tomorrow*, is another survey of international developments in the field of development theorizing which I have found very useful (Penguin Books, 1980).
- (15) Herbert Simon, *The Sciences of the Artificial*, M.I.T. Press, paperback edition, 1970. Cf. my criticism in Bo Göranson, ed., *Datautvecklingens filosofi*, Stockholm 1984, p. 51ff.
- (16) *The Sciences of the Artificial*, p. 60ff.
- (17) *Op.cit.*, p.83.
- (18) Tore Nordenstam & D. J. Shaw, *The Student Community in the University of Khartoum*, stencilled report, The Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, 1967 (also in *The New East*, Vol., XX, No. 2, 1970); *Manpower*, The Manpower and Employment Division, Labour Department, Ministry of Information and Labour, stencilled report, Khartoum, October 1961.
- (19) Cf. John H. Bodley, *Victims of Progress*, 1975.
- (20) Tore Nordenstam & Hakan Törnebohm, "Research, Ethics and Development", *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie*, 1979, pp. 60-61.
- (21) *Loc. cit.*
- (22) Cf. the survey in Paul Harrison, *The Third World Tomorrow*, Penguin Books, 1980.
- (23) Paul Harrison, *The Third World Tomorrow*, p. 29.
- (24) *The Third World Tomorrow*, p. 36.
- (25) *The Third World Tomorrow*, p. 39.
- (26) Cf. the chapter on "the indigenization of development thinking" in Björn Hettne, *Current Issues in Development Theory*, SAREC Report R5, Stockholm 1978).
- (27) See chapter 5 below.
- (28) Cf. the interview with the economist Dr. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, who was dean of the faculty of economic and social studies at the University of Khartoum when we interviewed him in 1981; chapter 2 below.
- (29) See chapter 8 below.
- (30) See chapter 2 below.
- (31) Cf. the interviews with Dr. Sayyid H. Hurreiz and Dr. Ahmed A. Nasr and other scholars at the Institute of African and Asian Studies in Khartoum, chapter 4 below; and the interview with Dr. Abdel Ghaffar in chapter 5 below.
- (32) The Swedish Centre for Working Life (Arbetsivscentrum) was established in Stockholm in 1977 with the expressed purpose of furthering participatory democracy in Swedish working life. A long list of publications from this Institute deal with themes which are closely related to some of the themes which came up in our talks in the Sudan,

e.g. a number of reports and books from the projects at the Centre in which I have taken an active part myself the (so-called PAAS-, ALLFA and FORM- projects). Cf e.g. Bo Göranson et al. : *Job Design and Automation in Sweden*, The Swedish Centre for Working Life, Stockholm 1982, and Ake Sandberg, ed., *Computers Dividing Computers from a Trade Union Perspective*, Arbetslivscentrum, Stockholm 1979.

- (33) Source : Peter Harris-Jones, "The Jamu'iya Development Scheme : An Essay on the Utility of Instant Anthropology" in *Essays on Sudan Ethnography*, eds. Ian Cunnison and Wendy James, 1972.
- (34) John H. Bodley, *Victims of Progress*, 1972, pp. 135-137. I have allowed myself to abbreviate somewhat. See further Conrad C. Reining, *The Zande Scheme : An Anthropological Case Study of Economic Development in Africa*. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1966.
- (35) See the interview with Hashim Habiballa in chapter 6 below.
- (36) Hashim Habiballa describes his own approach as "sympathetic". See chapter 6 below. On the Khashm El Girba Scheme, cf. Hussein M. Fahim, *Social Science Research in Relation to the Khashm el Girba Scheme in the Sudan*, Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, October 1973, and Gunner Sorbo, *How to Survive Development : The Story of New Halfa*, Development Studies and Research Centre, University of Khartoum.
- (37) Source : Terje Tvedt, *The Birth of the Jongley Canal Scheme*, draft of a chapter from a forthcoming dissertation on the history of the planning of the Jongley scheme.
- (38) Quoted from the interview with Dr. Abdel Ghaffar in chapter 5 below.
- (39) Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed, "Anthropology and Development Planning in the Sudan. The Case of Jonglei Project", *Sudan Journal of Development Research*, The Economic and Social Research Council, Khartoum, Vol. I. No. 1, p. 56.
- (40) *Issues Addressed by the Summer Institute of Linguistics at AID Request*, undated stencilled memorandum, p. 1.
- (41) Ushari A. Mahmud, Darius Jonathan Kenyi and Eluzai Moga, *Comments on the Vernacular Literacy Project (Southern Sudan)*, stencilled memorandum, Khartoum - Juba, Jan. 1980, 7 pages plus 6 pages addenda.

**2. RESEARCH POLICY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF KHARTOUM**

2.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

Virtually all research in the Sudan is carried out by government bodies: departments and ministries of government, universities, other institutes of higher education. A limited amount of applied research is carried out by foreign consultancy firms.

The bulk of the research which has been done up to now has been carried out by staff members and students at the University of Khartoum. The new universities in Juba, Wad Medani and Omdurman are still in the initial stage with a strong emphasis on teaching.¹ To make a survey of research in the Sudan up to now means therefore largely to make a survey of research in the University of Khartoum.

The University of Khartoum is built on the foundations that were laid by the British during the Anglo-Egyptian condominium period (1898 - 1956). To understand the present research scene in the Sudan, it is natural to start with the year of the British conquest, 1898. When the colonial power invaded the country, they found an area devastated by war and where the only formal education to be found was the traditional religious schools in the northern part of the country. Formal education in the Sudan had started as a concomitant of Islam. As Islam was introduced in the northern Sudan from the ninth century onwards, it was followed by traditional Islamic teaching. The main instrument of education was the Koran school, the *khalwa*.²

The Koran schools remained the basis of the educational system in the Sudan up to the first decades of this century. In the South, the Christian missionary schools similarly were the foundation for the other part of the dual educational system which was built up during the condominium period. Some attempts had been made during the Turkish regime in the 19th century to introduce modern education. The first ruler during this period, Mohamed Ali, even sent some Sudanese to be trained in Europe. The purpose of education was mainly to provide the government services with locally trained people. The background for this need was the unwillingness of Egyptians to work in the Sudan and the high salaries demanded by them. Seven primary schools were established in the 1860s. The output was clerks, artisans, and technicians who were needed to operate the new telegraph network, amongst other things.

The Mahdist regime (1885-1898) meant a return to the exclusive teaching of the Koran in the *khalwas*, which multiplied (there were 800 Koran schools in

Omdurman during this period). After the British conquest, a modern education system had to start from scratch.

The British considered the Sudan "a useless possession", to quote General Gordon, and were not prepared to invest in the area. The administration had to be self-supporting (taxes and in the beginning subsidies from Egypt). The educational policy under these circumstances was to limit the training of Sudanese to what was needed for the administration of the country. The Director of Education, who was appointed in 1900, spelled out the aims of education in the Sudan in the following way: the creation of an artisan class, the creation of a small administrative class to fill minor government posts, and the diffusion among the people of some understanding of the elements of government, particularly as far as justice was concerned. For security reasons, it was considered desirable to replace Egyptian officers by Sudanese. And to avoid the infiltration of subversive ideas, the training ought to take place in the Sudan. The government and the missionaries agreed on the policy of protecting the South from Islamic influence. The Verona Fathers and other missionary societies were given permission to take up their work again in the South and in a few cities in the North. Education and research in the Sudan thus got firmly tied to the needs of the government administration. The Gordon Memorial College has remained the core of this system since its beginning.

The idea of a college in the Sudan was launched in 1899, the first buildings were inaugurated in 1902 (the splendid structures designed by the architect Fabricius Pasha, which are now the centre of the University of Khartoum administration). In the beginning, the college was an elementary school, then it became a secondary school, a university college and, from 1956, an independent university. The background for this development was partly Sudanese demands for higher education, partly the new educational policy which Great Britain adopted towards her colonies and other dependencies towards the end of the Second World War. The ultimate aim was conceived to be self-government, at least to a limited extent in some advanced areas towards the end of the century. To prepare for eventual self-government, a shift of priorities was needed from the heavy emphasis on lower education and vocational training to a system which included also higher education at the university level. The new philosophy was spelled out in the Asquith Report and its companion volume, the Elliott Report, from 1945. The core of the university, according to the Asquith Report, was the liberal arts, including subjects like philosophy and classical languages, modern languages and history. Around this core, professional faculties for training teachers, doctors, agronomists and so on should be built up.

The existing higher schools in the Sudan – the Gordon Memorial College and the Kitchener School of Medicine, a very small institute which was founded in 1924 – were merged into one college and linked to the University of London, in accordance with the recommendations of the Asquith commission. When the Sudan became independent in 1956, the university college also became an autonomous university, the first in the country. The emphasis in the university college was clearly on the establishment of a sound system of teaching on the undergraduate level. Professors were not appointed until 1951. Staff members were allowed to do research, but this remained a matter of private initiative and the available funds were very limited indeed.

The first research institution in the Sudan, the Wellcome Research Laboratories, was established in 1903, and later incorporated into the college in Khartoum. ³ Research in the Sudan started in fact almost immediately after the British conquest, but it was not until the 1970s that research became a top priority in the University of Khartoum. The University's policy immediately after independence was to accept "every qualified student as far as is humanly possible".⁴ In his report for 1958-59, the Vice-Chancellor (Nasr al-Hag Ali) stated that "unlike many other similar institutions, the University of Khartoum has to meet specific immediate needs of a new state, an under-developed country, for as many professionals as could be produced. This role is surely to be reconciled with the traditional objective of a university and may tip the balance of teaching."⁵ During the same year, 44% of the staff were reported to be actively engaged in research. 130 papers were reported as published or accepted for publication or being prepared for publication. 3,000 Sudanese pounds were allotted to the research fund in the university, of which 2,483 pounds were spent during 1958-59. But most of the time was spent on teaching. High failure rates were a recurrent problem. When the Deans' Committee discussed the matter in 1964, they attributed the high failure rates to the following causes: large number of students of poor quality being admitted; lack of checking on attendance of classes; overcrowding in hostels; library facilities; lack of orientation for the first year students; shortage of staff and tutorials; text books; structure of the semester; methods and techniques; students' political activities and their general behaviour [including strikes which regularly caused the closing of the university for part of the session; T.N.]; cramming of courses. Against that background, research by the members of staff necessarily became a matter of lower priority.

In the seventies, when a firm foundation had been laid on the undergraduate level, there was a growing concern with research and postgraduate studies. The Sudan Research Unit was established in 1964 to promote research

on the Sudan, and later transformed into an institute for African and Asian studies.⁶ An umbrella organisation was created for studies at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels: the Graduate College.⁷ The research policy of the university was scrutinized by a committee in the mid-seventies, which came up with the suggestions that the staff should devote at least half their time to research, that relevance to development should be stressed, and that cooperation with government bodies should be given top priority.⁸ The creation of the National Council for Research at the beginning of the seventies is perhaps the clearest sign of the new emphasis on research.

Research policy in the University of Khartoum is handled formally by the University's Research Committee and the research committees in the faculties. In 1979, when we interviewed the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Ali Fadl, the sum available for research had grown to 125,000 pounds. In 1981, the sum was 200,000 Sudanese pounds, which might not be an increase in view of the devaluation of the pound, (cf. 2.4 below.)

The function of the Central Research Committee had been reduced to the task of dividing the available sum between the faculties according to certain criteria. In addition, the Central Research Committee could decide to use money on inter-faculty projects. In 1981, when we spoke to Dr. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, no money had been allotted to such inter-faculty projects. No annual reports from the Central Research Committee had been published for the last ten years.⁹

On the whole, the initiation of research seems to depend upon private initiatives from staff members and students. The proposals are then scrutinized by the research committees in the faculties, in the case of staff members, and by the Graduate College together with the relevant department, in the case of postgraduate students registering for an M.A. or a Ph.D. Many of our interlocutors stressed the need for inter-disciplinary research (and so did the memorandum on research policy from 1976). In 1981, the Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies reported that his faculty was making an attempt to channel the available resources in the direction of the economy of the Sudan during the last decade.¹¹

The practical value of research and adaptation to local conditions have been stressed in the Sudan from the beginning of the condominium period. Research started in areas like veterinary medicine and agriculture; and particularly in the period between the two world wars, Britain emphasized adaptation to local circumstances in the schools overseas. Sir James Currie pointed out in 1933 that it must be considered to be grotesque that an African who wished to get an education in agriculture, for instance, had to do so in Europe, e.g. in an English university which hardly dealt with agriculture

under tropical conditions. The ambition to provide an education which was equivalent to the education one could get in Europe and the fact that for instance the training in the Sudan was included, *de facto*, in the British educational system, did however act against adaptation. In order to get the same rights as British-trained doctors, the doctors in the Sudan had to take the same courses as in England, which meant no adaptation, to take one example. And in order to comply with examination requirements in the University of London, the courses had to be arranged in the same way, to take another example. (In the sixties, when I taught in the University of Khartoum, European insects were flown to Khartoum as examination material.) Still, the proportion of Sudan-relevant M.A. and Ph.D. theses is fairly high. Mohamed Omer Beshir estimates that about 150 of the 500 theses listed in the first two volumes of theses at the University of Khartoum are relevant to the Sudan, which he felt was a very good proportion. Nevertheless, there have been complaints to the effect that the University of Khartoum has been too isolated from the development of the country; and in the new universities, there is a feeling that one should try to direct research more directly to issues of development. As the humanistic researchers we have been talking to have stressed, there is a tendency to neglect the role of the humanities in development. ¹¹ "The fortunate faculties are the so-called professional faculties such as Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary Science and to some extent the Faculty of Science. The Faculty of Pharmacy is not treated as a professional one, nor is that of Law, that of Economics and that of Education." ¹² And of course not the Faculty of Arts and the institutes related to that faculty (like the Institute of African and Asian Studies). It would seem, however, that the emphasis on the liberal arts as the core of the university, which the University of Khartoum has inherited from the Asquith plan, has functioned to some extent as a counter-force to the strong technological drive which is evident also in the Sudan in the postwar period.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

- (1) See ch. 7-8 below.
- (2) Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Educational Development in the Sudan* (Oxford University Press 1969), p. 7. In addition to primary sources in the Government Archives in Khartoum, the following pages in this section build upon Mohamed Omer Beshir's book, Eric Ashby's *Universities: British, Indian, African*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, (London, 1966), the historical sketch in the University of Khartoum *Calendar* 1963-64 and a number of government commission reports, etc. I am also grateful for permission to use the University of Khartoum archives in 1965-66.
- (3) Cf. Mansour Ali Haseeb, *A Monograph on Biomedical Research in the Sudan*, Vol. I, Khartoum University Press 1975; and Ch. 3 below.
- (4) Quoted in the Vice-Chancellor's *Report for 1958-59*.
- (5) *Op.cit.*
- (6) Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, *Prospectus*, November 1981, p.3. Cf. ch. 4 below.
- (7) University of Khartoum : *The Graduate College Annual Report 1975-1976*. Cf. the interview with Mohamed Beshir in 2.3 below.
- (8) *Report of the Committee on Research Policy and Research Plan in the University of Khartoum*, October 1976, mimeo., 19 pp.; *Major Points in the Report of the Committee on Research Policy and Research Plan in the University of Khartoum*, University of Khartoum, 1976, mimeo., 6 pp. In the latter document, the rationale of the plan was summed up as follows: "The University of Khartoum contains the largest pool of research manpower in the Sudan. The policy outlined below aims to preserve the traditional freedoms of the University staff within a plan of research oriented to the needs of Sudanese society and national development. The plan has been designed in order to attract a substantial increase of research funds from the government and thereby to multiply the effectiveness of the University staff for research. In previous years less than 0.5 % of the annual budget of the University has been allocated to research. Within the coming six year period it is recommended that the University aim to achieve an allocation of 10% of its annual budget to research. As a step toward this goal, the University must plan to demonstrate its capacity for research."
- (9) Cf. section 2.4 below.
- (10) *Loc. cit.*
- (11) Cf. the interviews in ch. 4, 5 and 6 below.
- (12) Dr. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, section 2.4 below.

2.2. ALI FADL (INTERVIEW)

In the University Calendar for 1963-1964, Ali Mohamed Fadl is listed as research assistant in the Department of Public Health in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Khartoum. He had a diploma from the Kitchener School of Medicine, and was abroad for higher studies. Fifteen years later, when we interviewed him, he had got his doctorate, had made a successful career within the university and was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Khartoum when the interview took place in January 1979. Afterwards, he became Minister of Health in the central government. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer (IAO), Tore Nordenstam (TN) and Hakan Tornebohm (HT). Like the other interviews, the following talk has been somewhat abridged.

Participation and development

HT: We are working on something which might be called research policies in the Sudan—research policies geared towards development.

So we ask university people questions about the role the universities are playing in the development of this country, and the research policies in the universities concerned, and what plans they have for the future development of the research in the universities, and how it should be related to developments. And in particular we are interested in the role philosophy might play. Perhaps I could say it very simply: I believe that there are philosophies *in* development. The main actors have their philosophies, for instance the growth philosophy, the participation philosophy, or some other philosophy, and we would like to find out about the philosophies *in* development. And then our aim ultimately far ahead is to develop a philosophy *of* development. We think that philosophers should work on a philosophy *of* development which is related to philosophies *in* development in the same way as philosophy *of* science (my subject) is related to philosophies *in* sciences. This is the idea. Philosophers may clarify the very notion of development and discuss the criteria by means of which one can judge development *ex ante*, *ex post* and *in flux*. In other words, if you have a development project or scheme, how are you going to judge it afterwards, how are you going to judge whether the outcome was beneficial or harmful and what are the criteria you employ when you steer its implementation?

AF: I suppose that you are talking about economic development only.

HT: No.

AF: You are not?

HT: All kinds of development, for instance the development of universities, social developments and cultural developments. One of the

main interests we have is how developments will affect the various cultures in a country like the Sudan, how it will affect the people living in the villages and so on and so forth.

AF: You can plan right if your plans are accepted by people and if they bear a relation to the basic culture of the people, their needs, what they think and their priorities. From there you can start your planning, and then by trying to get a feed-back from the people whether they accept your plans or not, how to put things to them. You can make an agricultural scheme. The way to make it acceptable for people is to explain that it will lead to their goals. By doing so you gain their sympathy and enthusiasm to do something. Some governments in the Third World go about developments in a wrong way. They make their decisions, but they fail to establish channels for getting a feed-back from the people. Many development schemes fail because of this. I am glad to know that philosophers can do something in this field.

TN: Now, I have got a very strong impression that the ideal you have is not usually followed, in practice. Usually the people are not consulted in advance.

AF: According to my experience in the Sudan, I cannot generalize. I have not been associated with many big development plans, but I have to some extent participated in committees, in meetings discussing things relevant to the latest 6 year plan. The feeling I got from some people in certain circles, for example university teachers, whether in agriculture, in medicine or in economics, is that many people would have liked more consultation. If people who are experts are not consulted, I don't think there is likely to be any consultation at lower levels. I personally know of certain projects which are really good and I am sure if they are explained properly to the people, they would have been more enthusiastic. Everything would have been achieved or done at the right time with some vigour and some enthusiasm and with some sacrifice. If you are developing, you see, and people do not accept any sacrifice for their development, I think there must be something wrong. Perhaps there is some sort of incredibility. They don't believe that these projects are going to get anything quick for them. So in a way, you see, I have this experience.

TN: Do you think it would be possible to consult the people also in research projects?

AF: Yes, I think so. In certain areas you can consult. If you have an organization like the National Council for Research, they are here to

do research, so you can consult them, and they are experts in their field, they can go down to the field, they can detect the problems, you can ask them what sort of things they can do. In certain areas consultation may be difficult. Let us again take the university where research has more than one purpose. As a vice-chancellor, I would like to encourage research related to our local problems and our projects. But as a university lecturer you either publish or you perish. So he may be inclined to do some research even if it is not relevant to the development of this country.

HT: Any university must carry out fundamental research anyhow, and researchers belong to the international community of researchers. So from that point of view I think that every university is related to any other university.

AF: Yes, I quite agree, but I am just talking about this research which is relevant or tied to development in a certain country where that university exists.

Basic and applied research

TN: How do you see the relations between basic research and applied research? Do you try to achieve some kind of balance within this university ?

AF: We do. But it is not an easy job, because after all it depends on the place itself. We do by appointing people to do research for example in those areas, we try to strengthen the basic sciences as well as the applied sciences. The way in which we invite visiting professors, professors from IUC (the Inter-University Council in London), from the British Council or Fulbright, I try always to give various departments their share. Last year I favoured agriculture and veterinary science. I am now more inclined to give biochemistry and physiology their share. That is, I divide them equitably to the various faculties. The budget to a large extent controls the amount of research. But it depends also on the academic leaders. It depends not just on the number of people working in a field. It depends not only on the money available. It depends also on the human elements.

TN: Do you think there should be more applied research in this university?

AF: I think so.

TN: In which areas?

AF: Well, I think in medicine there is quite a bit that can be done, and again in agriculture. These areas just come up in my mind when I think about applied research. Are you thinking of any other area?

Interdisciplinary research

HT: I noticed that you encourage interdisciplinary research, perhaps more than European universities usually do, that you have research units; even in my time there was a hydrobiological research unit and an arid zone research unit and so on and so forth. So I would like to ask you a question about these developments towards integrated research, interdisciplinary research. You seem to encourage them very much here.

AF: Yes, we do encourage them. You want to know the steps we have taken?

HT: I would like to know about the history of this development and the future plans for it.

AF: In the early seventies, a committee on academic reform came out with a report with three main recommendations: One of them was to encourage interdisciplinary degrees and research and to apply things like a course unit system. And another thing is that in some promotion committees, where I sat, the tendency was to give more weight to people who publish jointly, especially in agriculture, veterinary science and economics; for example, that agriculturalists publish papers in collaboration with economists, and in medicine that physiologists publish papers together with clinicians. They can do some work together. Perhaps the person who initiated the joint work was the administrator, by finding money for it. You can encourage people to share the same piece of equipment. You should try to encourage your research workers to behave that way. The only difficulty is that many people are not used to publishing jointly. Only one person publishes a paper. So when they sit with us in promotion committees they do not like this idea very much of five people publishing one paper, but we try to convince them that it is the right thing to do. And I think this is one of the areas where, if you give more weight to it in a promotion committee, in a few weeks time it will have its response.

TN: The idea behind the notion of a philosophy of development is that philosophers should work jointly with historians, economists, agriculturalists and people in medicine and so on. They should work in joint projects. Philosophers could contribute by clarifying basic values, theoretical problems of a philosophical nature which are bound to crop up in any area of investigation.

AF: Definitely. That applies to medicine, to health education, which are extremely important but also extremely difficult ones. It is very diffi-

cult to speak about health education. It is very easy to see its importance, but it is very difficult to practice. I think we need the advice of philosophers.

HT : Perhaps I could say that my department offers courses to graduate students in engineering and business administration, economics, even in medicine, and we have done so for more than ten years. It is very natural, if we want to study particular issues like planning, that we invite people who are experts on planning either as practitioners or as researchers to introduce a topic and then we engage in an interdisciplinary discussion. We call it "colloquia". This is the way in which we do both teaching and in a way collective research. This is what we are trying to do.

AF : But there are no set courses for undergraduates in faculties like medicine in your department?

HT : No, not for undergraduates. The courses are only for graduates. They are not obligatory. They are voluntary. If they think that our courses are irrelevant to them, they don't ask us to come and give them. In this way we have a feed-back.

Research policy in the University of Khartoum

TN : Who takes the initiatives? Is it the researchers themselves?

AF : Yes.

TN : Do you or the University Council take any initiatives with regard to research areas?

AF : Not to research areas. The only way by which we can find a way to encourage them to do research in a relevant area is to make money, equipment, and so on available when they reach a certain level. We will ask them to train post-graduates, to register post-graduates. But we do not go and tell them to do this, let alone indicate the line of research. Definitely we do not do that. Definitely we do not penalize anybody who does not do research. This is one of the defects of our university. Many people stay in our university for twenty years without doing any research, but they do not get penalized. They may not be promoted—nothing more happens.

IAO: Are there cases in which people who want to do research in the university have asked for money and have been turned down?

AF : Our sources for money for research are very limited. Our only source is the government. We put our proposals for a budget. When we get some money, we distribute it immediately to faculties and departments and occasionally to individuals. If you have a special programme

of study, you will send in an application for money and most likely you will get it. If you don't get it, because the money has dried up, you apply to the relevant organization. They know that we need this sort of research. At the university level we don't contact areas to subscribe to our research projects in that way. This is our research policy: Please pay to our safe here or our banks so that we can spend on research.

IAO: To what extent has it been the policy of the university not to give money for research in the Faculty of Arts ?

AF: This has happened, I think, only once. I can't tell you exactly. You see, the university sees to it that you get money in your budget. Sorry, but what I said, of course, is not exactly the case, because sometimes we approach organizations like WHO, like FAO, but these are approached by the faculties or departments. Only the faculty of medicine has relations with WHO, so they can write to WHO. And WHO has a budget for Sudan and that is divided for medical education, for health services and so on. From that budget they can give you something to do your research. But as to your question I said that we get this sum of money. For example, last year we had something like £125,000. You get this money - usually it is much less than what you have asked for - and then you sit down and divide. The practice is to divide percentage-wise to the faculties. Three years ago I was deputy vice-chancellor; I was responsible for this sort of thing. We said we are not going to allot money to any faculty unless you tell us what you did with the money you had last year, and give us a budget proposal for research. For example that you have, say, five applications from five departments, that each project will cost so and so much, that it will run for three years. This year you want so and so much. Tell us also what you have published last year using the money you got then. According to your answer, we will give you money. We did this, and it was frightening to many faculties.

TN: Did you have to make severe cuts?

AF: I did, absolutely, I did, yes. I remember a case, that I am not going to mention, when I made cuts. I gave them not more than 10 or 15% of what they had the year before.

TN: Why ?

AF: Because that was not well utilized and they did not have a well worked out plan for research. I found that they used a lot of money for travelling and at the end of the year, when they looked into their drawers they found only a few hundred pounds. Then they divided these pounds to

the departments, which was a silly thing. If they have got five departments and there are 500 pounds left, then you give each department only 100 pounds. What can you do with 100 pounds? So I refused to give them.

IAO: You apply criteria of relevance when you consider applications for research grants, I suppose. Will you tell us about these criteria?

AF: Yes, very much so. In one case, somebody applied for a project on tuberculosis – I was chairman of that meeting. We know that tuberculosis is going out now. So the board thought this was not very relevant. They may be able to publish something, but that will not be extremely important for present problems. This was my personal feeling. The board said no because the money asked for was too much. If you had asked for just 10,000 pounds or so, perhaps we would have been giving it to you. I was also a member of the Medical Research Board, which is an organization within the National Research Council. You get very many applications from people, and we have one sitting commenting on many things. There, I remember, certain projects were refused because they were not relevant. They had a low priority. In that council we assessed that these and these were areas where we have done our best work. We advertised that we were ready to support research in those areas. We are ready to register students, willing to work in them.

Most of the subjects had to do with preventive medicine. I said that I was ready to register three or four students. They were ready to register. They have published six items I think, one in nutrition. As I said, several submissions or applications were rejected, because we thought that they were not relevant to our problems and that they have a low priority at the present time.

Teaching and research

TN: What is the balance between teaching and research in this university? Are you happy with the present division of labour between teaching at the undergraduate level and the research carried out by the staff?

AF: No, I am not happy, I think too much teaching is done, unfortunately, in places where they could have done much research. Take the faculty of engineering, I don't think they can do any research. The faculty of engineering has about 1,000 registered students. It needs something like 110 staff members at least on the establishment. We now have about 70. This is a difficulty. But the actual number of teachers available there is now only 42 instead of 110! A professor there, a

well trained person, who can lead research and initiate research for others, had about 11 hours of lectures a week excluding tutorials and practicals and everything. I think he will not be able to do any sort of research. So I really think in certain areas—this is just hearsay—that they are overloaded with teaching. In certain other areas it is different. People from the faculty of agriculture come and tell me:

“We know that there are certain people in this university who only teach two hours a week”. I don’t know whether this is true. It has never been reported officially to me by a dean or a head of department. But I remember in this connection that I read in the *Times* an article by an expatriate, who worked with us here, an expatriate member of the staff. He wrote about his experiences here in the Sudan. He said that he was only given a few hours per week to teach. He did not have much to do. Not perhaps because he is an expatriate. He was not wanting more time for himself in research. He was prepared to teach three hours a day for example and whatever load you gave him. He did not think that was too much. But anyway, when you read what he said, you get the impression that he was not very well utilized by our university and that some people do not have a big load of teaching.

TN: What should one do to encourage more research?

AF: We encourage local postgraduate teaching. We encourage research even among undergraduate students and so on. We are doing this. We are encouraging very much that most of our masters should be trained in the Sudan and if possible Ph.D’s. This is why we have established a graduate college. It has been effective. Now we have a big number of students registered mostly for master’s degrees.

The role of the expatriates

TN: Do you think there will be a role for expatriates in the future? Do you foresee the day when the university has been fully Sudanized?

AF: I would not like to see it that way. I want us to get these inputs from other universities also in the future. But definitely the ratio of Sudanese on the staff will increase.

TN: What is the ratio now? How many expatriates are there on the staff now?

AF: Excluding teaching assistants I think that the ratio of expatriates to Sudanese is about 1/5 now.

HT: What do you think will be the future role of the expatriates in this university? How do you think one should use the expatriates? To be good teachers, to do research, to introduce something new from another university? How do you want to use the expatriates?

AF: Well, I think they should induce research, because when they are here, I can leave a lot of teaching for some expatriates, teaching of post-graduate students, they can supervise many students or they can act as co-supervisors of Sudanese members, train them in supervision. Especially when in the future most of our teachers will be locally trained, we need some experience from abroad. We need the experience of other universities of course. We want influential people from other universities to come here for short periods.

The role of the University of Khartoum in the national university system

TN: Now you have got four national universities in the Sudan. How do you look at the division of labour between these universities? How do you perceive the role of the University of Khartoum in relation to new universities of Gezira and Juba and the Islamic University in Omdurman?

AF: Well, I think one of the main differences is that we have to provide them with the basic needs, provide them with a teaching staff and an administrative staff and possibly to train some of their people here in this university.

TN: Do you judge it to be necessary with another university some time?

AF: I think so.

TN: In previous interviews we have been told that one should avoid duplications and that the different universities should specialize in different divisions.

AF: I personally don't think this is right. Agriculture for example and economics have been established in the other universities. If we should locate one subject to only one of the universities and another subject to another university, this would be economic, for sure. But I think it is better that the same subjects are taught in all universities, because then you have competition between the universities and different experiences. Sudan is a very vast country and the objectives of the faculty of medicine in the southern region may be slightly different from the objectives here.

I would not like to see just copies or mirrors of the University of Khartoum. I personally am in favour of the various universities to be different and to develop in different ways. One of the things that we have always been discussing is the students. In Khartoum we have a fully residential university. 100% of our students come from secondary schools. In Juba it's different. I think this is the right thing for us. I have been told that Juba University takes students who have been

working in the field for some time. They have practised this for two years. Next academic year will be their third year. They are very much satisfied. I think this is right. They think it will improve the conditions in the southern provinces. They are taking teachers from elementary and secondary schools and raise their standards, and they go back to their jobs. A few also in the private sector can join the university. This is not happening in the University of Khartoum. It would be very difficult to introduce it in a comparatively old university like this one, where everything is set up. But it is possible to practise it in a new university like Juba University. I don't mind that there are duplications among the national universities. But we have also duplications within this university, which I don't like. We have a department of chemistry with the same syllabus in several faculties, in science, in medicine, in education, in agriculture and in engineering. This kind of duplication I don't like.

2.3. MOHAMED OMER BESHIR (INTERVIEW)

Mohamed Omer Beshir was born in 1926. He got a diploma in arts from the University College of Khartoum in 1948, a B.Sc. Economics from Queen's University in Belfast in 1956, and a B. Litt. from the University of Oxford in 1956. His Oxford thesis has been published under the title *Educational Development in the Sudan 1898 to 1956* (Oxford University Press 1969). He was a secondary school master from 1949 to 1953, assistant registrar in the University of Khartoum from 1956 to 1958, academic secretary in the University of Khartoum from 1968 to 1970, ambassador and head of the African Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1970-1971, and principal of the University of Khartoum from 1971 to 1974. After this successful administrative career, he was appointed professorial fellow in the Institute of African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum in 1974. He was appointed Dean of the Graduate College in the University of Khartoum in 1975. He holds an honorary LL.D. from Hull University. He is the author of a number of books (e.g. *The Southern Sudan. Background to Conflict*, 1968, 1969; and *Revolution and Nationalism in Africa*, London 1974), and a long list of papers in English and Arabic.

We interviewed him twice, first in his capacity as Dean of the Graduate College in the University of Khartoum in 1979, and again in his capacity as professor in the Institute of African and Asian Studies in 1980. In addition to the material in this section, parts of the interviews with Mohamed Omer Beshir are included in the chapters on the Institute of African and Asian Studies and on the National Council for Research below. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Graduate studies in the University of Khartoum

TN: This university started as an institution for training undergraduates. And in the original plan there was no provision for research really, except on an individual basis.

MOB: Yes, yes.

TN : Do you think this still hampers the university?

MOB: Well, of course, it was very natural and very appropriate and the right thing to train people to go into government services. The country had a great need for qualified people with first degrees. For a number of years, it was a natural thing to concentrate on training at the undergraduate level. So during the first twenty or fifteen years of its existence, all the facilities were given to undergraduate training. Postgraduate work was done abroad. This was natural. But now

comes the time, if the university is going to be a real university, to develop its graduate studies. A university without graduate studies is no real university. So the university policy has to be geared towards this new goal. That is the stage where we are now. It is the stage in which the maturation of the university takes place. Postgraduate studies will emerge. Research programmes related to national problems will be developed. It is the stage which the University of Khartoum has been going through since the 1970s. We are now emerging into the stage of development of our university when the university's role is extending, when the university is reaching out to the community, develops new means of educational delivery and adjusts to the political decisions on national developmental programmes. We are now becoming a real university.

I want to make it clear that the Graduate College is, I'd say, an umbrella for various research units. We have institutes now, we are developing institutes that are specially qualified to undertake postgraduate work on research in certain areas. The oldest one is the Institute of African and Asian Studies. It was formerly the Sudan Research Unit. Its area is African and Asian Sudanese studies in the humanities and social sciences. We have the Centre for Economic Development and Research, which concentrates entirely on postgraduate work. We have the Institute for Environmental Studies which will be started in July. It takes over the old hydrobiological and arid zone research units. Most of its work will be concentrated on postgraduate teaching and research. We have our Centre or Institute of Rural Building Research, you know, the old Building Research Unit. It is now changing its character. It is now operating in the engineering and technological field. It is mostly engaged in postgraduate work. We will soon have a new Institute of Animal Production, which will bring agriculturalists and veterinarians together in one place at the postgraduate level. So what we have, really, is a centre, a graduate college, a circle surrounded by postgraduate institutes. The Graduate College, the institutes and the faculties are connected together. The faculties are still composed of different departments, having research students working towards higher degrees.

Academics, because of their teaching commitments, can do either theoretical research or research that is related to library work, etc., or papers for conferences. But substantial research, I believe, in a place like the University of Khartoum, which will be 25 years old as a university in two years' time, can be done through graduate students and post-

graduate students, either by taking part in a project, which has already been decided upon, or on the initiative of the professors.

TN: What are your relationships with the departments and the institutes?

MOB: Well, you see, what we are producing here is something unique. The Graduate College doesn't have a staff. We are an academic organization. We register the students and send them to the departments. So the students will be working with the departments. We are catalysts in the sense that we give our own scholarships from university funds for research projects, which students can come and work on. We work as catalysts, we don't tell people what to do, but we tell people: "These are the projects that people are working on, or these are projects with a high priority. People can come and work on them." We tell the departments: "You train students for Master's and Ph.D. degrees." The first question we have is: "Do you have the supervision? If you don't have the supervision, we don't register students. Do you have the facilities? If you don't have the facilities, we don't register students."

TN : Do you try to initiate research in the departments?

MOB: Yes. We have a board on which all the faculties and all the research institutes outside the university, like the Council of Research, the Ministry of Public Service, etc., are represented. So we try to initiate research by proposals. The issue is not really an issue of telling people what to do and to propose ideas to them, to initiate research that way. The issue now is really: a) to have the people to do the supervision; (b) to have the equipment, the facilities, the infrastructure to make the research. So that, whatever research is being done, it is relevant to the Sudan. This is the main thing. Most of our students, we have eight hundred students, most of them are people either already in government service or in the university service under training to be potential members of staff.

TN : Eight hundred in the Graduate College?

MOB: Eight hundred registered in the Graduate College. We aren't working in the departments, but we look after the facilities, we give them research grants, we appoint the examiners. We see that they are qualified. We see that requirements are fulfilled.

TN : How many graduate students do you have abroad?

MOB: I don't know, we don't deal with graduate students abroad. I am only concerned with the students working for a higher degree here in Khartoum.

TN : Yes, but do you have a rough idea what the division is?

MOB: I don't, but the government policy for the last two years has been that all postgraduate work has to be carried out in the University of Khartoum. Nobody should be sent abroad unless there are no facilities in Khartoum. For example, if somebody comes to be trained in computer science, I say: "Sorry, I don't have a computer, I don't have the facilities, so send him abroad." So for anybody, who is doing it, doing postgraduate work, it has to be ascertained first that we do not have the facilities here.

"We are the Mother University"

TN : What do you think the role of this university will be now that you have four national universities? I suppose that there will be a division of labour between the universities?

MOB: What I hope is that all these universities will continue to produce undergraduates and to concentrate on undergraduates. This is their main function. We hope that postgraduate work will be concentrated in the University of Khartoum. We have the facilities. We are the biggest university. We are the mother university. We have got better facilities for training. I hope that it will continue to play this role. As a matter of fact, we say that it is one of our jobs to train people for the new universities, to meet the staff requirements of their developments. But I also see no reason why the new universities should not also start the postgraduate diplomas from the beginning. I've said to the people in Gezira: "I don't see why you should start only with undergraduates, why don't you start postgraduate work too?" Gezira has got some facilities in the Agricultural Research Division, they can employ those. So, I mean, they don't need twenty years to come to that stage.

TN : We've interviewed Ali Mohammed El Hassan in Wad Medani. They want to send virtually all their graduate students abroad to do their Ph.D.s. I was a bit surprised to find that they are not trying to make any kind of graduate studies in their university.

MOB: I agree with them. Anyone who is going to be a member of the staff of the university has to do a Ph.D. as training for research. I do encourage that. Our general policy is to let them do their Master's degree here, if we have the facilities. And they should do their Ph.D. abroad. I think that training abroad is very important. Mind you, there are certain areas which I feel from my own experience that they are weak areas. It should not be our policy that everybody should do research here. Well, it needs supervision. It needs facilities. Take electrical engineering for example. I would discourage anybody to do electrical

engineering here, if he is going to be a member of the staff of the university in the future. Even in the area of the humanities, we have got some weak departments. The facilities are not there. So if somebody wishes to become a teacher in the university, I need to make sure that he has got the facilities to start with. And then after doing his Master's – this is our policy in the University of Khartoum – we send them abroad to do their Ph.D.s. I think this is good. He has got his first and his second degree from Khartoum. Then he gets his third degree from abroad.

I agree with Ali's general policy to send students abroad to take their Ph.D. By the way, some of their students in the area of science, botany and zoology for example are working with us for a Master's degree. They are registered with us. The University of Juba has got some of their students working with us for their Master degree. They are new, and we are building areas of cooperation. I am sending some of my own students in the University of Khartoum for them to supervise. A pattern is emerging that will help this. We cannot say that everything has to be done here, that everyone has to do things here. The different universities have to cooperate.

Research and development in the Sudan

HT : I would like to ask you a question about the role that research in Khartoum University plays in the development of the country. How can you direct research so that it will be relevant to the society?

MOB: Well, we have produced five hundred Ph.D. and Master degrees.

HT : Yes.

MOB: I have found that, especially in the areas of the humanities and social sciences – I don't know much about the sciences, about biochemistry and chemistry and things like that – that about one hundred and fifty Master and Ph.D. theses are relevant to the Sudan. Problems arise from people's experiences, you know. So, in a way, you don't need to direct any decisions: "I direct you to work on the Sudan." One hundred and fifty pieces of research out of five hundred, I think that is a very good proportion.

The university gives me about sixty studentships a year. I'm discussing with the departments, which subjects are relevant areas. This is one way. Secondly, I ask – this I've tried for the last two years – I ask some of the provinces, Province Commissions, the Province Councils, to offer scholarships, studentships, for research in this and that area. For example, the Jongley Project Commission has given two scholar-

ships for people to do research in subjects relevant to the Jongley scheme.

TN : What are they doing, those two people ?

MOB: They are in agriculture. Both are registered in the Department of Rural Economics. And they are doing their Masters on topics which are relevant to agricultural economics in the Jongley area. One of them is working on cooperatives. The other is doing something about the animal wealth in the area. It is research for the M.A., nothing more. I don't expect them to put forth brilliant ideas, but that they will provide basic information. I give you another example. The Northern Province Council gave me two scholarships for research relevant to their province. One of the students is doing something on dates. The other is doing something on water erosion in the Province. I have got two scholarships from Kassala Province. We have said that we would like somebody to work on a tribe there. So, this is one way of doing it. Another way of directing research is this: We have got research money from the Canadian Agency for Research and Development and from the Ford Foundation for people to work on a research programme. The training component of it is given to the Graduate College to administer. So we say to the students: "We have the money. We pay you, etc." And again it is relevant to a research programme which is undertaken by the students. So this is the way of direction. No rules. We don't make rules!

Philosophy and development

TN: What do you think of traditional academic subjects like philosophy in this context?

MOB: Beautiful! One should not be that tight. Somebody came to me the other day. He wanted to do his Master thesis on Marx's concept of the state. The staff discussed it. "Why are you interested in it ?" I said. "The question of the state and its role in the Third World is very important. Our views here in the Sudan are relevant to this issue. I wouldn't look at it as *just* a theoretical matter." Of course, it is relevant. Theoretical things are relevant. It depends how you interpret these theoretical things. I told him: "You can compete for a studentship."

HT : We have a rather ambitious idea to try to start something which might be called "a philosophy of development". We have the idea that there are philosophies *in* development. The main actors, agents of development, have certain ideas on the courses of development, the goals of development, how it affects people and so on, and

what is desirable or not. But professional philosophers have not yet been interested to try to integrate the ideas and views of the agents of development. So we would like to make the philosophers here interested to work on what might be called a philosophy of development, that is related to philosophies *in* development. What Tore and I are doing now is to try to find out about the philosophies *in* development in this country by asking important people, who have a lot to do with development, like the vice-chancellor in this university, like you, like Francis Deng and other people, to hear their views on, say, traditions and modernization, participation in development schemes of the people concerned, and how planning from above may affect the people, how one could protect them from being hurt and so on. So we conceive of philosophies *in* and *of* developments. We feel that a philosophy *of* development has to be attuned to the philosophies *in* development. That is why it is very important that philosophers should get to know what issues the main actors in development schemes are thinking about. They should reflect on them. They should philosophize about them. They should discuss them with the people concerned. So our idea is that we should try to put seeds in the soil and have them grow.

MOB: In this university, like most other universities, the various subjects are very much compartmentalized. Economists talk only about economics, philosophers only about philosophy and so on. We would like to change this. We hope that the subjects will come closer. We want philosophers to understand economics and vice versa. We want to have better communications established between the various departments than what we have now. I've just come back from Kassala. I always go with the minister of Education, who is a friend of mine. There is a development going on there in the Rahad area. What are the engineers doing there? And what are the *real* problems there? What are their attitudes? I went to Khasm el Ghirba. There is a beautiful piece of architecture there. I'm not an engineer, but I could see the beauty of the dam as a dam, compared with the Jebel Aulia for example, I could see the beauty of it, and I had to ask questions: "Who did it? Who are the people who designed it? Who built it?" I was talking to the engineers, how they felt about it, and I was talking to the administrators. I found that the engineers, who are highly professional people who control the lives of the people in the area by irrigation and electricity, had virtually no communication at all with the administrators. I wish that the engineers should know some anthro-

polity and some sociology. I wish that the administrators should know a little bit of technology. It is quite revealing, when you ask them, how little they know about each other's work. Decisions are made in a very traditional way in this country. Nobody talks about management. You know, the real problem in the Third World is the management problem, I would think that what we need is an exposition of the real problems in a theoretically sound way. This is very much needed. I have been convinced, at this age, very late age, that what I read in books about development has no relation to the real facts. I will give you an example. I went to Rahad. After the floods after the rains, we had to go and see an engineer at the end of a canal. The rain stopped him. The land-rovers wouldn't work, because of the difficult conditions. The petrol wasn't there in sufficient quantities. His assistant fell ill with malaria. He had to make a decision: "Shall I use the petrol I have now to take my assistant to Wad Medani to treat him for his malaria, and leave my work, or shall I go on with my work to build the canal?" He decided to take his assistant to treat him for malaria. This decision had to be taken by a young man, who graduated from the university only two years ago. Senior persons working on development schemes have to take major decisions in which many considerations have to be taken. What is more important: one man's life or ten thousand acres which would give cotton worth ten thousand pounds? Decisions like this have to be taken.

Who are the experts?

Then another thing. You get people to write reports. You get foreign experts. They go fifteen days, thirty days to a place. "This is the project which is needed, this is the best thing to do." You know the famous Jebel Marra Scheme for the development of Darfur and Jebel Marra. I have seen some of the "experts" reports on this. They are so bad that they would not be accepted as essays from B.A. general students. One of the difficulties of development is that you employ people to advise you as experts who really don't know. It is a job for certain boys in certain countries. I don't know how you feel about these foreign experts who are writing reports on real development things.

HT : This is one of the main themes in the book we are going to write, that one must make use of the local know-how as much as possible and respect local knowledge.

MOB: What happens often is that people who are foreign to the country and its conditions give you, say, two million pounds for feasibility studies.

At the end you find that two-thirds of this money, which would assist you, goes back to the country which gives the aid and the money directly or indirectly. We have just got American aid giving two million dollars to the regional government in the South. Seventy-five percent of it go to the employment of non-Sudanese to study these languages as salaries and support, etc. Seventy five-per cent of it! And no Sudanese is being involved in it ! Research on Sudanese languages was started as far back as 1848 by the first Catholic missionaries. Even that is not recognized as if the world is just born today. They start it from the beginning as if it was something new. This is fantastic! They are doing it in spite of the wealth of knowledge available in the library here, and in spite of the fact that we have got a Department of Sudanese Languages in our Institute of African Studies. There are Sudanese who are trained and being trained in it . We are doing M.A.s in Sudanese languages. If we were contacted, we could get our fine Sudanese students to write M.A.s on some of these languages. This is a very dangerous attitude.

TN: This is what I would like to call "extracted" knowledge, knowledge which does not contribute to the development of the country where the research is done.

MOB: It is not developing the Sudanese. It is developing others, making others experts, and not the Sudanese. This is one of the areas that contributes to the distortion of development. Sometimes people accept the ideas of foreign experts, not because they believe them, but because they are so keen to get things done, to get off the ground. They need very many things. Suppose they want to start a new university. They think that they can do what they want, when it has started, but before that they are open to suggestions and recommendations of foreign experts. It is because they are so poor and so much in need of help. This does not mean that they are really committed to foreign ideas, that they think that they are valuable to the development of their communities. They accept them merely in order to get some actions started, that is all.

"Development is becoming an ideology now"

HT: I introduced philosophy here in this university and I am very interested in what happens to it in the future. An idea which is very dear to me is that a philosophy of development should grow up in this university. I would like to know what the prospects are to support students of philosophy who would like to do this sort of thing. I don't believe it is

possible to do it in philosophy alone but if philosophers take part in teamwork together with economists, sociologists and so on, it might be beneficial to all parties concerned. I wonder what you think about such an idea to encourage philosophers to go into a philosophy of development?

MOB: You see, in the Sudan, development is becoming an ideology now. I think, in the Sudan, and in many other Third World countries, we have moved away from the traditional ideologies. People are now becoming pragmatic. What is at issue is development, to find ways of development and to construct their own models of development. I think anybody who is in development, actively doing statistics, electrical engineering and so on, is exposed to theoretical concepts. It will be beneficial to all of them, the development people, to have a theoretical, philosophical and conceptual grasp of change and the targets of change. So I believe in a philosophy of development. Anything that will contribute to a better graduate, equipped with better tools, with a non-dogmatic mind, that is what is needed. If you ask me what kind of a person a philosopher of development should be, I say: "He should know a bit of economics and a bit of history too. He should know a bit of geography of the country. What I mean is not that he should know everything of course, but he should master the main concepts. He should have basic knowledge about the society, how it works, etc."

HT : This has to do also with the notion of interdisciplinary research.

MOB: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

I would like to see an interdisciplinary Master's degree which is done by both course-work and research, with a focus on developments.

We have experience in the Institute of African Studies with post-graduates, our degree is open to everybody. As a matter of fact, the best essay I have got was written by somebody who is a pharmacist. The questions were on African politics. This was the first time that he learned about African politics. Yet he produced much better essays than those who had read politics or economics before. And we are finding it often in the Institute of African Studies. We get philosophers. We get chemists. We get pharmacists. We get political scientists. We get them together and find that they are learning a lot from each other. And we are also learning from them much more than we are teaching them. So it is a good thing to bring people from different fields together to think about problems of common interest, which

are relevant to development. In that way we produce people that are exposed to the day-to-day problems and who are able to deal constructively with them. I did my first degree in history, I did my second degree in economics, I did my third degree in education. This has been very valuable for me. I can look at things from different angles. I find it easy to talk to historians and to economists. My studies are complementary. So if we could get this complementary thing at the postgraduate level, it would be much better, because people have matured then. It would be very valuable at the postgraduate level. I hope you will be able to convince the Department of Philosophy to establish M.A. courses in philosophy of development as an alternative. Of course, it has to be discussed with prospective employers and prospective developments, with the students and with the staff here. Relevant topics are the history of development, the history of science, some theories of developments etc. Philosophers may be of use to development. There is a vast literature on development.

HT : Including novels.

MOB: Including novels. Including novels, yes! This is what I say to the students in the Institute: "Read, and read the books which you have always wanted to read, but which you had no time to read. It is a joy to read what you always wanted to read."

2.4. AHMED HASSAN EL JACK (INTERVIEW)

Ahmed Hassan El Jack graduated from the University of Khartoum in 1963 with an honours degree in economics. After studying in the United States where he got his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, he returned to Khartoum. He has been head of the Department of Business Administration in the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies at the University of Khartoum for two years, and when we interviewed him in November 1981, he had been dean of the same faculty for fifteen months. He had been a member of more than fifteen national commissions; and at the time when the interview took place, he chaired a committee to look into the future of the railway system in the Sudan. He was appointed professor in 1983, and is now a member of the Planning Committee for the new university in the Northern Region. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer (IAO), Tore Nordenstam (TN) and Hakan Tornebohm (HT).

“Lack of participation, lack of commitment”

AHJ: The moral standards have deteriorated in the Sudan. Some people have moved away from ethics. Some people are dishonest in handling public money. In the past people in Sudan were honest and diligent in their work.

I remember the time when I was a youngster. I come from a village. My father was a junior government official. He had a small piece of land and he worked very hard to support his family. Now people are trying to get things for nothing. They want salaries, they want wages, and they want a bonus without doing anything. This has now become an accepted practice, unfortunately. People are neglecting their responsibilities. No one takes anybody's work seriously now. By and large, we have come down in our moral standards. Behaviour which we would not have condoned in the past is now an accepted common practice.

HT : How would you account for these changes?

AHJ: It depends upon a lot of things. The leaderships have come down. The leaderships of the unions, the leaderships of the government — they have come down in their standards.

TN : What is wrong with the economic policies of the country in your view?

AHJ: You should ask, what is good about it ? Everything is wrong about it. I have thought about this for a long time. People do not know where they are heading. If you don't know where you are going, you are likely

to end up in the wrong place. The political course has changed drastically during the present regime. For more than three years we have followed a certain economic policy.

TN : What kind?

AHJ: A very leftist policy. Then we held a middle ground for a number of years, in which free enterprise was encouraged. Now this tendency has been strengthened very much. We have moved from one extreme to another. Our economy has been forced to move that far. In the beginning the government tried to establish a planned economy after the Soviet model. We had nationalizations, etc. But it worked out very badly. It has changed in a very drastic way. Maybe we are now in an even more dangerous situation.

TN : How would you characterize the present philosophy of development? Would you like to have a development based on local initiatives or—?

AHJ: If efforts of developments originate from the people and if they have a popular support, definitely I like it. I believe it is better than anything else.

What happens now is that ministers who are supposed to be high authorities, have a highhanded approach. There is lack of participation. There is lack of consultation. There is lack of commitment.

IAO: What should be done about this?

AHJ: There is very little choice left. Why did they wait until there are no alternatives left? Why didn't they take steps when there still was room for manoeuvring? Right now the government takes up a loan of many million pounds. That shows that they are in a very bad shape. Even in a country with a much better economy than the Sudan, this would be very dangerous.

IAO: Do you think that a change in the government might lead to an improvement of the economy?

AHJ: Personally I think that this would be only a tactic to avoid responsibilities. I do not really see that it would help. We have a lot of this kind of tactics. I don't think it will work.

Problem-oriented research

AHJ: I did my biggest contributions outside the university as a consultant to the government. I worked in more than 15 national commissions. I also worked as a consultant for the UN organization ILO in Geneva for 8 months. I have been here and there. Right now I am very much involved in the proper decentralization of the railways. This is a very big issue. The government has decided for a very silly reason to decentralize the railways. I am the chairman of a committee which has the

task to look into the business of railways. Most of the people in the committee are from the railways. They are strongly opposed to the decisions of the government.

TN : Are you concerned with strikes?

AHJ: Yes. When the workers went on strike in May, the government dissolved their union.

TN : Do you regard your consultantships as a kind of research?

AHJ: I try to do that. I want to make use of my consultantships not only for money but also for research purposes.

HT : Would you tell us about the research of other people in the faculty?

AHJ: About 80% of the research that is carried out in the faculty is applied research. We do research on labour issues. We do research on markets, on finance, etc.

TN : Is this based on consultancies? Or do you have projects which the researchers have chosen themselves? How is your research financed?

AHJ: The research is mainly financed by the university. It has an annual budget for research, which is divided into portions to each faculty according to certain criteria. We try to encourage problem-oriented research. We are very pragmatic in our approach to research. We also encourage research which involves people from different disciplines. This year we try to address ourselves to one major issue: the economy of the Sudan during the last decade. We think, as I said earlier, that most of the economic decisions have been wrong. We want people to see what has happened during the last ten years. A second priority is given to themes in different disciplines.

TN : How do you decide on research programmes? Are the decisions taken by the faculty board?

AHJ: We have a faculty research board. This body receives applications from individuals, makes assessments and gives money for research.

TN : Do you get many applications?

AHJ: We get more applications than we have money to finance. Even if our budget would be doubled, we would still not have enough money for every worthy application. We try to get money from outside the university. Sometimes we get some money.

Research policy in the University of Khartoum

IAO : How is your budget in comparison with that of other faculties?

AHJ: That is a dangerous question. Certain faculties get more than their share of what is available, not only research money but everything. Our budget is very small in comparison with that of other faculties.

TN: Which are the favoured faculties?

AHJ: The fortunate faculties are the so-called professional faculties such as Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary Science, and to some extent the Faculty of Science. The Faculty of Pharmacy is not treated as a professional one, nor is that of Law, that of Economics and that of Education.

TN: Who is responsible for this policy in the university ?

AHJ: It has been evolving for a long time. The Central Research Committee has not yet produced any reports for the last ten years. For this year they use a simple formula for research budgeting. The more people there are in a faculty, the bigger the share of the research fund that goes to it, irrespective of what they did last year or the year before that and what they intend to do.

This is a very artificial and arbitrary criterion. We have criticized that rule in the deans' committee.

TN : What is the function of the Central Research Committee?

AHJ: It is supposed to divide research money into two parts: one goes to the faculty and the other one remains in the Central Research Committee.

The second part of the budget is supposed to be used to finance research of an interdisciplinary nature, projects with a wide scope. Individual types of projects are supported by the research committees of the faculties. This year all the money went to the faculties.

Furthermore the Central Research Committee is supposed to write annual reports on the research that is carried out in the University. But they have not done so for the last ten years.

IAO : What do you think about the distribution of research money to the various faculties?

AHJ: It is good and bad. It is good that money goes to where research is done. It is bad that projects which do not fit into a single faculty are not given support.

I think that Economics has a lot to do with Geography. What we do in Business Administration with labour relations and labour laws has a lot to do with the Faculty of Law.

I am sure that the same goes for other faculties as well, such as the Faculty of Veterinary Science and the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Faculty of Medicine.

There is a need for joint research projects involving more than one faculty, but there is no way of getting money for such projects.

TN : What is the distribution of responsibilities and money of this faculty and the Development Studies and Research Centre?

AHJ: DSRC has its own operation budget. DSRC is a part of our faculty. DSRC has only one staff member, the director. The centre has money from the Dutch Government , which takes care of their research.

IAO: How is the research money divided to the departments in the faculty? Are there any problems about that?

AHJ: No. The Faculty Research Board gives money to individuals rather than to departments. The distribution is a fair one based on the merits of the applications. Heads of department always have a say. The Faculty Research Board acts as a watchdog.

I have never heard that any department claims that it has been treated badly in comparison with other departments.

TN : Do you think that this University is a reasonably good place to do research?

AHJ: No.

TN : What are the problems?

AHJ: If the budget for research had been doubled, we would still not be able to cater for all the good applicants. The research budget for the university is too small. Just to give you an example (I am sure that you have heard it more than once): The money used to feed the students is about 5 million Sudanese pounds per annum, which is a lot more than what goes to research: 200,000 Sudanese pounds per annum.

HT: Are you happy about other conditions of research, apart from the financial ones?

AHJ: The other factors which are supposed to be conducive to research are not there. In many faculties staff members spend very much time on teaching. The time for research is very limited. Furthermore this university lacks facilities such as machines for copying and adequate journals.

Outside the university there are many factors hindering research. We might have to queue for five hours just to get petrol for our cars. That beats you not only physically but also mentally.

IAO: Have you got seminars in which staff from different departments come together and discuss questions of common interest?

AHJ: This year we have seminars on the economics of the country. A faculty like this should be in the mainstream of events. We are very much concerned about the future of the Sudan.

HT : Could you tell us about research activities in this faculty which you regard as specially acceptable and successful?

AHJ: Research dealing with the impact of development in rural settings has been done in this faculty and I am sure that it is a useful type of research.

A number of projects have been done on labour issues, wages, relationships between workers and management, labour laws....

HT : Do you have written documents about these research projects ?

AHJ: It is the job of the Central Research Committee to highlight what the staff has been doing every year. Unfortunately they have not produced any annual reports for the last ten years.

**3. AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY
SCIENCE AT SHAMBAT**

3.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

The Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Science in Shambat outside Khartoum are well-established teaching and research institutions within a well-established university. Already in 1900, the British administration established a veterinary quarantine unit within the Military Veterinary Department, which studied and treated rinderpest and other endemic diseases in animals.¹

The first independent unit for agricultural research was established in 1904, and about the same time the Wellcome Laboratory, a donation, was established to help to control epidemics and pests attacking animals. The schools for agriculture and veterinary science, which later became faculties in the University of Khartoum, were started in 1938, when the economic recession had come to an end and new plans for higher education were formulated.²

A Department of Agriculture was established in 1919, and research stations in agriculture and veterinary science continued to grow up over the country. At the beginning of the seventies, the newly established National Council for Research made a survey of existing research units and projects. They found 262 scientific and technical units, virtually all of them in the public sector (only 2 in the private sector) and with a heavy concentration in Khartoum Province (231 units). Out of 203 research projects which were registered as ongoing projects at the time of that survey, 121 were in the field of agriculture. Most of the projects were undertaken by government bodies. Only 3 of the 203 projects were listed as "fundamental research".³

Another measure of the research activities in agriculture and veterinary science is the number of theses on the Sudan produced in those fields. A list compiled in 1974 of theses on the Sudan lists a total of 549 theses, mostly Master degrees. Out of those, 98 were in the field of agriculture and 44 in veterinary science.⁴

That agriculture and veterinary science belong to the best established and best organized research fields in the country is hardly surprising in view of the fact that the economy of the Sudan is based on agriculture and husbandry. The core of the research activities in those fields are the Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Science at Shambat, which until recently were the only institutions of this kind in the Sudan. Since 1975, teaching and research facilities in agriculture and veterinary science have been built up also in the new universities of Juba and the Gezira.

What, then, are the working conditions and research policies of the researchers in Shambat today? The key to the situation in agricultural and veterinary science research in the Sudan is adaptation to local circumstances. This applies both to the organization of research, the selection of problems, the choice of methods, and publication. The two faculties in Shambat are the hub of a nation-wide network of research. There is a great number of research units in agriculture and veterinary science spread over the whole country, attached to the ministries (which have also multiplied as a result of the regionalization policy in the Sudan). The Agricultural Research Corporation was mentioned in the interviews as one example: a research institute in Wad Medani which addresses itself to questions like irrigation in the Sudan and cattle problems in various parts of the country.

The multiplication of research units in agriculture and veterinary science seems to have been one of the main reasons for establishing the National Council for Research at the beginning of the seventies. The deans of the two faculties at Shambat are *ex officio* members of the subcouncil for agriculture. The subcouncil discusses research priorities, suggests projects to institutions and individuals, and contributes to the financing of the projects.⁵ The National Council for Research also functions as a channel to international organizations like FAO and the International Centre for Research in Arid Areas (ICARA), which help to fund some projects in the Sudan.

The selection of problems seems to be guided by two main considerations: practical relevance and economic feasibility. The Central Research Committee in the University of Khartoum has adopted the policy of decentralizing the available funds, as we saw in the previous chapter. In the Faculty of Veterinary Science, the annual budget was 8,000 Sudanese pounds, when our interviews in Shambat took place in 1981. The amount was normally distributed equally to the eight departments in the faculty. Staff members who submit applications for economic support for research projects are of course aware of these limitations when they draft their projects. Most of the work for Master degrees in agriculture and veterinary science is now done in the Sudan, and supervision of graduate students is an important aspect of the staff members' research activities. There is a limit to research for a Master degree, 2,000 Sudanese pounds, which means that, e.g. projects which require extensive travelling in the field, are discouraged. The same applies to methods of work in general. "In a country like the Sudan, if you want to do research you have to develop the facilities. The only way to do research is to approach it knowing that the facilities are not up to the proper standards. When you enter into research, you have to build up what is required in terms of facilities."⁶ An example which was mentioned in the interviews is a study of

how much water is needed to produce cotton in an economic way, based on simple experiments at the university farm. A microscope which has been acquired for teaching purposes can also be used for the staff members' own projects. The offices of the staff members are at the same time teaching labs.

Publication is usually a big problem in a developing country. Publication in prestigious international journals might be desirable from the academic point of view, but it is not easy to obtain if your research is oriented towards the solution of local problems. Sending manuscripts back and forth between an African and a European country might also delay publication beyond toleration. The establishment of the Khartoum University Press in the seventies helped to improve the situation, but the publication situation is generally unsatisfactory. (The University Press had not been functioning for a couple of years when we discussed the problem in Khartoum.) In veterinary science, the situation is better than in most subjects. There are (or were) two Sudanese journals, *The Sudan Journal for Veterinary Science* and *The Sudan Journal for Veterinary Research*. In agriculture, there used to be a local journal, published by the faculty at Shambat, which was discontinued for lack of funds. (I have seen several attempts which have lead to only one or a few issues in other fields of research in the Sudan.) Since the working language of agricultural research in the Sudan is English, it would in fact be desirable to have two journals in the field, one in English, in the first instance, and one in Arabic which could reach a wider audience.⁷

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- (1) Mansour Ali Haseeb, *A Monograph on Biomedical Research in the Sudan*, Vol. 1, Khartoum University Press 1975; "Historical Note", *University of Khartoum Calendar* 1963-1964, pp. 57ff.
- (2) Cf. Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Educational Development in the Sudan*, Oxford University Press, 1969; Tore Nordenstam. *Afrikas universitet*, Wahlström & Widstrand, Stockholm 1970.
- (3) El Sammani A. Yacoub and Fouad A. Agabani, *Scientific and Technical Potential 'STP' in the Sudan*, The National Council for Research, Khartoum 1974; *Science Policy and Annual Report for 1973-1974*. The National Council for Research, Khartoum 1974.
- (4) Abdel Rahman El Nasri, *Theses on the Sudan*, 1974. Cf. *Dissertation Abstracts*, *University of Khartoum* 1958-1975, published by The Graduate College, University of Khartoum, Khartoum University Press s.d.
- (5) See further ch. 9 below.
- (6) El Imam El Khidir, section 3.2 below.
- (7) *Loc. cit*

3.2. EL-IMAM EL-KHIDIR (INTERVIEW)

El Imam El Khidir M. Nour graduated from the faculty of agriculture in the University of Cairo in 1957. He was accepted as a postgraduate student in the faculty of agriculture in the University of Khartoum in the same year. He specialized in agricultural entomology and got his M. Sc. from the University of Khartoum three years later (thesis: "Morphological and biological studies on whiteflies in the Sudan"). He then got a scholarship to continue his studies at the University of London, where he received his Ph.D. in 1963 on the thesis "Ecological studies on *aleyrodes brassicae* with special reference to dispersal". He was appointed lecturer in the University of Khartoum in 1963, and later promoted to professor in the department of crop protection in the Faculty of Agriculture at Shambat. He has been to the United States, Germany, Switzerland and Egypt for short scientific tours. He is a member of the Agricultural Council of Natural Resources, the Pest Control Committee and several other committees outside the university. He is now (1985) dean of the faculty of agriculture at Shambat. The interview took place in November 1981. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Teaching and research

I: When I came here I was shouldering the task of teaching general and agricultural entomology for the second year agriculture, and I spent quite a long time looking into entomological problems and their control which students should be introduced to. Simultaneously I started to do research on some crop pests. Also I was supervising several candidates – until now 12 – mostly for M. Sc. degrees. Among them only one was a candidate for a Ph.D. degree.

In my field of speciality I have dealt with several different pests. I work on cotton pests, vegetable pests, fruit pests. Recently I have been writing on storage pests.

There are many aspects of research. What I do depends largely on the fact that the candidates come with problems they want to investigate. For example one of them comes from the Gezira Scheme with problems on cotton pests. Sometimes they select a particular insect to work on. I have to accept to supervise them and assist them in carrying out their research. Sometimes we advise a student to work on problems that we know about.

Most of the problems we have tackled are of a field nature. We can

do some work in the laboratory, but our equipment is limited. If you want to have controlled conditions, this is very difficult to cope with. So we always rely on field work.

At present I have a student who works on survival capabilities of a cotton pest. He works in the field and collects various varieties. He is looking after the populations of the insects.

We also work in groups. For example in working on a project on storage pests I am a member of a group which consists of six scientists.

This is a project of national importance. We did experiments in the Gedaref area in the Eastern Sudan, the main grain-producing area in the country.

TN : Who took the initiative for this project?

The Agricultural Research Council

I : The Agricultural Research Council. It is a body to organize and direct research. They approach researchers in different departments and institutions in the country. When they think that a project is of national importance and requires more than one scientist to work with it then they will pick a team of scientists who are interested in the project and who to some extent are familiar with it. The initiative for our project came from the Agricultural Research Council.

TN : They approached you and asked you to join the project?

I : Yes.

HT : Are you the leader of this project?

I : Yes, I am the project leader. We started this project three years ago. One of the early leaders resigned and went to Saudi Arabia. Another leader came in his place. He has now left and is at present in UK. I took over the leadership after the practical work had been finished. At the present time we are preparing a technical report of the results, which will be submitted to the National Council of Research. FAO is interested in this project. They are interested in losses that occur in storage, mainly in the Third World. They have contributed to the financing of the project. The National Council for Research has paid another part.

TN : The contact with FAO goes through the National Council for Research?

I : Yes the National Council for Research is the official body which brought FAO into the picture. We cannot contact them directly.

IAO : Can the faculty contact FAO directly?

I : Yes, the faculty can.

Research conditions

HT : Are you happy with the research conditions, not only in your department but also in the whole faculty ?

I: In a country like the Sudan, if you want to do research you have to develop the facilities. The only way to do research is to approach it knowing that the facilities are not up to the proper standards. When you enter into research, you have to build up what is required in terms of facilities.

IAO: Where would you look for needed resources?

I: We used to get help from the research committee of the faculty. In fact we utilize some of the equipment we get for teaching. For example this microscope was bought for teaching purposes, but I can use it in my research.

We go also through other organizations like the Agricultural Research Council.

HT: Do you think that the Agricultural Research Council is doing a very good job?

I: I think so, because at least it is inspiring. The Research Council is interested in receiving and in putting its hands on the problems coming from different parts of the country and then to suggest that some people should take on the tasks of carrying out investigations.

I remember a work I did on termites. I started this work because a student who was registered for a Ph.D. was interested in termites. He did a very good job.

TN: What is the division of labour between teaching and research?

I: When I accepted this post in the university, I thought that my main job was to teach. But in order to be able to teach in a university, you must have secure information to convey to the students. The work in the university entails that one divides one's time about equally to teaching and to research.

TN: How do you organize your time for research?

I: Sometimes I say to myself: "If I had been free from teaching, I would have done more research than I have actually done." I also think that the university ought to give some free time to staff for doing research. It ought to have a research set-up, where members of staff would be completely free to do research for a couple of years and then come back for teaching and then go back again to do research. It is very difficult to organize your time for research. Every time you are with the students and you expect them to come and ask about one thing or another.

TN: Yet you have done a great deal.

I: Yes, I try to set off part of the day and a day or two in the week for research.

IAO : I remember that some members of staff here considered organizing their time so that some of them would take over all teaching for part of the year, so that the others could do research. Have you tried that yourself?

I : We have started a semester-system. One of its aims is to give staff-members some time off for their research work. This applies specially to the teaching of undergraduate students. When you have postgraduate students, however, you have to take care of them even when you are free. We are therefore rarely completely free.

HT : Could you not employ these students as assistants in your own work?

I : In our project we help students more than they can help us. Sometimes they are of help to us. For example in our current teamwork we have two postgraduate students. One is working for an M.Sc. and the other for a Ph.D. degree. They help us a great deal, especially by collecting data.

Sometimes students are very strongly engaged in lines of research which are a bit outside the common project.

Obstacles to research

IAO: What, in your view, are the main obstacles to research in this faculty?

I : I think, as I mentioned before, that free time is very important. If I had been completely free, I would have done better research. This, of course, is not possible in this university. As far as lack of facilities is concerned I think that they have to be acquired.

You do your research within the limits you have. You can go around and do research. It is not easy in this country. But if you are really keen enough you can pursue it.

TN : How many active researchers do you have in this faculty?

I : What do you mean by "active researchers" ?

TN : People having ongoing research projects. If you take all members of staff in the faculty, what proportion of them are active researchers?

I : It is an obligation to do research. Therefore we are not concentrating on one aspect, so that there are staff-members merely engaged in teaching and not doing any research. Teaching takes a lot of time. But most of the staff are doing at least some research, whether on a small or on a large scale.

AO : You have been a staff-member in this faculty for ten years. What

changes have taken place? Have the conditions for doing research changed for the better or . . . ?

I : I was the second candidate to work for a higher degree in this faculty. When we began, the facilities were very limited. What we have at present is far better than what we used to have. Very likely the staff-student ratio is increasing. My office is a so-called office-lab. If I have to make a demonstration for my students, I do it here in my office. There are improvements. We have more equipment; whether it satisfies my colleagues I cannot judge. The facilities that we have now are better in quantity and quality than we used to have.

HT: Is it difficult to get new equipment when you need it?

I: There are delays in getting our facilities. When you put an order, it takes a year to get it from outside. These days it may take longer. Sometimes if you have money and you get it by air it comes quicker. But normally it takes a long time. The funds available for equipment these days are not large.

TN: For lack of foreign currency?

I: I guess so. The people who give you money for research are always inclined to buy equipment with Sudanese money, if that is possible.

Publication problems

TN: How do you publish results of research?

I: This is a difficult thing. It takes us longer to get something published than when you are working outside the country. Unfortunately we do not have local scientific journals, where you can place your stuff. We used to have an agricultural journal in this faculty, but this is not coming out these days for lack of funds.

TN: Have you published any papers for the last four or five years?

I: Yes, in Germany. It takes a long time to put your data and results in a publishable form.

HT: Would you like to have a local journal? Would it be of assistance to you?

I: Certainly, I am very much in favour of publishing in local journals. This would be a way to encourage research in the country and to encourage people.

Many people become dissatisfied when their work is not acceptable for publication in international journals. This is an obstacle to their promotion.

It would be a good thing to have a local journal for publishing

papers concerning the conditions of the country. It is very difficult to publish such papers say in the US or UK. Therefore a local journal would be of great help to pull up our research standards.

Language problems

TN: Which language should be used?

I: In fact we would start with English at present. But later on Arabic might be used.

There is a committee looking into Arabicization, even for teaching in the university. It is not difficult to do that, because Arabic is our language and it is easier for us than English.

IAO: Are there scientific journals in Arabic in other Arab countries in your field?

I: I came across a publication on plant protection written in Arabic, published either in Jordan, Iraq or Syria.

TN: You know of only one publication in Arabic in your field?

I: Well no, but it can be developed. It will help. Language is one of the preconditions for doing any kind of research work.

Very likely, if people engaged in research were permitted to present their findings in Arabic, they would do a better job.

When I first studied my subject, I did so in Arabic in Cairo. I did my university studies in Arabic. People still question whether it is possible to teach agriculture in Arabic. I know that it is possible.

TN: Do you teach in English exclusively?

I: Sometimes we use Arabic in the offices and in the laboratories. Candidates always approach me in Arabic, when they come to ask me questions about something that I said in English in a lecture.

TN: In the Faculty of Arts all teaching is done in Arabic up to the intermediate level.

IAO: Some courses in history and some courses in philosophy are taught in Arabic, but most courses are taught in English. Do you have examiners from any Arab country?

I: No, but we have one from the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. The examination papers of our students are often written in very poor English. A few of them are good but not many.

If you teach them yourself you can sometimes understand what they write, but the external examiners have difficulties.

HT: Do you regard it as a grave problem that the command of English among the students is not good enough?

I: I don't think it ever will become good enough. The only way out for our students is that they will be allowed to switch from English to their mother tongue.

Most of our students now are shy of expressing themselves especially when you have seminars. If the talks were delivered in Arabic, things would have been different.

Research and agricultural development in the Sudan

HT: Do you see any practical effects of the research that you are doing?

I: I guess so. I have worked on white flies which are a very important pest in the country.

Myself and colleagues of mine have produced a body of knowledge which can be used by those who are working in the field. Most benefits go to our students who are trained at the postgraduate level. Most of them go out after completing their studies, several of them to the Gezira Scheme.

They become heads of sections. Two of our M.Sc. graduates are now in charge of crop protection management in the Gezira scheme.

As university teachers we feel that our main contribution to the country goes through our students.

Yesterday I received from the extension department a leaflet telling farmers how to look after their storage commodities.

TN: How do you as a scientist look at the agricultural policies in this country?

I: The agricultural policies are not up to our expectations. They have to be improved. You get a scientist in this country involved in so many things. We need people to specialize. This applies also to the people who make the policies. They should have enough time to think, to read and to plan. Our policies are based on what kind of problem we have.

Very likely in the Agricultural Research Organization people are clear about what to do.

There is some measure of freedom in the departments of the university. People may do their work independently. In places like the Agricultural Research Cooperation, which is the main agricultural research centre in the country, people come and they discuss. All of them are familiar with what is to be done next year, which is connected to some of the existing problems.

TN: So the work done in your faculty is not very closely related to the needs of the country?

I: The project we are working on presently is linked to the needs of the country.

IAO: How much are you involved in government policies?

I: I am a member of a committee called "The Pest Control Committee". This is a national committee which decides upon various aspects concerning crop protection, for example about what chemicals should be used. It is required that these should be properly tested. Here researchers do work of national importance.

In the National Council of Research there is an Agricultural Research Council. Its task is to look into the guidance of research in the country. We get several submissions of research projects. People come together and discuss them. They give money to interesting projects of national importance. We are practising some sort of control on the ongoing research in the Sudan.

I am also a member of a council which is interested in agricultural training. It belongs to the Ministry of Education. We look into the curricula of the different institutes and try to put them in a shape which is of value to the needs of the country.

IAO: What do you think about developments in the Sudan at large?

I: We have the agricultural potential to better ourselves. We begin to understand what we should do to improve our agricultural production, which is a way out of our economic difficulties. To get significant practical results takes more than two or three years. We are always trying to do our best to follow the right path.

The agricultural policy of the government has been scrutinized by experts. They have come to the conclusion that it probably is all right. It is very difficult to implement these policies, however. If we get financial aid, it is likely that it goes in a straight direction. Unfortunately implementations are always upset at an early stage, because of financial and other difficulties.

TN: One difficulty, which several people have mentioned, is that the official policies are not really in agreement with what the people want.

I: We are a developing country in a stage of changing into a better society. We are using scientific knowledge in this process. But a significant change for the better will not come about in a short time.

3.3. Abdel Mohsin Hassan El Nadi (Interview)

Abdel Mohsin Hassan El Nadi was born in 1937. He has studied at the universities of Khartoum (where he received a B.Sc. in 1961 and an M.Sc. in 1963) and Nottingham (where he received his Ph.D. in 1966). The title of his doctoral dissertation was "Effects of water stress on growth and flowering of the broad bean". He joined the University of Khartoum as a lecturer in the department of agronomy in 1966 and was appointed professor in 1975. When we interviewed him in 1981, he was dean of the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Khartoum. He got research fellowships for three to six months from the Netherlands, England and the United States. He is a member of the Agricultural Research Council, chairman of the Higher Council for the Studies in Sciences and National Resources of the Sudan, and other committees and boards. He has published a long list of scientific papers and technical reports (feasibility studies, etc.) on irrigation, agriculture and related themes.

The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

National and international sponsors of research

TN : Are you engaged in a research project at the moment?

EN : I am still pursuing my work on the water relations of plants with particular emphasis on the efficiency of water utilization. To me the crop is experimental material. I can use wheat. I use my techniques and my methodology to establish water requirements.

TN : Do you do fieldwork out in the country?

EN : Most of my work is done here on the university farm in Shambat, where it is possible to work under experimentally controlled conditions.

TN : Who sponsors your current research?

EN : I started with a very humble grant from the Faculty Research Board. I could not afford the luxury of buying sophisticated equipment. From that humble start something came out and I got a grant from an international aid organization.

TN : Why did they want to support your research?

EN : Well, they support research on the ground of the merits of the submission. In actual fact, the research project was handed over to me by my own professor who taught me agronomy. When he left the faculty, I became responsible for this line of research. So I sought to establish contacts and it turned out that I got money. They gave me equipment which I could not afford with the limited research funds of the faculty. After that I sought help by contacting donors for research.

These donors give you money to do if it they are satisfied that your project is a good one. Other research was contract research, like the one I did last year.

TN : What kind of research project was that?

EN : That was called The Nile Valley project. Research is going on all over the world on this particular crop.

TN : Is that a British government sponsored institution?

EN : It is sponsored by the International Center for Research in Arid Areas /ICARA/. It belongs to a group funded by donors like the World Bank, and also by individuals. There are similar organizations in India, in Latin America, in —

IAO : To what extent do you find that aid has strings attached to it ?

EN : It depends on the donors. For example if you get aid from an international agency, the limitations for your choices are that you have to justify what you are doing. It is important that results of a certain kind of projects should be comparable when they are carried out in different places in the world. This is a restriction in a sense. ICARA gives you a free hand at the national level. They cooperate with the Ministry of Agriculture, which contacts individuals whom they think should be suitable. They leave you a free hand to identify the area of research and to determine priorities.

At the end of each year they have a session, when they discuss the results. In the light of the findings they may determine new lines of research to be pursued further, and they may determine that some lines should be dropped out.

IAO : To what extent are these decisions made by outsiders ?

EN: Some organizations exist mainly to support research in developing countries. Rather than to invite an expert from outside to come to work for a short while and then go away, they prefer that experts in the country concerned should carry out the work. The green revolution, as you have heard about, did not work. The value of the grain of the new species for the farmer is far less than the value of the straw of the older species. The farmer refused the new plant. He needs the straw to feed his animals. So he prefers the local species of plant, although it produces less grain. But this does not compensate for the loss of yield of the straw. The value of the straw is more than the value of the grain itself, because that may be turned into milk, butter and meat.

TN : This is a very interesting case. How do you identify the needs of the

people here? How do you relate the role of the researcher to the needs of the population?

EN: Let me tell you how this is actually done. This may be more informative.

An individual research worker, supported by a research grant from the faculty, is required to justify before the faculty research board the money that he requires for research. He needs only to satisfy before this board that his work is up to academic standards. Pursuit of knowledge is the only thing that matters in fundamental research. Again from the other end of the spectrum you have a problem-oriented research, presented by the individual research worker in the faculty. This kind of research is carried out at this faculty. The university as a whole, not individual faculties, has the ultimate jurisdiction for OK-ing programmes.

The other level of planning research is the team approach, the interdisciplinary that is done at the faculty level. We give it priority. The university encourages it, because being interdisciplinary it looks at problems from different angles and your contributions become more weighty.

Team work is also encouraged by the marginal funds for research. Research of national importance is encouraged. For instance studies of the biology of mosquitoes. This kind of research is carried out by so and so from the faculty of medicine, so and so from a department of biology, so and so who is interested in insecticides, so and so who is interested in.... Such a project is very much encouraged. The initiative may come from above. Sometimes it comes from the National Council for Research.

The Council can sense and probe the problems of the country in the areas of medical research, of veterinary research, of industrial research.... They sponsor work for a higher degree provided that the topic of the dissertation will be so and so.

At one time, professor Nazir Dafallah, who at present is the Minister of Education, had the idea that the National Council for Research should sponsor theses of national interest.

TN: Does this mean that you have two funds supporting agricultural research, the faculty budget and the National Council of Research?

The Agricultural Research Corporation

EN: As Sudan is an agricultural country, agricultural research is in a fortunate position. The Ministry of Agriculture can help by doing team work involving people from the Agricultural Research Corpor-

ation, who are full-time researchers. They are paid by the Ministry but they are autonomous.

TN: How many researchers are there in that corporation?

EN: It has grown up from a small beginning. Private corporations were involved, then interested in problems of growing cotton. They did the pioneering work on the possibility of growing cotton in the Sudan. When the things grew then came the Cotton Growing Corporation. This corporation was looking after problems of cotton growing in their time. They had a journal which has changed into a journal of experimental agriculture. The credit goes to my professor. When he accepted to become editor, he changed the name.

The Agricultural Research Corporation has its headquarter in Wad Medani, the capital of the Gezira. They address themselves to problems of irrigation in the Gezira. They are also concerned with cattle in different parts of the country.

TN: How is their research related to that which is carried out in your faculty? Would you say that it is more of a routine type of research or do they do original research in the same way as you are doing in this faculty?

EN: Their research comes from the 6-year economic plan. The plan outlines the policies and strategies for the production of so and so many quantities of such and such crops. With these policies and strategies, the Minister of Agriculture is under the obligation to direct the relevant organs, in this case the Agricultural Research Corporation, to do the real plan of executing that policy.

The research programmes are very diverse. They cover all aspects of production, the production aspect, the protection aspect, the improvement aspect, breeding and so on. The actual implementation is that each department and section in the corporation could utilize the research proposals coming from the workers. They submit demands and they defend and justify the money that is going to be spent in their research to make sure that it really tallies with the targets of this country. To what extent they succeed in doing that depends of course on various factors. The plans may change. Some unforeseen variables may come into the picture, such as new diseases.

This may upset the priorities. So the research workers may have to modify their projects. The variables of the studied objects are very

complex. They are concerned with the soil, with the biosphere, with... The plant as a living organism is very complex. It depends on a number of biotic factors, atmospheric factors, The variables are *so* many.

That is why the programmes in this kind of research are not so quick as you see in industrial research. In industries you can control everything. What you find out in this kind of research is valid in every country. In agricultural research we usually accept findings of 10% accuracy. Coefficients of variations by means of which we measure differences between populations of something or other are up to 20%. Such variations are nonsense in industries. What would such variations amount to in say the car industry? It would mean that we have 20 odd ones in every batch of 100 cars.

The national plans of development

TN: Do you think that the national plans of development have had an impact on agriculture? After all these plans are not really plans of action. They are rather catalogues of desiderata.

EN: Yes, a lot of these are slogans. Sometimes they are made very quietly to satisfy political objectives, because the people who make these resolutions may not realize the dimensions of the problems. The research workers, who are going to implement these demands, see this clearly. Your point is valid. I was involved, together with some colleagues, in evaluating to what extent research findings of the Agricultural Research Corporation have contributed to solve the problems and meet the aspirations of the planners.

We found that the world looks different from what the planners thought. So the plans have to be modified. We have 6-year plans. Then we have modified 6-year plans. Then we forget about some of them. Research is emerging from interactions with farming societies by feedback mechanisms. There is a tragedy here. Many colleagues of mine are sharing my opinions. In spite of the fact that this country is poor—it belongs to the poorest countries of the world judged by GNP-per capita income—Sudan is potentially rich.

I don't believe in the GNP-measure. The wealth of the nomads cannot be measured in terms of dollars. They have meat, milk and transport. That satisfies their needs. This does not count in the evaluation of the per capita income.

After independence the authorities started what we call Sudanization policies, whereby hundreds of young men and women were sent out

to specialize at the Ph.D. level in all fields of knowledge, human sciences, biological sciences and so on.

We now have a number of Sudanese working in international organizations and doing very well. There are also a number of Sudanese in the oil-rich countries to help them.

The point that I will bring home is that the knowledge we have is far ahead of what is actually made use of by the producers, whether they are herdsmen or growers of crops or

The reason why we are 20-30 years ahead of the traditional farming is that these new findings need inputs. We have to plough money in to get a good harvest. It is an investment.

The limitations to making real strides to improve the agriculture in this country are that the right amount of money is not given at the right time to the right people. This is our tragedy.

IAO: Regarding the 6-year plan, would you say that we ought to do away with it?

EN: I think that some form of government must be there, some form of plan must be there, so as to coordinate efforts. I will try to be fair.

But what I would like to see is that the expertise should be involved in the execution of the plans, having a say in making those plans. In reality they are left out. The people who make the plans are the politicians or advisers of some sort. The expertise, in many instances, is not involved in the actual plans. Some politicians believe that it is for them to make the planning. Planning is for the planners and for economists, but they are not going to do the work as they are not even being consulted.

Research—for the benefit of whom?

TN: Do you have foreign consultancy firms operating in the field of agriculture?

EN: We Sudanese do research which may be useful to us, but a donor is interested in making a feasibility study to see whether a project will be efficient or not, will be successful or not. These studies are very useful to enrich our corpus of knowledge as lecturers in the university, whether they are done here or whether they are done elsewhere in the Arab world.

A good example of this is the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development. 22 Arab countries are members of that organization. It is one of the several off-shoots of the Arab League. It provides money to problem-oriented research: surveys, feasibility studies and so on. All this is a form of funding research by a very able organization

financially. At the same time a number of staff get research money. I enjoy that together with colleagues of mine.

IAO: In making these plans some people involved are consultants. You are a consultant yourself. People in different faculties do their work all by themselves. What attitude do you take to this? Do you see a place for social sciences to be taught in this faculty? Do you see yourself as teaching anywhere in the university apart from the Faculty of Agriculture?

EN: I think this question is very important. I think any research worker, before he draws up his proposal would ask himself: What sort of person is he going to please? If you are going to please the peasant by doing a sort of routine work, then the farmer will be pleased with you and you will become very popular. It may be a simple thing; making some observations and coming up with some recommendations about manure for the crops, about replacing a tool by another tool—very simple things.

Now if you want to please the farmer in the field, then your job is very simple. Some people opt for this. But they do know very well that this research does not have the academic glamour or the academic status to be accepted for publication in international journals. Therefore there are many people who refrain from doing research of this nature.

This will not help for production because no one is going to publish it. The fear is there, due to the way in which the promotion committee is operating, that all research in the university, especially at an earlier stage, will not be done in such a way and it will please, say, the farmer by modifying his tools and so on. International organizations, on the other hand, are concerned with such objectives to start with: simple things helping people in their day to day work.

If you want to please the highbrow scientists, then your research has to be fundamental and you will be described as a test-tube agriculturalist. Your research will be published perhaps even in the Proceedings of the Royal Society, *but* it is no good to the farmer.

You may be spending all your life doing research which it will take years to make practical use of. It will not be of an applied nature at all. The third category is a compromise, to do fundamental applied research:

I am addressing myself to the task of finding out how much water is needed to produce cotton in an economic way.

These are realistic, very legitimate questions to ask:

How much water to apply, when to stop irrigation

To find the answers the experiments are very simple, but in order to give it an academic touch, I may use the cotton plant as a "guinea pig" to make experiments which will satisfy me as an academician.

A wind of change

ADN: I work on academic research and at the same time I am trying to solve problems of a practical nature.

You have a choice for all this. Not only we in the Sudan but the whole world now is fully aware of the pragmatic approach to research. In America we are aware of the fact that the universities have contracts to solve the problems of the farmers. This research is financed by organizations outside the universities. So the universities are not only doing research for the sake of new knowledge.

The farmers pay money. The researchers under contract are answerable to the farmers. "What did you do with the money? What are your results?" So he must be very careful there.

In Ireland, for example in the University of Belfast, the agriculturalists employed, are employed by the Ministry of Agriculture. Even in England there is now a wind of change. I have heard from several sources that one does not like to see scientists stuck in grooves, who are unaware of what is going on in the outside world. They do research but their research is in a groove.

One would like that professors are not only supervising students doing research. They should do research themselves. The tradition of academic freedom is now being reviewed.

TN : The University of Khartoum was set out as a British university as an Asquith University to be more precise. Do you feel any wind of change in this University?

EN : I do. Specially as a result of the Sudanization program, the graduate Sudanese who come back to us have been educated in various countries. Some for example come back with American attitudes towards the mission of the university and they do not accept everything in the inherited British patterns. This intercourse of ideas has brought about great changes for the better I think.

3.4. ABDEL HAMID OSMAN AND OSMAN ABDALLA (INTERVIEW)

Abdel Hamid Osman got a bachelor's degree from the faculty of veterinary science in the University of Khartoum in 1959. He then went to the United States for higher studies. He took his master's degree in animal husbandry and a Ph.D. in genetics. The title of his doctoral thesis is "Genotype-environment interaction in production traits of sheep" (1964). He was appointed lecturer in the University of Khartoum in 1964 and was promoted to professor in 1976. He then worked for two years as director of the Animal Science Division in the Arab Organization for Studies of Dry Areas, in Syria, and for another two years in Baghdad as an expert on animal breeding. He then returned to the department of Animal Husbandry at the University of Khartoum, and was head of that department when we interviewed him in 1981.

Osman Abdalla graduated from the University of Khartoum in 1957. He then joined the Ministry of Animal Resources for a couple of months, and returned to the university as a teaching assistant to take a higher degree. He did his master's degree in histology. He was appointed lecturer in histology in 1960. One year later, he attended a course on veterinary teaching in Denmark for nine months, and proceeded to Edinburgh, where he got his Ph. D. in 1964. His M.V. Sc. thesis has got the title "Anatomical study of the female genital system of *camelus dromedarius* with special reference to the histology of its mucous membrane"; his Ph.D. thesis has got the title "On the morphology and histochemistry of the oviducis, uterus and placenta of sheep". He was appointed head of the department of veterinary anatomy at Shambat in 1967, and was dean of the faculty of veterinary science when we interviewed him in November 1981. Osman Abdalla died in 1982. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Research in the faculty of veterinary science

OA : Our research activities can be divided into two parts :

- (1) research activities of postgraduate students, and
- (2) research activities of staff members.

Staff members are doing research according to their interests. We have seven departments. Their research is either carried out individually or they work in teams. In the department of preventive medicine, they are doing research on trypanosomiasis, which is an important disease. There is research cooperation with the same department at the University of Edinburgh.

In the department of pathology and microbiology a joint research project is carried out with the University of Belfast. There are people in the department of animal husbandry, who carry out a joint project with the National Council of Research.

These are the joint research projects going on in the faculty. In a part of these activities we have research carried out by postgraduate students, who are registered for a Ph.D. degree. Their work pertains to problems in the Sudan. For any graduate student who comes here we choose a research project of use for the country.

The projects are designed in such a way that the post graduate committee approves of them so that the students can go on with them.

We have more than fifty postgraduate students in the faculty.

TN: Do you direct their studies into certain fields?

OA: A project of a student will only be acceptable if the supervisors approve of it. If no supervisors are available for a valuable project, the student will be sent abroad.

TN: Do the students select their own fields?

OA: Yes, with the help of their supervisors.

HT: How many go abroad and how many stay here for higher degrees?

OA: About 50/50.

HT: Do you want to bring about conditions which will enable all students to do their postgraduate work in this university?

OA: Yes. Most of the M.Sc. students are in fact already supervised here.

The research committee

IAO: What do you do if a staff member comes forward with a proposal to do research?

OA: We have a Central Research Committee for the University of Khartoum. This committee distributes funds to the faculties. The faculties have their own research boards which consist of the dean and the heads of departments in the faculty.

Every year we have meetings and we consider projects submitted to us. Then it will be considered how much time the research projects will take. Funds will be made available according to the faculty budget.

HT: Are you satisfied with the funds you get for research?

OA: Well, to some extent yes. Usually funds are available to purchase facilities which will be needed for research. But sometimes we have difficulties to acquire equipment which is very expensive.

HT: Do you get assistance from outside Sudan?

OA: Yes, we get assistance for the joint projects I mentioned before. We have a journal which is supported with British aid. But the aid is limited.

IAO: What criteria do you apply when you assess research projects submitted by members of staff?

OA: The faculty research board considers acceptance or refusal according to the significance of the projects which normally are of an applied nature. Then we consider how costly it is. If somebody comes with a project which costs more than a certain amount of money, we cannot finance it; but we do not refuse it, if we think that it is significant. We forward it to the Central Research Committee of the university. By and large the staff members do only propose research projects which they think have a chance to be accepted.

The University as a whole has a fund of say 100,000 Sudanese pounds. A member of the staff takes this into account when he submits a research proposal. This is the case both for the students and for the staff.

If a student does a piece of research which requires extensive field work and expensive motor transport, he will be advised not to pursue this project, because it cannot be funded.

There is a limit for Master's research. It should not cost more than 2,000 Sudanese pounds.

HT: I would like to raise a question about research which involves more than one faculty. Do you have any projects which are linked to other faculties? Do you have joint projects with the faculty of agriculture for instance?

OA: We have a joint project with the faculty of science. We want to study the anatomy and physiology of camels. They are desert animals which can stay without water for a long time.

HT: Do you have joint projects with the faculty of medicine?

OA: There is a field called zoonosis, that is diseases which are carried from animals to men. Some of our colleagues are working on a project within this area. There is a big common project about bilharzia.

IAO: To pursue the question about cooperation with other faculties, how are joint projects financed?

OA: If there is a proposal for a joint project in which two faculties are involved, it will go to the Central Research Committee of the university.

We have 8,000 Sudanese pounds per annum for research in our faculty. We normally give every department 1,000 pounds. In most cases research funds are not abundant. This is the same for both developed and developing countries. All we can do is to share what is available in a fair manner.

Research and social change

HT: I continue to ask you questions about links to other faculties. Do you have research links with social anthropology?

Do you have research connections with the centre for development studies?

AHO: We are very much interested in such cooperation in my department of animal husbandry.

We are very much interested in animal production under nomadic conditions. We would like to work with people in sociology and in social anthropology who know the habits of these people. They have studied them very well.

We would like very much to cooperate with them, but there are difficulties there. We have cooperated with them not in the form of joint projects but in the form of exchanging views and ideas with them in scientific meetings. We appreciate their work. They appreciate our work. We do not have a formal link with them which I think is very desirable.

IAO: Do you have cooperation in the form of teaching courses? Would this faculty welcome courses in social anthropology for students in the faculty?

AHO: I think it would be very relevant. It is up to the Senate to decide on such courses. Such courses would combine very well with the technical know-how that the students acquire in the courses we give to them. They would know how to handle these people.

HT: Do you train such experts in the faculty ?

AHO: Not in the faculty really. The government sends staff members to study this, but we are still insufficient in this respect.

HT: Do you have sufficient numbers of veterinarians attached to various regions in the country ?

OA: Yes, we do. We have no problems here. Perhaps professor Abdel Hamid will tell you about this.

AHO: There is something missing here. The veterinarians are really doing their job combating diseases, giving advice to those who come to them. But the farmers are ignorant. They need to be much better informed. It is one of the tasks of the Ministry of Agriculture to inform the farmers and animal breeders. We have animals in quantity but not in quality. The animal owners are just living their traditional lives. They are satisfied if the number of animals is growing even at the expense of their quality. The veterinarians want to change this, but they cannot do that entirely on their own. We need people who are specialists on social change.

IAO: Do you think that some course in arts subjects would be of use to your students?

AHO: I think that is desirable. We ought to work towards it. But it will take a lot of efforts to convince members of the Senate that it is desirable. We would have to put up a very strong case for it. C.P. Snow has written about this topic. People from the science subjects should know more about the humanities and vice versa. After all we need this as human beings.

Social anthropologists have for a long time carried out important research on nomadic tribes, their likes and dislikes, how they think and feel, how they approach things, how they make decisions, how they run their lives. Their results should be known to our students.

In the same way it would be of value to the social scientists to know about animal production, about nutrition and about agriculture. If veterinarians are ignorant about the findings of social anthropologists they are likely to make wrong decisions when they go into the field and try to help owners of livestock.

It should therefore be desirable that we make new courses available to our students. We already teach this but not in a professional way. We tell our students of animal production about the nomads, about their migrations and so on. If professionals tell the students about these matters, I am sure that our courses will be more interesting.

OA: Research as we do it here within our limited funds and facilities is only concerned with tropical diseases. But I remember a seminar that we had here three years ago about the settlement of nomads.

The animal owners are moving according to water supplies and the grazing areas. The government wants to know why these people are not settling down.

That was a very interesting seminar. People from the faculty of economics and social studies and the faculty of arts told us how strong the traditions and habits are of the nomads and how difficult it would be to change them. We arrived at the recommendation that these people should be provided with necessary services in accordance with their habits and conditions.

We should have elementary schools and teachers moving with them. We should have medical men and veterinary men moving with them. It would be a good thing to provide these services to the nomads.

Obstacles to research

TN : What are the main obstacles to research?

AHO: Money is one thing. Transport is another. Research work is delayed

because of the lack of transport. If somebody wants to do research in the field, he has to wait for his turn.

HT: Apart from money and transport, what other obstacles do you have?

AHO: We lack sophisticated equipment.

HT: Are the publishing facilities sufficient?

ADO: There is the Khartoum University Press. It was moved from one place to another. So it stopped functioning for one year.

HT: In other interviews some people complained that they had to wait a very long time to get something published. Are you favoured in comparison with other faculties when it comes to publications?

AHO: I don't think that we have problems with publications. We have two local journals in veterinary science. One is "The Sudan Journal for Veterinary Science" and another is "The Sudan Journal for Veterinary Research". We can therefore publish our materials in the local journals. In addition to what professor Osman said about money, I want to say that in the university most of the members of staff are overworked. For instance in our department there are only two staff members. Some of our colleagues have left. Only two staff members are teaching more than 40 students. They have hardly any time left for research. Another thing is that members of staff, who are coming back, need a long time to become adjusted.

It is not as in Europe. You make one or two phone calls. You get a house and you take a suitcase and tomorrow you are in full steam to do research. Here in the Sudan it takes us a long time to settle down and when we have settled down, it takes also a long time to identify research problems. These are problems different from those you have in Europe.

Another trouble is lack of team research. Most people prefer to work on their own. In Europe you just go to a research laboratory where joint projects are going on and you enter into one of them. You consult others. The equipment is already there and you can just go ahead. Here you have to start anew. People coming back here, have to spend a long time preparing for research and to try to get equipment and so on.

The brain drain problem

HT: Do you lose staff to Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries? Is that a problem for you?

AHO: It is a big problem. I think that we have to discourage people from going away. Nobody wants to set up decrees forbidding people to go

away. We should encourage newly graduated people to stay in the Sudan.

This is a great problem not only in the Sudan. There are similar problems in Somalia, in Pakistan, in

Well-trained people in developing countries are faced with many problems, which make many of them quit. You have to find a way to keep good scientists in the country. This boils down to money, but not only that. Even if there are research funds, you cannot always keep scientists in the country.

TN: How many professors are there in the University of Khartoum?

AHO: There are about 75 full professors.

TN: That gives you an indication of the exit. There are about 30 Sudanese in Riyadh who are full professors.

AHO: We face difficulties in the staffing position. According to the course-unit system every staff member will have to do more teaching and he should also have time for research. We need more staff members in order to apply the course-unit system. For the time being this is impossible, because we have a shortage of staff due to emigration.

Interdisciplinary activities

IAO: What courses do you think this faculty could offer to students in other faculties if you had enough staff?

OA: We are now teaching courses in the faculty of agriculture. We give short non-professional courses to graduates about animals.

AHO: The university will establish an institute for animal production. That institute is the best place for joint courses. It will be in charge of teaching animal production in the two faculties here in Shambat. The students in that institute will take courses in anatomy and physiology in this faculty and engineering in the faculty of engineering. This is an ideal set-up, where you can give joint courses and to create a new discipline.

As far as the course-unit system – as professor Osman mentioned – is concerned, it needs a larger staff than we have now. But I think that an alternative to the present system – an alternative which has been introduced in many European universities – is to break up a subject into blocks of two or three weeks. This will be almost like a course-unit system, and has the same advantages as that system. If we do this, staff will have more time for research. This type of block-system has further advantages. If there is a block-system in Juba, in Wad Medani and in Khartoum, then staff members can travel to say

Juba, teach there for three weeks and then come back. It will also be possible to invite a person from Europe to come here for a short while and teach our students.

Such a system is very flexible. It is almost like a course unit system, but it makes better use of time and staff.

AHO: The main disadvantage of our traditional system is that it is very unfair to our students. It is almost like going on a rail. Once a student has come to our faculty, he has very little choice of his destination.

The block-system would make it possible to change his direction at any time.

If he has no interest in, say, animal husbandry and has more interest in farm machinery or in medicine or in surgery, then he can follow his interests.

Research and the needs of the country

TN: Before you leave, is there anything else that you think is important that we have missed?

AHO: There are research needs of the country. There are research interests of the fellows who want to do research. Most people have to compromise on what they want to do. What are the urgent needs of the country? What funds are available? What can we do and what do we want to do? This is unsatisfactory. You can't do what you want to do. You don't have enough money to do it. Most staff members are in this predicament. This is a fact of life.

OA : You are working on a philosophy of development. Here in the Sudan as a developing country definitely the directions of research are quite different from what they are in a developed country. Research should be adapted to the new arrangements in the government to promote regionalism.

I attended a meeting in the National Council for Research about the use of technology and scientific findings. The question was raised, about what ought to be done in the rural areas. We thought that as different regions in the Sudan have different resources, the research which is going on should be regionalized. One should find out about the resources in various regions and how they should be utilized. We agriculturalists and veterinarians should spread ourselves everywhere. There are certain areas that have got rich animal resources like the Red Sea Hills and in particular the Western Sudan. The research in the Sudan should be directed towards the resources available in every region. The regions have to be developed in such a way—according

to the government policies – that the regions should be as independent as possible. This will help to make the country self-supporting. We thought that the government should give a free hand to the research workers to investigate and help the government of each region to find out what is best for it. There are difficulties here:

We have problems of financing.

We have problems of transport.

We have problems of staying in remote places with our families.

Scientists should be encouraged to stay and work in remote places.

TN : Are you talking about the idea of dividing the Sudan?

OA : It has already been divided.

TN : Does this mean that there is a Ministry of Agriculture in every region?

OA : Yes.

TN : How does this affect research in veterinary science?

OA : Depending on the results of pilot investigations we may establish research stations in places where there is a big demand for veterinary services.

**4. THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN AND ASIAN
STUDIES IN KHARTOUM**

4.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

In addition to the faculties, a number of research institutes with an interdisciplinary character have grown up in the University of Khartoum. The Institute of African and Asian Studies is one of those institutes. In 1964, the university established the Sudan Research Unit within the faculty of arts which was intended to be a centre for humanistic research on the Sudan. Around 1970, the need was felt to widen the scope of the Sudan Research Unit: the director of the Sudan Research Unit wanted to establish an African studies programme; and in view of Sudan's position as a link between the Arab world and the rest of Africa, the scope of the new institute was widened to include also Asian studies. At the same time, the ministry of foreign affairs needed an institute for training their personnel in contemporary affairs, especially in Africa and the Arab world. Through the joint efforts of the director of the Sudan Research Unit (professor Yusuf Fadl Hasan), Mohamed Omer Beshir (who was at that time employed by the ministry of foreign affairs and then by the university as head of the administration, principal), and the university organs, the Institute of African and Asian Studies was established in a very short time, and started its activities in 1972.¹

Mohamed Omer Beshir said that the ministry of foreign affairs needed a research arm.² In fact, the Institute of African and Asian Studies functions above all as the research arm for the faculty of arts in certain fields within the humanities . The institute is divided, like a little faculty, into three departments: a department of African and Asian studies, to which the two professors in the institute belong (Yusuf Fadl and Mohamed Omer Beshir); a department of folklore; and a department of Sudanese and African languages. The activities of the institute include courses on the diploma, M.A. and Ph. D. levels within the three departments; seminars and international conferences; the building up of a research library and documentation centre; and the publication of theses, books, papers and conference reports. The first international conference was organized in 1968 by the Sudan Research Unit and was entitled "Sudan in Africa". The second conference was held in 1970 under the title "Language and Literature in the Sudan". The third conference was held in 1977 : "The Central Bilad al Sudan: Tradition and Adaptation". In 1978, a conference of the institutes and centres of African studies in Africa was organized in Khartoum. All those conferences have been documented in book form.³ And in 1981, a "Folklore and National

Development Symposium" was held at the institute, again to be documented in book form.

One can discern at least two main forces behind the activities of the researchers in the Institute of African and Asian Studies in Khartoum. One is the ambition to build up Sudanese expertise in the field of Sudanese studies, including the Sudan's relations with neighbouring countries and cultures. "One of the difficulties of development is that you employ people to advise you as experts who don't really know", as Mohamed Omer Beshir put it.⁴ Expatriates are certainly needed in view of the enormous research areas which are waiting for exploration in the Sudan. The cultural diversity and richness of the country is staggering. There are about 135 native languages in the Sudan each with its own culture tied to it. "Say we have ten expatriates working on the Dinkas. We need a hundred persons to study the Dinkas, before we find out who the Dinkas really are" (Yusuf Fadl Hasan).⁵ But above all, there is a need for building up Sudanese expertise in such fields as linguistics and folklore. The language project in the Southern Sudan, which was mentioned earlier (section 1.3 above), is a good case to illustrate some of the problems involved. Only 2.5 % of the total budget for that American-financed project was reserved for training Sudanese to take part in the project, whereas 10% of the total budget was reserved for an evaluation study by American experts.⁶ Similarly, large sums of money tend to be spent on feasibility studies by foreign experts. "It is not developing the Sudanese. It is developing others. This is one of the areas that contributes to the distortion of development" (Mohamed Omer Beshir).⁷ On the other hand, there are obvious obstacles on the way, when it comes to research on languages and cultures in the Sudan. The Institute of African and Asian Studies is part of a national university, but it is placed in the Arab part of the country. When it comes to areas like linguistics, history and other cultural studies, research gets caught in the general tensions which are built in a pluralistic society like the Sudanese. The attitude of the folklorist Dr. Sayyid H. Hurreiz is very interesting in this connection. When the head of the department of Islamic Studies at the University of Khartoum, Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, asked him what he thought about the danger that folklore could be used to promote tribalism in the Sudan, Dr. Hurreiz's reply was: "Let everybody express his voice. When everybody does that. they are no longer afraid that they as a minority may be dominated by another culture. What is the best way of promoting national unity? I would say: Let everybody express what he thinks."⁸

The second main drive behind the activities of the Institute of African and Asian Studies is (I suggest) an awareness of the relevance of cultural studies for issues of development "It is only by discovering ourselves, by knowing

about ourselves, that we discover what the Sudan is" (Yusuf Fadl Hasan).⁹ In particular, linguistic research can help to provide a platform of knowledge for language policy in the Sudan. Most of the languages in the Sudan have barely been investigated at all. The ambitious Language Survey project within the institute aims in the first instance at mapping the spread of the various languages.¹⁰ If one wants to produce teaching and reading material in the local languages, some time-consuming research will be needed. And research in folklore has two obvious functions (to take one more example): in the first place, to record and preserve the cultural heritage in a changing society; in the second place, to help to base e.g. technological development on the existing knowledge and resources, a point which, has been stressed particularly by Dr. Hurreiz.¹¹ In the terminology of the first chapter of this book, there exists an enormous amount of knowledge by familiarity and experience, practical knowledge, which ought to be taken into account when planning for development. This would be one way of paying more than lip-service to the criteria of perceptiveness and sensitivity to the interests and needs of the people affected by development.¹²

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- (1) See sections 4.2 and 4.3 below, and the annual reports of the Institute of African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum.
- (2) Section 4.3 below.
- (3) Yusuf Fadl Hasan, ed., *Sudan in Africa*, Khartoum University Press 1971; Abdel Gadir Mahmud Abdallah, ed., *Studies in the Ancient Languages of the Sudan* (1974) and Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz & Herman Bell, eds., *Directions in Sudanese Linguistics and Folklore* (1975); Ahmed A. Nasr & Mahasin A. Hajj al Safi eds., *African Studies in Africa* (1981). For a complete list of publications by the Institute of African and Asian Studies up to 1981, see the Institute's *Prospectus* for 1981-1982, pp. 39-51.
- (4) See the section "Who are the Experts?" in 2.3 above.
- (5) Section 4.2 below.
- (6) Ushari A. Mahmud, Darius Jonathan Kenyi and Eluzai Moga, *Comments on the Vernacular Literacy Projects*, Khartoum - Juba 1980 (mimeo.), p. 2 ff. Cf. the comments on this project in sections 2.3, 4.2 and 4.5.
- (7) 2.3 above.
- (8) 4.4 below.
- (9) See 4.2 below.
- (10) The publications of the Sudan Language Survey include 29 reports on the Nuba Mountains, which is the best investigated area so far. E.g. the report *Southern Kordofan. The Nuba Mountains. Al-Goz. Selected Tables, No. 15* (1979), mimeo., 21 pp. Cf. also Bjorn Jernudd, *The Language Survey of Sudan. The First Phase : A Questionnaire Survey in Schools* (Ph.D. thesis, Umea 1979).
- (11) In the case-study "The Impact of Urbanization on Shukriyya life and Folk Poetry" (in Richard Dorson, ed., *Folklore in the Modern World*, pp. 77-86). Dr. Hurreiz found that "the implementation of a development scheme of mechanized agriculture dependent on Western technology and associated with a high degree of urbanization not known before in that area (which was basically nomadic), produced some initial negative responses that could have been foreseen if the sources of folklore were tapped" (to quote from another paper by Sayyid H. Hurreiz, "Folklore and National Development", presented at the Folklore and National Development Symposium, Khartoum 2-5 February 1981). Cf. the interview in section 4.4. below.
- (12) On practical knowledge and the perceptiveness and sensitivity criteria, see section 1.1 and 1.2 above.

4.2. YUSUF FADL HASAN (INTERVIEW)

After graduating from the University of Khartoum in 1956, Yusuf Fadl Hasan worked for some time in the ministry of local government. He took a course for a higher examination, then became a teaching assistant in the department of history at the University of Khartoum, and went straight away to England, where he got an honours degree in history. He then returned to a lectureship in history at the University of Khartoum. After some years he continued his studies in the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. He completed his Ph.D. in 1964 (*The Arabs and the Eastern Sudan from the seventh to the early sixteenth century*). He became director of the Sudan Research Unit in 1964 and director of the Institute of African and Asian Studies, when the institute was established in 1972. In 1983, he was appointed deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Khartoum. In 1984 he succeeded the late professor El Haj as vice-chancellor of the Islamic University in Omdurman.

His publications include *The Arabs and the Sudan*, Khartoum University Press, 1973; *Some Aspects of the Writing of History in Modern Sudan* (Institute of African and Asian Studies, Occasional Paper No. 12, 1978); an introduction to the Islamic states in the Sudan with the title *Muqaddima fi-Ta'rikh al-Mamalik al-Islamiyya fi'l-Sudan al-Sharqi*; etc. He is also the editor of Muhammad al-Nur b. Dayf Allah, *Kitab al-Tabaqat fi Khusus al-Awliya' wa'l Salihin wa'l 'Ulama wa l'Shuara fi al-Sudan* (2nd ed., Khartoum University Press, 1974); etc. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer (IAO), Tore Nordenstam (TN) and Hakan Tornebohm (HT). The interview was made in November 1981.

The establishment of the institute.

YFH: I came back to Khartoum in 1964 and continued to lecture in the department of history. Soon, however, I was appointed director of the Sudan Research Unit as successor to professor Sanderson, when he left the Sudan. The Sudan Research Unit started after lengthy discussions in 1961-62 in the faculty board of arts in which professor Abdallah El-Tayib and professor Hakan Tornebohm took part. I was then a secretary of the faculty board of arts.

It was quite a job. When professor Abdallah El-Tayib became dean, he had so many brilliant ideas and visions.

It happened many times that we differed, professor Abdallah and myself, on what shape the Sudan Research Unit should have.

TN : Why did the Sudan Research Unit change into the Institute of African and Asian Studies?

YFH: To begin with I was the only staff member. Then we got some teaching assistants, Mustafa Ibrahim Taha, who made a survey of the Shaigiya, and Ismail Abdallah, who did some work on Khashm el-Ghirba. That is how we started. We got junior staff members appointed for two or three years to do research for a Master's degree. Some came from the department of history and some from the department of Arabic. I felt that this was not good enough. If we did not have a solid staff establishment, we could not really get started. I thought of establishing an African studies programme. This happened in 1966, when I contacted the Rockefeller Foundation to give me a grant to visit all African studies programmes in Africa, in USA and UK

In the light of my experience I outlined a programme. When we started, we decided that we should concentrate on postgraduate work.

We appointed new staff members. Now we have ten members of staff and about the same number in the making. One of them is in China. We are expanding.

At the beginning we had an option whether we should belong to the faculty of arts or whether we should become an independent institute. I thought that it would be better for us to become independent. We were the first institute with this status in the university.

At first we did not have departments. We were one organic unit. Then I felt that we ought to have departments. This was six years ago. We now have three departments:

The department of Sudanese and African languages; the department of folklore (I think there is no similar department in Africa or in the Arab world); the department of Asian and African Studies, which gives courses in history, politics, geography, economics and a bit of social anthropology all combined in an interdisciplinary approach.

All our students should know a third language, African or Asian. When we started, we were teaching them Amharic or Hebrew. Then we added Swahili and Hausa. We offer diplomas in these languages too. We also offer postgraduate diploma courses in the Nubian languages, but so far we have not had any students.

We have a distinguished expert on some of these languages. Professor Herman Bell is the best expert on Nubian languages in the world. We also have plans to introduce diploma courses in the Dinka language. The Dinkas constitute the largest ethnic group in the country. There are about two million Dinkas. This will be the first Sudanese language that we teach. We expect that this language will attract

more students than the Nubian, which is not so interesting from a practical point of view.

TN: Do you have Southerners on the staff?

YFH: Yes, we do, and more and more are becoming interested in joining us. We have a geographer. We have a political scientist. We have someone doing oral traditions. The head of the department of Sudanese and African languages comes from Bahr Al Ghazal.

TN: When the institute started professor Mohammed Omer Beshir was principal. How did you interact with him in setting up the institute ?

YFH: Mohammed Omer Beshir was always very interested in the Sudan Research Unit. He attended our weekly seminars.

We have had regular seminars every Wednesday ever since we started the Sudan Research Unit, except for the last year, because of transport difficulties.

Later in 1966, when we discussed the question of promoting the Sudan Research Unit into an Institute of African and Asian Studies, Mohammed was the principal of the university and chairman of the committee that implemented the transfer from the Sudan Research Unit into the Institute of African and Asian Studies. He was very helpful.

IAO: Do you think this was a natural development of the Sudan Research Unit?

The scope of the institute

YFH: We were primarily interested in African studies from the beginning. I thought that the African study programme by itself would not get at the complexity of interests that we have here in the Sudan. Sudan is a bridge between the Arab and the African worlds. I began to think about an Institute of Sudanese Studies, but this label is not a catching one. Then we shifted to African and Arab Studies, but I was not happy about this label either. Why should we emphasize the idea of an "Arab" Africa. The former term has both a geographical and an ethnic connotation. The word "Asia" came to our rescue. It does not involve us in having too much to do with the term "Arab" from an ethnic point of view. We were also playing about with the idea of "Middle Eastern Studies". This came from the department of politics. I did not like the word "Middle Eastern". I don't like to be middle to anybody. The word "Middle East" was coined during World War I by an American writer.

To get away from these restrictions we have now someone who is interested in China to show that we do not concentrate on the Arab world.

In a nutshell: We are primarily interested in the Sudan.

All our students take courses on the Sudan. Then we move to our neighbouring countries in Africa and then to the Middle East and study such things as liberation movements, communities, languages, etc.

We do not go to Senegal. We know more about Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Chad, Egypt and Libya. From there we go to the Middle Eastern countries and concentrate on contemporary issues, such as the struggles between the Palestinians, the Israelis and the neighbouring Arab states. The Gulf is very prominent in our studies.

So at last we have African and Asian Studies.

IAO : Do you intend to change the name once more?

YFH: Why do you ask this question?

IAO : I wonder if you might be interested in covering more states.

YFH: Someone suggested: "Call it the Third World Institute." But I think it is too vast an area. Why should we concern ourselves with Latin America when our resources are limited?

There have been controversies between professor Abdallah El Tayib and myself concerning the name around 1974 and the organization of the institute.

At one time he thought that we should have five departments. We wanted only three. Abdallah said: "Let us have five departments. One of those should be a department of art". I wanted art to be taken care of as part of material cultures.

Abdallah was also interested in music. I said that we were already interested in ethnomusic, not in music as such. Abdallah wanted us to take up journalism. I thought that would take us away from our main target. Abdallah had right from the beginning a profusion of ideas.

Five years later, when we came to the teaching of African languages here, Abdallah was not happy about its location in the Sudan Research Unit. He wanted to have it in the faculty of arts. I thought that theoretical linguistics should go to the faculty of arts. When it comes to the study of national languages in the country, though, it is our business.

Indigenization

TN : What is the importance of the work you do here in this institute for the development of the Sudan?

YFH: I think we are the only organization within the university doing some solid work in our field for furthering what is called the process of

indigenizing the university. In that sense we are a product of the independent University of Khartoum and of the independent Sudan. What we teach, we teach from a Sudanese point of view. The folklore we study has all to do with the Sudanese nationality, the Sudanese character. It is only by discovering ourselves, by knowing about ourselves, that we discover what the Sudan is. In that sense I think it is very important that we direct our attention to our cultures, our heritage, our languages. In that respect I don't think much has been done outside. By our work we have generated many ideas for others to follow up.

The Department of Culture was established in the Ministry of Culture and Information. Before it was called "The Ministry of Information". After the Institute of African and Asian Studies was established, where we had folklore, etc, this government department was established. The National Council for Literature and Arts came after we were established.

Most of my colleagues here sit in committees outside the university. So if you take the University of Khartoum as having developed forward, our institute will be one of the areas where we have done most work. I think that we are ahead of many. I will not say that we have covered all that we wanted. There remains a lot to be done. The Sudan is a big living museum.

I never thought that we should be shy to have expatriates to come here to do research in any field. In certain countries they have their own policies, whereby expatriates are not allowed to do research. I hold a different view. Say we have ten expatriates, working on the Dinkas.

We need a hundred persons to study the Dinkas, before we find out who the Dinkas really are.

We have a number of people coming from other universities to do Ph.D.degrees with us. They join us as associates. They have to pay 100 dollars as fees. They use our name. They are part of the institute.

The Sudan Language Survey

TN : I am very interested to hear the story of the Sudan Language Survey.

YFH: The Language Survey was started at the time of the Sudan Research Unit. We initiated it and invited Dr. Herman Bell who did his Ph.D. on the Nubian languages. He came here as a visiting professor on a Smithsonian Institute scholarship. He spent a year here and we later launched the project.

My idea was that we should study and describe all Sudanese languages here. We have a gentlemen's agreement with the department of Arabic not to touch the classical Arabic. But they do not want to have anything to do with colloquial Arabic. They think that is below their dignity. So we took care of that too, as well as the African languages in the Sudan.

We record whatever we can of folktales, proverbs, legends, stories and what-not in colloquial Arabic. We do that in the department of folklore. We have around 3,000 tapes with such materials.

We thought that we should do the same for other languages in the Sudan. We began by collecting manuscripts which have been written by district commissioners. We have something like thirty mimeographed monographs, not something spectacular. The programme was to collect, describe and identify the existing languages of the Sudan. We got some money from the Ford Foundation. Herman Bell, Sayyid Hurreiz, Yusuf Khalifa Abu Bakr worked on the project. Abu Bakr is one of the leading Sudanese in the field. He is not very much known yet. He has written on the Southern languages using the Arabic script. Unfortunately many of the people working on the project are no longer with us.

TN: Has Ushari Mahmud left?

YFH: Yes, but he offers some help too. The survey concentrated on the Nuba Mountains. We have got something like 29 monographs.

This was done by Dr. Yusuf Khalifa Abu Bakr, Dr. Bell and Mohammed Yusuf, who is a Nubian.

Now we have moved to Ingessana. We have made four surveys, one in Sinkat, one in Khashm el-Ghirba, one in Khartoum and one in Juba and Malakal. This was done by Dr. Ushari Mahmud.

TN : Bjorn Jernudd also took part in the Language Survey, didn't he?

YFH: He helped us setting up the questionnaire. He was for a time an adviser to the Ford Foundation on this matter.

We were disappointed when he left, because we felt that he took all our material and got his Ph.D. on it, without due acknowledgement to the Institute of African and Asian studies and those who collaborated with him.

IAO : What were the aims of the Language Survey?

YFH: We thought that it should have a practical value for the educationalists when they plan what languages to use for teaching the country. There is a big debate on what languages should be used in schools. There

was already a decision taken that five languages should be used, then nine, and that they should be taught in Roman letters.

We think that it would be easy to use Arabic letters instead. It should be easier for a child to learn his own language in Arabic letters, and then switch to Arabic at the second stage. The idea is that we should teach the children in local languages at the first stage, and then Arabic should be used as language of instruction. English would come at the third stage.

When we have got all this material we are in a position to advise the Ministry of Education on the advisability of whatever decision they take. What we do in the language survey is very much worthwhile both from an academic and a practical point of view. A professor from Iraq together with a Sudanese professor made a word count of the type of Arabic used in the Sudanese elementary schools. This is published in a study that the Sudan Research Unit sponsored. He came to the interesting conclusion that the Arabic used in the schoolbooks have very little to do with the realities of life. It is out of date. It is archaic. It is not at all of practical use. We aim at being useful to the Ministry of Education when they make their policies.

IAO : Have you got good relations with them?

YFH: Yes indeed. When we received money from the Ford Foundation, we got it through the Ministry of Education. All avenues to the ministry are open to us. We have very good personal contacts with them. They are represented on our committees.

Language policy and linguistic research in the South

YFH: We have contacted the department of statistics, and suggested that they should have a question on language in the population census. They said: "It is very costly." We went to their adviser, an eminent Egyptian scholar, and asked him if they could insert this question: "What language do you use?" They refused it, perhaps for political reasons.

TN : Language is a very tricky political issue.

YFH: That is why we were so interested to have the question about language inserted in the questionnaire.

TN : What is your personal view on language policies in the Sudan?

YFH: At the Addis Ababa conference the statement was made that English should be the official language in the Southern Sudan. Arabic is in fact the official language in the Southern Sudan and English is a working language.

When it came to the implementation of language policies in the Southern Sudan, the minister of education there went his own way. He taught in the vernacular and suspended teaching of Arabic up to a certain level. This could not have been imposed upon him by the treaty itself. We went there three times. I went there myself with a Ford Foundation representative. We discussed it with them. The minister of education of the Southern region came to talk to me about this. We wanted to do research there ourselves, that is conduct our language survey. We have not done much so far.

So it takes some time to create the right atmosphere.

HT : I would like to ask you about your relations with Juba. We have interviewed professor Abu Zayd, vice-chancellor of the Juba University. He said that he would be very interested to collect folklore material in the South. Have you got any connections with these endeavours? Have they started this work in Juba?

YFH: I do not know for sure whether they have started it.

Before the University of Juba started we advised the University of Khartoum and some people there to start a language centre in Wau, which should collect language and folklore material. It did not materialize. It was taken over by the creation of the University in Juba. One of our teaching assistants is now in the university of Juba working on African languages. He has done work on the Bari language. Ushari, who is with us in the department of Sudanese and African languages, is a liaison between them and us. Ushari knows a lot about the language situation in the South. He did his Ph.D. in that field. He is also very interested in what is called Juba Arabic.

The teaching assistant comes from the Zande group. Through them we are able to do this work, but we do not have a formal arrangement with them. I think that it is better, for the time being, to do what we do in an informal way.

Research imperialism?

TN : I have the impression that the difficult relations between the North and the South also come into your field of activities. What the Summer School of Linguistics is doing in the South, couldn't that be done as well through your institute?

YFH: Exactly, we wrote many memoranda about the whole thing as you can imagine. They did not go far enough. In the interest of the bigger issues, research should perhaps come later. The budget of the Summer School of Linguistics goes into millions of dollars. They do language surveys

and reports on languages, all in Roman letters. We wrote a lengthy memorandum about it. We know all the details about their budget, what they are working on, etc. Every time when they come to Khartoum, they visit us.

Their work has been initiated from outside. I knew the director before. He came to us here once or twice. We made an arrangement for cooperation: book exchange, joint projects and so on, but in the end they got money from USAID and they did it alone.

TN : Would you say that this is a kind of research imperialism?

YFH: If you want to say so, yes.

TN : Are there other examples of the same kind, or is this unique?

YFH: This goes deep. This is only one case. This Summer Institute of Linguistics is primarily concerned with the translation of the Bible. We, however, are not biased to this or that religious point of view. They spend one year here to learn Arabic, before they do their work. Some of them take a Master's degree from us. Now there are two of them doing Arabic here.

I don't like the word "imperialism", but there is a cultural superiority feeling, that they are better equipped than we are. Our institute has grown to the extent that we can handle our own research problems. Any research programme within our realm we can do very efficiently. When we started to have international conferences, inviting scholars, we wanted to demonstrate to everybody that Sudanese scholars are very capable of dealing with their own problems and in a manner complying with excellent standards. We have had conferences on "The Sudan in Africa", on "Language and Literature in the Sudan", and on so. We now have "The Nile Valley" conference. We had one on "Afro-Arab Relations". We had one on "Folklore and Development". When Dr. Kamal Shaddad organized the conference on "Philosophy, Religion and Development" and when the department of Arabic wanted to do something on Arabicization, they all fell within this context. I wanted to demonstrate that we are mature enough to handle any research problem in our own field. Perhaps we have not the same facilities, like computers, etc., as the rich countries, but we do quite well with the resources we have.

TN : Do you have a shortage of staff?

YFH: We have, but we hope that through cooperation with similar organizations, we may be able to surmount the difficulties. We sat down with the representatives of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and said: "These are your questionnaires. Let us join hands. We

insert the questions we want, and we come and sit with you to do it.”
They said OK, but nothing came out of it.

Relations with the Development Studies and Research Centre

HT: How is your institute related to the Centre of Developmental Studies?
Do you have research cooperation with them?

YFH: So far, no. But I think we ought to. The new director, Dr. Abdal Ghaffar, has always helped us in his personal capacity as a researcher. It is not a formal link but a personal one. Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar comes to our conferences. He teaches for us. He supervises some of our students. He helps us in examinations.

HT: Has the situation improved since he became a director?

YFH: It was not bad before.

TN: Why do you have two institutes?

YFH: The emphasis is different. We are primarily interested in culture, politics, languages and folklore. Our culture is influenced by other cultures and civilizations. In order to understand these influences we have to pay attention to geographical, economic and political factors. We cater for them. We want to go to the roots. The other institute, though it is developmental, is not really concerned with the roots. Their concerns have to do with the fact that they are based on the faculty of Economics and Social Studies.

HT: You have a department here, where you also teach politics?

YFH: It is the department of African and Asian Studies.

HT: It is the same name as the institute. Is this only a teaching department or do you do research on African politics?

YFH: There are researchers in the department. Mohammed Omer Beshir is interested in African liberation movements. We have somebody who is interested in East Africa. The next step is to engage in area studies, Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Sudan, Uganda... Abu Bakr takes care of Kenya and Tanzania. We want the institute to work in area studies. Unless we have experts on areas we will not be able to do it. We have a new lecturer, Brown, who will take West Africa. We have an expert on Somalia. Take East Africa as a community, as a cultural unity, as a geographical unity, all that and the language aspect. When the students graduate, they will have a good grasp of that region.

We are not concerned with what happens in Europe or in US, except in so far as it will affect Africa or Asia. We have two people. One is being trained in the Gulf States and the other one is specialized in South-east Asia, India, Pakistan, Malaysia....

The department of politics does not take that line. They take a general framework of politics.

Research conditions in the University of Khartoum

IAO: You have been a university professor for some time. You have been in the faculty of arts and now in this institute. You have come from history to this institute. We now have these two institutes [IAAS and CDS]. Would you say that the university ought to be reorganized?

YFH: I would not dismantle it, but I would try to improve it. I don't believe in dismantling something and then create something entirely new. There is an inherent tradition, things which have been inherited, which people don't like to be changed easily. This is my experience with the course unit system. In the faculty of arts we worked so hard to create this system, at some time under pressure. It was the university policy that it should be created.

I don't think that social anthropology fits in the faculty of economics and social studies. It fits in the faculty of arts. It was for personal reasons, quarrels and so on, that it was established in the "wrong" faculty.

Geography may be better placed outside the faculty of arts. The university should not develop by having more and more centres and institutes, like say an institute for Islamic studies, like an institute for psychology, but we should have better facilities to do interdisciplinary work. That would be the right thing to do.

I want more postgraduate work to be done. I want the staff to be more involved in research rather than in teaching.

It is only on paper that we have eight hours per week, there are a lot of meetings to attend. At times I never have time to see my postgraduate students.

Staff members should never have many students to supervise. Those who are able to supervise and who are interested in doing so are not many. With the small salaries we get, many of us are attracted to go outside.

You should give them all the facilities to do their work: office facilities, library facilities, transport facilities and all that. This applies to postgraduate students also. We need to have much better facilities for publications. We should go in more for regional universities. This would be a good thing from an environmental and a developmental point of view.

I don't say we should have replicas of the Institute of African and

Asian studies wherever you go. We should have small universities like that in Juba and that in Gezira. We should have one in the north, one in the west and one in the east, that sort of thing.

The University of Khartoum should play a leading role in higher education, experimenting on new things, new areas of study, etc. The new universities should have policies altogether different from the University of Khartoum. Not everything is as bright as one would think. Many things could be better in our university. If we take the example of the Institute of African and Asian Studies. It has been here for nearly ten years. It is a success. This is an example of experimenting on the idea of institute and schools. Let us try to go this way for a while.

“There is a bias against the humanities and the social sciences”

IAO: Are the natural sciences and the social sciences in the proper place in our university?

YFH: There is a bias in this university and in the country against the social sciences. People speak about the surplus of lawyers. In the administration many people think that all we need in the faculty of arts and in the humanities at large are blackboards. We have passed the stage of needing blackboards only. Even lecturing is now becoming obsolete in certain fields. One of our troubles is that we have great difficulties in getting books. There is a large time gap, sometimes five years, before we get our books. Sometimes it takes a whole year, before we know that a book exists, unless a friend tells you that a book exists or sends you a copy free. I get all my books from friends who are interested in the Sudan.

It is because my field is so narrowly specialized—those who are interested in the history of the Sudan know what I write—that I get books from colleagues. If someone is writing a thesis, it may happen that somebody else has worked on the same topic and published his findings before this becomes known here.

There is a bias against the humanists. They are not developmental enough to be given extra funds. They don't realize how much we need books.

Take psychology. We have been struggling for a long time to get a laboratory. Had we not established close ties with a university like Bergen, had we not had contacts with professor Nordenstam and professor Tornebohm, I am sure that we would have been worse off. It is only by using our personal contacts that we can help ourselves.

Unless the country and the university take serious decisions about this, I am sure that we will go down the drain. I don't think the staff is a problem for us. They are very good, but they can get frustrated. We did not get any books for the library of the institute for the past two years. I have stopped ordering books for myself. It is not worth the trouble. It takes three years or more before they arrive.

One of the big failures here in the University of Khartoum is that we don't fully appreciate the need for having regular seminars and discussion groups. When we have conferences, the people are very eager to attend discussions. They have their chance to express their ideas. It is here that you make the real staff members. You do not make them in the lecture rooms. We should have more conferences and dialogues.

4.3. MOHAMED OMER BESHIR (INTERVIEW)

Mohamed Omer Beshir is a professorial fellow in the Institute of African and Asian Studies in the University of Khartoum. After a career in the university administration, he turned to research. (For details about his career, see section 2.3 above.) "It is important (he said) that people move from one job to another. I think that a university administrator after some years does not contribute much. He should then leave his position to other people who still have an enthusiasm for the job." "I like to organize research, to organize the work of my students. I am learning a lot from them really." The following interview (which has been abridged) took place in January 1980. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

The idea of an institute of African and Asian studies

MOB: The institute idea arose, I think, before 1963 when the Sudan Research Unit was established.

HT: There was one year of discussion before it was established. It was established the year after I left in 1963.

MOB: I am not very sure about the date. Anyhow even when it was established, some people did suggest at the time in the council of the university: "Why don't we have an institute of Sudanese studies, of African studies?" There was a vague idea, which crystallized after 1969/1970, that it ought to play a significant role in African affairs.

I was working in the ministry at that time; I was head of the department of African Affairs. I was responsible for promoting contacts between the Sudan and other African countries. It became clear to me how much the ministry needs supporting research on Africa and the Middle East. So I felt a need that the relations of these countries to Africa should be developed.

The ministry needed an arm of research outside the ministry. We needed an institute for training personnel in contemporary African politics. We needed to expose the public to African and Asian issues. It could not be done within any political organization. It could only be done within the University of Khartoum, which contained the only organization for higher education and research in the Sudan. So the idea was very much canvassed within the ministry of foreign affairs, and within government circles.

The government and the ministry of foreign affairs suggested to the university that we need training in African and Asian issues.

At this time I became the principal of the university. There was full understanding between myself and the vice-chancellor. We agreed to form a committee to discuss the issue of the development of the Sudan Research Unit into an independent institute dealing not only with Sudanese, but also with Middle Eastern and African issues. It took only three months between the time the idea was put before this committee to the time when the senate approved it. I had no experience before of any idea in any university taking such a short period in being implemented. The normal time is about three years between the introduction of a new idea and its implementation. The reason for the short period was that the climate of opinion outside the university favoured the idea. It was regarded as highly credible. The leadership of the university was also convinced. The people in the working committee were all enthusiastic about the idea and so there were no bureaucratic hurdles of any kind. It caught the imagination of people outside and inside the university. This is how the institute was established.

The interesting thing about this unique situation was that the climate was favourable, the demand was there, the resources were there. This was the response of the university to something outside it.

I used my position as principal to promote the idea. I was attending all meetings. People came to me and asked: "Do we have the money?" I said. "Yes, we have the money." There is only one other example of a similar idea taking a very short time to be implemented: the establishment of a school of dentistry, which took place at about the same time.

It is true that the idea of establishing that school was in the air for a considerable time. But it was first when the vice-chancellor, the deputy vice-chancellor and myself became committed to that idea that things started to move.

I said: "Let us have an institute for Afro-Asian studies and a school of dentistry. " The three of us brought this school into existence.

Teaching and research in the institute

TN: What fields of research do you concentrate on within the institute?

MOB: The teaching component is important. One of the main objectives is to train people on contemporary problems in Africa and in Asia. The core of teaching consists of courses on the Sudan, on Africa, on Asia and in particular on The Middle East. We concentrate on contemporary issues. There is no detailed syllabus. It is up to the members of staff to construct their courses as they like.

TN: Have you presented the policy of the institute in a document?

MOB: Yes, we have a booklet. It contains our statutes, which are not quite identical with what is implemented.

We are exposing our students to contemporary issues in the Third World. Our students have very different backgrounds. We don't require that our students have any degree in the social sciences. We think that having any university degree and having a motivation is enough. For example one of our best students has a degree in pharmacy. All our students are highly motivated.

TN: Do you give diplomas?

MOB: Yes, we give diplomas and we give Master's degrees.

TN: Do you have any Ph.D. students?

MOB: Yes we have two or three such students.

TN: How is this institute related to the Centre of Development Studies?

MOB: That institute concentrates mostly on economics. They offer in-service training to people in the government. They try to promote research in the areas of economics and social sciences. The centre is the research arm of the faculty of economics and social studies.

We on the other hand concentrate on area-studies.

TN: You are concerned with development also ?

MOB: Yes, we are. We are concerned with development of people in our training programmes.

TN: You said that the centre of development studies concentrates on economics and social studies. Do you also engage in such studies ?

MOB: Yes, we do. We are interested in the nationalist movement in the Sudan and the Southern problems.

Problems

TN: You mentioned that you are going to review the policy of the institute shortly.

MOB: Well, we would like to sit down and ask: "What are the problems of research? Do we need to have projects? Where are we going from here?" This is just an internal exercise, you know. We don't want to feel that as a postgraduate institute we are only involved in teaching and that research is neglected. We are not very happy with our situation. We are satisfied with the work of our students, but we still feel that we face two problems: the infrastructure and the personnel. If we are going to do all the research we want to do, we need more personnel.

The research of the students is complementary to that of the staff. We don't have building facilities. You can see how cramped we are.

Library facilities are insufficient. We need better publication facilities. This is what I call the infrastructure.

TN: Why do you have publication difficulties? You have got a university press.

MOB: We don't have the money to buy photocopying machines. The demand on the university press is very large. There are a lot of research reports lying about without being printed in a reasonable time. This applies not only to us. It applies to all departments and institutes in the university. I have noticed in the last years that many people who come from outside, either research students registered outside, or people who come from international organizations to do consultative jobs, or from the government, in many cases cover areas which have already been covered here in the Sudan. Many people do research which has already been done here or which could be done much better here.

TN: Do you have a national register of research?

MOB: No, we don't. And we lack adequate facilities for publishing research reports. People are sitting in Cambridge, in Oxford or in Columbia. They are registered for a degree. They are working on problems on the Sudan, the Gezira, the Southern regions, etc. I cannot see the value of it to the Sudan. It can only have a value to the person who is doing it. They cannot add much to what we ourselves are able to do here.

Research permits for foreigners

TN: Can you tell us about research permits for foreigners. I believe that foreigners need research permits to carry out research in the Sudan.

MOB: Yes, they do. If they want to come to our institute to do research, they can become associates.

But to become an associate, a person needs credentials, recommendations and we should approve his subject. People who want to do research in the Sudan attach themselves to the institute or to the departments in the university. They may go to the archives. If they want to do fieldwork, they associate themselves with somebody. It is rather a non-rigid system.

TN: A young social anthropologist from Norway has tried to get a research permit for quite some time. He has got it now.

MOB: The mistake they make is to take many things for granted. This is a problem we have with foreign research workers. Someone wants to work on the Southern problem. He takes much too much for granted. Someone wants to go to Kadugli. He wants everything to be arranged for him in three days. Not even in England can it be done in three

days. I have to bring my passport. I have to get a recommendation from my embassy, etc.

We rarely get to know about the results of foreigners working on Sudanese problems.

TN: Has there been any formulated policy regarding foreign research?

MOB: It depends on their personal contacts in the first place.

HT: Whom should they approach?

MOB: If they want to do research for example on the history of Sudan or the economics of Sudan they should try to find out which people, which departments and which institutes are interested. They must establish contacts first. This is hard work and takes a lot of time. They have to be patient.

4.4. AHMAD A. NASR AND SAYYID H. HURREIZ (INTERVIEW)

Ahmad A. Nasr (born in 1938) has been a lecturer in the department of Folklore in the Institute of African and Asian Studies since 1977. He got a B.A. Honours in philosophy at the University of Khartoum in 1964. After teaching for a year in a secondary school, he returned for higher studies at the University of Khartoum. He got his M.A. in philosophy in 1969 on the thesis "Ethical Ideology in the Nuba Mountains". From 1972 to 1977 he studied at the University of Wisconsin, where he received his Ph.D. in 1977 on a dissertation on Hausa oral literature. He was appointed head of the department of folklore in 1980, and has been acting director of the Institute of African and Asian Studies for some periods. From October 1982 to July 1983 he carried out research at King Abd el Aziz University in Jedda, and established a department of cultural studies within the Hajj Research Centre.

He is a member of many committees and boards (the National Council for Music, the National Atlas Project, chairman of Sudan Folklore Society, member of the University senate, etc.). He has published a number of books and papers, e.g. *Maiurno of the Blue Nile: A Study of an Oral Biography* (Khartoum University Press 1980); *Two Ancient Egyptian Narratives: Structure and Theme* (in Arabic, Khartoum 1981); *African Studies in Africa* (co-editor, Khartoum 1981); "Popular Islam in al-Tayyib Salih", *Journal of Arabic Literature*, Vol. XI (Leyden 1980); etc. Ahmad A. Nasr is the editor of *Bulletin of Sudanese Studies*. He has also published short stories in Arabic ("Two drops of tears", *Woman's Voice*, No. 115, 1968; etc.).

Sayyid H. Hurreiz (born in 1940) got a B.A. Honours from the University of Khartoum in 1964 in English and Arabic. He did an M.A. in folklore at the University of Leeds in 1966 (thesis: "Birth, initiation, marriage and death customs and beliefs in the Central Sudan"). He took a diploma in applied linguistics in Edinburgh in 1967. He was appointed lecturer in the University of Khartoum in 1967. He worked for a Ph.D. in folklore at the University of Indiana from 1969 to 1972. The title of his thesis was: "The Ja'aliyin Folktales, An Interplay with Arabic, Islamic and African Elements". He has published a number of papers on folklore and sociolinguistics, and is co-editor of the volume *Directions in Sudanese Linguistics and Folklore* (Khartoum University Press, 1975). In 1984, he was appointed professor and director of the Institute of African and Asian Studies.

The interview took place on December 2, 1981. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Folklore and development

TN : What made you choose folklore?

SH : When I graduated in 1964, many interesting things took place in the country, the October revolution for instance. There are many different cultures in the Sudan. Professor Murray in the department of English encouraged me a lot. I took part in a field excursion to the Nuba Mountains, organized by the English department. This was my first experience with fieldwork and I acquired a taste for it. I became very interested in collecting oral data. When I came back, professor Murray saw this interest and he told me that the faculty of arts was just about to start the Sudan Research Unit, and that if I were interested he would help me. He helped to find a place in Leeds and there I continued with folklore. There was a great arousal of interests in different cultures around 1964, when the Sudan Research Unit started. So I moved into this orbit.

TN : Why did this interest peak in the mid-sixties?

SH : The October revolution immediately triggered national interests. The revolution itself was very much concerned with issues on the conflict between the South and the North. People used to talk for the first time about the cultural premises of the Southern Sudan. This became a national issue. People in the university, people in the streets, laymen were interested everywhere. I wanted to be a part of this. Your work "Sudanese ethics" also played a role.

HT : We have heard from the new director of the Centre of Development Studies, Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar, that they are interested to have contacts with folkloristics. We heard from him that folkloristics are interesting in the context of development. Have you got any links with them? You would surely be welcomed by them.

SH: My feeling is unfortunately that we do not have any strong links with the centre. The previous director of the centre, Dr. Rasheed, who is an economist, did think that folklore does not have much to do with development, which is mainly an economic struggle. Now that the centre has an anthropologist as its director, there is definitely more room for folklore in developmental studies.

AN: The centre held a conference on formal education and development in 1978. They didn't think of inviting us to that conference.

HT: Dr. Rasheed was not invited to the conference on Philosophy, Religion and Development, organized in 1977 by Dr. Kamal Shaddad, who was then head of the department of Philosophy. He was a bit cross about that.

SH: To come back to the question about the role of folklore in development, many people think that folklore is only concerned with customs, superstitions and such things. But recently the idea of applied folklore has arisen. One will cultivate this component in development.

There is a lot of talk at the present time about traditional technology. We have a broad approach to folklore. We do not confine ourselves to verbal and oral folklore only. We are also concerned with material aspects of culture, such as traditional technology. The people who hold these views are in a better position to relate their work to development. It is not a luxury only. I am very enthusiastic about these ideas. For us the premise of development is man, not man as manpower, but man as the goal of development and at the same time the means for fulfilling this development.

TN: How do you distinguish yourself from social anthropologists?

SH: There is a lot that we have in common when we talk about cultural premises of development and when we talk about man as the main factor of development. The difference between us is that we focus on different aspects. We pay more attention to oral literature, to proverbs, to folktales, mythology and also to the material culture which is not that interesting to the social anthropologists. (By the way, we have close contacts with social anthropologists. We have courses in our department which are taught by social anthropologists. Before Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar became director of the Centre of Developmental Studies, he used to supervise some of our dissertations.) I have taken the Nubians in the Northern Sudan as an example.

I tried to show that they have a ready-made traditional technology. They have knowledge to implement this technology. When they grow up, they are taught what to plant, when to plant it, what soil should be used, how long it takes, how to irrigate and how much water should be used. They have very accurate knowledge how to operate the irrigation system. The Nubians have their technology, and their knowledge of how to use it. On the basis of this they will become good farmers. The challenge now is that they may have to give up the technologies that they master very well and take over another technology that they cannot control. I draw the conclusion that there is more room for folklore in this broad sense.

Folklore and national unity

IAO: Some people think that folklore can be used to promote tribalism in the Sudan as against unity and nation building. What do you think about that?

SH: What I feel is this. If you ask how I will try to promote national unity as a folklorist, I say: Let everybody express his voice. When everybody does that, they are no longer afraid that they as a minority may be dominated by another culture. This idea of a united nation is not strangling our cultures. We should say what we wish within the context of such unity. What is the best way to promote national unity?

I would say: Let everybody express what he thinks.

The question of language differences is important. When I was a student, I found that some students with another mother-tongue used Arabic when they talked to each other. But when a Northerner came, they immediately switched over to use their own language. They would not confess that they knew Arabic. Later on, after the Addis Ababa agreement, when there was more freedom to express one's own culture and what one would like to be, many people have noticed that there is more interest in Arabic than before. Even in the South, Arabic is used in political discussions.

The more people are allowed to express themselves in their own language and in their own culture, the more they are inclined to accept that they belong to the same nation.

TN: I have noticed a tendency to concentrate on questions which have to do with unity and diversification. This is particularly noticeable in the Sudan language survey. The main emphasis is on the use of Arabic. I have not noticed any genuine interest in the other languages in themselves. I am not sure whether this is symptomatic of the Institute of the African and Asian Studies.

SH: The main aim of the language survey is national integration, but there is room for vernaculars. In a survey in a particular region in the Western Sudan, they showed that in the classroom situation, the students who did not speak Arabic were at a disadvantage compared to those who spoke Arabic. So what I want to say is: The authorities have noticed that children who do not speak Arabic are at a disadvantage in their school-work. They can do this: They can introduce vernaculars as languages of instruction in the schools and after that switch over to Arabic at a later stage. That is what happens in the South.

TN: What about your own department? Do you put emphasis on the spread of Arabic culture and Islam?

SH: No, we are collecting vernacular folklore from different parts of the Sudan.

TN: Which languages have you covered?

SH: Hausa, Bari, Shilluk, Nuba, Beja We have covered quite a large number.

What we do for example in the case of the Beja is to invite university students in their third or fourth year and teachers from the same region. They come and we give them instructions on how to do field-work and we help them to present the material. Much of our work has been done by such people.

TN: Do your M.A. students work in their home regions?

AN: Most of our students prefer to work on a topic rather than on a region. So far most regional work has been done in Arabic-speaking regions, but now we become more and more interested in other regions where Arabic is not spoken. If we find a student from the Nuba Mountains, we encourage him to work in that area.

TN: Do you have foreign students?

SH: We had some from Nigeria. Now we have one from Tanzania and one from Ethiopia.

TH: How many students do you have altogether?

SH: Two Ph.D. students, two M.A students and four general students.

TN: What do the Ph.D students do?

AN: Now they are taking courses. After this they will work on their dissertations, one on a Tanzanian topic and the other on Ingessana.

SH: There are regions which we have not studied much. We try to get students and teachers from such areas to do field-work there. It is our policy to try to cover areas which we have not studied before.

Every year about March, before the university holiday, we put notices on the notice boards that we want students to come to us. We employ about twenty students, preferably from areas which we do not know much about.

TN: How is your research work supported financially?

SH: We get research equipment from various sources. UNESCO and a German foundation send us tape recorders and some money.

HT: Do you carry out comparative folkloristics?

SH: Not much, in the beginning we were mainly concerned with rescue operations. We wanted to collect material from as many parts as possible for retrieval.

Later on we did concern ourselves with comparisons based on primary materials.

IAO: Have you attempted to make your work known to the general public?

SH: Radio Omdurman has organized programmes on folklore and we have

been invited to participate. This was four years ago. Every staff member was responsible for a bit of the programme.

Tribalism and national unity

- HT: We talked to Ahmed Al-Shari and he said that the Sudanese are very much aware of their tribes and that tribalism is very much alive even among the educated. What do you think about that statement?
- SH: To a great extent I would agree. There was a very interesting discussion in the current Nile Valley conference on this issue. I don't agree one hundred per cent though. The tribe has to some extent been superseded by another loyalty. You find someone whose whole identification is with one ethnic group and another person with another ethnic group. But later on you may find that both of them tend to identify themselves with the same religious order which thus tends to supersede the ethnic identifications.
- TN: So religious orders are more important than tribes?
- SH: In some cases, yes, but one cannot generalize. So what I will say is that I do agree with Dr. Al-Shari. but I will add that tribalism can be superseded and that this has already occurred in some cases.
- HT: I would like to go on with my line of questioning. There is a Sudanese nation. How much loyalty do people feel towards this nation? How far do the Dinkas for example regard themselves Sudanese? What about the feelings of national identity in various ethnic groups in the Sudan?
- SH: That is a very interesting question. I think that people identify themselves with certain groups. Not enough work has been done. The Dinka working in the Khashm el-Ghirba project, who have moved from from the Southern Sudan, find themselves in a multi-ethnic community with the Beja, with the Shukriya, with the Nubians, etc. I don't think they are the same as the Dinkas who have not moved. But I think that it is very true that ethnic identification is an important part of life. In the Khashm el-Ghirba project in the beginning everybody complained, especially the Northern tribes, about tensions between the tribes. But now, about twenty years later, all these groups are living together with little conflicts among them, and a lot of intermixture between them.
- HT: I would like to ask you a question about goals. You said in the beginning that you do not want to destroy diversity in order to achieve unity. But is there not a risk that you might destroy unity by promoting diversity? It would seem that these are conflicting ambitions.
- SH: I believe that people who are allowed to express their own culture

automatically will feel that they are not isolated. They will feel that they will not lose what they have when they relate themselves to other groups. They acquire confidence and reassurance. I would say: My first priority is national unity but I will work towards national unity *through* cultural diversity. I know that this can be dangerous. This will need a very wise policy.

I will not go along and urge that the Dinkas should be educated in their own language all the way. I will stop Dinka education before the level of secondary school. Let them express their own cultural traditions in their own language as much as they wish. But problems of national planning for education and languages cannot be rational without attempts at unification.

TN : What do you think about using local languages in education?

SH : I think that the Dinka for example should start their education in their own language, as is the case now; but if they do not learn Arabic well enough, they will not have the same chances and opportunities as the people who know Arabic. I think that they should be taught in their own language up to say the intermediate level. After that they have to merge into the national system of education.

If one organizes education in this way, I believe that one may avoid that minorities feel threatened.

AN : I believe that folkloristic studies may lead to the realization that there are a number of common elements in different cultures, which may be of help to promote common understanding.

HT : I like the idea of common understanding. But how can you promote this in practice? How can you make the Dinka understand say the Nuer better by means of applied folkloristics?

AN : I certainly think that folkloristics can have such effects.

SH : I agree with Ahmed. When we study the folklore of different ethnic groups, we find a lot of common elements. Such findings will undoubtedly promote common understanding.

Development from below

TN : Planning in the Sudan usually starts from above. How do you feel about that?

SH : I definitely think that development should start from below. This is the only way which will help people to improve their lot. We would have to educate the policy makers to realize that.

TN : Do you think that there is a place for planning from above?

SH : Yes I do. But the policy makers should try to find out what the

conditions are here and there and everywhere, and they should start from there.

We organize conferences in this institute, and invite policy makers from various universities to take part in them, In this way we hope to influence them. But I am not too optimistic about the effects. It will take a long time to change their minds.

4.5. USHARI AHMAD MAHMUD (INTERVIEW)

After the usual school education (four years in a primary school, four years years in a junior secondary school, and four years in an upper secondary school), Ushari Ahmad Mahmud (born in 1948) took an honours degree in French and English at the University of Khartoum in 1972. After some months as an interpreter for the television in the capital, he was appointed to a teaching assistantship in the Institute of African and Asian Studies. He worked as an assistant in the Language Survey of the Sudan, one of the institute's projects, for some time, and then took a Master's degree at the University of Khartoum. He continued his studies at the University of Texas and at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., where he got his Ph.D. in 1979 on a thesis on the linguistic structure of Arabic in the Southern Sudan. This was actually one of the five chapters which Ushari Mahmud submitted as a dissertation. The rest of the thesis, which was an attempt to analyse the spread of Arabic in the South of the Sudan from a Marxist point of view, was rejected. (Language does not change "merely by contact or just by voluntary wish, but because of structural changes within modes of production".) In the 1981-82 prospectus from the Institute of African and Asian Studies, Ushari Mahmud was listed as acting head of the department of Sudanese and African Languages. He is now head of the Research Division of the Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language (ALECSO) and editor of *Arab Journal of Language Studies*. His publications include the book *Arabic in the Southern Sudan. History and Spread of a Pidgin Creole* (168 pages. Khartoum 1983).

The interview took place in 1980. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm. The interview has been abridged considerably.

The Sudan Language Survey

TN: You mentioned the Sudan Language Survey before – what is that?

UM: The Language Survey of the Sudan – well, this is a project by the Institute of African and Asian Studies to map and to describe language usage in the Sudan. It used to be founded by the Ford Foundation for some time. Now it is supported by the university. It is a university project.

TN: How many people are working on that project?

UM: I would say very few people. At this point, there is only myself, basically, working on it. But from 1972 up to the present, several people worked on it. There was Bjorn Jernudd, a Swede. There was Dr.

Herman Bell from America, a linguist. And several students who just did four country areas.

TN: How far have you got in this project up to now ?

UM: So far we have covered the Nuba Mountains area, and studies were done in New Halfa, in the Ingessana field, and in the Southern Sudan, mainly in Bahr al-Ghazal Province and in Juba town. So it is more or less scattered. The only area that was subjected to a concentrated study was the Nuba Mountains. So that is where we are.

TN: Could we ask you how you do it? If we take the Nuba Mountains, how do you go about it?

UM: The way it was done was actually just going to different communities and selecting a sample from there. A random sample, basically. And then interviewing the subjects about their language and about their language use. The people who actually did the interviewing were teachers in the Nuba Mountains.

TN: What did you try to find out?

UM: What we tried to find out was what languages are spoken, and indirectly how far Arabic is spoken in these areas. I say indirectly because basically the objective is to map the language knowledge and language distribution as such. It is very hard to consider these languages without considering the Arabic language at the same time, because of the relationship that exists between the two.

TN: Are most people bilingual?

UM: I would say yes. Most of the people in the Sudan are bilingual in Arabic and another tribal language.

TN: How would you justify spending money on this type of research?

UM: Oh, I don't think it can be justified. I think it's very hard to justify work without any immediate relevance.

Linguistics and social inequality

TN: What type of research would you like to see instead?

UM: I would like to see one which is immediately linked to practical problems, certainly, but also research that would enrich our knowledge about language as such, research which is also theoretically sound, that is theoretically important and significant and not only descriptive. I would stress the word "immediate" here.

TN : What would you like to do yourself, as a linguist, which could be of immediate practical value?

UM : Well, language is immediately linked with social inequalities. Linguistic abilities can bar certain groups of people from access to education and access to jobs for example, I would want to see such problems addressed.

TN : In the hope of changing . . .

UM : In the hope of changing the social inequalities that are related or stem from or are affected by several factors, of which language is one.

TN : How do you think that linguistic analysis can help to change existing inequalities?

UM : Linguistic analysis can help to change inequalities by focussing on on the way people speak and how they are judged or evaluated according to the way they speak, for example. In Arabia, for example, the way people speak the Arabic language really affects one a great deal.

TN : How do you derive policies, practical policies from the analysis?

UM : For one thing, by analysing these differences and directing attention to them, by making people more conscious and sensitive to the existence of such differences within one class, within the group or in the town, or village, and within the country as a whole. But the implementation of the recommendations depends on the existing political structure itself. Even if you come with the nicest recommendations, they might not be taken by policy makers. One shouldn't have any illusion that policy makers would be interested in your work.

TN : What do you do then?

UM : You continue to work. And you are not only a linguist, you are also a politically active person. You have to see to it that ultimately a more just society evolves than the one you have now.

TN : Now, in the Northern part of the country, Arabic is the teaching language in all primary schools. Do you think this is a severe hindrance to the children who have other mother tongues?

UM : Oh yes, certainly it is. There are socially and economically and educationally backward regions in which languages other than Arabic are dominant. Just look at the periphery of the Sudan.

TN : Arabic might help to give these groups access to the common culture of the country.

UM : Yes, that is true, but I don't know what the worth of such a common culture is in concrete terms. It is all well and good to call for a common culture, but once you see how that works to the disadvantage of certain groups. then I don't think it holds.

TN : So you think it is important that everybody should be taught in his own vernacular?

UM: No, I am not saying that really. I am saying that theoretically every child can be taught in any language. But the Arabic educational material is not prepared in such a way that would make it usable by groups that don't speak Arabic. You already have a disadvantage here. An

easy solution would be for every child to be taught in his language, at least for some years. But you could just as well do it in Arabic, provided you get much more funds for teacher training and book preparation for example. But really language is not a problem on its own for these groups. I mean, they are poor, they are neglected, exploited, and uneducated on top of that. So if you just educate them, that is not going to help them very much. To some extent, yes.

Language policy in the Sudan

TN: I am wondering what contribution linguistic research could make to language problems in the Sudan. You have this difference between language policies in the North and in the South, which I assume is not based on any kind of research, but on political decisions.

UM: On political decisions, yes. Linguistics can help with analyses of the languages in the Sudan. For example, to write books in them and develop more efficient orthography systems – that is an area where linguistics can really help. Linguistic research can also help in the educational process itself by studying difficulties of processing language in reading and in writing, for example. I think you need some linguistic research to handle these technical problems of helping children to read better, or to write better.

TN: I am wondering whether research could help to question the wisdom of political decisions which have been taken. Or do you think that is an area which is too sensitive, which you think one should avoid?

UM: No, in fact, I don't think there is any area which is too sensitive for research, as a matter of fact. You can use linguistic research to question some of the policies taken. Take for example the process of the spread of Arabic in the Southern Sudan. You can project that if this process goes on, the vernaculars will come to an end. Then probably it will stem from your own research that this is the language which should be used, I mean the language which is used by the majority of the people. Southern Arabic is spoken by more people than any other language in the South.

TN: But speaking a language is not merely mastering a set of technicalities. It is not merely learning a vocabulary, a syntax, and so on. It is also the carrier of a cultural tradition.

UM: This has always been an argument against Arabic. But I don't think it holds, when you subject it to evidence. People who lose their language and adopt another language do not lose a culture. And culture itself evolves with the evolution of a language, the way I see it. The new

language really becomes the receptacle for traditions and cultures. Folktales are also told in the Arabic language, jokes are made in Arabic, songs are in Arabic; Arabic is actually a creative medium.

TN: Also in the South?

UM: In the South, yes.

TN: Wouldn't this mean that the indigenous cultures in the South would just be swallowed by this overwhelming cultural tradition which is represented by the Arabic language?

UM: I don't really see that possibility that the cultures of the people would be overwhelmed. You have to see all kinds of things to safeguard against being overwhelmed. It is overwhelming now in fact, in an unplanned fashion. That is, you have the language spreading, and Arab modes of dress, even behaviour, certain values, etc. Just introducing it in schools, few of these schools as there are, I don't think that is doing much. I don't think that the educational system plays a big role in the spread of Arabic at all.

TN: Is there such a thing as language planning in the Sudan?

UM: No. I wouldn't say that there is any conscious language planning. Decisions are made, but -

TN: How would one set about to build up language planning in a way which could be justified rationally, academically?

UM: Well, I think by developing a cadre of trained people in linguistics, I mean, in language planning, in sociolinguistics, etc. That is, a group of people who can participate in discourse about language on a scientific basis and who could intervene in language policies or in the language planning process. I don't think we have that now. I mean, that cadre is really not there. It is basically scattered people.

But I think we should really address the chances of these rational programmes ever being implemented. And there you immediately come to the politics of it all, which I think many researchers would tend to ignore or not talk about in explicit terms.

TN : Would you draw the conclusion from this that researchers have to be politically active?

UM : Oh, yes, definitely. Yes, definitely.

TN : Are you politically active?

UM : Yes, I am politically active. In my classroom, I am politically active, and with the people I meet, and in what I write. I think this is really a major thing, because over and over, you see these nice programmes and that this is what we should do. We have talked so much about what we should do and ignored who will do it.

Ideology and praxis

TN : Do you think there is anything in the papers we have given you which is missing ? Is there something which you think we should have taken up which we haven't?

UM : Yes : How do you go about validating the statements by the people who you have interviewed? I think I see a gap between what they say and what they are doing. I mean, seeing what is actually being done in the institutions they are heading, for example. And also, cornering them to say exactly what they mean. What you have is people who are actually partisans of different paradigms all talking in the same language. I mean, they represent different schools, but they are actually talking the language of a group that they do not belong to.

**5. THE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND RESEARCH
CENTRE IN KHARTOUM**

5.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

The Development Studies and Research Centre was created in 1976 "as a training, teaching, research and consultation unit within the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies" at the University of Khartoum.¹ In the prospectus of the centre, the aims of the new institute were spelled out as follows:

"The University's contribution to over-all national development has always been central to its role as a leading national institution... it has been increasingly recognized that the University's efforts in this direction should be rationalized and further intensified. This has meant, in particular, a closer association between the University and the on-going development programmes. The "Development Studies and Research Centre" could become an effective vehicle for the achievement of this desirable goal. The aim of the DSRC is to offer a mission-oriented programme of training, research, publications and consultation in the field of development studies."²

During the first year, the task was to build up a framework by way of staff, library and publication facilities, etc. It was "essentially a promotional year" to quote the first annual report from the centre.³ A diploma course in development studies was established after that, and a number of plans were made for research projects in cooperation with such organizations and institutions as UNICEF (who wanted a study of the "problems and needs of children in the Sudan"), FAO (a project on "population and rural development in the Sudan"), the Harvard Institute for International Development, and the British Council.

The centre is intended to perform inter-faculty functions, but it was set up as a unit within the faculty of economic and social studies. The background for the establishment of the centre also includes such aspects as the difficulties of conducting work of an interdisciplinary nature in a tightly compartmentalized faculty structure, a complaint which we have heard also from other faculties, and the theoretical orientation of the teaching and research activities in the faculty of economic and social studies.⁴ The first director of the centre, Dr. Sadig Rasheed, was an economist, and the emphasis of the activities has throughout been on socio-economic aspects of development. The three-semester diploma course in development studies given by the centre includes compulsory courses on "Development Planning and Social Change" and "Statistics and Computer Science". The publications of the centre include some evaluations of the development plans of the Sudan but

also studies by social anthropologists on themes like the New Halfa project and the role of small centres in urbanisation and exploitation.⁵ The first director stressed the importance of interdisciplinary work on development and felt that there was a need for a new kind of social science in the interests of the people. "I think there is nothing such as an accepted concept of development", he said, "about which we can say: This is the right concept which we are trying to enforce, and this is the position of these people vis à vis these kinds of development. One has to take into account that even these people are quite rational about what they think about development and what immediately affects their livelihoods."⁶

The fundamental respect for the views and wishes of the people affected by development is a thread which goes through our talks on development and research in the Sudan. The international slogans, which we reviewed earlier,⁷ and the search for new strategies of development in the interests of the people concerned in such international organizations as the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and UNESCO, would seem to go in the same direction as widespread attitudes in the Sudan. The strong emphasis on moral notions such as dignity, honour, self-respect and respect for others, irrespective of rank and social status, in Sudanese ethics does indeed provide what I should like to call anchoring points for attempts to work out new strategies in the field of development and research.⁸

The second director of the centre for development studies at the University of Khartoum, Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar, whom we interviewed a couple of years later, is a social anthropologist by training. Like his predecessor, he stressed the importance of interdisciplinary work, and at the time of the interview he had just finished a project of this kind on the Jongley Canal Scheme. In contrast to the traditional social-anthropological concept of "participant observation", Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar proposes a practice of "participant intervention": "It is not enough just to collect data . . . we should try to do something for the local people by means of our research".⁹ In the case just referred to, the results must be said to be rather spectacular: as a result of the investigations of the interdisciplinary team, a decision was made to change the route of the canal considerably in the interests of the local population.

According to the statutes, the centre should also act as a consultancy agency for the public sector. This is an aspect of the centre's functions which was stressed particularly by the new director. The background for this is the disappointing experience with foreign consultancy firms in the post-independence period. The feasibility studies carried out by foreign experts tend to be considerably more expensive than locally produced studies, and often they are severely hampered by the foreign experts' lack of knowledge of the Sudan-

ese scene : “It happens very often that the authors spend no more than about two weeks gathering empirical materials. This is not enough to understand the Sudanese situation. As a consequence their reports are not useful for implementation.”¹⁰ Many grand proposals have fallen flat on the ground for such reasons.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the new director of the centre of development studies, like his colleague Mohamed Omer Beshir in the twin institute of African and Asian studies, puts a special emphasis on the building up of Sudanese competence in the consultancy field.¹¹

NOTES

- (1) Statute No. 41 made by the Council of the University of Khartoum, quoted in the prospectus of the centre (mimeo., 7 pages, s.d.).
- (2) *Op. cit.*, p.1.
- (3) Development Studies and Research Centre, Faculty of Economic and Social Studies, University of Khartoum, *Annual Report September 1976 - October 1977, Proposed Activities 1977/78* (mimeo., 19 pages, 1977).
- (4) Cf. section 5.2 below. Similar views have been expressed e.g. by Mohamed Omer Beshir (cf. section 2.3) and Ibrahim Hassan (section 9.2.)
- (5) Examples from the monograph series of the centre : Sayed Nimeri, *The Five Year Plan (1970-75); Some Aspects of the Plan and its Performance (1977)*; B.A. Azhar, *Development Budgeting in the Sudan (1977)*; Gunnar M. Sorbo, *How to Survive Development : The Story of New Halfa (1977)*; Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed and Mustafa Abdel Rahman, *Urbanisation and Exploitation : The Role of Small Centres (1979)*; Ellen Gruenbaum, *Patterns of Family Living : A Case Study of Two Villages on the Rahad River (1979)*.
- (6) Sadig Rasheed, section 5.2 below.
- (7) In section 1.2 above.
- (8) Cf. Tore Nordenstam. *Sudanese Ethics* (The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies/ Almqvist & Wiksell, Uppsala 1968). In a forthcoming paper (to be published in a volume on human rights edited by Bernt Hagtvedt at the Christian Michelsen Institute in Bergen), I discuss the parallel problem of anchoring concepts and practices of human rights in existing ethics and cultures.
- (9) See section 5.3 below. Similar attitudes are expressed by Hashim Habiballa in section 6.5. Cf. also 1.3 *supra*.
- (10) Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar in section 5.3 below.
- (11) See the section "who are the experts?" in the interview with professor Mohamed Omer Beshir, section 2.3 above.

5.2. SADIG RASHEED (INTERVIEW)

Sadig Rasheed received his B.Sc. Econ. from the University of Khartoum in 1965, and his Ph. D. (Berlin) in 1974. He was the first head of the Development Studies and Research Centre when the interview took place in 1979. He then left the Sudan to become head of the United Nations institute for social conditions and environment in Libya. He is now employed by the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa.

The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Some questions concerning development

HT : What we are here for is to gather information about and find out what opinions prominent Sudanese hold about research policies in the Sudan. We are interested in the question of the role which research is playing in developments in this country, and how researchers look on processes of development and the role which the universities are playing in this field and particularly the role that the Development Studies and Research Centre is playing.

SR : I think these are fundamental questions which are of great interest to Africa in general and to the Sudan in particular. It is high time that people should stop and look hard at the role of the universities and the role of research centres; if we need new forms of higher educational institutions and new forms of directions of research and higher education, the role of higher education in the development of social sciences, and the need for inter- and multidisciplinary studies involving social and other sciences.

In collaboration with UNESCO we are actually now starting a research project on the impact of research on development. It is a sort of global research programme that UNESCO is going to undertake and we have agreed to participate in this.

The idea of a centre for development studies

HT : I would like to ask you about the history of this centre.

SR : It is a very young body. It was established only in October 1976.

HT : How did it start?

SR : It started as the result of a growing concern of members of the faculty of economic and social studies about the contribution of the faculty to the policies of development and in particular to the on-going process of development. We felt that the faculty in the past has been mainly interested in disciplinary sort of studies. We have rather tight com-

partments, we have had curriculum-oriented research that was very much geared more or less to theoretical aspects rather than to practical aspects. Although there has been quite a number of good contributions to problems of development and participation in developments and so on and so forth, this was more or less on an individual basis and individual initiatives. So the need was felt that we should somehow institutionalize the links to practice by creating a full-time body which will act as an effective link between the faculty and the university at large, on the one hand, and these problems of development and on-going development efforts on the other hand. We felt that if we wanted to do something like this, then certain conditions should exist.

First of all this centre should be interested in the whole issue of development in an interdisciplinary way. That means that we needed a forum, we needed a delivery mechanism, which will cut across these compartments, tight compartments.

Secondly, we needed a body that is flexible enough to interact with the policy makers, whatever that means and so on and so forth, that will influence them in their activities.

A third requirement is that we needed a flexible enough structure, that would concentrate on problem-oriented and practical-oriented types of activities, whether in training or research or in consultation, etc., etc. Again, this came as a part of a long time awareness that it is important now that universities in Africa in general and in the Sudan in particular should re-examine their position and look at their contribution to society, societal needs and developmental needs in particular. So this move within the faculty met equally innovative thinking on the part of the top hierarchy of the university, the vice-chancellor and others. So the whole idea materialized. A very interesting history in this is that after we came up with this idea of a centre, a working committee of the senate suggested that we should try to change it into an institute of development studies. That was actually the suggestion of the vice-chancellor that it should be an all-university centre rather than a centre within the faculty of economic and social studies. Surprising to you as it may be, I was against this idea, because I saw that this is the best way to start, because the potentials of the faculty of economic and social studies are really great. If we create it in this way there is nothing which prevents us to cooperate with other faculties in the university. Our practice has indeed been very fruitful. A good deal of cooperation has taken place. Actually a number of us are not only

interdisciplinary but multidisciplinary as well. We have people from other faculties participating in our research activities. Five deans and representatives from the faculties of agriculture, medicine and so on are sitting on our board.

An interdisciplinary approach to development

HT: We would like to know some particulars about your centre, how many people are working in it and what they are working on.

SR: Our centre is rather unique in the sense that on the one hand it is a part of the faculty of economic and social studies, and it is supposed to mobilize whatever resources exist in the faculty of economic and social studies and put them in the service of development efforts, if we put it that way. So by definition every staff member of the faculty of economic and social studies is our staff member. That means that we are not interested in deliberately creating a new sort of hierarchy within the university or within the faculty, unless it is necessary. According to our statute we may tap resources within the university at large and even outside the university. At the same time, we are very much interested in building a core, I would not call it staff, but a core consisting both of administrators and other collaborators such as research officers, such as publications officers, such as registrars, as well as the staff members, who will supplement specializations or who will bring new types of fields to already existing fields.

We are trying now to build a capacity of areas, where people are not narrowly specialized but will have a sort of interdisciplinary orientation towards problems of development. An example of this: We took a chap from the faculty of agriculture who had a B.Sc. degree in agricultural economics. We sent him to Bergen. He took a diploma in development sociology and now we have sent him off to the United States, to do a Ph. D. in agricultural policies with emphasis on rural developments. This is Mustafa. Salah, for example, he is a social anthropologist. Now he is going into the field of development anthropology. I took a chap who is an econometrician from the department of economics, we sent him to Holland to do his M.Sc. on regional development planning and then we will ask him to do a Ph.D. in the area of rural development, as part of a programme aiming at building a long-term capability of the centre in this area of regional development and planning. I say this just to emphasize how we try to meet the need for interdisciplinary research. We will build this type of capability in the centre and these people will again be available for teaching

purposes outside the centre in the faculty. This means that we have a small outfit here in terms of the immediate, narrower domain, consisting of the director of the research and publications officers, of a qualified documentist, of a registrar, of five teaching assistants and a number of other supporting staff members. We mobilize people as the need might arise for a particular training and/or research project. We are going to introduce a diploma, a master's programme of regional development and planning with the help of the Institute of Social Studies. They have agreed that one man will be available to help in teaching them.

Victims of development ?

- HT:** Could I ask you a very general question? Do you think there are any victims of development? Are some people adversely affected by developments? What I have in mind is that people in the villages might become rather confused by events going on in their lives. They may have problems of adjusting themselves to the new things. It is an issue about modernization and traditionalism.
- SR:** Possibly, could be in certain aspects. There are those who have been bypassed by developments and there are those who can't see eye to eye with the kind of developments that are taking place. There could be instances of particular impacts of development on particular groups in particular situations that are harmful.
- HT:** What could one do about it? Is it a question of educating these people to accept unavoidable drawbacks in processes which are judged to be beneficial from many other points of view, but perhaps not immediately for them?
- SR:** You are raising a very important question of the whole purpose and strategy of development. The question of what is beneficial is a very philosophical one. Beneficial to whom and from the point of view of whom and in what context and so on. I mean it would be perhaps too general if one should stop just to theorize about this and to make general conclusions. One has to take into account that even these people are quite rational about what they think about development and what immediately affects their livelihoods. I think there is nothing such as an accepted concept of development about which we can say: "This is the right concept, which we are trying to enforce, and this is the position of these people vis à vis these kinds of development. If they comply, they are good people; if they do not, that means that their resistance is unnecessary. Then they should be educated to accept." I would not

put myself on record for trying to find this kind of situation, and then from there I try to find a solution of the problem of how these people or the resistances of these people to this kind of particular development can be changed, and so on and so forth.

One must look at particular types of development policies and strategies and at particular kinds of resistances and at the whole impact of these development processes on these people. It would be very unscientific on my part to try to make any comments without looking at particular situations. On the whole there might definitely be adverse effects of particular policies on particular groups of people in particular situations. Not all the effects are adverse but certain spills-over and certain long-term effects might be negative in some aspects. Certain situations might not work out as previously conceived, etc., etc.

“Development in the interest of the people”

TN: Most plans are the results of the work of experts. I believe that people who are going to be affected by them are very rarely consulted in advance.

SR: Yes, this is the whole philosophy behind the new thinking about the process of development. We call it “from the top down”. This is part of the very hard question about the development for whom and how to develop and how to plan for development. I think now we could say there is a consensus among a substantial part of academicians and social scientists in the Third World, the progressive ones at least, that you need a new kind of development in the interest of the people. It is very difficult to come out with a sort of overall general theory on that. It has different labels. Some people call it the integrated world development. Some people call it rural development. Some other people call it the liaison of human beings. In spite of all these kinds of labels there is a general agreement that the objective is clear that you are looking for a development that would increase the future self-reliance of these people, based on maximum participation not only in the sharing of the benefits but also in the decision-making process itself. These people have the right to participate in the decisions and in executing and implementing them and in sharing the benefits of them. This is a reason why we need another kind of social science, a kind of research which will benefit this group and which will act as a countervailing power. It is not sufficient just to talk about development. Basically and inherently, whether it is on the lower level or the national level, it is a problem of economic and of political power. I mean why did the

trickle-down not reach these people. It is because certain policies take place. It is because there are certain power structures. It is because there are certain political structures and so on and so forth. So the whole concept is definitely wide open. Our conference last year was a path-breaking conference. The participants accepted at least a general diagnosis of the problem, recognized it, and now something has to be done about it. We are starting a whole process of new thinking among African social scientists. They have to pursue a new kind of social science research and social theorizing, that will be of interest to the immediate needs.

TN: Well, this is indeed a universal problem. Participation is just as scanty in Europe and USA.

SR: But unfortunately our awareness has been awakened just recently.

TN: Yes, we have the same problem in Scandinavia of course. The people who are effected by developments are not consulted in any efficient way. Formally yes, by elected representatives, but in practice they are not consulted.

SR: This is indeed a problem.

TN: It is a very difficult task to activate people.

SR: Then again you are talking about another practical problem. Even if we prescribe recipes for this participation, how do we actually implement it, and how do we actually mobilize these people? This is the whole concept of participation, how can you do it, how do you link up to the local political and administrative bodies, and how do you link up the whole process to the central authorities and so on and so forth? This is going to be a long and painful process.

TN: Have you worked out any ideas how to set about it?

SR: Well, for example, number ten in our monograph series is going to be on this aspect of participation and decentralization of rural developments and on the experience of the local governments following particular decrees that took place in Sudan and so on. I think this is a subject of a long-term research looking to what is happening historically, and what can be done, We are working now on a project in association with The United Nations University—it will take about three to four years—to look at the whole process of rural developments in five African countries in retrospect, look at what kind of results prescribed strategies have had, and from there to recommend appropriate strategies of development for those five countries. We are looking for recommendable technological policies that will lead to appropriate outcomes and so on and so forth. So I mean there are so many avenues

to this problem, and we are working in different avenues locally and regionally and sub-regionally and so on. One cannot have ready answers to these questions except concerning the process of research looking very carefully at strategies and the relationship of these strategies to the actual reality. So what I want to say is that these issues are our main preoccupation here in the centre in collaboration with the Council of Developmental Economic and Social Research in Africa which has been a co-sponsor of our conference.

5.3. ABDAL-GHAFFAR MUHAMMAD AHMAD (INTERVIEW)

Abdal-Ghaffar Muhammad Ahmad (born in 1945) received his honours and M.Sc. degrees in social anthropology from the University of Khartoum in 1968 and 1970. His master's thesis is entitled "The political system of the Rufaa el Hoi". He took his doctoral degree at the University of Bergen in 1973. His dissertation has been published by Khartoum University Press: *Shaykhs and Followers. Political Struggle in the Rufa'a al-Hoi Nazirate in the Sudan* (1974) His other publications include *Economic Anthropology and Problems of Development in the Sudan* (in Arabic, published by Khartoum University Press) and a number of papers. He has been a lecturer in the department of anthropology and sociology at the University of Khartoum. In 1976-77, he was on secondment to the Economic and Social Research Council as director of that subcouncil of the National Council for Research. In 1978, he was seconded to the University of Juba to help with the establishment of the new university. When we interviewed him in 1981, he had succeeded Dr. Rasheed as director of the Development Studies and Research Centre in the University of Khartoum. He is now (1985) on secondment to King Saud University in Riyadh and has been succeeded by Dr. Khalid Osman as director of the Development Studies and Research Centre.

The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Consultancy work

TN: What are the tasks of this institute?

AG: It has three major tasks:

- (1) teaching and offering postgraduate diplomas and master's degrees in regional development and planning,
- (2) publishing research done by members of the staff, in the university in general and in particular the staff in the faculty of economics and social studies, of which it is a part, and
- (3) doing consultancy work in the public sector.

One area which we are developing now in connection with this is trying to provide and secure money for research carried out by staff and postgraduate students.

TN: Is your consultancy work a new development?

AG: It was part of the statute, by which the institute was created 1976, but it has not been done enough. The only time that it has been implemented is the last months. This is a result of a study of a compre-

hensive programme for social infrastructure in the Southern region regulated by the Ministry of Finance. We are now doing another piece of work, how to give the university an opportunity to utilize its internal resources for creating revenue.

TN: How do you get your tasks?

AG: We have been approached by the Ministry of Finance.

I think this is a reaction against many things that were happening in the last five years. Until the last year most of the feasibility studies, upon which programmes of development have been based, were mainly done by foreign consultancy houses. Although there are several Sudanese consultancy houses, the government seems to depend more and more on foreign consultancy houses. This is basically because these consultancy houses know the formats of report writing which will be acceptable to donor institutions.

But unfortunately it turns out that you can get a very neat report technically, but it does not carry the right kind of contents. As a result it collapses. It collapses because it very often happens that the authors spend no more than about two weeks gathering empirical materials. This is not enough to get to understand the Sudanese situation. As a consequence their reports are not useful for implementation.

There is a tendency now in decision-making areas to start and look at academic institutions like the universities of Khartoum, Gezira and Juba to employ them. They also realize that they should subcontract individuals here, so that they realize that there exist institutions here that can coordinate the work of these people.

Our report here, which has been done by us, costs 40,000 Sudanese pounds. Any foreign consultancy house would have charged more than 100,000 dollars.

TN: Have you informed the ministries about the facilities that you have?

AG: Yes. Unfortunately this is a very slow business. It was publicized last Thursday, when this building was inaugurated. We made a small note which we distributed to all people around. (Unfortunately I don't have a copy here.) It was received very well in the meeting. We will use the coming two or three days to distribute it to all people, who are in a position to make decisions and who need some sort of support from our side, and we have also contacted people in an informal manner without documents.

This note is a summary of what we have done during the last three or four years or so. It should attract attention.

TN: Is consultancy the most important task of the centre?

AG: Yes, definitely, plus the teaching part. Those whom we have been teaching so far are people coming from various ministries. One of our requirements is that a person should be a government employee and that he should have been working at least one year.

“Development is not only a matter of growth”

IAO: What courses do you give?

AG: We mainly teach development planning. We teach theories of social and human developments. We teach statistics. We teach techniques of public management, public administration. Most of this is taught in departments of the faculty of economics, some are taught in the faculty of arts and some in the faculty of agriculture.

We build in our programmes as many case studies as we can and include one month of fieldwork. People should produce a final report.

IAO: Development work appears to be dominated by economic theorizing. As a social anthropologist, I would imagine that you are rather critical about that approach. How do you avoid an economic bias?

AG: Quite correct. Such a bias was there. My predecessor Dr. Rasheed is an economist. You can see from the course content that there is a bias towards economics. But he is broad-minded. Even in economics he concentrated on economic developments. He allowed for participation by other social scientists. This was a good base, which allowed for some sort of practice, into which other social sciences had a significant input. We are running two diplomas and one master's degree. One of the diplomas and the master's course are about regional development. We are running them in cooperation with the department of economics and the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague in Holland. This institute is heavily emphasizing the social impact of developments. So this balances the influence from economics. We are well aware of the fact that when it comes to development economists are very much inclined to use quantitative methods. We try to counteract this inclination by emphasizing qualitative aspects of social change.

Take for example the problem of the social infrastructure in the Southern region: we do not only need an economist, we need a specialist in health and nutrition, we need somebody on gardening and fruits, we need somebody on building of houses, we need somebody on roads. When you have your economist, your specialist on management, immediately you are going out of the social sciences into natural sciences. I think this is one of the most interesting aspects of our work that we are here working in an interdisciplinary field.

If you are really dealing with problems of development, you definitely have to cover all these areas. Otherwise you will be limiting yourself to something which is not comprehensive enough.

Cooperation in research and teaching

IAO : We would like to get some examples of research which has been carried out here.

AG : Internal transport in the Sudan. Sudanese migration. The economic and social effects of money-lending. The role of training in economic development. Evaluation of the Kanaka Scheme, its social and economic benefits. Cotton picking labour in the Gezira Scheme. . . .

TN : Who is initiating the research projects carried out in this centre?

AG : Mostly it is the students together with their supervisors. We distribute the students to a number of supervisors, and we try our best to allow the suggestions to come from the students.

IAO : Do you think that your centre should cooperate with other departments in research?

AG : Yes, I think so. We have limited manpower and financial resources in the university. Our ultimate goal is to make use of these resources in such a manner that our outcome to the society should be optimal. This cannot be done without coordination with other departments. The coordination cannot just come about without planning. One would like them to state their views on what they are going to teach here and there, to get feedback from them to limit ourselves to certain areas where we could really contribute and to allow them to take other areas. But, unfortunately, with the present system in the University of Khartoum these possibilities have not been utilized in an optimal manner. Each department and institution is working more or less autonomously from the others.

One ought to create some sort of course-unit system, whereby you can offer a degree. But I need some input into that degree from other departments in different faculties.

I would like to be able to send students to take courses in other departments to be included in their training here.

TN : You will have a course unit system, won't you?

AG : Yes, I hope so. It has been considered for quite some time, but it has not yet been introduced.

TN : It has been decided, hasn't it?

AG : Yes, but it has not been implemented yet.

IAO : How would you like seeing other departments taking part in the construction of your courses?

AG : One way of going about this is to inform others about what we want to do and are doing. Not only when I came here, but also when I was in the department of anthropology, the fact struck me that most departments have not presented programmes of teaching beforehand, which would make it possible to see what they are offering and who is teaching what. One should have detailed courses presented in a booklet, which could be distributed to colleagues in the university.

TN : You used to have a calendar before, which gave such information.

AG : The last calendar was issued in 1976.

TN : Is there enough teaching material?

AG : We use quite a lot of published material from sociology, social anthropology, economics and so on.

HT : Do you have any connections with the faculty of arts?

AG : Yes, we have through the department of geography. Two people from that department are heavily involved in our diploma course on social developments.

TN : No other departments?

AG : Not yet, because no one has seriously attempted to approach them.

IAO : Do you think that it would be useful for you to have connections with departments other than geography in the faculty of arts?

AG : Yes, definitely. I would like to have an historian on the teaching staff, someone specializing in the history of the Sudan. History is very relevant for an understanding of the development of societies in our country.

HT : How is your teaching related to what is done in the graduate college?

AG : When we accept people for our courses, we do it through the graduate college. They have to fulfil the requirements of the graduate college. When it comes to the choice of topics, we always consult the graduate college. The graduate college takes to the senate whatever we are proposing here. The establishment of a course has to be discussed thoroughly with them. They have to be convinced.

Unless there were a coordinating body, there would be an extensive overlap between courses taken by graduate students.

TN : What is the division of labour between your institute and the institute of African and Asian Studies?

AG : I must admit that there has been no cooperation so far. The department of folklore seems to be the only department in that institute that is functioning properly. History and political science are there, but not as prominent. The folklore people are collecting oral material, which we might make use of in our development studies.

IAO: I wonder if this institute would accept a graduate of philosophy?

AG: Our criteria for acceptance is not only to take a person with a degree from the faculty of economics and social studies. We have people from the faculty of veterinary science. We have a lot of agronomists. What we do is that we need to see where X or Y is coming from. We teach them for two or three years after graduating in an area relevant to our studies. Even a graduate of philosophy may be relevant to us. I would not be surprised to find such a person. When I was in the Economic and Social Research Council we used to give seminars in which people with interests in arts subjects participated. One of the papers we had in 1976 was about philosophy and development. But that is my personal view. Next year we will start a series of seminars here and we will then look for people who might give significant contributions including contributions of philosophers.

Team work

TN: Do you think it would be a good idea to try to make a research programme of a larger nature, in which individual programmes could fit?

AG: Well, we did that last year and we are repeating it next month. We selected certain problems related to a specific area, the Kassala area. We invited all our diploma students to work within that frame. They could pick and choose a topic. Some people worked on the market aspect. Others were working on the relations between social institutions. Some were interested in the manpower. Others were interested in the administrative aspects. The reports have, unfortunately, not been typed yet, but they have already been examined for the first batch of this group. The rest will be examined during the first part of December.

IAO: How do you know whether your students can work in teams?

AG: It has been a little bit difficult, I admit, and it has been debated in the institute here, whether this is really possible or not. There are lots of limitations, because some of the students are definitely not able to work in teams and they would prefer to work on their own.

IAO: How do you decide what kind of researchers you need?

AG: There are two ways in which we approach this : Institutionally creation of teams rests basically on the director with the help of a committee, which is selected by the Centre Board consisting of various people from the faculty of economics and social studies.

This might end up in recommending that all fields of research should be represented. But the way in which we are teaching social sciences right now, we are allowing for the fact that people are getting more and

more broadminded about development. Therefore they look around and see what human beings need in specific situations. What are the different components of this? According to the components you start seeking appropriate specialists.

In the end it rests on the leadership, the person on top, the director. If he has a very limited view on what development should be, then definitely the number of team members and the scope of their work will be limited.

However the way we are teaching the field methodology, we emphasize that it is the preference and the policy of the institute to train people in this line and unless a person has very good reasons to work alone, he should work in a team.

JAO: Why is it so important to work in teams?

AG: You cannot understand developments as processes unless you look at them from different angles, from different disciplines. One person can cater for one aspect of development, but a team can cover a much wider area. The way in which data are collected and the way in which data are processed, the use of qualitative data, etc. form part of the training they get in the course. They have to be able to use all these tools when they do their inquiries.

The outcome of the fieldwork is not only the kind of material they collect, but the kind of methodology they use.

“Participant intervention” — the Jongley case

TN: It would be very interesting to hear about your experiences with the Jongley project.

AG: It has been very important for me in understanding what social science should do in developments. Should we supply material to decision makers and planners? Do we have more commitments than this? Certain issues of ethics have arisen for me. One of the basic themes in handling issues of development is that we are really dealing with issues that influence the lives of people. One has to be very careful in what one is doing.

One gives recommendations to decision-makers and planners, who are going to execute certain policies. If you make mistakes in your recommendations, you may harm the local population.

Even if you are very objective and neutral in collecting and analyzing your material, and hand it over to the decision-makers, you may make mistakes. You may hurt people who have been hospitable to you. You are holding away ideas about how communities may be developed.

What we have done in Jongley is that we looked at situations where development had been very slow, and in most cases had been arrested mainly due to disturbances during the civil war. We did some work among the Nuer and Dinka. Most of them are cattle herders. They are interested in their cattle. But in the early sixties some migrations started and people began to acquire new ideas, which have worked on the local people. They started to break away from traditions and to get interested in developing small trade. Cattle did not used to be sold but now there are transactions in which cattle are exchanged among various individuals.

Our aim was to find out about the social relations which have been brought about by the new system of transactions. The building of the canal will definitely influence cattle roads and the kind of settlements they have and so on.

What can be done to minimize the harmful consequences of the canal for the local population? Our task as social scientists was to list the preferences of the local people and to communicate their views to the higher authorities. The material that we have collected has been very significant.

Through the social studies that started in 1975, we have been able to change the route of the canal, because we could argue that another route than that which was originally planned would be preferable to the local people.

TN : Who gave you the task?

AG : It came through after discussions together with two colleagues of mine with the first commissioner of the Jongley project, who was very critical of social sciences.

He thought that Evans-Pritchard and others have said the last word about the Nilotic people and that there was no use for further studies.

TN : So it came about through your personal contacts?

AG: In a way yes, but then it became institutionalized in the Jongley project. It is not limited to that region. Now the same agreement, more or less with the same team, has been extended to other areas. We have learned some methodological lessons from our work in the Jongley area. It is not enough just to collect data. One should engage in what I would like to call *participant intervention*. Which means that we should try to do something for the local people by means of our research.

TN: How many were you on the team?

AG: We were ten coming from social anthropology, sociology, geography, economics. One was a life study specialist.

TN: Who paid for this ?

AG: It was all paid by the commission.

IAO: Was the commissioner satisfied with your work?

AG: To begin with he had a bias against anthropology. We tried to change his mind. Now I think that he has been converted.

6. THE ROLE OF THE HUMANITIES

6.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

Virtually everybody will agree on the value of caring for the needs of the people who will be affected by development projects, on the verbal level. Also tough-minded technocrats have learned to speak the language of participation, self-reliance and endogenous development. In practice, the attitudes to the humanities and the issues they are preoccupied with are a good sign of where on the scale one stands: from a purely technocratic outlook à la classical "social engineering" on the one hand, to a well-developed, reflective humanistic perspective on development processes, on the other hand. A fully-fledged technocrat will tend to neglect the humanities and their concerns, if not on paper at least when it comes to the budget and the actual implementation of the project at hand.

There has been a heavy concentration on technological development in the post-war period, the broad field of the human sciences usually being represented by economic planning and maybe some social anthropology thrown in to take care of the rest. At the University of Khartoum, the effects of this policy show up in the distribution of resources internally (e.g. the distribution of the research budget to the various faculties),¹ as well as in the flow of assistance from outside agencies. There are fewer agencies available which can direct aid, say, to a department in the humanities than to a department in agriculture or veterinary science. "The fortunate faculties are the so-called professional faculties such as medicine, engineering, agriculture, veterinary science and to some extent the faculty of science."² The British Council (to mention one example which came up in our talks in Khartoum) does not regard the arts subjects as relevant for development.³ The reaction of Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Hardallo, who was dean of the faculty of arts when we talked to him in 1981, was this: "Applied science is certainly relevant, but it is no good to be a scientist who is not concerned with what he is doing. It is even dangerous. We are suggesting now in our council that humanities should be introduced in all faculties."⁴ Similarly, Dr. Tawheeda Osman Hadra, who was head of the department of English at that time, commented that "the authorities make the fallacy of thinking that only scientific and technical subjects are relevant for development. The six-year plan concentrates on the professional faculties. They think that the immediate needs of the country are best served so. But I think they are wrong."⁵ One of the immediate effects of the lack of interest in the arts subjects is the difficulty of recruiting high-calibre teachers and researchers in those fields. The students usually prefer

the professional faculties when they apply for entry to the university, and the brain-drain problem hits some of the art subjects (like English and philosophy) severely. The salaries at the university of Khartoum are not competitive compared to Europe or the oil-producing Arab countries. The topping-up system which Britain applies to many subjects adding to the local salaries is not applied to the subjects which are not regarded as relevant for development. When we made our last batch of interviews, three of the ten posts in philosophy were vacant, and seven of the eight honours students in English had left the Sudan for higher-paid jobs in Saudi Arabia.⁶ This is one way in which the so-called crisis in the humanities shows up in the Sudan.⁷

“The crisis in the humanities” is largely a result of the technocratic policies in the last few decades, in my interpretation of the situation, in the Scandinavian countries, in the Sudan and elsewhere. The shift in attitudes in the last decades has been rather dramatic. The traditional British policy was to export the English university system with little or no adaptation. This policy was eagerly supported in Africa for a long time: attempts at adaptation and Africanization were regarded with suspicion as perils to the quality of higher education. “One finds, therefore, a certain implicit conspiracy to resist major adaptations and to preserve the overall pattern of higher education as it is found in England”, as Sir Eric Ashby has put it. “This pattern is what the African wants because this is what he would have got if he had graduated from London or Cambridge; this is what the expatriate wants because it is the pattern in which he himself was trained.”⁸ The existing college in Khartoum was set on the line of development suggested by the Asquith commission in 1945, and grew into an independent university in about ten years after a period of linkage with the University of London. The core of the university, as conceived by the Asquith commission, was the faculty of arts with its emphasis on a liberal education, including acquaintance with the history and the classical languages upon which our culture rests. In the Sudan, Greek and Latin were replaced with the study of classical Arabic; philosophy, history, geography, archaeology and English were taught in the faculty of arts from the beginning. Later, other modern languages have been added to the repertoire (French, Russian), along with Islamic studies.⁹

The Sudanization policy of the University of Khartoum, which was adopted after independence in 1956, included both the staff and the contents of the courses. In philosophy, the bulk of the teaching has always been analytic philosophy of the same kind which has dominated the Anglo-Saxon world and Scandinavia in the post-war period. But Islamic philosophy was introduced almost immediately, when the French-educated Sudanese scholar Dr. Osman Chahine was recruited to the university. Now, some twenty-five

years later, the department of philosophy is characterized by a unique blend of Western philosophy and Islamic philosophy. The lecturers who got their first philosophical education in the early sixties, have written doctoral theses on themes like Arabic logic and are taking an active part in the transformation of the Islamic heritage. According to Dr. Zakaria Bashier, there has been “an imbalance between environmental development and human development” in recent times. Against the one-sided stress on technological and economic development, he emphasizes “a balance between human well-being, morality and spiritual values”, which he sums up under the heading “nuclear humanism”.¹⁰

The development in philosophy is paralleled by developments in the other arts subjects, where similar adaptation processes have been carried out. The establishment of the Sudan Research Unit in 1964 (transformed into the Institute of African and Asian Studies in 1972) is a sign of this development, with its emphasis on Sudanese history, languages and folklore.¹¹

The National Council for Research, which was established during the most overtly technocratic phase of the history of the Sudan around 1970, does not include a section for the humanities.¹² Instead, a National Council for the Humanities has been created. In 1981, when we interviewed the chairman of the council for the humanities, few results had been forthcoming: “They started a year ago. Some universities are uncooperative. They don’t want anybody outside to meddle with their work.”¹³ (The two universities with faculties of arts are the University of Khartoum and the Islamic University in Omdurman. The universities in Juba and Wad Medani have teaching in some arts subjects, e.g. English, but no faculties of arts.)

Obviously research, publication and teaching in subjects like history, human geography and linguistics are valuable, not least in a pluralistic and diversified country like the Sudan, and so is the kind of critical reflection on basic suppositions of development which is one of the tasks of philosophy. But where should one put such values on the list of priorities? Should the priorities be the same in a developing country as in the industrialized part of the world? It is the task of humanists to continue to raise such questions, and to try to make themselves heard. As Dr. Hardallo puts it, “Research should not only be done, it should also be *seen* done.”¹⁴ If development is going to continue to be dominated by technocratic thinking and practices, then at least it ought to do so as the result of reflection upon the alternatives. Humanistic perspectives will probably not be endorsed because of their intrinsic attractiveness, but as the result of the accumulation of projects which have failed because of the neglect of the people concerned. In other words, the humanistic

perspectives which are the main contribution of the humanities to the understanding of development, are likely to force themselves upon the agents of development for purely pragmatic reasons as the result of the negative experiences with technocratic practices of development. This is my own view, and it seems to coincide with the views of our interlocutors in the Sudan.¹⁵

NOTES

- (1) Cf. ch. 2 above.
- (2) Dr. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, section 2.4 above.
- (3) See the interview with Dr. Tawheeda, 6.3 below.
- (4) Section 6.2 below.
- (5) Section 6.3 below.
- (6) The brain-drain problem is an acute one for the University of Khartoum as well as for the rest of the Sudan. Cf. UN ECWA. *The Arab Brain Drain*; Ithaca Press 1981.
- (7) Cf. e.g. J.H. Plumb, ed. *Crisis in the Humanities*, Penguin Books 1964; and Gunnar Skirbekk, "Crisis in the Humanities?" (in Norwegian, *Norsk filosofisk tidsskrift*, (The Norwegian journal of philosophy) 1982, pp. 179-193). A classic in this field is C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (1959), with its lack of understanding of the achievements of *research* in the humanities.
- (8) Eric Ashby, in association with Mary Anderson, *Universities: British, Indian, African. A Study in the Ecology of Higher Education*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1966, p. 241.
- (9) Cf. the University of Khartoum *Calendar for 1963-64*, the note on the history of the university; also Tore Nordenstam, *Afrikas universitet*, Wahlstrom & Widstrand, Stockholm 1970 (in Swedish).
- (10) See section 6.4 below. Cf. also Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer in section 7.5. below.
- (11) Chapter 4 above.
- (12) The establishment of the National Council for Research coincides with the pro-Soviet period at the beginning of the seventies. Cf. "A Taste of Socialist Planning" by Abdel Rahman Abdel Wahab in "Development Planning in the Sudan : Policy and Organization", the concluding chapter of *An Introduction to the Sudan Economy*, edited by Ali Mohamed El-Hassan (Khartoum University Press 1976).
- (13) Ibrahim Ahmed Hardallo, section 6.2 below.
- (14) *Loc.cit.*
- (15) Several of our interviewees expressed the view that one must be *pragmatic* when it comes to development. Cf. e.g. Mohamed Omer Beshir in section 2.3 and Joseph Awad in section 8.3. Their pragmatism includes an emphasis on the need for listening to the people concerned by development : "You have to be seriously involved, and when the people begin to feel that you are really a part of them they will appreciate any change." (Joseph Awad, section 8.3).
"One of the basic themes in handling issues of development is that we are really dealing with issues that influence the lives of people. It is not enough just to collect data. One should engage in what I would like to call *participant observation*, which means that we should try to do something for the local people by means of our research." (Abdel Ghaffar, section 5.3). "In the Sudan, development is becoming an ideology now... People are now becoming very pragmatic." (Mohamed Omer Beshir, section 2.3). "You can plan right if your plans are accepted by people and if they bear a relation to the basic culture of the people, their needs, what they think and their priorities."
(Dr. Ali Fadl, section 2.2).
"My approach might be described as a *sympathetic* approach. I look at attitudes and values in a particular group as something which is justifiable within their own cultural context." (Hashim Habiballa, section 6.5)
Cf. chapter 1 above on the role of the humanities in the *articulation of tacit knowledge*.

6.2. IBRAHIM AHMED HARDALLO (INTERVIEW)

Ibrahim Ahmed Hardallo has a B.A. Honours in English and Arabic from the University of Khartoum, a B.A. from the University of London and Ph.D. from Cambridge. He is now professor of Arabic in the University of Khartoum; and when we interviewed him in 1981, he was dean of the faculty of arts. He has published papers on Arabic literature and a book in English on the concept and history of antisemitism. Arabic literature in Andalusia is one of his special interests. At the time of the interview, he was writing a paper on the future of literature in the technological age, which provided the starting point for the talk. At the present (1985), he is on secondment to Umm al-Ghora University in Saudi Arabia. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

The role of literature

TN: What do you think about the role of literature in the technological age? And what do you think about the role of the humanities?

IAH: There are certain assumptions about literature. I am questioning first the assumption that literature is incompatible with science because literature is dealing with emotions and imagination. A second assumption I am questioning is that literature in our part of the world is connected with certain environments. Some people think that when technology changes everything, we will not be able to find a language to express what we think.

The third assumption is that literature is only for enjoyment. You do not read a novel for ideas, for mental exercise. You read a novel to relax, to get away from your problems in life.

The fourth assumption which is connected with the last one, is that people now write for money. Forester, a great writer in the West, when asked why he was writing, said: "I write for money and reputation." These are the assumptions that I discuss. I think that unless we change our assumptions about literature, literature will be of no use. We should change the writer to be a kind of missionary to change the people, to change the community, but he should not be a prophet to tell people what they should do.

I think that if such a change takes place, then literature will have a future.

TN: What do you think should be the division of labour between literature and science?

IAH: I think the methods should be the same in the humanities and the sciences. Science is not incompatible with literature, I don't think so.

TN: Do you think that they basically have the same objective?

IAH: Yes, I think so.

Research conditions in the faculty of arts

HT: What do you think about the research which is carried out in your faculty? Are you happy about it? Would you like to have any change in the research policy within the faculty?

IAH: I am not happy.

First of all we have to find the atmosphere for research. I think that research should be carried out by teams rather than by individuals. Team-work is very difficult to do here.

Secondly there is very little time for doing research.

HT: Why?

IAH: The staff members are busy with other things. You don't find the atmosphere to do proper research.

There are inadequate facilities, books etc. We don't get up-to-date information about what is said about a certain subject. This delays our efforts. It takes us a long time to find out what other people say about certain topics.

If we had the facilities, a member of the staff could go to England to get fresh information.

I find that most of our staff are keen to do some research, but they are facing grave difficulties.

We have a research committee in the faculty and we invite staff members to submit proposals for research topics. Each and every one comes up with proposals.

TN: But you have done research yourself.

IAH: Yes, but I found it very difficult to do it here.

TN: How do you go about it practically?

IAH: I don't do it in my office. I do it at home.

HT: In your case it must be specially difficult, as you are a dean. But for the ordinary staff members, who do not have so many obligations as you have, surely it should be easier for them?

IAH: When I mentioned the difficulties of researchers I was also thinking about social problems, of going to see friends. There are ties here in the Sudan. Every evening you see a number of friends and their wives. Then the members of staff have to go out shopping. This is very time-consuming.

TN: Do you have a servant?

IAH: Yes, I have. He does not do anything other than cleaning the house.

TN: Have you formulated research priorities in the faculty? Have you formulated criteria to apply to the applications you get?

IAH: We encourage archaeological research. This has first priority. Also any research project in geography is given high priority. When some member of staff wishes to write a book say on folklore, African literature written in French, we favour such projects. We also encourage the writing of textbooks.

IAO: How do the departments in the faculty relate themselves to the departments abroad?

IAH: We normally get people from abroad to visit us here. When such people come, we discuss projects with them and we appoint a coordinator. The applicants present working papers on what they are going to do. We divide what we can afford to share.

The selection of research students

HT: How is the faculty of arts related to the graduate college? I understand that all students working for a higher degree in the university are registered in the graduate college.

How do you deal with this on a day-to-day basis?

IAH : The graduate college simply transfers the papers to us. Somebody applies to do research on say literature, language or philosophy, We get a paper with the qualifications and give it to the department concerned.

The departmental board will consider it. If the subject is good and if the candidate is good, then they will take it back to the faculty research board, which consists of the heads of the departments. The dean is the chairman. We have a secretary for research. The paper will be sent to the faculty research board with the recommendations of the department, whether the candidate is suitable and whether the subject is suitable.

We discuss it and if we think it is all right, we send the paper with our approval back to the graduate college. Then the student will be registered there and he will pay the fee. That is all.

TN : What about the selection of supervisors?

IAH: We appoint supervisors. They will work out progress reports to the graduate college after six months or one year say. One idea of this graduate college is to attract candidates from the government sector to do research in the Sudan rather than outside. Many candidates come from the government sector. Most of them do research supervised by

the university staff either in science or in medicine or in . . .

We hope that the government will give us the money for this.

“Research should not only be done, it should also be seen done”

TN : What is the division of labour between this faculty and the Institute of African and Asian Studies?

IAH : There is an historical connection. The Institute of African and Asian Studies has grown out of the Sudan Research Unit which was a body of the faculty of arts.

TN : Is the Institute of African and Asian Studies attached to this faculty?

IAH : No, it is a totally independent institute.

HT : Are there any research connections between the Institute of African and Asian Studies and the faculty?

IAH : Some of our staff may go and teach in the institute. They teach languages. They teach African history and lots of other things which are also taught here. But there is no such thing as a joint project for the institute and this faculty.

TN : Does the institute function as another faculty?

IAH : Yes, it does in a way. It emphasizes postgraduate work. They don't have many undergraduate students.

HT : How is this faculty related to the Centre of Developmental Studies? Do you have any research connections? We have interviewed Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar and he told us that he would not mind getting contributions from this faculty in certain projects.

IAH : We would not mind either. We have to think about it and we have to see how it fits in with our priorities.

A problem with research in Sudan is that research is not well-connected with the problems in the communities. This is a criticism which is now directed to the universities. Research is not connected with the problems of the communities, neither in the applied sciences nor in the humanities. Research in Sudan and in the developing countries in general should not only be done but it should also be *seen* done. In your country, in England and in the States, research is done quietly, but here people would like to be assured that something is going on, which will be for the good of the country.

TN : What can you do to show yourselves?

IAH : I am not saying that this should be seen in the newspapers, but it should be shown in conferences.

We should try to find researchable problems of social relevance.

People don't accept that research is carried out silently. They want to see the process itself.

The National Council for the Humanities

TN : In what places is research in the humanities carried out in the Sudan?
You have the Institute of African and Asian studies. You have the faculty of arts in this university. Do you have anything else?

IAH : Yes, we have the University of Gezira. They have economics

TN :but not a faculty of Arts.

IAH : In Juba also, they have education, sociology andbut I doubt that they do any research there. They have just started.

TN : Do you have any national committee to coordinate research in the humanities corresponding to the National Council of Research?

IAH : There is the National Council for the Humanities. Our previous dean professor Osman Sid Ahmed is general secretary of the National Council for the Humanities. They have small committees say for arts, for economics, for These committees should do work on coordinating research and also of syllabi in different universities.

TN : Have you seen any results of their work ?

IAH : Very little. They started a year ago. Some universities are uncooperative. They don't want anybody outside to meddle with their work.

TN : What do they actually do?

IAH : They ask the faculties what syllabi they use, what research they are doing, how many people are doing research

TN : Are you the chairman of the council for the humanities?

IAH : Yes.

TN : How often do you meet?

IAH : We meet every month.

TN : What did you do when you last met?

IAH : This council is divided into small groups. One group is concerned with conferences. Last year when we started, we held a small seminar on the problems of higher education in our faculty. We are planning another seminar in February 1982. We will invite people from outside. Another group is concerned with the coordination of syllabi in the universities. We are trying to issue a small booklet about our activities. We are also very much concerned with Arabicization.

HT: Have you got any written material about this council in English?

IAH: No.

HT: How is it related to the National Council for Research?

IAH: It is not related in the way that the National Council for Research is supervising it. It belongs to the Council for Higher Education.

TN: Is it a full-time job to be a general secretary?

IAH: Yes, it is.

The relevance of the humanities for development

HT: What do you think about the research conditions in the university, the way in which money is distributed in the various faculties and so on?

IAH: We have a small cake to share in our faculty. We think that this is not enough. That does not encourage members of staff to do research. This will affect the quality of research. If you don't have the time or the facilities to consult whatever references you need or to meet whatever people you would like to get needed information and manuscripts, this will affect the quality of research.

HT: Are you happy about the way the central research committee of the university functions?

IAH: We are now in a stage of decentralization. The central research committee is giving the faculties full authority to deal with research.

We are given a small sum of money which we are free to use.

TN: We have been talking with Mr. Theakstone from the Inter-University Council in London. He told us that the arts subjects are not regarded as relevant for development. What do you think about that?

IAH: I read your report on "Paradigms of Development". How you regard the arts subjects from the point of view on developments depends upon how you look at development. Applied science is certainly relevant, but it is no good to be a scientist who is not concerned with what he is doing. It is even dangerous.

We are suggesting now in our council that the humanities should be introduced in all faculties. People should be informed about literature, about philosophy, about . . . It is no good to be an expert if you don't feel the responsibility for your role.

HT: There are general liberal studies in American universities. Do you have in mind to introduce that kind of studies?

IAH: We cannot afford to offer courses on all that we teach here, but we might follow the example of the Centre of Mathematical Studies in this university. They offer courses in mathematics in various faculties. It is for instance useful to study mathematics and philosophy, mathematics and geography, etc. I think this is very important.

IAO: Do you think it would be a good thing to introduce a course unit system?

IAH: Yes, a course unit system will give you options to combine topics freely in accordance with the aptitudes of the students. That is an advantage of such a system.

It is better than the system we have now, where the students have very

little choice in what subjects they take. Such a system will make it much easier for us to introduce topics from the field of arts subjects.

HT: What is your view on the role of philosophy in this country?

IAH: I have not studied philosophy as a student, but I am very interested in philosophy and I have read quite a lot. I think philosophy should be the first subject that we introduce in other faculties.

HT: Thank you.

IAH: I don't say this just to please you.

6.3. TAWHEEDA OSMAN HADRA (INTERVIEW)

Tawheeda Osman Hadra graduated from the University of Khartoum with English as a major subject. She took her M.A. at the University of Khartoum in 1971 (thesis: "A Linguistic Study of the Register of Architecture and Building Based on the Analysis of Extracts from Architecture Course Books Used in the University of Khartoum"). Her teaching career started in 1969, when she began teaching remedial English at the University of Khartoum. She has also studied in London, and completed her Ph.D. at the University of Khartoum in 1979 with a thesis on inbedded sentences in English and Sudanese spoken Arabic. She is a lecturer in the department of English at the University of Khartoum, and was appointed head of the English department in 1980. She is the first woman who has become head of a department in the faculty of arts in the University of Khartoum. She is a co-editor of *Tales of Animals, Magic and Men* (Khartoum University Press 1983).

The interview took place in November 1981. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

The teaching of English in Sudan

TN: What are you working on at the moment?

T: I am working on a project about folktales. It is a project for children. I write the tales both in simple Arabic and simple English. It is intended for schools. Volume 1 is completed and I am now working on Volume 2.

TN: Will these books be used as teaching material in schools?

T: No, they shall only be used as reading material, to improve the reading skills of the pupils.

TN: Why do you have English translations?

T: Well, they will help the pupils to improve their English. It is helpful to them that they already know the contents more or less. If they get stuck, they can always read the Arabic version. The books are also addressed to foreign readers.

IAO: In what schools will they be used?

T: They will be used in secondary schools.

HT: What do you think about the standard of English among the students?

T: The standard of English is dropping. Previously English was the language of instruction in the schools. Now it is just one of the subjects. There are too few qualified teachers of English. The students who come to the university are very deficient in English. I feel that if the hours allotted to English in the schools are properly utilized, then we would get students with better standards.

- TN: Do you need some kind of remedial English?
 T: In fact we spend the whole preliminary year teaching remedial English.
 TN: Is English compulsory for all students?
 T: Yes it is in all faculties.
 HT: Is this department responsible for the teaching of English in all faculties?
 T: It is a separate department, called "English Servicing Unit".
 TN: Is this the only department of English in the Sudan?
 T: No, there is one in the Islamic University in Omdurman. There is one in the faculty of Education. In the Gezira University there is an English servicing unit. It is not a full department. The Khartoum branch of the Cairo University does not have any department of English.
 TN: Do you have any links with universities outside the Sudan?
 T: We have links with the University of Delaware and with Leeds University. We can send students to them. We also get some help with staff.
 HT: Do you have many graduate students? How many? What are they doing?
 T: We have only six now. They are doing M.A.s in literature.
 HT: What kind of literature?
 T: They chose themes like poetry in a certain age, like fiction in a certain age.
 We have also a graduate course for teachers in English. We give them a diploma for teaching English as a foreign language. They are graduate students, who are actually teaching in higher secondary schools. We have twenty such students. They stay with us for a year.
 We are teaching them how to teach English. Then they are given a graduate diploma.
 IAO: In what committees are you involved outside the university?
 T: I am involved with the National Council of Development of Curricula and Research, but only in connection with curricula for the schools. This council belongs to the Ministry of Education.
 IAO: Do you think that you have got the right number of students?
 T: Yes, I think so, but we could cater for a few more. Unfortunately they do not stay very long with us. By the end of the second year the number drops from about 50 to about 30 students.

Research interests

- HT: I would like to ask you about your research interests.
 T: I am mainly interested in linguistics and in particular in comparative linguistics. I am also interested in sociolinguistics, but I have not done much in that field.

- HT: And what are the other members of staff doing?
- T: Most of my colleagues do their research on literature, mainly written by Arabs and Africans.
- IAO: How many of you are language- and how many are literature-people?
- T: Only two of us are working on language. One is interested in comparative literature—English and Arabic. Then there are four people working only on English literature.
- IAO: Where is your work published?
- T: Mainly in local journals and by the Khartoum University Press, but one of us has had a book published by the Oxford University Press.
- IAO: Do you have connections with other departments on language issues?
- T: Yes, we offer courses to other departments, but we do not have any cooperation by way of research.

Research conditions

- TN: What do you think about the research conditions in this faculty?
- T: They are like those in other departments in the university. We suffer from lack of publication facilities. There are many members of staff who have written good stuff, but they can't get it published, for they do not have the money.
- IAO: How does a faculty member get money for research?
- T: He submits an application to the faculty research board, but he rarely gets all he asks for. That is a handicap.
- IAO: Do the departments have a say on the final research funding?
- T: The applications go directly from individuals to the faculty research board.
- HT: The money goes to individuals rather than to departments, is that so?
- T: Yes, unless a department has a joint project, like the department of archaeology. They have a joint project with other departments.
- TN: What is it like to be a woman researcher in the Sudan?
- T: As far as I am concerned I don't find it very different from a man. The only drawbacks are on the personal and family side. It takes time to look after a family. This has to do with the woman's role.
- HT: You don't complain, but perhaps other women complain about the family burden?
- T: Well, there are times when my husband sits at his desk, while I am roaming about to see what the children are doing, to cook meals, etc. When I do my academic work, it is late in the evenings.
- IAO: Do you have any benefits from being the wife of a distinguished academic husband?

- T: Unfortunately no. The gap is great between his and my interests. He is an historian and I am a linguist. This makes it difficult for us to cooperate. But there are things that I learn from him. He is a hard worker. Unfortunately I do not have so much time to devote to academic work as he has.
- TN: What do your relatives think about your academic work ?
- T: I don't know. They have not said anything.
- HT: Perhaps they are proud of you ?
- T: Perhaps, but sometimes my father thinks that I get too tired from working all day.
- IAO: I have a general question: Do you think that papers on English could be published in Arabic?
- T: As there is a shortage of publication possibilities, I think it would be a good idea that Arabic journals should take work done by us. As there are few journals here, it should be possible to make use of those which exist, including Arabic ones, as places for publishing works even on English in Arabic journals.
- HT: What do you think about the library facilities? Do you think that the library is suitable for research work?
- T: Unfortunately, no. It used to be. It used to move with the times. But for a number of years, the library is lacking in development. This is so, mainly because the staff is not very interested in developing the library. The staff should take the initiative and order the books and journals that they need. Then it will be the job of the librarian to make these books and journals available.
- TN: Have you yourself submitted wishes?
- T: Yes, sometimes I do. They order the books and send a note that they are available.
- HT: Do you have to wait for a long time?
- T: Yes, for six months or a year or so, but they always come eventually.

The brain-drain problem

- TN: Do you have staffing problems?
- T: Yes, specially on the language side. We do get some help from part-timers.
- TN: How many expatriates do you have?
- T: Two permanent staff and one part-timer.
- TN: Do you get enough expatriates? Do you have difficulties of recruitment?

- T: Yes, we have such difficulties. We advertise positions, but we do not get enough good applicants.
- TN: Why is that so?
- T: There are many factors. We cannot compete with other universities in the Arab world offering much higher salaries. Some people fear that the situation in the Sudan is unstable.
- HT: Do you lose people to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and so on?
- T : Yes, we do.
- HT : What do you feel about it ?
- T : I have mixed feelings. One cannot blame people for taking very well paid jobs. But there are times when I feel that the people who go away ought to give back to the country what it has given to them. So I am stuck with my mixed feelings.
- TN : What do your students become after their studies, teachers of English or . . . ?
- T : Some of them do, not many. I think that is why they leave us. Some of them go to the teaching profession, some of them go to the foreign service. Some work as translators. A large number of them go to Saudi Arabia, where there is a big market for people with a degree in English, as teachers, as translators.
- HT : How many moved from here to Saudi Arabia to get jobs?
- T : We had eight graduates from the honours class last year. Seven of them went away, only one stayed here.
- HT : Is the number of “movers” exceptionally high for English?
Is it typical that seven out of eight graduates want to go to Saudi Arabia?
- T : Well, it is typical in a way and it is not in another. They get much better paid jobs than they can get here.

The role of the humanities in development

- IAO : What do you think about the role of the faculty of arts in the developments in the Sudan?
- T : I think it is important, but the authorities make the fallacy of thinking that only scientific and technical subjects are relevant for development. The six-year plan concentrates on the professional faculties. They think that the immediate needs of the country are best served so. But I think they are wrong. One should not push the humanities aside at the expense of technology. The faculty of arts has suffered a lot from this sort of planning in terms of budget and in terms of representation in decision-making bodies.

- TN: This applies to outside bodies also. The British Council for instance does not regard English as a developmental subject.
- T: No, no, neither the British Council, nor the USAID does. They do not give grants to applicants from the faculty of arts, if there are other applicants, from the faculty of agriculture and so on. They get the grants, not we.
- TN: How can you convince them that arts subjects are relevant? What can you say to them?
- T: The sciences cannot be isolated from the arts. They have to go hand in hand. How can the scientists communicate without languages?
- HT: And how can the planners be wise without philosophy?
- T: (Laughter.) True.

6.4. ZAKARIA BASHIER IMAM (INTERVIEW)

Zakaria Bashier Imam graduated from the University of Khartoum in 1966 with the subjects economics, mathematics and philosophy. He has got an M. Litt. from Durham, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh on Ibn Sina (Avicenna). He has done work on modal logic, including studies of the logic of the medieval philosopher Al-Farabi. His publications include a book on the Islamic path to social change (*Tariq at-Tatawwur al-Ijtima'i al-Islami* (Jeddah, 1977) and *The Meccan Crucible* (Ithaca Press, London 1978). After his return from Pittsburgh, he was appointed lecturer in philosophy at the University of Khartoum. In August 1973 he gave a talk on the issue of academic freedom in the student's union, which led to trial and two years of imprisonment in the state prison at Kober (Khartoum North). "I was treated very well in the prison", he said, "having all my books, receiving frequent visits from my family" (unlike the other prisoners). After that he became an assistant professor of Islamic studies at King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah (philosophy being unacceptable in Saudi Arabia since Al-Ghazali's attack on philosophy in the 11th century). In 1977, he returned to the University of Khartoum. He is now active in politics; he has been elected to represent the higher education staff in the National People's Council; as president of the Committee on Education and Research, he has got the status of a state minister.

The interview took place in January 1980. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

The idea of a philosophy of development

ZB : I am interested in what you are up to in your project.

HT : Briefly I would say that there are paradigms in various fields of activities.

Reflections on these paradigms, criticism of them and modifications of them might be called philosophies within these fields of activities. There are philosophies in politics, in education and of course in the sciences and so on. Why not also in developments?

One assumption that we make is that there exist philosophies *in* developments. These are thoughts of the main actors in the development processes. These thoughts are about society, about quality of life, about indicators of progress and so on.

So the first thing we would like to do is to find out what these thoughts are.

ZB : Surely we are interested in the development of the human person. But why do you want to have a branch of philosophy called “philosophy of development”? Isn’t it the case that since antiquity philosophers were doing a lot in the development of the human mind, human conceptions of things, world-views and so on. Why do you want to have a philosophy of development over and above this? What conception of development are you working with?

TN : When we talk about “philosophy of development”, we want to concentrate on current ideas on development as you find them in the minds of men working with developments.

ZB : I understand. Development is a function of so many things. It is not a simple idea.

HT : We don’t think it is a very simple thing. We would like to know what the main actors involved think about the role of universities in development, the role of research in development, how research should be related to development projects in this country and in other countries and such things.

ZB : Are you concerned with economics mainly ?

HT : No, we are also concerned with social, educational and cultural developments.

ZB : I still find it rather vague, I am sorry to say. Development is a very complex conception. Take for example university development. One way in which one might see this is that one wants ultimately to be able to be geared primarily towards development of the human person into a free being. Development could be a cult, the way development has been emphasized by certain modern states. Why should we develop? Specially if developments follow a certain trend, concentrating on certain aspects of life.

We can’t say that there are no presuppositions involved in the quest for development that we now see in countries in the Third World. These presuppositions themselves must be made explicit.

HT : Yes, but that is precisely what we are trying to do . It is part of the tasks of a philosophy of development to disclose the main presuppositions in development projects. We are trying to get hold of such presuppositions by interviewing people to find out what their presuppositions are.

ZB : I see your point.

Philosophers should take a stand on substantive issues

TN: What research are you actually carrying out now?

ZB: My research now is about Ibn Khaldoun. Ibn Khaldoun is very important in the Islamic world. I study his theories on history.

I am also very interested in al-Ghazali and the negative influence on philosophy that is brought about by his work *Tahafut al-Falsafa* (Destruction of philosophy). He was never against philosophical methods. He himself was a very able philosopher. Only he was against certain themes and certain ideas held by certain philosophers. He was not against *all* philosophy. Al-Ghazali's work was subject to a very gross misunderstanding. I am doing some work which is an extension of my Ph.D. thesis on Ibn Sina together with other themes that I became interested in when I was in King Abdul Aziz University. This is mainly in the history of Islam.

This may be looked at as a chapter in the philosophy of history. I present a number of theses about how society evolves and why it passes through crises and why it sometimes declines. A man like Ibn Khaldoun is very useful here. He was very influential.

TN: How does the research you do here compare with the usual kind of analytic philosophy which is being done in the USA?

ZB: I think that the analytical tools are very valuable. In USA, philosophy is formal through and through. It is not much concerned with contents. The emphasis is upon clarity of thinking and regimentation of the mind. No substantive issues have been raised at all.

When I was in Pittsburgh one of my teachers was professor Belnap. He used to say almost every day that in moral philosophy and in social philosophy, you have to start with a formal theory. I want to change this.

If I can graduate somebody who is clearminded, whose thinking is regimented, then of course I hope that he will be able to take a stand on specific substantial issues. Why shy away from it?

At the time that I was in the USA, the philosophers were really very isolated. They had no say in matters of public concern. They felt that it was below the dignity of philosophers to take a stand.

When millions of Afro-Americans were treated very badly, no philosophers thought that it was respectable to deal with the issue of racialism.

TN: Do you regard your book "The Meccan Crucible" as a piece of philosophy or how do you look upon it?

ZB: In my book I give a certain reading to the history of ideas. I tried to use

tools of philosophical analysis. I try to give a certain interpretation. I would not like to have a very rigid line of demarcation between what is and what is not philosophy. My book could be regarded as a work on the philosophy of history. I was trying to see how the patterns of things were developing. It contains a philosophy of change. It is a description, and an interpretation based on ideas on social change. It is not a pure historical account.

TN: It is probably the first account written by an academically trained analytical philosopher on this topic.

ZB: Maybe so. Previous books were either too dogmatic or very superficial. You don't find a book which consistently sustains a dialogue, trying to analyse the themes and to fit them into rational categories. In this way I think the book is rather novel.

Nuclear humanism

TN: Do you think that we could talk about Islamic conceptions of development? Is there such a thing?

Your own book indicates that there exist Islamic notions of social change.

ZB: Being one of the monistic religions, Islam is not fundamentally different from Christianity. The emphasis is on the unique traits of man. That is an issue on which controversies could evolve within Islam. Man is considered as a unique being. He is a moral agent. He is an autonomous being. He is a free man. The Islamic conception of development would be to emphasize a balance between human well-being, morality and spiritual values. The main emphasis is on what might be called *nuclear humanism*. Cultures which do not place much weight on religion would not make the same emphasis. Islam favours that things should develop in all aspects. The material, intellectual and spiritual sections of society should develop. Personality is always emphasized in Islam.

TN: How do you look at the current development in the Sudan?

ZB: If you read the constitution, you see that the people who wrote this document were concerned that one should develop the country in all aspects, material as well as moral, intellectual, cultural and spiritual. In practice you find that emphasis is put on the construction of roads and economic development.

When matters come to actual implementations, you get the same emphasis as in every secular post-Christian Western country. There is actually lip-service being paid to the social and human development

of man. The emphasis is on material things, to make life easier in a material sense. Not much care is taken of the quality of life. What matters is efficiency above all. This is what is going on.

It is not particular to the Sudan. It is a world-wide phenomenon. The dominant influence is Western of course. We are very much affected by what is going on in the West. And also it is being recognized that it is only lip-service being paid to the spiritual matters. You can see this if you look at the university.

We are not so much interested in delivering education as such, but we want to develop the factories, the roads and so on. This shift is not casual. It is very significant. It implies that now much more concern is given to material and economic developments, which is O.K. to the extent that the Sudan is a very underdeveloped country.

But in an ideal situation one would like that development should be geared towards the happiness and well-being of the human beings. One has therefore to ask: What is a human being? What does he deserve? How can we bring about a society in which people are happy and in peace? The materialistic development that we have in Los Angeles for instance or in New York brings about unemployment, crime and violence. People become isolated and unhappy.

TN: What do you think about developments in the South, which is not a Muslim part of the Sudan?

ZB: Islam recognizes pluralistic developments. They can develop autonomously.

TN: There are people in the South, who are neither Muslims nor Christians, nor Jews. What do you think about that?

ZB: This is accepted by the government. It is up to the South to develop the way they like.

We don't mind having a pluralistic society. In other words, I want to have a free interchange of ideas. If Southerners, who are Christians, want to preach Christianity in Khartoum, by all means let them do it! If man is autonomous and rational, he can choose. In order to be able to choose in a realistic way, we must have options.

TN: Is there a ban on Islam in the South at the moment ?

ZB: It is not an official ban, but I think there is now in some circles a fear that we want to Islamicize the South.

I don't know what is meant by that. If you assume that man is an autonomous being, then of course we want to have an open society. We don't want to have a closed country. We want to have very easy relations with the West.

Philosophy and development

TN : What do you think academic philosophy could do for the kind of development you have in mind?

ZB : I think that what academic philosophy could do, is to try to bring about a graduate who thinks freely and who has a very wide world-view, who knows a great deal of what goes on in the world. If we can get this kind of man, the Sudan will be a much happier place to live in I think that philosophy is a subject which always extends itself and reaches out to other disciplines. We should be interested in and concerned about what goes on in the university as a whole. I want philosophy to foster what is highest in man, freedom, open-mindedness and what is uniquely human.

TN : I see a difficulty here in the tradition of departmentalization in the university. There is a tradition of having rather closed-in departments.

ZB : We are held in by scarcity of funds and facilities, but we are very much interested in a mixed course system to break up the departmental boundaries.

TN : What kind of research do you think is most important as far as philosophy is concerned?

ZB : I am very much interested in moral philosophy. I am interested in all subjects which help to develop an all-round intellectual capability. I like the emphasis on free thinking and on training the mind and inculcating things like being creative and open-minded and so on.

TN : Within moral philosophy, what research projects do you think are important to carry out within this department ?

ZB : Of course I am very much against indoctrination.

An important aspect of philosophy is that there is no limit of learning. Philosophers always learn. Philosophy is, as is said, a very generous mistress.

TN : Would you rather leave it to the students to suggest topics?

ZB : It is a free interaction. I give some topics, such as justice, free will, determinism, liberty, progress and so on. I always give the students a chance to suggest topics which they like to discuss.

This is a situation that I would like to develop to have an exchange of ideas. A teacher of philosophy should not just pass certain information to the students. He should see how they think and he should ask for arguments, valid arguments.

I always stress that it is not important *what* you think, but we want to be able to argue about what you think.

Is there a modern Islamic philosophy?

TN: Another question we want to ask you that we have not brought up yet, is the question of modern Islamic philosophy. Is there such a thing as modern Islamic philosophy in contrast to the history of Islamic philosophy?

ZB: I am trying to develop something in this area. I take my point of departure in Al-Ghazali. I really don't think that Islamic philosophy is merely a shadow of Greek philosophy. There are many novel ideas there which can be developed and which can be very useful.

TN: I read a paper recently by a Pakistani writer, Qureishi. He is a political scientist. He went through the early constitutional development in medieval Mecca.

His point is that you have a classical Islamic philosophy, but you have no modern development of it.

ZB: Yes, I would agree with this. This is a statement about the history of Muslim thought. It is an accident of history. After the flourishing period in the Islamic empire, there was this period of decline, stagnation if you like. We are now very much in the same situation as when Europe was awakened in Muslim Spain, where Ibn Rushd was teaching. His ideas were taken up in the University of Paris and were very influential in the Christian world. Some of the people in Paris who adopted his ideas lost their chairs, because they were regarded as heretics.

Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd and others brought Greek philosophy into the European culture. They had a tremendous impact on that part of the world. Similar things are happening now in the Muslim world. Inevitably this will bring about a great change. It will not be a matter of traditional Islamic constitution. A new thing will come up. This is almost inevitable. This is why I think that the University of Khartoum is a very interesting place. We are trying to work out a curriculum here in this department which combines Western and Islamic philosophy. Ibn Khaldoun is very interesting. There is an increasing recognition now of the importance of Ibn Khaldoun. He has worked out a political theory, which does not recognize any secular division between religion and other aspects of society.

Islam has always denied this dichotomy. It has a programme of social change, based on the evolution of man in a certain way. This is something which is very specific for Islam, the fact that Mohammed was not only a prophet but that he was also a statesman and a general.

- TN: You lecture in two universities, both here and in the Islamic University in Omdurman. How do these two universities compare in relation to these aims?
- ZB: The University of Khartoum has a very liberal tradition as you know. This is a very good thing. I want this to be retained. Omdurman's university is still a university in the making. Nobody is clear about what its character is. For the time being it is not at all clear in what way it is going to be developed. It has evolved from a traditional Islamic institution. Traditional Islamic institutions were unable to guide this kind of society. This is why Muslim societies declined long, long before the advent of Europeans. In this respect, one would not want to see developments along traditional Islamic paths. Institutions should develop along the same lines as Western academic institutions. They should in addition put emphasis on Islamic subjects and Islamic civilization.
- They should foster and promote the Islamic way of life. Some of the people in the university of Omdurman are very broad-minded, especially the director. Something interesting may develop out of the Omdurman university. This needs to be seen.
- TN: Could you think of yourself working in that university?
- ZB: I would prefer to work in the University of Khartoum because it is more like Western universities. I am not embarrassed to admit that Western universities are positive centers. There are many good aspects of those institutions. I would like our university to foster all the good things in Western universities together with moral conditions that are absent in the West.
- We don't want to go through the same history as Western universities.
- TN: Is there anything else that you think we should have discussed with you?
- ZB: Well, it was not clear at the beginning what your project was about, but I have been satisfied by your explanations. I understand that you are very much concerned with the concept of development and that you are not committed to any particular model or paradigm of development.
- TN: That is right. Development for us does not stand for any particular type of development.
- ZB: My last word will be that there has been an imbalance between environmental development and human development.

6.5. HASHIM HABIBALLA MOHAMMED (INTERVIEW)

Hashim Habiballa Mohammed was born in 1951 in Omdurman. He got his first degree from the Khartoum branch of Cairo University, and was then accepted as a postgraduate student in philosophy at the University of Khartoum (after having done a qualifying honours degree at the University of Khartoum, according to the regulations). He has also studied for one year and a half in England. When we interviewed him in 1981, he was working on a Ph.D. dissertation on the values of the Nubians under the supervision of Dr. Zakaria Bashier. For the time being, he has interrupted his Ph.D. studies to take a job in Abu Dhabi.

The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

A project in descriptive ethics

HHM: The Nubians are in a rather special situation. A major part of them has been uprooted from their homeland as a result of the building of the High Dam in Aswan. Their land had to be evacuated, because it was going to be submerged by water. They went through a massive resettlement in the Khashm el-Ghirba area in the Kassala province.

I employ a theoretical framework concerning morality which I have adopted with modifications from Dr. Tim Moore, who was teaching philosophy in this university. I carry on comparative analyses about the values which the Nubians used to have and their current values. Their way of life and their situations have changed. The result which I aim at ought to show that this kind of study is relevant for developments in the Third World. They ought to contribute to a better understanding of the concept of development itself.

Development should not be imposed from above

TN : How does your study relate to the concept of development?

HHM: There was a conference on development here in Khartoum in 1977. After that conference I have been thinking on the worthwhileness of contributing to the understanding of basic problems of development, particularly in my country but also in other countries. I use many of the ideas which have been expressed at that conference. I think

there is a big error made by the authorities which are now engaged in planning for the development of this country. They assume that the government and the experts are more able to formulate images of a better future and of a better life for the people. They assume that they know this better than other people.

I believe that the class who is now responsible for planning and policy-making for development is a controversial class. Their education and their experience have moved them away from the lives of the ordinary people. They don't know the thinking and the aspirations of the people in the country.

I think what has been left out are serious attempts to find out precisely what people want. I want to find out what people are actually involved in.

I don't think that a concept of development should be imposed from above. I think that everybody has in his mind an image of a better situation for himself and what should be done to reach his objective. The same goes also for his group. The national goals of development would be best served if the authorities help people to better themselves in accordance with their images of a better life. This is my basic idea. Development in this sense would become the actual fulfilment of the wishes of the people expressed in various ways, in the ways of life they are actually living and in their dreams. Starting from this basis you have guarantees that people will contribute to developments.

IAO: Thinking about values and what you discover with this kind of approach, do you think that you might end up by finding that people hold some values, which are bad, out of date, etc? Or would you say that whatever you will find is as good as the values of modern progressive people? In what ways do you think that modern ideas should influence your research?

HHM: Ideas of backwardness versus progressiveness do not occupy any significant place in my thinking. Consider supporters of colonization or imperialism for instance. They think that they have a right to impose themselves upon another group, because they are regarded by them as so backward and reactionary that they are unable to handle their own affairs. Within such ideologies critical judgments about the values of other people are significant and central.

My own thinking is directly opposed to this. I respect what people think and I believe that they know what is good for them.

HT: We have found that there is something which might be called "technocratic paradigms of development". How would you characterize

your own paradigm in comparison with the technocratic ones?

HHM: I think that one should start a developmental scheme by trying to come in touch with the hopes and desires of the people concerning development. This should be the context in which all development work should take place.

I think that scientists and experts should be employed to help to realize what people actually are dreaming about. Take for example the nomads. If part of their image of a better life is to have better grazing places for their animals and enough water, then it is the work of scientists and experts to try to help them to realize such wishes.

Here in the Sudan, unfortunately we have it working in the other way. We have the experts knitting their own dreams and sending them to the people. Sometimes by happy coincidence it may be fruitful to people around. For example building a sugar factory somewhere as part of a process of development might very well be of some help to the people living in the area.

Two examples

I will tell you about my experiences when I visited Khashm el-Ghirba. On my way back I went to the Rahad area. The Rahad Scheme is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of the government. When I was there I came in touch with the attitudes of the people towards the scheme. I found out that they look upon it in accordance with their own ideas on what they want. For example they view it as a new source of water for their camels. Water comes nearer. They used to utilize the water of the Rahad river. Now instead of going all the way to the Rahad river, they go a much shorter distance. They relate the scheme to their own ideas on what they wanted before, but not as a replacement to those ideas. None of them is thinking to be converted to a farmer and to leave his herd. They think that would be shameful.

TN: Where do the farmers come from?

HHM: This is a problem which the Khashm El-Ghirba scheme has suffered from until now.

The assumption was made that this scheme should be satisfactory to the Nubians. The authorities had a very simple idea about the Nubians living in the Northern Sudan.

They thought that the Nubians were farmers. They occupied a very narrow land along the Nile, which is not enough for them to practise agriculture as the main part of their economy. So the best thing to do

for them when they had to be moved, was to build a great agricultural scheme. This was done. The Khashm el-Ghirba scheme was well planned and well established. Still, none of the Nubians is now working there as a farmer. They get people from the West and from the South to do the farm work.

The production of the scheme is deteriorating all the time. I believe that the same thing is going to happen in the Rahad scheme. I am definitely pessimistic about its future.

TN: Do you know of any project of development in the Sudan that is based upon your ideas of development?

To the best of my knowledge I don't know any. My ideas have not yet got through to the people in power.

The 1977 conference was not attended by anybody who is responsible for developments.

A sympathetic approach to values

TN: Could you tell us about your methods?

HHM: My understanding of values and attitudes is that they are incorporated into particular ways of life and contributing to certain images of community welfare. They are actually forms of life.

They are always apt to change, when circumstances and situations change. My method is practical.

I have got some support from people in the department of anthropology. I had to go through the techniques of field work, conducting interviews, applying methods of observation, methods of collecting material and also methods of participation in groups. I spent a total of about one year of field work among the two groups: those who refused to migrate (about 12,000) and those who migrated (about 33,000).

What I am after is not just to establish facts, however. In dealing with the kind of problems I am working on, one ought to pull down the boundaries between different sciences. They should all work together and try to achieve a deep understanding of human phenomena. Various sciences can contribute. Not only sociology. Not only anthropology. Not only economics. All these could play together in order to achieve an understanding of such human phenomena.

My view goes against the views of traditional philosophers about what the field of philosophy is, what philosophy is concerned about. I regard my thesis as a challenge. I don't believe that philosophy should be confined to conceptual problems. I think that philosophy should tackle

reality as it is and to give answers to some of the questions which need to be answered.

TN: Do you work in ways which are different from those of social anthropologists?

HMM: Oh yes, definitely. Social anthropologists are basically lacking what you might call a theoretical framework, by which they could approach existing realities. That is why there is a tendency among social anthropologists to do philosophy. Lévi-Strauss, a leading French anthropologist, and also his followers, are mainly philosophers. They spend so and so much time in the field and then they find at the end that they have to do philosophy to gain comprehensive ideas about what they have been working on all these years. This is what I would like my work to contribute to, namely a breaking down of the boundaries between disciplines in the interest of understanding human phenomena. All the human sciences should be employed to understand such phenomena.

I have one chapter in which I discuss the philosophical background of my work. I have written it in a conventional philosophical fashion in order to give people the feeling that I am not simply throwing away philosophy as a discipline which could truly contribute to these problems. Philosophy has great relevance to the actual problems of people. Certain assumptions have been made by certain philosophers. These philosophers would have done what I am now doing if they had worked out these assumptions to their ultimate conclusions.

IAO: You want to find out what people feel and think about values. You are not concerned with the question whether it is good or bad. Is that correct?

HMM: Oh, yes. My approach might be described as a *sympathetic* approach. I look at attitudes and values in a particular group as something which is justifiable within their own cultural context. In this sense, I do not think that it would be useful to do this and then in the end conclude that they are mistaken, that what they are doing is wrong.

I am concerned with trying to understand all this. I am not one of those who say: "This is right and that is wrong." I belong to the people who say: "This is what people think and value. It can be explained within their own cultural context." The other way is to do politics in the traditional sense.

Changing values among the Nubians

TN: Could you tell us a bit about your findings about the values of the two groups of Nubians?

HHM: I have got some interesting findings. What is most interesting about the group which is now in New Halfa is the way in which they are managing the new situation, what they are actually doing to adapt themselves to the new conditions.

There is nothing to do. Whoever is a farmer there has no land to plant anything upon. But, quite interestingly, I observed that they managed to create new forms of economics. Passengers who leave the train at Wadi Halfa have to take a bus from the railway station in order to get the steamer which will take them into Egypt.

The first thing that surprised me was that it is so far away from the railway station that you have to take a bus to get there. The end station of the train could easily be brought nearer to the harbour.

I have a feeling that there is a kind of consent that the harbour should be that far away so that the local people could create a business of taking people from the station to the harbour. That has been agreed upon at the community level. Everybody knows that the harbour could be brought nearer to the station, but they keep it that far away so as to create an area in which business of some sort could be established. Then there is also another phenomenon, which is the fact that at the time when the steamer comes to the harbour, everybody leaves his job, government officials, teachers, or whatever. They all turn into merchants selling all kinds of things for two or three hours. No one asks: "Why do you leave the office? Why do you leave your work?" If you go to the office, nobody will be there. Everybody will answer you, as a very natural thing, that the steamer has just arrived from Aswan. Nobody is doing any other job than to buy and sell things. You could easily see that these new activities differ from the basic ideas, values and attitudes in the old days. I tried also to investigate the idea of being loyal to one's land. People tend to think that this would be the most acute moral issue, which was encountered by the Nubians, when decisions were made to take them from one place to another. When I came to investigate this group which is now in Old Halfa, I also wanted to know why they refused to go. It was surprising that everybody had got his own reasons. You get different reasons for not going. I recall one man, who is peculiar in many ways. He insists on growing something, although there is hardly any soil. What he was doing was

to grow vegetables and sell them in the market. Sometimes he put the seeds in places which were about to be flooded. (The big lake is still growing.) He would come one day and find that everything was under the water. Sometimes when he thought that the water was just about to spoil his vegetables, he took them away and tried to plant them a bit away from the water. I found that rather funny. We started to talk. He told me about his son and said that he was bitten by a scorpion and was taken to the doctor. I asked him : “Why do you go through all these troubles? As you are a farmer, you could go to Khashm el-Ghirba and become quite prosperous there. You seem to be keen on agriculture.” He said: “Do you know how the Arabs in the Khashm el-Ghirba area deal with the Nubians when they have a quarrel or dispute with them? They say: ‘Hey Nubian, bend down and sniff this land. Do you smell the ground of your grandfathers?’” He added: “ I would live in my country, even if it is bare stones, and respect myself. I will keep my dignity, rather than to go to any place where people could say things like this to my face: ‘Where do you come from? Your grandfathers are not buried here.’”

One would naturally say that those who insisted to stay have this idea of loyalty to the land. Those who have moved justify their migration by the fact that the land is no longer there. Some of them say: “I am not disloyal to Halfa, but it is under water, and I am not loyal to a piece of desert. ” They have a reasonable attitude. They say: “We cannot be loyal to Halfa, because Halfa is no longer there.”

Philosophy is both descriptive and critical at the same time

- HT: The critical function of philosophy seems to me to be one of its main functions or perhaps even its main function. To criticize the ideas of development which are effective at the national level seems to me to be a very important task for a philosopher here in Sudan. Do you agree?
- HHM : Definitely, yes. The people in the Centre for Development Studies should exchange ideas with people from various ministries which are involved in development planning. They should transmit views to them, the official agents of developments, about what development really is and what it should be.
- IAO : I have a question related to Hakan’s remarks about the critical function of philosophy. You have been engaged in this kind of research, trying to find out about values and you have restricted yourself to

these tasks. Does that not mean that you have cut out the critical function of philosophy?

HHM: I think also that philosophy should be critical, but I don't think that philosophy should be identified as a critical activity.

Empirical and theoretical research may very well lead to critical conclusions. If I carry out an investigation of the values in a certain group, applying appropriate empirical methods, this investigation is in itself critical about other ways of dealing with the same topic.

There are several ways of criticizing.

To provide an alternative is an effective way of criticizing other alternatives. You don't need an explicit criticism if your alternative is convincing. In my work there is a place for criticizing ideas of other philosophers about values. As to criticism of the people's ways of seeing things, I could present them personally in the face of people. But I could not support my value judgements except on the ground of my own personal way of assessing things. I believe that a criticism of this kind is fruitless. I could not improve in any way the quality and standards of what I am doing.

What I am doing aims basically at an adequate understanding of what that situation is, what people think, what they feel and what their aspirations are.

7. ISLAM AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

An Islamic institute, concentrating on the teaching of Arabic and Islam, was created in Omdurman in 1912. The first graduates from the institute got their certificates in 1924.¹ In 1964, the institute was transformed into a university, which was suppressed during the pro-Soviet Communist period immediately, after the revolution in 1969. In 1975, the Islamic University in Omdurman was re-opened and given the status of one of the four national universities in the Sudan.

The activities of the university lie wholly within the field of the human sciences, with an emphasis on the arts and theology. There are four faculties in the university: one for the humanities, one for social studies, one for Islamic studies, and a faculty for girls. The purpose of the university is to develop an Islamic spirit in all fields of studies. Our interlocutors talked about the possibility of introducing professional faculties (e.g. agriculture) at a later stage: "The philosophy of this university is to teach the students Islamic conceptions and to provide the society with people with an Islamic spirit in all fields, so we get Muslim administrators, accountants, lawyers, who know Muslim philosophy and religion very well."² The Koran is studied throughout the students' period at the university, the Tradition (al-Hadith), "Islamic principles", etc. for shorter periods.³

At the University of Khartoum, Islamic studies play a different but related role. The University of Khartoum was set up as a secularized university based on British models, whereas models of Islamic universities can be found throughout the Islamic world, e.g. in Egypt, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. (The first Islamic universities, which grew up round the mosques in the 9th and 10th centuries, do in fact antedate their first European counterparts by a couple of centuries.)⁴ A department of Islamic studies was established in the University of Khartoum in 1980. A committee had started to look into the possibility of creating such a department in 1976, but the issue was delayed for financial reasons. Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, which is now head of the department of Islamic studies at the University of Khartoum, saw a way of rescuing the plans by making drastic cuts in the proposed budget. He is on secondment from the philosophy department (which has a number of vacancies); in addition, he uses part-time teachers and has set up a network of collaboration with similar departments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The department of

Islamic studies at the University of Khartoum is intended to be a service department for the whole university with the task of conveying an Islamic perspective to the different fields of specialization. The head of the department of Islamic studies is also in charge of the mosque at the University of Khartoum which was opened in December 1981.⁵ In addition to the department of Islamic studies, there is also an older department of Islamic law (Sharia) in the faculty of law at the University of Khartoum. Both the Islamic University in Omdurman and the activities of the department of Islamic studies at the University of Khartoum are firmly based on the teachings of Islam. The paradigms of development, which can be inferred from Islam, differ from Western secularized paradigms of development in at least two important respects: as far as views on the nature of man is concerned, and as far as views on the nature of the world is concerned.

In the Western tradition, man has been looked upon as a controller of nature and a manipulator of other men and society in the technocratic tradition which can be traced back to figures like Machiavelli, Bacon, and Hobbes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The social scientist Dr. El Hadi Abdel Samad Abdallah at the Islamic University in Omdurman as well as the philosopher Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer at the University of Khartoum explicitly reject the view of man as a controller of the world. In the religious perspective, God is the master of the world, and man is the slave of Allah: "To be a Muslim is to be someone who surrenders to the word of Allah. Hence, to worship Allah in Islam means to do whatever you do observing that you are doing it as a worship to God," as Ibrahim Ahmed Omer formulated it. The world is seen as having a purpose; the religious perspective includes a teleological view of the nature of the world. And the task of the subordinate creature man is to try to find out about that purpose from a study of the religious teachings which contain the guidelines for the Islamic conceptions of development.

The interpretation of the implications of Islam for particular issues may differ from individual to individual. In the Islamic University in Omdurman, there is a strong emphasis on the separation of the sexes. Mixed teaching is avoided, the libraries are different or at least used at different times, and preferably the girl students should be taught by women teachers, although that is not practicable for the time being.⁷ The separation of the sexes is again based upon certain assumptions concerning the nature of woman and man, the idea being that men and women should develop differently because of their inherent differences of human nature.⁸ Some of the Western-educated Muslim university teachers we talked to, prefer to work in a framework like that of the University of Khartoum; others prefer a more traditional Islamic setup like that of the university in Omdurman.⁹

Both the Islamic University in Omdurman and the department of Islamic studies in the University of Khartoum are still in the building-up stage. The emphasis is on teaching, and the funds available for research are limited. In the Islamic University in Omdurman, one tends to find “armchair research projects”.¹⁰ Research on decentralization in the Sudan has, however, been carried out at the Islamic university with financial support from the Central Bureau for Decentralization (directly tied to the offices of the president of the country). Dr. El Hadi Abdel Samad Abdallah’s research interests focus on local government and regionalization in the Sudan. His description of what an Islamic perspective might amount to in a field like administrative science is indeed a good illustration of how some of the basic assumptions of an Islamic paradigm of development can be translated into a concrete research programme. His rejection of the view of man as controller and manipulator entails a major revision of the dominating paradigm in the field of administration sciences. In the Islamic counter-paradigm, which Dr. El Hadi is working at, examples drawn from the history of Islam can play an important role: (“the Prophet Mohammed was the best administrator that has ever lived”), and new forms of government administration can be conceived within the framework provided by the Islamic tradition (“political osmosis” as a key to local self-government).¹¹

NOTES

- (1) Interview with Hassan Alfatih Quaribullah.
- (2) El Hadi Abdel Samad Abdallah, section 7.4 below
- (3) See section 7.3 below.
- (4) al-Azhar, the oldest university in Cairo, was founded in 970 and al-Qarawiyyin University in Morocco was founded in 859. (Abdelhazi Tazi, *11 siècles à l'Université Qarawiyyin*, Imprimerie de Fedala Mohammedia, Morocco 1960; K. Vollers, "Azhar", *Encyclopedia of Islam*; Abdelhamid Muhammed Ahmed, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen al-Azhar und der modernistischen Bewegung in Agypten von Mohammed Abduh bis zur Gegenwart* (dissertation, Hamburg, 1963).
- (5) Cf. the beginning of the interview in section 7.5 below.
- (6) Section 7.5.
- (7) Cf. professor Mohammed Ahmed El Haj and Dr. Quaribullah, sections 7.2 and 7.3 below.
- (8) See esp. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer on this; section 7.5 below.
- (9) Besides the interviews in this chapter, see esp. the interview with Dr. Zakaria Bashier Imam in section 6.4.
- (10) Mohammed Ahmed El Haj, section 7.2.
- (11) See the interview in 7.4 below.

7.2. MOHAMMED AHMED EL HAJ (INTERVIEW)

Mohammed Ahmed El Haj graduated from the University of Khartoum in 1956. He worked in the local government in 1956-57. Then he got a scholarship from the University of Khartoum and went to the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, where he got a master's degree in 1960. He worked in the University of Khartoum from 1960 to 1962, and in Nigerian universities (Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello) for the next fifteen years. He returned to the history department at the University of Khartoum in 1977, and eventually became head of that department . In 1980, he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Islamic University in Omdurman. Mohammed Ahmed El Haj died in 1984.

The interview took place in 1981. The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

An Islamic university

TN : This is an Islamic university. How does it differ from the University of Khartoum in its conception?

MAH: This university springs from the soil of this country. This is to say that it should promote the culture of the people of this country, which is mainly Arabic and Islamic. The University of Khartoum is to a large extent a secular university, similar to British universities. The University of Khartoum is an imported institution. This university however springs from the soil of this country. Does this answer your question?

TN : Well, that is a beginning of an answer. How do you make a university of this kind ? It cannot be an easy task.

HT : How is this university related to other Islamic universities, like the Al Azhar University in Cairo, like other universities in the Muslim world, such as the Ahmadu Bello University in Kano, Nigeria?

MAH: To come to the first question. How do we go about making this university a national university? So far this university offers only humanities. It does not offer sciences. For that reason it is easier to work out a system, whereby teaching and research are oriented to Islamic philosophy. We have an Islamic philosophy of education, Islamic methods of education, and we are adopting this philosophy. We are adopting these methods.

Organizationally, we have a college for girls, which is autonomous to a large extent. This university education is not mixed. Girls are separ-

ated from boys. This fits in with the teaching of the Islam. In the University of Khartoum, the education is mixed. It is expensive to have the girls taught separately, but our religion demands that we teach the girls separately.

The position of women

TN : Why is it so important to teach the girls separately ?

IAO : In modern education, boys and girls are taught together. This is foreign to Islam. We have inherited the Western model. We are trying to go the Islamic way. In Islam the sexes do not mix as they do in the West. We are not saying in Islam they should not come together at all. But there are limits to the mixing. Traditionally the model of education in Islam is that boys and girls should be taught separately. The university in Omdurman has adopted this separation.

MAH: I believe that even in the West certain universities have separate colleges for the girls. Girls' education is separate in schools in the Sudan. A father may be a strict Muslim. He does not want his daughter to mix with boys. When it comes to the level of the university, we should have provisions for those girls who do not want to mix and who want to have separate education.

Such provisions did not exist before until the founding of this university.

A girl has a choice either to go to the University of Khartoum, where there is mixed education, assuming of course that she has the standard, or to come to the University of Omdurman, where there is a separate college for girls. I think it is very important to have such a provision in a Muslim society.

IAO : There are examples of girls who did not go to the University of Khartoum although they were qualified to do so because the mixed education there does not fit with Islam. Now they have a chance.

TN : I understand that there has been some protests among the girls in this university. What have they protested against ?

MAH: I was told that some years ago before I came here there were protests. But at the moment, whenever I speak to the girls, they say that they came to this university because there is separate education for the girls. Since I came here I have never noticed any protests among the girls against separate education.

IAO : Before you came, some girl students complained because they did not have the same conditions as the boys. They did not have the same library facilities.

TN : So there are separate libraries?

IAO : There is a main library. The boys have more access to it than the girls. The girls want to be given more time to use the library.

MAH: The girls have their own library in the college for the girls. Two days in the week they are allowed to come to use the central library. The boys are not admitted to it then.

TN : Do you have the same teachers for the boys and the girls ?

MAH: There is a problem here. Our policy is to have women teachers in the college for the girls. So far we have very few women teachers. We have sent some women away to qualify. They have not yet come back. In certain subjects, we still depend on men teachers from the boys' colleges. Our policy is to "womanize" the staff of the college of the girls. We are moving steadily towards that objective.

HT : May I ask you another question in relation to this and then go over to a different topic. Do the girls have the same courses and the same examinations as the men?

MAH: Yes, they do.

Research and higher education

HT : My next question is concerned with research activities in this university. In what fields do you do research ?

MAH: In the humanities.

HT : Are there particular fields that you concentrate on ?

MAH: We have four faculties; a faculty of arts, a faculty of social studies, a faculty of Islamic studies, and finally the girls' college. The girls' college has all the subjects that are studied in the other faculties.

All the subjects which are taught in this university are subject to research also.

TN : You are building up a new university. One would expect that the emphasis is on teaching at this stage. So I would like to ask you if research has already started ?

MAH: Yes. Would-be staff members of this university are trained in research to get a higher degree, so that they can be appointed as teachers. If a student acquires a first class or a second class degree in this university, he will normally be appointed to what we call a teaching assistant and immediately be sent to another university to qualify for a Ph.D. degree.

HT : Are they sent abroad or are they sent to the Graduate College of the University of Khartoum ?

MAH: Some of them go to the University of Khartoum, but that university does not always offer all the subjects we need. We also want to have more diversity. We have now students in England, in Egypt and in Saudi Arabia. When they all come back, there will be some diversity in their university backgrounds, which I think will be to the benefit of this university.

IAO : Do you have graduate courses?

MAH: Yes, we offer master's degrees in this university.

HT : In all subjects that are taught here ?

MAH: Yes, we do.

HT : How many postgraduate students do you have?

MAH: We have about twenty.

HT : What are the most popular subjects for higher studies.?

MAH: History and education.

HT : What about philosophy?

MAH: We do not offer philosophy here.

IAO : That is one of the minor subjects here.

MAH: We do not have a department of philosophy here. Philosophy is taught within another department.

IAO : For instance Dr. Zarroug at the University of Khartoum is teaching Islamic philosophy here.

HT : Have you, Ibrahim, taught philosophy here also?

Research resources

IAO : Yes, I have, but that was some years ago. May I ask you about your resources for research?

MAH: There is nothing in the budget for research in fact. That is why in the choice of subjects for research we try to avoid expensive projects, for instance projects which need field work and equipment. We usually offer what may be called armchair research projects.

TN : Is this going to change?

MAH: Of course we hope so, but this university and also the other universities in the country suffer from sharp cuts in the budget.

HT : Do you get money from other Muslim countries or do you get all your money from the government here in the Sudan?

MAH: Entirely from the government. Saudi-Arabia assists us with some staff, mainly Egyptians appointed to universities in Saudi Arabia and then seconded to us here. We have got about twenty.

The brain-drain problem

TN : How many staff members do you have altogether?

MAH: Now we have about 100 full-timers, but 16 of them are now seconded to Saudi Arabia. We offer them staff members, and they second Egyptians to come to us in exchange. We have also some part-timers coming to us from the University of Khartoum and the Khartoum branch of the Cairo University.

HT : Is it a problem for you that staff members go to Saudi Arabia ?

MAH : It is a very big problem. In fact this morning I was writing to the president of a university in Saudi Arabia because some members of our staff stay longer than the maximum time of four years that we allow them. They stay longer because they get higher salaries there. I wrote to the president of the Saudi Arabian university that they should cooperate with us and not allow a person to stay longer than the maximum period of four years.

Probably this will be our main problem in the future when our students sent abroad for higher studies come back. There are more than 100 of them. When they come back, they will be offered posts in Saudi Arabia, in Kuwait and in the Gulf states. We are going to be faced with the problem of how to stop people from going there. We are not trying to stop this completely, but to regularize it in such a way that they will be away only for a limited period and then come back.

I should have mentioned earlier that the language of instruction in this university is Arabic by law and so is the language of instruction in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf states.

TN : Not in all faculties, there are some faculties in which the teaching is in English in Saudi-Arabia.

MAH: Yes, for example in the faculties of engineering, but the humanities are taught in Arabic.

The standard of the students

HT : Talking about languages, how is the standard of English among the students in this university ? Do they know enough English to be able pursue higher studies in England and in USA for example ?

MAH: When you see the dean of the faculty of economics and social studies, you will find that his standard of English is excellent.

HT : In his case yes, but are you satisfied by the standard of English among the students at the undergraduate level in this university ? What do you feel about it ? You have a department of English here ?

MAH: Yes, and a department of French.

IAO : By the way, Hakan, I want to point out that the students admitted here have almost the same standard as the students admitted to the University of Khartoum.

In the past they used to take students of a lower standard than the University of Khartoum, but for the last few years we have a central board of admissions for all the national universities. The admissions requirements are the same for all these universities.

MAH: There is another thing, Dr. Ibrahim. We insist that the central admissions office only gives us students who put on the admissions form the University in Omdurman as their first or second choice, so that we are sure that they come to this university because they want to come here and not because they were not admitted to another university. Only the students who put the Islamic University in Omdurman as their first or second choice are admitted to this university. Their background, as Dr. Ibrahim said, is the same of course as the background of the students in Khartoum. They went to the same schools and they sat the same examinations for the Sudan school certificate.

Do you have any students who come from outside the Sudan?

MAH: Yes we do. We do have students from quite a number of countries in Asia and quite a number of countries in Africa. They are mainly Muslim students who come here to study Arabic and Islamic studies.

HT : Do they know Arabic, all of them, when they come here?

MAH: Some of them know some Arabic, for instance those who come from Nigeria.

With regard to Europe we have established a relation with the University of Edinburgh, whereby we offer to give them four scholarships for students to come here to study Arabic and Islamic studies. They have quite a large department of Arabic and Islamic studies in Edinburgh.

TN : Are you sending some of your students to Edinburgh in return ?

MAH: Yes, we send graduate students. There are two Ph.D. candidates from here there. They send undergraduates, and we send graduates.

IAO : Do you also have relations with other universities in Africa ?

MAH: We send some of our postgraduate students to Al-Azhar. This morning I signed a letter authorizing the dean of the Girls' College to go for two weeks to Al-Azhar, to see for himself how the girls' education is organized there. He will leave on Saturday.

HT : What about other Islamic universities ?

MAH : We also have relations with Saudi universities as I said earlier. We exchange staff members. Our university is a member of the Association of Arab Universities and also of the Association of African Universities. We attend meetings of these two associations. This is a way in which we are related to Arab and African Universities.

7.3. HASSAN ALFATIH QUARIBULLAH (INTERVIEW)

Hassan Alfatih Quaribullah has got a Ph.D. in Islamic studies from the University of Edinburgh on Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy. He was appointed lecturer in 1965, associate professor in 1974, and was promoted to a chair in 1979. He has held various posts as head of department, dean and deputy vice-chancellor in the Islamic University in Omdurman. He has been a member of the Advisory Committee of the Secretary-General of the Islamic Organization in Jeddah since 1973.

He has published two books in Egypt on themes from Islamic philosophy and Islamic studies.

The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

The idea of an Islamic university

H : The philosophy of this university is totally different from the philosophy of the university of Khartoum and many other universities. We think that we have a tradition and a special identity which has been built by the Koran and the Sunna. When we teach for instance philosophy, the background of teaching should depend on Islamic ideas. The teaching here is not only for the sake of knowledge. It is for the aim of serving the Koran and Sunna, and for serving the traditions of our people. We are a Muslim people, and we think that we have a special mission to build a new generation with its own identity. We are not imitating the Azhar university. We confine ourselves more to Islamic studies than Al-Azhar does. We want to serve our people by changing the society and to build a modern society on new ideas.

We want to change this society, and we believe we can do something for this modern society by putting it on the correct path of Islam. So this is why we started the same departments which you have in other universities. We have a geography department here. The aim of the department is totally different from the aim of other geography departments. We teach the same stuff here but from a totally different angle.

TN : What will the difference be in practice, say, in the case of geography ?

H : We teach here the geography of different countries, say, the geography of the Sudan. The Sudan has been dominated by different peoples, and Islam has also dominated the Sudan. We have to concentrate on the time when Islam dominated the Sudan. We do not ignore other studies, but we concentrate on Islamic countries more than on European

countries. This is different from the other universities because they are teaching the geography of European and other countries. We teach all the things which they are teaching, but the concentration will be on the Islamic territories. The department of documentation operates like other such departments all over the world, but we also want to help people to know something about the tradition of the Hadith and the Sharia. The English department and the French department teach literature. You can teach an ethical or an unethical literature. We concentrate on an ethical literature, which is Islamic or not Islamic.

T: Could you give some example, say from French literature or English literature.?

H : I can give you an example from Arabic literature, because I know this much better. Take a man like [undecipherable name, T.N.] who is well known in all the countries of Islam. He has some poetry which is ethical poetry and some which is very bad. We concentrate on the things which let people go the right way, not running after women because of the sexual side. but because she is a human being. And we teach our students subjects which are very essential for every department. They are the Koran, the Tradition, the Islamic principles and the Islamic creed. This is very essential for the Sunna tradition. A student has to study them whether he is in the English department or the French department or any other department.

TN : Throughout all the years ?

H : Not throughout all the years. The Koran is studied four years, the Tradition one year, commentary one year, Islamic creed one year, and Islamic principles one year. And together with these studies, he has to concentrate on his subject from the angle of Islamic philosophy.

The college for girls

HT : You talked about a college for girls?

H : Yes.

HT : Could you tell us a little more about that?

H : Yes. From the Islamic point of view we wish to build a society which is not running for sexuality. We have to give the chance for girls to study alone. I think they should be protected from the other sex. We want also to give men a chance to study alone. We think if we create such a chance for people we might get a good society which is controlled by the ethical point of view and not controlled by the sexual point of view. We think of the practice which we have seen in say American

and other universities. The problems of the students there or some of the problems is the sexual point of view. I used to study in such a university. The students' union of that university had to give girls a chance to sleep with boys in their rooms during the night, which is not accepted even by the English society, and we don't want to come to this here.

Towards an Islamic state

TN : You talked about the philosophy of the university. You said that you are working towards an Islamic state. Is that right ?

H : Yes, we are planning to build a new society, which depends on Islam. This is why we think that this university does not belong to the Sudan. It is now in Sudan, but does not belong to the Sudan. It belongs to all Muslims, because it is based on the philosophy of all Muslims. This is why we accept students from many other countries. We do have more than 20 nationalities here in the university, and we do have more than 20 students now from America. They are studying in different departments. We also have students from the Philippines, from Palestine, from Egypt and from many different countries.

TN : What about the difficult problems of the South in the Sudan ?

H : We think that people in the South have their own identity. The religion there is neither Christianity nor Islam. They have no religion. We also from the Islamic point of view think that we should not govern people if they are not happy with us . If they want to do some agreement with us to build our country as a common country we do not mind. We don't think that the Sudan is a country for the Sudanese. We think that we Muslims have no special country.

TN : Do you get any Southern students at all ?

H : Yes, we have some students from there.

TN : How many ?

H : Actually there are not more than two.

TN : What is the total number of students at the moment ?

H : About 1300. Yes. 300 girls and 1000 men.

Respect for othen religions

HT : I want to ask you about your views on the Coptic religion and other religions. What do you feel about them ?

H : I think the Christian religion comes from God and we have to respect that religion and we have to respect Jesus Christ and we have to believe what he is saying. If we oppose his ideas, we are not good Muslims.

We think that he was a messenger from God. But he is not actually a God, nor is he the son of God, He is a messenger like all other messengers. Moses is a messenger and Muhammed is a messenger.

It is difficult to accept the concept of trinity in Christianity. This is why we think that the Christians are believing in more than one God. The notion of a unified God is a problem, but to believe in Jesus as a messenger is no problem. Otherwise we don't have any problems with them. We respect them. As to the Jewish people, we respect their religion and we have to respect their religion. If we don't respect their religion, we are not true Muslims. In our creed we believe in all the messengers, and definitely Moses and Jesus are messengers for the Muslims too.

TN : Do you have any missionary activities in the South ?

H : No, we don't have. We think that we don't need to have missionaries there. We think that our creed is very clear for all people. We don't want to ask others to believe in what they don't like to believe in. So we are just telling people about our religion, if they desire to know it. If they accept or if they do not, that is up to them.

7.4. EL HADI ABDEL SAMAD ABDALLAH (INTERVIEW)

El Hadi Abdel Samad Abdallah got his first degree from the University of Khartoum in 1968 with philosophy and political science as his major subjects. He then worked in local government and was stationed in Nyala in the province of Darfur. In 1970, he took a diploma in public administration at the University of Khartoum. He returned to local administration in Southern Darfur, and in 1972 he was transferred to the Ministry of Local Government in Khartoum as a research officer in the field of decentralization. At that time, he published two pamphlets, one of them in English with the title "Aspects of local government in the Sudan". He also gave a lecture series in 1972 in the Academy for Administrative Sciences, which was established in 1971 by the Ministry of Local Government to train local government officers through in-service courses. He then continued his studies at the University of Pittsburgh, where he took a master's degree in public administration in 1977. He joined the department of administration in the Islamic University in Omdurman in 1979, and left again for Pittsburgh to do his Ph.D. He was acting dean of the faculty of economics and social studies in the Islamic University in Omdurman, when we interviewed him in 1981.

The interviewers are Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

A plea for decentralisation

HA : The main thesis in my dissertation is that regionalism is a fact of life in the Sudan. People attach themselves to certain tracts of lands, north, east, south and west.

Throughout our history government administrations have lived to cope with this regionalism. This is O.K. But my thesis is that regionalism itself cannot solve the problems of development.

Development is a matter of choices. People make various choices to better their lives. Only if people have enough capacities in their region to make a good choice to better their lot, regionalism is a good thing.

IAO: Could you elaborate on the point that people have abilities to better themselves ?

HA : People can better themselves without influence from outside. Since independence the government in the Sudan has not given people enough freedom to make choices to do what they wish. There are several impediments, financial and otherwise, that hinder these choices.

IAO : Whose fault is this ?

HA : The central government has throughout history not been able to give regions and localities freedom. There is a tradition of centralism in Khartoum, but many ministries have been dissolved according to the philosophy that regions and localities must have their own governments. But this happens often in appearance only. Take for example the Higher Council for Regional Affairs. This is actually the former Ministry of Regional Affairs. The same people are working there doing the same job. Only the name has changed from "Ministry . . ." to "Higher Council . . .". The tradition of centralism in Khartoum does not allow people in the periphery to make their own decisions at all.

IAO : How should the relationships between centre and regions be organized?

HA : Relations between localities can be organized on a regional level by means of an institution which does not intrude in the localities except by making general policies. Last week we have been discussing in the Council of Ministers the evaluation of regional governments. It does not make any sense to make institutions or set up a bureaucracy to supervise the regions. Let the regions themselves do their work but let the regional governments come here to Khartoum from time to time and together supervise their own work.

I believe in autonomy within control, that means I believe that control should be introduced in the periphery and at the centre by means of an institution in which local governments take part.

Political osmosis

IAO : Don't you think that there is a danger of disintegration here ?

HA : I don't think that such a fear is valid. A central body will be needed because the people in the periphery cannot cooperate. They cannot form a state. Therefore an organization will be needed which will not allow disintegration to take place. I call this conception *political osmosis*.

We draw the regions together to the centre through political means. The regions are supposed to implement major policies framed by the centre. The regional governors are members of the Bureau for Decentralized Government and also of the Sudanese Socialist Union. So major policies are made with their participation. They go back and implement policies which they themselves have participated in making. This system does not allow them to separate, because they are part of a central bureaucracy with coordinating functions. This is political osmosis.

Public administration and Islam

HT : How is your work related to the philosophy of this university?

HA : In this university, we are trying to imbue the students with Islamic morals and principles.

In management we teach both private and public administration. The philosophy of this university is to teach the students Islamic conceptions and to provide the society with people with an Islamic spirit in all fields, so we get Muslim administrators, accountants, lawyers, who know Muslim philosophy and religion very well.

HT : This is a national university catering for the manpower needs of the whole country. Will some of the people trained there be working in parts of the country, such as the South, where Islam is not strong ?

HA : A Muslim administrator or accountant or lawyer or . . . can serve the country very well even in the South.

We do not think that a person who is graduated from here should only be working among Muslims. Islam is a general philosophy of life. Islam has certain principles for humanity at large. The Islamic spirit is good for humanity as such.

TN : Have you integrated Islamic principles into the courses of public and business administration?

HA : Yes, we have courses on Islamic systems of government, on Islamic administration, on Islamic . . .

We try to compare what Islam provides us as Muslims with modern Western institutions and practices. We give courses on the Muslim conception of state and Muslim history, specially during the time of the prophet Muhammed, who was the best administrator that has ever lived. When I teach leadership in administration for example, I am not only teaching general principles of leadership, but I am talking about the good leaders among the early Caliphs. We can very well introduce our own Muslim ideas into our courses.

TN : When you wrote your doctor's dissertation, did you also try to insert Islamic elements into it?

HA : There is one chapter related to the Islamic way of life. Then there is the Islamic view of the Universe? I explained how one should fulfil his duties as a political man.

TN : How do you describe the role of man in the Universe in your thesis?

HA : I try to refute the Western philosophy according to which man is the master of nature. I think that man is not a manager and controller of this world.

God has given man the capacity to make use of the elements and opportunities in this universe.

We should treat the universe not as its controllers.

In the West, man is conceived of as a controller of the universe which uses all its elements to his own benefit. As a result a number of crises have arisen, in society, in environments, in . . .

But if man sees himself as a friend of other created things all of which are controlled by God he uses them in a rational way (in a non-technocratic sense of rationality). So this is my major thesis. I went from there to conceive of an administrator as being essentially an opportunist.

TN : What do you think about organizational theories like Herbert Simon's?

HA : They are based on the idea that man is a controller. I don't accept that. They are going on the wrong path.

IAO : Will you tell us about your research, since you came here?

HA : We are now doing some work for the regional government. I prepared a small paper in Arabic about the regional-central division. Another thing is a small paper which will be published tomorrow in an Arabic newspaper about autonomy in the university. I call it a myth to believe in full autonomy. The university cannot be separated from the society.

TN : What limitations do you see to autonomy ?

HA : Universities cannot be autonomous in the sense of self-administered and self-financed units. They are parts of a bigger context. Dr. Abdel Salah in the Faculty of Law, University of Khartoum, said that the university is autonomous in the sense that thoughts outside the university should not affect the thinking and activities of the students within the university.

I say no, we cannot have that philosophy and so one cannot flourish unless the university is influenced from outside. My second point is that a university has certain functions with regard to the development of the country.

The political authorities must have a say in how people should be trained. Universities must be very closely linked to the development policies in the country.

The authorities in the state should have a say on how the university is going to provide the new batches of economists, agriculturalists, social scientists and whatever.

IAO : The students of a university should not be at the mercy of parties and governments. Student politics and university organizations should not be dictated from outside. They should be the outcome of the life of the universities and their administrative units.

HA : I stress that there should be flows from outside the universities. So the university policies are invariably affected by whatever goes on outside. The dictates are there, whether we want it or not.

We cannot have a Chinese wall separating the universities from the outside world.

The university is an academic institution. This academic institution consists of people and people have connections outside the university. So intervention is unavoidable, whether it is formal or informal. The Sudanese Socialist Union is intervening informally. We cannot stop that. I am just trying to make an academic argument for interventions in universities.

In the regions there are also interventions because the regions form part of the whole political system. Decisions taken in the regions are to some extent dictated from Khartoum.

Research in the Islamic University in Omdurman.

HT : The National Council for Research plays some role, I suppose for the research activities within the universities. So that is some kind of governing.

HA : Formally we don't have a defined connection with this council.

Actually, the research activities in this university are not organized in a proper way. We have a committee for our research but we are trying to have a bigger council for research to organize the activities.

HT : What are your research priorities in this university?

HA : We now have a project of doing research on the regional administration. We have some financial support from the Central Bureau for Decentralization. We should have its secretary coming here to spend three or four months advising us on suitable research projects to be carried out in the fields which they will support financially. They should result in diplomas in development administration. We are now trying to work out research designs on regional administrations. We will give some introductory courses on administration and they will take the students to the field to collect data and then come back to analyse them. Hopefully we will have some worthwhile research in the University. Secondly we plan to have a journal called "Administration Society". Now professor Ahmed Al Haj is looking into this suggestion.

TN : The Vice-Chancellor told us that you have no research funds.

HA : We have a promise from the Central Bureau of Decentralization that

we will get 100.000 Sudanese pounds for the projects on decentralization . The Minister is studying this project.

TN : Does this come from the budget of the Ministry ?

HA : Part of the fund given for research on decentralization was given to the University of Khartoum two or three months ago.

TN : Where does the money come from ?

HA : From the offices of the president.

7.5. IBRAHIM AHMED OMER (INTERVIEW)

Ibrahim Ahmed Omer got his first degree in mathematics and physics in the faculty of science at the University of Khartoum. He then took a degree in the faculty of arts with philosophy as his major subject. He was appointed teaching assistant in the department of philosophy and went to Cambridge for higher degrees. He took a Ph.D. in Cambridge after having spent four years there (on the deductive-nomological model of scientific explanation). He became a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Khartoum in 1972. In 1978, he became head of the department of philosophy. He spent nine months at the research centre in the Faculty of Sharia in Makka in 1979. Upon returning to Khartoum, he saw to it that the plans for a department of Islamic studies were realized, and started the new department in 1980. The department of Islamic studies is intended as a service unit not only for the faculty of arts but for the whole university. As an interviewer, Ibrahim Ahmed Omer is one of the main contributors to the present volume; and he helped to arrange many of the interviews in Khartoum. In the following, he plays the role of interviewee for a change. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm. The interview took place on December 3, 1981, the day before the inauguration of the university mosque in Khartoum.

Islamic studies in the University of Khartoum

IAO: Tomorrow we are going to open the mosque of the University of Khartoum. The Vice-Chancellor has already taken the decision that the administration of the mosque will be under the department of Islamic studies. So I am now having a chance of saying how a mosque should play a role in the life of the university. This must be considered very important because the University of Khartoum has been looked upon as a model of a Western university. And the University of Khartoum has had a very significant role in the Sudan. It still plays that role. It is also important, I think, because now we are seeing much interaction between the Islamic world and Europe, America and other parts of the world to make this fruitful, we very much need to have people who are not unfairly critical of us, who would not put words into our mouths as much as listen of what we are saying, and then judge. I hope the University of Khartoum will play a very important role in clarifying the possibility of co-existence between different religions, different cultures, different ideologies, without one

being or having something against the other just because one is ignorant about what the other holds or just because of unfriendly propaganda. So I think the department of Islamic studies is the core, insha' allah, of wide-ranging work in the life of the University of Khartoum and in the life of the Sudan and as such in the life of this internationally important area.

TN : What about the charge of duplication in relation to the Islamic university in Omdurman?

IAO : I think my answer to this can be in two points. First, so long as it is religion, there can be no duplication, because the point of having religion, accepting it, is to live according to its teachings. So we cannot say that a University of Khartoum student should not know how to live, because students of the University in Omdurman know how to live. So I think if we take Islam seriously, or religion seriously, it is something which all believers should know fairly well irrespective of their institution. I used to teach philosophy in the Islamic university in Omdurman, and I think it is important that people should know how to think systematically; they should know how to use logic and presuppositions and analysis. Even if the whole world knows this, it is no reason that the last one in the world should not know it. This must be something which should be learned by all people. So any Muslim, I think, should have this kind of training. And therefore I think it is good that we are doing it in the faculty of arts. And it is good that we are doing courses in other faculties, without stopping people from doing their professional work. This is one answer.

The second answer is that my conception of the department is different from what I see happening in the Islamic university in Omdurman. I don't think there is any harm in saying that people understand principles differently, whether these are philosophical or religious or otherwise. And there is no harm in saying that people in going around implementing these principles differ. Our understanding of Islam, I hope, is very close, but we should allow for the differences. This justifies a department in the University of Khartoum, with the traditions of the University of Khartoum, with the kind of connections we have in the University of Khartoum, with other universities.

An Islamic conception of development

HT : I would like to ask you a question about the relation between Islam and development, about the notion of an Islamic philosophy of development. What do you think about this?

IAO : I think all philosophies of development are concerned with man, well, all of them should be concerned with man. The difference lies in their conception of man. Now the Islamic conception of development starts for me from basic Islamic facts that give the Islamic point of view concerning Man and the Universe and their relation to God. One of these facts is that man is the slave of Allah. I think this Islamic conception of slavery which might be very strange to Western thought, is the gate of emancipation from human domination. When you are the slave of Allah, you emancipate yourself from any other kind of slavery. Secondly, because your conception of man is so linked with your belief in Allah and in the hereafter, you tend to arrange your priorities in a different order. I have always been of the opinion that different philosophies should be rewritten as differences in priorities, rather than absolute points of view each trying to claim the whole truth. There has been an ordering of priorities within each philosophy. The differences of opinion are just differences of ordering the priorities. In Islam priority is given to the words of Allah. According to this the goods of this life come second to those of the other life. This is not to say that this life has been belittled or that what we should do in it should be ignored or we should not try to seek a good life here. It only shows that if I may use that philosophical concept – our utility is broader than just what is useful for human beings in this world. We as Muslims do what Allah would like us to do first. But this itself is the guarantee that my deed is the best for my country, and the best for myself. So this is one basic idea upon which a conception of Islamic development should be ultimately built.

An Islamic conception of development should take into consideration the kind of coherence which you find in Islam. We say that Islam is a religion of the oneness of God; there is only one God. The implication of this belief on the Islamic system is that there is coherence between its different aspects. And hence wherever you try to take one portion, and look at it as something completely independent and completely self-sufficient, you miss the point. It can never be done. You must always know that whatever divisions you make are only for pragmatic reasons. Ultimately, it has a relation with other

things. We don't think, in an Islamic conception of development, that economics or social life or political life or any other form of practice of human beings is independent of the others.

So whatever aspect of life you take, you cannot fully understand nor healthily develop if you try to dislocate it from the others.

An Islamic conception would also, I think, make use or not "make use" *depend* ("make use" is too weak) of the fact that this universe and human beings have been created with a purpose, and people have not been left altogether for themselves. They have been given guidance from Allah. So it would be foolish, if I am a believer, to forget about the guidance. It will be foolish to live and work as if I can do everything by myself, if there are some directives about these in the Koran. I myself would be making a gross mistake if I go on using analytical methods or experimental methods in a certain topic, ignoring whatever facts are mentioned about that in the Koran.

An Islamic conception of development, I think, should start by understanding the problems or the phenomena of the society from a digestion of what the basic teaching of Islam says. Ideally, I should start by finding out what has been said about this, because if there is anything said about it, then for me as a Muslim, it must be true. Then after that, most likely having found the directives, you are asked to use your intellect to the full and use your senses to the full, within the framework of those directives.

A "coherentistic" conception of development

IAO : How is this different from other conceptions of development? I think that in other conceptions, there are no directives which are given this place which are given to the Koran and the Sunna. The other conceptions of development, I think, would try to find their methods for investigation from what the human intellect gives, from the human experience, and from other things. There is no place for also incorporating an element from divine sources. I think other conceptions of development have been in many cases one-sided, sometimes specializing in economics, sometimes specializing in other sides of the developed human being. The Islamic conception of development is based on this "coherentistic" (if I may so) notion of development. Well, this is generally how I think about it.

Of course, I must emphasize here that in the question of formulating what Islamic Development is I am a beginner. I am open to any kind of discussion or change that is reasonable. However, I think I am a devout believer.

What does it mean to worship Allah ?

TN : This was an admirably clear statement. There is one point which I should like to elaborate upon, and that is your first priority, viz. to worship Allah. What does that mean?

IAO : "Islam" itself means to surrender. To be a Muslim is to be someone who surrenders to the word of Allah. To know that nothing in this universe has been done uselessly or without a grand purpose and that you are part of this. Hence, to worship Allah in Islam means to do whatever you do observing that you are doing it in obedience to God. If I teach in the university, I must know that I am doing this as part of my worship to God. If I pray my five daily prayers, I am also praying to Allah. If I dig a canal or pave a road, I should do it as worship to Allah. So whatever I do, my first regard is that this would be first and foremost obedience to Allah. And as a consequence of that it benefits people.

The Koran says that corruption in the world has been because people deviate from the path of Allah. Whatever you do in the straightforward path of Allah would be to the benefit of people. So by worshipping Allah or by taking that into consideration, I also mean that my reward is not going to depend on you, the people who benefit from this. My intention should always be to do it for the sake of Allah, and the reward for this is mainly in the hereafter. It has been promised by Allah that if you do it in this sense, you will have reward here and now as well as there.

Segregation of the sexes ?

TN : I should like to ask you a question which came up both times we were at the Islamic university in Omdurman, both when we talked to Qu-aribullah and when we talked to the Vice-Chancellor. That is the question of segregation of the sexes. How do you look upon that ?

TAO: I take it that in Islam there is no segregation, because segregation actually means a kind of injustice being done to one part.

I look upon Islamic society as a society where both man and women share and take part in almost, not all, but almost all aspects of life. Segregation is a term which has been used by the West in order to describe the situation of women in the Islamic world before they came in. I believe that a society can freely accept that women have or specialize in particular aspects of social life, whereas men specialize in others. The fallacy, I think, has been to think that by specializing you

are degrading women. If a society really honours or respects women, this does not mean that the woman should take part in every kind of activity, nor that social life should be by mixing the sexes at all times and in all places. The respect of woman should come from how we treat the basic issues concerning her as a human being and in her relation not to man but to Allah. Just as man does not derive his respect from his relation to woman but to his Creator.

In the West, boys and girls can befriend each other, they can live with each other. But if we believe that sexual intercourse before marriage is something evil, because marriage is the only proper way of having intercourse, then the society is required not to allow situations where sinful sexual intercourse could take place. Hence a situation that would lead to this should be guarded against. Whatever 'segregation' which we have between men and women does have this background; we want to do away with situations where people can fall into sin. We believe that sin is the worst action which can be done. I have said before it is not our first priority to satisfy lusts in our life-time; more important is to have peace with God, with Allah. And Allah said this is sin. So we want to curb that. I think all true religions, like Judaism, like Christianity, can understand this very well. But now the West cannot see it because they are far from the true religions.

And thus they call it "segregation", well, sometimes even worse than that.

TN : Why should woman specialize in certain fields and men in other fields ?

IAO : For the simple reason that it is best for society. It is not just a question of being best for women, best to man, it is as well a question of society as a whole. When I do something and I do it in a good manner, then, it is not only my person who benefits from that, but the community. I think men and women should specialize in particular aspects if that leads to the best for the community. I think the point of having women caring after the children is not only the best for the women, but for the children, and the society.

HT : Could I ask you another question? This is about the idea of self-fulfilment. If you do something you are good at and that is useful, then this will be good for yourself to do that, and it will also be good for others.

IAO : Yes, but if a woman is really a Muslim, she should know that the best satisfaction is to find Allah's path. So I think what constitutes self-fulfilment cannot be separated from the ultimate goals in which the human being believes. If a Muslim woman thinks that she should be

satisfied with something which only gives her the pleasure of this life, I would say that she is not well trained in Islam, she is not well aware of the principles of Islam. I take it that what suits self-fulfilment depends very much upon what you believe.

Many people do not choose their walks in life as the result of very deep thinking. Many of the steps we walk in life, we take without careful calculations. If someone sits down and thinks deeply about what he wants, he must bring in his highest principles in life, and let them play a role in whatever he does. And that is also an aspect of what I mean when I say that whatever you do must be worship of God.

Understanding the Koran*

HT : May I ask you a question – I hope you will not be offended by it. The Koran was written – well, let us say, the Koran did not exist before 600 A.D. And it came into existence, as we see it, some time between 600 and 700. One should then expect that as far as it refers to society, it refers to contemporary society in Arabia, in Makka and Medina at that time. And then one could ask if what was good for such a society will remain good for the modern societies?

IAO : Well, the answer lies in changing your word “written” to “revealed”. Because if we believe that it is revealed, and the Koran has been revealed by Allah, and Allah created the world and knows every bit of it from the day he created it to the day it ends, then I think the answer comes straight out. It is very easy for such a creator to make that possible. And second, we are saying that there is always place for the human mind and for the human being to understand things better. You remember, I have made a rather bold comparison between nature and the Koran and Sunna. And I said that just as nature is there, and it has been there since man began to think about it, and every now and then man understands it better, similarly, the Koran and Sunna are there and people ever since are trying to understand them better, and could understand them better.

My view is that these are the gifts for human beings from Allah, nature and the Koran and the Sunna. Understand them, think about them, find guidance from them. I think the totality of knowledge we have from them can never stop so long as they are sources which Allah gave to us.

And I must repeat that the whole thing depends upon the fact that the Koran and Sunna are revelations .

- TN : In a number of our interviews this time, people have emphasized that you must listen to the people, to what they wish, and that planning should start from below. How does this fit into your conception and your list of priorities ?
- IAO : It fits very well, actually. If we take the modest project we are working on, that we are interviewing people in the Sudan, trying to find out what they want, trying to find their values, trying to find how they think, trying to find what they want and what they don't want, trying to find how to encourage them to better their lives – this is what we are doing actually, currently – I am convinced that ultimately, in the case of the Sudan, the values which are there of the people of the Sudan will coincide with what the Koran will tell them. *

* The themes of this talk have also been dealt with in a video-interview which took place in September 1984: *Ibrahim Ahmed Omer interviewed by Tore Nordenstam*, Video – Tape PS 6, available from the Dialogue-Project, Department of Social and Economic Geography, University of Lund, Sweden.

8. THE UNIVERSITIES IN JUBA AND WAD MEDANI

8.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

The background for the new universities in Juba and Wad Medani includes a number of imbalances in the educational system of the Sudan and in the development of the country in general. Some 70% of the students at the University of Khartoum studied science-based subjects in the mid-seventies. Yet the majority of the students enrolled in higher education in the country were to be found in subjects like the humanities, law, commerce and social science. The explanation is the great number of students enrolled in the Khartoum branch of the University of Cairo : in 1975-76 it had 9,547 students studying commerce, law and arts (and 23 students in its newly established faculty of science). The enrolment in the University of Khartoum at that time was more than 7,000 students. The Islamic University in Omdurman had some 1,000 students then in its three faculties of arts, Islamic studies and social studies. The total number of post-secondary students in the Sudan in the middle of the seventies was about 20,000. ¹ On a national basis, it was felt that there was a need for expansion in the technological and natural-scientific fields. At the same time, there were great imbalances between the regions, notably between the Southern region and the rest of the country. The civil war, which came to an end in 1972 after seventeen years, had left the Southern region in chaos. The educational system broke down completely in the mid-sixties. Per capita income in the South was about half of the national average in the middle of the seventies.

Literacy in the South was just over eight per cent, according to the 1973 compared to some twenty per cent in the country as a whole. Unemployment in the South was estimated to be over 15% in the South ten years ago, compared to around 4% in the North. ²

Against this background, plans were made at the beginning of the seventies to establish new universities in the South and in the Gezira with an emphasis on regional development. The areas in question are mainly agricultural; hence the decision to put a special emphasis on rural development in the two new universities. The University of Khartoum had been established on a British model with a number of professional faculties grouped around a core of liberal studies (the art subjects). The University of Juba was planned as a complement to the well-established university in the capital. The core of the new university in the South is the college of natural resources and environmental studies. In addition, there are colleges of education, of economic and social

studies and a college of adult education. The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Juba at the time of our visits there, professor Abu Zeid, characterized the new university as “probably the first environmental and developmental university on the continent, perhaps in the whole world”.³

In the University of Gezira, which was founded at the same time as the University of Juba in November 1975, there is a similar emphasis on rural development. In a research plan for the faculty of economic and rural development in the University of Gezira, dated February 1978, the university is characterized as “essentially and basically a research institution”.⁴ The focus of the research activities of the economic faculty should be the Sudanese rural sector. The areas most urgently in need of research, according to that statement, include “the distributional implications of the development process”, that is the growing inequalities which are a concomitant of development of the type which has been dominating in the post-war period; “land tenure and land distribution”, including studies of the need for land reforms; “social welfare and/or basic needs” :with reference to the concept of basic needs launched by the ILO (including minimum requirements of a family for private consumption and essential public services),⁵ it is proposed that development strategies based on that concept “need a lot of ironing.” It is already conceded by the advocates of the concept that not all societies are sufficiently homogeneous to allow the specification of a uniform bundle of basic needs, both qualitatively and quantitatively. In a country like the Sudan this qualification becomes even more pertinent.”⁶

National integration is one of the vital problems for a culturally diversified country like the Sudan. The problem was a particularly pressing one in the early seventies immediately after the end of the civil war. The formula adopted for the new universities in the South and in the Gezira was to make them national universities with special obligations to the regions they are located in. In the plans for the University of Juba from 1967, it was stressed that “The University shall be an Instrument of National Integration” and that “admission shall be open to qualified men and women nationwide; but special consideration will be given to citizens of the region as this is justified by the special circumstances of the southern region”.⁷ Accordingly, admission requirements have been lowered in the case of a number of women students from the South and a number of “mature students” from the southern region have been accepted to the university. (This has led to tensions in the students’ union; cf. the talk with Moses Macar below.⁸)

The emphasis in the new universities in Juba and Wad Medani as well as in the Islamic university in Omdurman has so far been on undergraduate teaching and the construction of buildings, etc. (Cf. the interview with Moses Macar,

who gave us a lively description of the difficulties of building a modern university based on high technology in the environment of the Southern Sudan.⁹ In the University of Gezira, there was a research plan for the faculty of economics and rural development, when we talked to the Dean of that faculty a few years ago, with an emphasis on the study of social and economic effects of development projects. The 1976 plan for the University of Juba includes plans for laboratories and research station, a university farm and a veterinary clinic. Plans for the future included experimental fish ponds, forestry stations and wildlife sanctuaries, and research centres for staff and students in strategic places throughout the region.¹⁰ In the first few years of its existence, no detailed plans were made for the research side of the University of Juba. The time had not come yet to set up a research committee, and no part of the budget was earmarked for research. Some research was carried out by individual staff members, but the possibilities to carry out research were very limited not least because of practical difficulties like lack of petrol and electricity.

In our talks with staff members and administrators at the universities in Juba and Wad Medani, we found a sharp awareness of the importance of the sensitivity and perceptiveness criteria of development. Development programmes ought to be sensitive to the legitimate interests of the people who will be affected by the programmes and perceptive in the sense of paying attention to the salient features of their areas of operation.¹¹ The general declarations in the volume edited by El Sammani A. Yacoub are followed up by similar statements by his successor as Vice-Chancellor, professor Abu Zeid : “We believe in the rational development of our resources, both renewable and non-renewable resources. We don’t want to commit the same mistake that was made elsewhere, especially in industrialized areas.” “Our role is modernization, if you wish, in a traditional way.”¹² Similarly, the veterinarian Dr. Joseph Awad emphasized the importance of *showing* what can be done : “If you have a university farm, where the animals are poorer than the animals of the man in the village, you are not justified to say : ‘I am a qualified animal production man’. Then the man in the village says : ‘Well, look at you animals and look at mine.’ So we must be very pragmatic, we must listen to the man in the village. This is my motto : I found it in the library. It is from an ancient poet :

“Go in search of your people, love them, learn from them, learn with them, serve them, begin with what they know and build on what they have.”¹³

NOTES

- (1) El Sammani A. Yacoub, ed., *The University of Juba : Background, Concepts and Plan of Action*, mimeo., 72 pp., Khartoum, December 1976.
- (2) *Op.cit*
- (3) Cf. section 8.2 below.
- (4) University of Gezira, Faculty of Economics and Rural Development, *A Proposed Research Plan for the Faculty*, mimeo., 9 pp. Khartoum February 1978.
- (5) Cf. chapter 1, section 2 above.
- (6) *A Proposed Research Plan for the Faculty*, p. 4.
- (7) El Sammani A. Yacoub, *op.cit.*, p. 45.
- (8) Section 8.4 *infra*.
- (9) Section 8.4.
- (10) *The University of Juba : Background, Concepts and Plan of Action*, p. 41.
- (11) See chapter 1, section 2 above
- (12) See the interview in 8.2 below.
- (13) See 8.3 below. Cf. section 1.2 above.

8.2. A. ABU ZEID (INTERVIEW)

Abdel Rahman Abu Zeid is a graduate of the faculty of arts in the University of Khartoum, and has done postgraduate studies in Canada. He has taught at Makerere University in Uganda. He was secretary-general of the newly established University of Juba when the Vice-Chancellor El Sammani A. Yacoub died in an air crash in 1977. A. Abu Zeid then became the successor of Dr. El Sammani. He is now (1985) secretary-general of the National Council for Higher Education.

The interview with A. Abu Zeid took place in January 1979.

The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

An environmental and developmental university

AZ : The philosophy of this university is unique in that it is a little off what is traditionally known at universities. We try to tie higher education to the actual needs of the country and to the environment.

TN : You say the country, do you mean the South ?

AZ : The southern Sudan as well as the rest of the Sudan. We train for the whole country as we grow, but we emphasize the development of trained personnel for the southern regions of the Sudan. It needs more trained people than the rest of the country. It is at a disadvantage due to what has happened in the past. We try to make up for all the deficiencies in man-power and environmental requirements in the southern Sudan. To my knowledge it is probably the first environmental and developmental university on the continent, perhaps in the whole world. Yes, we notice that departments have been created for environmental studies, ecological studies, around the world, but there is no other university that is entirely devoted to these particular tasks. We believe in the rational development of our resources, both renewable and non-renewable resources. We notice elsewhere in the world that these have been pinched and irrationally utilized. This has been a big disadvantage not only for the countries concerned but also for this country. We don't want to commit the same mistake that was made elsewhere, especially in industrialized areas. This is what we mean by being "environment-conscious". We are "developmental" in the sense that we tie our academic profile to the real and actual and statistically supported man-power requirements of the region. And we try to develop the region and similar regions in Sudan. Unlike

other universities in the Sudan we are entrusted with the task of modernizing essentially traditional societies in that part of our country, the Southern region, which in the past was deprived in terms of education and social benefits. Our role is modernization, if you wish, in a traditional way. It is unique in being environmentally conscious and developmentally oriented. Of course we have just newly started, but it is our task to play this role and we are determined to play it to the full extent and to the full limits of our restricted resources.

Tradition and modernization

TN : If you want to modernize a society which is traditional in the way societies are in the south, then you will encounter a number of problems of course. How can you modernize without doing damage to traditional values?

AZ : Of course there are various concepts of modernization. To a western educated person, modernization will mean something, to somebody who is steeped in African culture it means something else, to somebody educated in socialist countries imbued with Marxist philosophy it means a third thing. And between those three concepts, you also find other varieties of orientation as to the meaning of modernization. If I give you one, it would remain mine, but it will affect the university also in its orientation, in its responsibility for development and in the direct activities of the university. I hope mine will be the one that will be useful. We try to modernize the agricultural sector in the Southern region in a meaningful way without too much damage to the traditional ways of the people. We want to put at the disposal of agriculturalists the sum-total of knowledge and research being done in these fields, specially in arid, semi-arid and tropical zones. We try to modernize again our cattle-rearing techniques, for the benefit of making cattle raising a commercially viable enterprise, rather than the haphazard way in which it is done today. We try also to modernize our educational techniques, to make them efficient according to our requirements in the kind of educational system we need by putting at the disposal of our young men and women trained personnel who will lead the educational processes. What I am saying to you is not necessarily a novel and unique idea about modernization. But if you understand the state of the economy, the state of agriculture, the state of veterinary science in the region, you will appreciate what I am talking about. Our people in the region are undernourished and

underfed. Yet the land is fertile, the land is rich, all the resources are there, the water is there. Yet the people are still engaged in traditional agricultural methods at a subsistence level. At times it is even below such a level. There are sometimes famines. This will need the attention of the university.

TN : Have you met with any resistance against modernization; do you expect to meet such resistance ?

AZ : The resistance will come only when the land tenure system is affected. If you want to make land available for agriculture in a tribally owned area, you may in fact encounter resistance as we sometimes do around the Juba area. Sometimes the resistance comes simply because traditionally this is the way you plant your crop and this is the way you raise your cattle, this is the way you fish and so on. Where you are not quite receptive to new techniques and methods is especially when these new techniques and methods are a little complicated or presume a certain level of education or capital. Now, that might come as an unconscious attempt to resist the introduction of the new techniques. But there is no such thing as that the whole tribe stands up and says : We don't want these new things. On the contrary, they seek our support and the support of the ministry concerned. They try to improve the health of their cattle. They try to improve their agriculture, the fishing techniques and so on. They are increasingly becoming aware of the necessity of healthy cattle; cattle is the major part of the wealth of the tribes. They also recognize the need for agricultural improvements. They also recognize the needs for improvements of their own health, for housing techniques and so on. But an unspoken resistance will be there, because it is tied to the traditional conceptualizations of these matters. With efforts and skilfully trained personnel these things will be taken care of.

Traditional art

TN : What about the traditional culture, that part of culture that is not tied to the natural resources? I am thinking about language, oral literature religion and so on, will you have departments for the study of such things?

AZ : As I said we are a new university still. But it is my intention to develop among our own students and staff an interest in the various cultural themes available in the region. That is why we are developing the theatre. We are developing an interest among students and staff in

collections of songs, poetry and so on. It is our intention to develop within the college of engineering, which we hope to be able to establish within 2 years, a school for design, to try to take traditional cultural themes in terms of design and apply them in a refined, advanced way to the making of furniture. I think our people will later on recognize in it a value and beauty that is equal to the value and beauty of Scandinavian design.

TN : Now how can you accommodate the study of oral literature within the framework of the five colleges?

AZ : This will be done essentially in the college of social and economic studies and the college of education. We should not just collect everything. What is required for the historian might not be equally required for the economist. What is required for the educationalist is different from a social anthropologist. This is very essential and urgent for us, but it is also a very expensive enterprise. This is a very vast region. We need vehicles for it. We need audiovisual techniques, recording techniques, archive techniques. For the retrieval of all this material we need a documentation centre, we need staff for it, who are also educated in the techniques and who are sensitive to the value of modern collecting. It is a major undertaking for a university to do it with a real hope of success. But for a small university it is a staggering undertaking.

Research and development

HT : Do you study development projects and schemes made for this region in Khartoum? Do you criticize them?

AZ : There are usually two development plans, one for the region and one for the whole Sudan. The region had its first six year development plan which was started last year . We will need another four or five years to see the outcome of this first six year development plan. Sudan has also as a whole a six year development plan. Within the national six year development plan, there are items for the development of the region which are centrally controlled, handled and financed. There are others which are purely left for the regional government to handle with subventions from the central treasury, since the region gets its finance from the central treasury. Those areas outlined in the constitution of the Addis Ababa agreement, which should have a semi-autonomous status, include the southern Sudan. And that is where the university wishes to come in. In fact we have been invited to come in and try to put the outcome of our research at their disposal.

HT : Does that mean that various staff members look into those plans and express their views ?

AZ : Yes, we do. When we are formulating our academic programme, the six year development plan for the region is before us. When we are training in the college of education we follow the six year development plan: What is needed? When we are formulating the academic programme for national resources we want to know that they are doing, which projects they intend to implement. Accordingly we devise the intake of students, the formulation of the academic programme, with a view of helping. We might not be able within this six year development plan to be effective, but towards the end of it we will have produced the first batch of our graduates, and then they will assume their role in the economy and in the general activities in the region. But they will be trained in such a way that they will not need a year or two to understand what the government is doing. They will already be familiar with the actual problems in the region because of the practical nature and the interdisciplinary nature of our training. That's why critique of the plans and of the performance of the economy are always forthcoming since we study them as we train. as we do research.

Research in the University of Juba

TN : Have you started a Ph.D. training programme for your future staff ?

AZ : No, not yet. I do not believe the university is equipped at this stage for that. For the Ph.D. level you need equipment, literature, and so on. The university has not built up its library and laboratories to that level yet. Most of the people we are training in our staff development plan are sent to neighbouring countries or to Europe.

TN : Have you got any research projects started?

AZ : Yes, we have a number of things going on. They are still early. They are still tentative. They are still being formulated. We have sociologists engaged in research in the area. We have agriculturalists engaged in some work on assignment. We have chemists working with local foods. We have economists working on what we call the informal economic sector. This work is very important. We have a boat which will be equipped with a laboratory to work in the Jongley area, on fishery and hydrobiology and so on. I think this should be operational in some four months time when we are able to get our laboratory.

HT : What are your main difficulties?

AZ : The main difficulties for a new university like this are really financial

and logistic. Transport is a real problem, finance is a real problem. But above all obtaining qualified staff to lead research and teach is really problematic. We are not able to get all the Sudanese we want to have. Very few Sudanese come to the university. That is why qualified staff comes from abroad. That is the reason why are very anxious to develop links with other universities.

TN : Have you signed any agreement so far ?

AZ : So far we have a link only with the university of Durham, UK. I am working now on one with the university of Texas in agricultural and mechanical engineering. Also the University of Khartoum loans us some of their staff during their summer holidays. We have a good relationship with the University of Nairobi, and some of the British universities. The Dutch have started to be interested in sending us staff. The Swedes haven't yet, but we hope to get staff from Sweden. We are particularly interested in Swedish universities in the area of medicine and the areas of natural resources, agriculture, wood industry, and also ecological studies because they are pretty advanced in Swedish universities. Generally we hope to be able also to interest them in our African studies programme.

The language problem

TN : What about the language problem ?

AZ : It isn't really the political side that bothers us. It is the actual functional side of it that concerns us. The University of Khartoum has been talking about Arabicization since the late 50s. And they have not done much since professor Hakan Tornebohm was here. They haven't been able to do more than to Arabicize the curriculum in the first and second year of the faculty of arts and maybe a subject or two in the faculty of law. They will need another 15 years before they can make a change of direction. Meanwhile our medium of instruction is English in the University of Juba. Arabic is the official language of the state. The knowledge of Arabic must be developed. The people of Sudan must have at least one common language with which they can communicate. But I believe that English should remain with us for quite some time to be the medium of instruction, because we would like our research and the people who are trained to be linked to the international scientific community and so on. All over the Arab world they either do it in French or English. When it is done in Arabic, the standards are not very good.

- TN** : What is the standard of Arabic among the students that come from secondary schools in the South?
- AZ** : It isn't just the South. Everywhere in the Sudan the standard of Arabic is very bad now. The English is even worse. The reason is that in the secondary schools the staff is no longer well trained.
- TN** : When I taught in the University of Khartoum the Southerners were not fluent in Arabic.
- AZ** : No they are not. But in the past ten years or so Arabic has gained a lot of acceptance in the Southern region. There are two streams in the high schools. One of them teaches purely English and the other teaches in Arabic with English as a second language. But contrary to the myth around the Sudan and outside, Arabic is the medium of conversation of the people in the South. It is the only lingua franca when people from different tribes talk to each other. The number of English-speaking Southerners form a very thin layer within the society. They are not more than about 2% of the population. It is only those who have either secondary school or university education that can speak that language. Arabic is recognized in the villages, in the towns, as a common language. Only some official transactions are done in English but they can only be used by those officials who know English. The standard of English has to be improved.

8.3. JOSEPH AWAD (INTERVIEW)

Joseph Awad was born in 1938 in Wau in Bahr al-Ghazal Province in Southern Sudan. He belongs to the Zande tribe. He attended a primary school in Wau, an elementary school in Bor, St. Anthony intermediate school, and the secondary school in Rumbek. He entered the University of Khartoum in 1959 and got his first degree in 1964. He did a postgraduate course in animal production and got a master's degree in 1967. He has done research on animal production in the University of Cambridge. He was appointed lecturer in the department of animal production in the University of Khartoum in 1972 and became director of the Juba university project in 1974. From 1975 to 1977 he was director of the regional ministry of education in the Southern region of the Sudan. In 1977, he was appointed dean of the college of natural resources in the University of Juba.

The interview was made in 1979. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Natural resources and development

HT : We would like to know about this faculty which you are a dean of.

JA : I will be very happy to tell you about our plans, particularly in the college of natural resources. In the development of this university we put particular emphasis on development in the rural areas. Research must be geared towards that aim. About 95% of our people are living in the rural areas. We need straight away to start with things like agricultural and veterinary science, because we have people who have livestock; forestry, because this is one of the resources we have; fisheries because this is one of the resources we have; and wild life. The strategy that we would like to adopt when it comes to research and development is that we don't want these things to be done in isolation. Therefore the ecology and interdisciplinary courses are very important in our thinking and in our plans. In Khartoum University, we have a department of chemistry in the faculty of science, we have a department of chemistry in the faculty of veterinary science, we have a department of chemistry in the faculty of agriculture, we have a department of chemistry in the faculty of medicine, and then I think also we have a department of chemistry in the faculty of engineering.

TN : And in education.

JA : And in education, yes.

HT : And in pharmacy.

JA : And in pharmacy also.

This is what we would like to avoid in this college of natural resources. This is one of many examples. Also you have animal production. Animal production you cannot do in isolation from agriculture. You cannot do agriculture in isolation from wildlife. You cannot do fisheries in isolation from wildlife because even in the rivers you have got animals like the hippopotamus. So when you have a ministry of wildlife separately from the ministry of agriculture, who is to cater? In fact one simple example is in the Jongley scheme. There is now a conflict between one minister and another simply because one feels this thing belongs to me or that thing belongs to him.

“We must be very pragmatic”

If you have a university farm where the animals of the university farm are poorer than the animals of the man in the village, you are not justified to say : “I am a qualified animal production man”. Then the man in the village says : “Well, look at your animals and look at mine”. So we must be very pragmatic, we must listen to the man in the village, This is my motto : I found it in the library. It is from an ancient poet : “Go in search of your people, love them, learn from them, learn with them, serve them, begin with what they know and build on what they have.”

TN : How will you set about this in practice ?

JA : We must start with ourselves. If I want to improve on the local building materials, my house or my small hut must be based on that, and the people will see it and then they copy. I think this is the best way to start : to be practical, rather than to go to talk with them. Saying “You do it this way or that way”, simply does not work. You have to be seriously involved, and when the people begin to feel that you are really a part of them, they will appreciate any change.

TN : Will this university take an active part in community development ?

JA : Yes, this university will take an active part in community development in the future. Now we are still fixed with the physical building of the university, but once we are in full gear, our students have also to work in the rural areas. This is one of the conditions we put to the interviewees. We are going to work under tough conditions. We are not going to work in Khartoum or in Juba. We do not think always in terms of

electricity or cars. You must know how to ride bicycles. You must know how to ride motorcycles. You must know how to set up simple things so that when you are somewhere posted in the rural areas, you do not say : “I cannot do this because the things we were taught are not here.”

TN : How would you arrange the division between academic work and practical work?

JA : The academic work here, I am insisting, and the practical work should go hand in hand. The student should know some basic theories, but they must know the applied side of it. And I think in our examination system if the student does not pass the applied side of it, he should not pass the paper. We are not interested in certificates. We are interested in the man in the field, somebody who is useful to himself, useful to his family and useful to the community as a whole. The problem we have with most of our graduates now is that they feel they can't fit in. We have quite a lot of our graduates abroad, they were trained on very sophisticated equipment, things that are not applicable in this place and therefore this makes them not like to come back.

TN : How will you train your future staff ?

JA : We select teaching assistants on this basis. They must stay with us in the university for one year and work with us here and see the difficulties.

TN : And then they are sent abroad ?

JA : Then they are sent abroad. And usually preferably to African universities. Usually they tend to think that going abroad means going to America and going to Europe and so on. But I think that there is quite a lot to be learned in African universities.

Starting in a small way

JA : The problem really is doing practical things, making people do the practical things. When we were in schools in our days we did not only learn in the classroom. We also had some plots. We had groundnuts, we had maize, we had tomatoes, we had everything. And this went to our kitchen. We sold part of it. We got some pocket-money. I wonder whether the present way of classroom education should not be questioned.

I am also sometimes a bit tired of big projects, I don't like too big projects. I always believe one must start small. By starting in a small way, if you lose your losses are less, and the chances are that you will succeed. And when you succeed you will know the small mistakes, and

on these small mistakes you can plan bigger things. I think this is the procedure we should follow.

- TN : So you are sceptical about, say, the six year plan, that type of planning?
- JA : Well, I would not say that I am sceptical. I do not know the details of the six year plan, because I have been mostly narrowed to my field. But always the danger with a big plan is : where is the source of the finance? This is one of the things which really is the centre of development. I have been a director of education in the region, and there was never a time when I got in my approved development budget more than 20% of what I needed. If you give me only 20% there is no chance that the project will succeed.

8.4. MOSES MACAR (INTERVIEW)

Moses Macar is a Dinka. Education in the South was scarce when Moses Macar was a boy. He started school at the age of 11-12 in an elementary school near his home. He then attended an intermediate school at Tonj. The school was closed for a whole year because of disturbances during the civil war which began in 1957. From 1959 to 1963 he attended the secondary school in Rumbek, which was the only secondary school in the South at that time. He then studied mathematics and physics at the University of Khartoum, became a demonstrator in physics, and in 1968 he got a scholarship to do his master's degree in England. Having finished that in 1970, he joined the department of meteorology in Khartoum in 1970 and also did some part-time work in the physics department in the University of Khartoum. From 1976, he also had a part-time job in the geography department in the University of Khartoum. In 1977, when the University of Juba opened, he saw an opportunity of returning to the South, and got a lectureship in physics in the University of Juba. Gradually he moved into the university administration, and when we interviewed him in January 1980, functioned as secretary-general of the university, although formally he was still employed as a lecturer in physics.

The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Building a new university

MM : When we started here, the university was a very small place. There were only a few buildings which previously had been used by a secondary school for girls. We took over these buildings in 1977, and converted the buildings. The big one at the gate opposite the guest house was converted to a store. At that time there were no stores. The other big building near it was made a club for the staff. Part of it was also used for guests. The two guest houses, the one which you are in, and the other one behind it, were built when the university was still a project. These two houses were ready by the time the university opened. The house with the round roof was built when the university started. These were the only buildings that we had in the beginning. In 1977, before the end of the year, the small round tukul houses you see at the back, the white ones, were built by a contractor. They were intended at that time for the teaching assistants, because at that time the number of teaching assistants was greater than the number of staff members. As recruited members of the staff were coming in, we found

that we could not give these houses to the teaching assistants, but we had to give them to the members of staff. The Vice-chancellor, although he is not an architect or an engineer, decided to design houses himself and using the university building unit to build the houses that we now call the red-brick houses. There are 12 such houses. Now most of our staff is accommodated in about 14 houses. Behind them a firm built houses for the ministry of education of the southern region. Later on the regional government decided to give some of these houses to the university. So we were given 8 of these houses. By the end of 1978, we already had about 20 houses. At the same time the EEC had started a project of building staff houses which you can see now on the way which leads to the ministries. They are about finished now. We need only to connect them with water and electricity. By February 1980 they should be completed. We got held up, since April or May, as you can see on many of the buildings, because the road to Mombasa was blocked owing to the war in Uganda. We couldn't get some of our cement. When the cement stopped, our work stopped. Some of the houses which should have been completed long ago are still unfinished. Because of this stoppage, we could do nothing but wait. Some of the companies which supply the building material refused to use the road because it was unsafe. It was also very expensive for us to get what we got. We now bring one kind of cement from Mombasa up to Juba for 4000 shillings, that is quite expensive, but we have no choice.

TN : Does this mean that you have to postpone some of the development plans?

MM : Yes, of course. We can't proceed to the next stage before we have finished what we have already started. There were things we could do with the local material, but we cannot do without some cement. Although we use some mud mortar and such things there are some parts for which you need cement. Window frames need to be cemented in. The floors need some cement. The plastering of the walls need some cement. So all these things we couldn't do without cement.

As you can see on the campus now, we are getting crowded. We have reached a critical stage, when we are beginning to destroy the beauty of the place, but our problem is how to accommodate people for the time being.

TN : What about the plans for the new campus ?

MM : The plans for the new campus are there. The new campus is to be financed by the EEC. Some other technical procedures are being finalized and we are hoping by May this year (1980) that we will start to build the new campus across the river. It would be cheaper to use ground water

on the main campus rather than water from the river. But we have had experience on the sub-campus here with wells. In less than six months all these wells dried up. We have had a lot of difficulties.

This way of getting water is not reliable. We would like, however expensive it may be, to get our water from the river. We have also to put money and efforts into things like power supplies. When the university was built here, the intention was that we should benefit from the services of the city. But we later on found out that it could not work. So we had to supply our own power for electricity. We had to supply our own water. We had to take away resources which we could otherwise use for certain things. Every year we buy new generators. Last week we brought in four generators. We are now looking for someone to fix them, so that by the time the new term starts we have enough power.

The students in Juba

TN : Will you be able to maintain the level of the intake or do you have to cut down?

MM : When the university started it was supposed to start small and gradually grow. But perhaps the excitement of the moment or some pressures forced the university to take more than should have been the case at the beginning. When we came to the third year we had an overshoot. This overshoot made it difficult for us to have enough space for the new arrivals. So we had to cut down the intake from 250 to 120. This is a necessary compensation for what we were taking in earlier. So actually we have the same number of students now as we should have according to the plan.

TN : Do you have any women students at the moment ?

MM : Yes, we have about 30. We modify our admission requirements in their favour as an encouragement for women in the Southern Region, so that they work hard in schools and feel that the university is not only for boys.

TN : How many secondary schools for girls are there ?

MM : We have two in Juba here, one is only for girls and the other one is mixed with boys and girls. Then we have one near Wau. And we have another one in Malakal.

HT : How many schools for boys are there ?

MM : We have altogether seven secondary schools for boys. The number of women graduates is still very small compared to that of the male graduates.

TN : Is this regarded as a serious problem ?

MM : After the May revolution the general attitude has been that women should be given a place in the society. All possible help should be given to the women to improve their lot. But we cannot continue to give them special admission conditions in the long run. Otherwise the standards of the university will drop. Although we want the number of women students to increase, we expect them to compete for the few places we can offer in the university. We want to encourage the authorities to improve the standards in the secondary schools for girls.

HT : Are there any women students from other parts of the Sudan in Juba University ?

MM : Yes, About half of the women students come from other regions than the South.

HT : From which parts of the Sudan do they come ?

MM : We don't count that way. All students who don't come from the South, come from the North.

TN : We have heard that you have had some student strikes. Of course that is a longstanding tradition in the University of Khartoum.

MM : Well, that is a world wide phenomenon. Our students are no different. They are just like any students from all over the world.

The first strike which they had last year was over the student union. They wanted to form a union. The Northern students said that they did not want the mature students to participate in the students' activities, and in the elections to the union. The administration decided that the mature students are an integral part of the student body and they should have a right to participate in all student activities. Most of the mature students are from the South. So the Southern students supported their claims. The Northern students stood against the mature students. But even if the mature students joined with the other students they were not able to form a 2/3 majority. So a complex problem evolved.

TN : Has the union been formed now?

MM : Yes, the union has been formed now. The students have calmed down. Later on there became a deadlock between the administration and the students. One group boycotted the lectures and when the other group wanted to go to the lectures a certain insecurity cropped up. So the administration thought that it would be safer to close the university, because there was going to be violence.

Cooperation with the ministries

TN : Did you have any contacts with people outside this university, when developing your curricula, for instance from the ministries?

MM : Yes, two ministries in the region are very closely related to the university, the ministry of agriculture and the ministry of wildlife. They are very much involved in the university activities. The director general of the ministry of agriculture is a member of the university council. The director of the ministry of wildlife is also a part-time lecturer in the university.

Some employees in the ministries are sent to the university to be trained in relevant fields, such as fisheries, wild life management, animal production and such things.

TN : Regarding the relations between the university and the ministries we have heard that there have been workshops, seminars.

MM : You see, there are particular ministries who are very interested in the university. The ministry of agriculture, I told you, the ministry of wildlife, the ministry of education and in a way also the ministry of finance. They are interested in the College of Economics and Social Studies. The ministry of education is the main ministry which has what they call in-service courses in the university here. We have had various levels of training given to senior school teachers and some elementary school teachers. They come for three weeks, six weeks, a month and so on. This is organized in conjunction with the college of adult education, which is responsible for these in-service courses. The courses are given by the college of adult education which has direct contact with the ministry of education. In addition to this we have other seminars concerned with what they call the women leadership courses which are given to the socialist women. We bring them here for a period of two-three months and train them. We combine women and men leadership courses for the socialist union in the university here. People from villages come here for a certain period. Most of them are illiterate. Most of the work will be discussions. We have what they call rural development and community development. Courses on these matters are organized and given here. Sometimes we provide help with staffing. But they need facilities, they need rooms and they need other things. All these things we are doing.

TN : Can you accommodate the participants on the campus ?

MM : It depends on which time they come. For example now about 24 people are accommodated here. We have another group of about 30 or so who will come to stay here for six weeks at the end of February. But when the university is open accommodation will not be available.

Research

TN : There are no plans for research in the six year plan. Have you made any plan for research in the future ?

MM : Well, any university which wants to have a meaningful impact upon the society must have some research. As I told you before, why we don't put a priority upon it now is for the reason that we are fully occupied with the infrastructure of the University. But research will ultimately come in. Otherwise our impact upon the society will be nothing. But even now we do some research. Members of staff are undertaking projects in various villages, in the area of community development. For example : In a village 35 miles west of there, the dean of the college of education and most of his students go there every weekend to talk with the people to find out their problems. They look at their methods of cultivation, their difficulties in getting water, their actual cash crops. They sit together with the people and discuss their problems every weekened. They go to the fields. They go to the houses. They go to the surrounding area and see what sort of vegetation they have, what sort of soil they have and such things. This might not be very serious research, but it could produce some results of use to the people of that village. It also injects some encouragement to the local population that technical ideas are coming to improve their production.

We have also another rural village which has been chosen by the college of adult education. They are carrying out leadership programmes, community health-care, agricultural programmes, etc. We get some of their leaders and elders and bring them to the university here and give them some discussions on various problems of the village. Now there are members of staff who are using these data, which later on can be worked upon and could be called research in that village.

8.5. ALI MOHAMED EL-HASSAN (INTERVIEW)

Dr. Ali Mohamed El-Hassan has a first class B. Sc. (Honours) from the the University of Khartoum, an M.Sc. in Economics from Yale and a Ph.D. from Reading. Before going to the new University of Gezira, he was a lecturer in the Department of Economics in the University of Khartoum. He was dean of the faculty of economics and rural development in the University of Gezira in Wad Medani, when we interviewed him in 1979.

His publications include a survey of the Sudan economy in the volume *An Introduction to the Sudan Economy* (Khartoum University Press 1976), edited by Ali Mohamed El-Hassan. At the time of writing that survey, Dr. Ali Mohamed El-Hassan was director of the Economic and Social Research Council in Khartoum. At present, he is director of the Arab Institute for Agricultural Products in Khartoum.

A rural university

AH : The act which established this university came out in November 1975, together with a number of acts which are supposed to regulate higher education in this country. The most important of these acts is the one which established the National Council for Higher Education, chaired by the minister of education and the membership of which includes the vice-chancellors of the four national universities and various ministers, the minister of finance, the minister of public service, etc. and some people who have been involved in higher education for some time and have retired, and people who are involved in university education. Another act is the one which established the University of Juba, and at the same time the act that established the University of Gezira in November 1975. Prior to the act, there was a plan to establish here in Wad Medani a so-called Nasser Medical School to commemorate the late president Nasser of Egypt. That was supposed to be financed by donations from individuals both in the Sudan and in Egypt and other sources. This plan was made in 1967, the year when president Nasser died. Immediately after his death some people gathered and said: "We need this medical school and we will place it in Wad Medani and we will collect money both from internal and external sources."

TN : I remember from the time when I was in Khartoum that there were discussions about establishing an agricultural institute or university in Wad Medani. That was in the middle of the sixties.

AH : That is true. In 1963-64 the idea was raised in the Philosophical Society. It is mentioned in their publications for the year 1964. You remember professor Abdallah Nur, who was the dean of the faculty of agriculture in Shambat. He published a paper in that volume in which he argued for the case of a Gezira university. Not exactly in the form it has now. It should be a rural university. Anyway, his idea was subsequently followed by the idea to establish the Nasser Medical School, and they started to collect money from different sources and they started to build physically the laboratories which you see when you are entering the main building, a three-storeyed building. There is a chemistry lab on the first floor. On the top floor there are service labs. These labs are supposed to work in collaboration with the hospital which is 100 yards west of it. The library was almost finished. They had around 30,000 pounds in their bank account.

The University of Gezira act came in 1975. It said that all the belongings of the Nasser medical school will now go to the University of Gezira, including the assets they had. So when the act came, we had a budget of 75,000 pounds shared by the universities of Juba and Gezira. I don't know the source of that money. The act stipulates that there should be four faculties in the university of Gezira, a faculty of medicine, a faculty of science, a faculty of agricultural sciences, a faculty of technology and an institute of economic and rural studies. This name was changed to "the faculty of economics and rural development".

The poorest of the poor

AH : The idea of combining social and economic rural development comes from the United Nations' concern for the conditions of the poorest of the poor in the developing countries.

I thought that if this faculty is to be established effectively, it has to have some assistance from outside. We thought that we should stress rural development, because it is not stressed in the University of Khartoum. Partly it was to emphasize the international stress at the time on rural development.

AH : The department of rural economics at Shambat is a department of agricultural economics. How does your work differ from that in the department of rural economics at Shambat ?

Rural development in our sense encompasses more than the simple study of agricultural economics. The degree structure which we have established in our faculty stresses applied studies as opposed to theor-

etical studies. It stresses physically going out in these areas and doing some work there. It stresses the collection of data from these neglected parts of the country.

We think that we are fortunate in being located in a rural area. We meet rural problems which are still under-researched. We think that there has been quite a lot of lip service even in our government. It is stressed in the current six year plan. It is stressed in public statements made by our president and various ministers. We think that much more knowledge and know-how is needed to do something effective to improve the conditions of the poorest of the poor. This is stressed in our degree structure. This is stressed in our research. We have started to plan a Ph.D. programme in rural development to which we have recruited 9 people from the civil service, who will stay with us for 12 months to do course work and then go to the field and deal with practical problems. Then they will go to their ministries with better qualifications than they had before.

Research priorities

TN : What kind of research do you have?

AH : We have published a small research programme, which is supposed to guide us for the next six years. We are using that as a way of attracting foreign donors. Almost every week we have some people who come from various international organizations.

Ford foundation has almost promised us to finance the research activities of this faculty for the next two years. That includes the research infrastructure in terms of cars, calculators, minicomputers and that sort of thing. We hope that by February the final decision will be made. It has to be made in Washington, I am afraid.

We use our research plan to make financiers interested in what we are doing and what we want to do.

- (1) We do not wish to duplicate what they are doing in Khartoum, not because it is bad, but simply because it is already done.
- (2) We hope to be more problem-oriented in our research and teaching.
- (3) We hope to be able to help the poorest of the poor to understand their problems and help to solve them.

Hence our emphasize is on rural development.

We have in our university a plan to create a community service centre.

That centre is supposed to draw staff from the different faculties. It is going to be an independent centre of the university, independent in the sense that it does not belong to any faculty in the university . It is going to have a full-time director immediately under the vice-chancellor. It will be able to draw from the staff of the different faculties and the different departments of the university, and it is supposed to undertake research pertaining to community development in an interdisciplinary way. It is drawing medical scientists, physical scientists and social scientists to tackle community development problems.

We hope to get some help from the Canadians with that, but so far we have not got any positive reaction.

Regional and national tasks

AH : The university of Gezira is national, from the point of view of the composition of the staff and the student body. It is regional from the point of view that it is located in this particular area and that the research will be oriented to the problems of Gezira. These problems are typical of rural areas. As far as the plans of the university are concerned, both in respect to teaching and research, we focus our attention on regional issues.

It is not a first class university, but considering the difficulties we have met it is quite a satisfactory university.

9. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH

9.1. INTRODUCTION

(Tore Nordenstam)

In 1964, the Sudanese Philosophical Society (which is a forum for research on the Sudan in general) held a conference on "Scientific Research in the Sudan". The conference recommended that a national council for scientific research should be established. A few years later, in 1968, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research Act was issued. The actual organization of the council took place after the May revolution in 1969, and after committee work under the personal direction of the president of the country, the National Council for Research began functioning in 1970. For the period when the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research existed as a separate body (from October 1971 to May 1973), the council was affiliated to that ministry. After the dissolution of the ministry for scientific research, the National Council for Research was re-organized as a corporate body and could start a new phase of its work, "characterized by greater clarity of function", to quote from the Annual Report for 1973-1974.¹

The first few years after the May revolution were characterized by attempts to speed up development by planning based on Soviet models. A Ministry of Planning was created, and a five year plan was made for the period 1970-1975. The preface by Dr. El Sammani Abdalla Yacoub to the annual report from the council for 1973-1974 is written in this spirit. The constitution of the Sudan includes an article with the following contents : "The State shall endeavour to develop and modernise the society through scientific planning and care for the promotion of skills, scientific research, and academic and applied studies".² In order to make it possible to plan scientifically for development 'it is essential to devise a science policy for the whole country, "a comprehensive scientific plan that is tied firmly to the development, the training, and the psychology of the nation, and to the way of life of the people", wrote El Sammani in 1974.³ The five year plan for 1970-1975 was drawn up with the help of a team of Russian experts. Attempts to relate research directly to the aims spelled out by the national and regional development plans are of a later date. Research related to national development was made a priority in the report on research policy at the University of Khartoum in 1976 ("The policy outlined below aims to preserve the traditional freedoms of the University staff within a plan of research oriented to the needs of Sudanese society and national development").⁴ And the establishment of the new universities in

Juba and Wad Medani are clearly related to development, as our interlocutors at those universities stressed in the interviews.⁵

Besides the aim of basing national development on scientific research and the ambition of creating an over-all national policy of research, the 1973-1974 annual report from the National Research Council enumerates four other problems to which it address itself:

(1) Scientific research was said to be characterized by inertia, which made it lag behind the national efforts to modernize the country.

(2) The presence of specialised research bodies in the various ministries and institutions was said to produce harmful duplication.

(3) International scientific cooperation was said to occur on a haphazard, personal basis, which resulted in the inability of the country to utilise in a sound manner such international cooperation.

(4) The lack of a standardised and rewarding salary scale for researchers was said to have resulted “in the phenomenon of not only geographical migration, but professional migration, of the nation’s scientists and researchers.”⁶

The most tangible problem on this list is probably the uncontrolled spread of research units tied to the various ministries and other government institutions. The National Council for Research made a survey of existing research units and projects in the early seventies. They found 262 scientific and technical units, virtually all of them in the public sector (only 2 in the private sector), and with a heavy concentration in Khartoum province (231 units). Out of 203 projects which were registered as ongoing at the time of the survey, 121 were in the field of agriculture.⁷ It not clear which criteria were used to count the number of research units. University projects are not included, it seems, and the humanities are outside the scope of the National Council for Research, which is perhaps not surprising in view of the technocratic attitudes which prevailed in the early seventies when the Council started functioning.⁸ Given the spread of agricultural and veterinary science stations all over the country, there is obviously a need for a coordinating body. The sub-council for agricultural research functions well as a coordinating body, according to our interviewees.⁹

The role of the sub-council for economic and social research seems more unclear, and one of the former directors of that sub-council expressed the opinion that the council should not continue in its present form (“As it has functioned for the last five years I don’t think it should be there”). According to Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar, the sub-council for economic and social research ought to concentrate more on creating policies and checking priorities.¹⁰ With the spread of universities in the country, it seems likely that also the economic sub-council will get a more clearly defined role as a coordinating body. (Up to

1976-77, the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies at the University of Khartoum was the only research institution in those fields in the country.)¹¹

The director of the sub-council for economic and social research in 1979-1980 was Dr. Ibrahim Hassan, a social scientist on secondment from the University of Khartoum, whom we interviewed twice. The sub-council (he said) has divided research into three categories: basic research, which is left to the universities; applied research, which is the area on which the sub-council concentrates; and routine research, which is left to the government departments. The sub-council has a research budget, which it uses to stimulate research in neglected areas. The sub-council organizes conferences and publishes bibliographies and a review of development research. The sub-council has also tried to identify the most important research areas in the field of economic and social studies related to development. Dr. Ibrahim Hassan suggested five areas which need investigation: (1) "the monitoring of development itself", which he characterized as a large umbrella, under which almost everything could be studied; (2) studies of self-sufficiency, which is included in the national development plans as a target; (3) rural development ("Our knowledge of rural society is very, very meagre"); (4) studies of the integration of the country, which he characterized as sensitive issues which the sub-council had not done anything about yet; and (5) the problems connected with the establishment of a national market.¹²

The over-all impression is that at least one of the sub-councils, the council for agricultural research, has already found a well-defined role; the other sub-council which was discussed in the interviews, the council for economic and social research, is still searching for a clearly defined function. Dr Ibrahim Hassan, the director of the sub-council for economic and social research, objected mildly to the use of such strong words as research policies and research plans, and suggested that there may come a time when the economic and social research council will limit itself to the initiation, co-ordination and funding of research.¹³

NOTES

- (1) *Science Policy and Annual Report for 1973-1974 of The National Council for Research* Khartoum, July 1974, pp. 3-5.
- (2) *Op.cit.*, p.9. Cf. Abdel Rahman Abdel Wahab's survey "Development planning in the Sudan : Policy and Organization", in Ali Mohamed El-Hassan (ed.), *An Introduction to the Sudan Economy*, Khartoum University Press 1976, pp. 216-234.
- (3) Preface to *Science Policy and Annual Report for 1973-1974 of The National Council for Research*, p. 1.
- (4) *Major Points in the Report of the Committee on Research Policy and Research Plan in the University of Khartoum*, mimeo., University of Khartoum 1976. Cf. section 2.1 above.
- (5) Of. chapter 8.
- (6) *Science Policy and Annual Report for 1973-1974 of The National Council for Research* p. 4. On the brain-drain problem, cf. chapter 6 above; and the UN/ECWA volume *The Arab Brain Drain*, Ithaca Press 1981.
- (7) El Sammani A. Yacoub and Fouad A. Agabani, *Scientific and Technical Potential 'STP' in the Sudan*, The National Council for Research, Khartoum 1974. Cf. the *Annual Report for 1973-1974 of the National Council for Research*, p. 21 : "Agriculture was the discipline of most of the research projects (60%), followed by social sciences (14%) and medicine (11%) , then engineering (6%) and natural sciences (5%)."
- (8) A National Council for the Humanities was established in 1980. Cf. chapter 6 above.
- (9) Cf. sections 9.3 and 9.4 below.
- (10) See the interview in section 9.6
- (11) On research in economics and social science in the universities in Omdurman and Wad Medani, see chapters 7 and 8 above.
- (12) See the interview in section 9.2 On the integration issue, cf. the talk with Sayyid H- Hurreiz and Ahmed A. Nasr in section 4.4 above. Rural development is a main theme at the universities of Juba and Wad Medani (ch.8).
- (13) Section 9.2 below. For details of the work of the four sub-councils in the initial period of the National Council for Research, see the Annual Report for 1973-1974 (which is the only annual report from the National Council for Research we have come across). The Medical Research Council had a budget of LS. 44,360 for 1974/75 and supported twelve projects, all executed through the Institute of Tropical Medicine ("Bilharzia in the Gezira", "Bilharzia in Western Sudan", "Cerebro-spinal meningitis", etc.) Six scholarships for further study at the University of Khartoum were approved, and a bibliography of biomedical research in the Sudan was published in 1973 (Mansour Al Haseeb, *A Monograph on Biomedical Research in the Sudan*, Vol. 1, Khartoum University Press). The allocations for the Scientific and Technological Research Council for 1974-75 amounted to LS 19,700. The activities of the council included documentation projects and projects in applied research ("Study of the properties of the soil used

in the construction of mud buildings in different parts of the Sudan”, “Study to improve the properties of baked bricks in various parts of Sudan”, the project “Summer-time in the Sudan”- an assessment of its usefulness in the Sudan which led to the dropping of the system of summer-time in the Sudan; etc.) .

The allocation for the Economic and Social Research Council for 1974-75 was LS 25,300. The Agricultural Research Council proposed a budget amounting to LS 30,000 for that year, which was cut back to LS 19,000 by the Ministry of Finance and National Economy. (*Annual Report for 1973-1974 of The National Council for Research, Part Two. Annual Reports of the Specialised Research Councils*).

9.2. IBRAHIM HASSAN (INTERVIEW)

Ibrahim Hassan graduated from the faculty of arts in the University of Khartoum in 1958 (in Arabic, Geography and Economics). After that, he taught in schools in Port Sudan and in Bakht el-Ruda. He returned to the university in 1959 as a tutor in the department of economics and commerce. He studied business administration in the University of California from 1960 to 1962, and joined the new department of business administration in the University of Khartoum in the same year. He then did a Ph.D. at the University of Illinois in marketing and business administration. He returned to Khartoum in 1971 and became dean of the faculty of economic and social studies, up to 1974. He was appointed director of the Economic and Social Research Council in March 1977. He has also been a visiting member of staff at the UN insitute for economic development and planning in Dakar, and has been a consultant on several occasions.

We interviewed him twice, in January 1979 and in January 1980. The following pages contain extracts from both interviews. The interviewers are Tore Nordenstam and Hakan Tornebohm.

Initiating and coordinating research in the Sudan

IH : The National Council for Research was founded in 1970 with the clear mandate of initiating, organizing and coordinating research related to the social and economic development of the country. This organization has a board, chaired by the president of the National Council for Research (sometimes the president of the republic). The membership comes from policy-makers, ministers, representatives of government departments, vice-chancellors of the universities, some people selected on their own merits, two or three representatives of the private sector and the chairmen of the sub-councils. The purpose is to see to it that development issues are used as frameworks of research.

Below the top level there are four sub-councils :

The medical research council,

The scientific and technological research council,

The agricultural research council and

The economic and social research council.

Together with agencies that will facilitate the work of these councils and the work of the researchers, we are thinking about acquiring computers to improve our data base. There is presently a unit for statistics (STP). Each council has a chairman, who is supposedly

a leader in his field, who comes from the university or from outside the university. Each council has a board. The level of its representatives is naturally below that of the National Council. It has the same sort of mix. We have for example in our case representatives who come from the universities. There are deans of the faculties concerned in Khartoum, Gezira and Juba. We have some selected researchers from the universities. We have representatives of the executive branch of the government. We have representatives of the private sector. The idea is that the board is competent to work out overall policies for research in the relevant areas and see to it that there are plans for research/research programmes to be followed. Ideas for research come from various sources. They could come from individuals such as staff members of the departments of the universities. They could come from government agencies. They may be extracted from development plans.

Until recently we relied more and more on requests from government departments and from individuals. Now we are moving towards making our own research plans but not to the exclusion of the interests of the researchers.

Within this sort of programme we are expected to approach people who do research. We are expected to encourage young chaps to do research by means of scholarships. We are expected to publish research in one form or another.

We could give staff members financial support. We hope also that we may, in some instances, persuade university people to do research in areas which they have not yet been interested in. For example, there is no such thing as a research programme dealing with urban studies in the University of Khartoum. So we support the department of anthropology to do some research on urban studies. We financed the research of two students working for a master's degree who ultimately joined the university. This is one kind of support that we give to researchers.

The other kind of support that we give to the universities is related to this example. We have no single piece of social research concerned with health and education. We try to persuade social scientists to do research in areas such as health, education and social services. What we have done so far is to limit ourselves to suggestions of topics.

When it comes to social problems which we think should have high priority, we are keen to support relevant research. Another way of stimulating research which we follow is to organize seminars, in which researchers are invited to present their findings. We type their reports

and distribute them to other interested participants, so that researchers will have an opportunity to discuss their work with other scholars. These seminars serve more than one purpose. In addition to being platforms they serve also in assessments of work. Young researchers, such as teaching assistants in the university, see how research is presented and how it is submitted to criticism.

This is an indirect way of educating them to do research. Graduates are not in general ready to do research at an early stage in their graduate studies. Nevertheless they are expected to start to work on a thesis all of a sudden. So this is an additional service that our seminars give to the research community.

Another kind of service offered by our council is related to bibliographies. We are supporting the publication of bibliographies contracted by us. We think that such bibliographies are lacking.

The seminars have been going on since 1974. The bibliographies are printed by the university press. We have one volume on economics and one on administration. We have now nearly completed a volume on education.

We have a journal devoted to applied research. It is called "The Sudan Journal of Development Research". We have two issues and there are two more in press.

Out of these seminar papers sometimes we select a few of social interest and we ask the authors to revise their papers on the basis of the seminar discussions. When the revisions are made and the papers have been assessed we publish them in one of our volumes. We called one such volume "Essays on the Economy and Society of Sudan". So far as our responsibilities are concerned, we are only responsible for the quality of the published papers. These are some of the things that the council tries to provide for the research community.

Now coming to our budget. We have an annual budget, part of which is devoted to research, about 25%. There are other items in the budget, that are not called research but they are actually used for research. We spend about 85,000 pounds per annum, together with supporting staff such as librarians, teaching assistants and administrative staff.

The National Council of Research wanted plans for research

That is a very strong word. I think one should not build up ambitious plans. One should rather try to stimulate research. There are problems of doing research. People resent hearing about planning of research. Their work is based on their personal and institutional experience. They must come together and discuss what to do and how to do it.

It is more or less an intellectual exercise. Most of our research institutions are new. People are rather young. They need time to find their own ways.

Applied research

IH : We have in this council divided research into three categories: basic research, applied research and routine research.

This division helps us to identify the kind of research that each institution can do.

We are not much involved with basic research. We leave that to the university. We don't get involved at all with routine research. We are most interested in applied research.

If there is a problem of an interdisciplinary nature that may require some time and which may have an impact on the development process, then we make the necessary contact with the relevant departments. In most cases the members of the research groups are from outside the council. In the case of the agricultural research council most of the research is carried out by people who are not members of the National Council for Research.

The council may be interested in one or two specific research problems. It allocates money in that case and approaches the relevant researchers. In our own case, there may come a time when we will limit ourselves to initiation, coordination and funding of research. Competent researchers in the economic and social sciences are very limited in number. Until recently nearly all of them worked in the University of Khartoum. The history of the faculty of Economic and Social Studies is not a very happy one in terms of personnel. When I was dean of the faculty, I came to the insight that it is unrealistic to expect that departments in the faculty could carry the whole burden of research for the development of the country. We started therefore recruiting people for the Council.

Two years later we were thinking in terms of extending the Council geographically but now that we have four national universities, plans for geographical expansion have been discarded. The Council is concerned with applied research in identified areas. It contracts researchers and institutions rather than doing research itself. As far as the increase of the stock of researchers is concerned, we are no longer limited to

the National Council for Research. The fact that there are several universities is a fact that counts.

Our main problem is printing. Some material has not been published, although it was written about three years ago.

TN : Can you tell us what kinds of research institutions you have in the Sudan?

IH : We have the National Council for Research. We have specialized research institutions, like the Agricultural Research Corporation, which spreads all over the country. We have the veterinary research stations. These bodies are attached to the Ministry of Agriculture. We have some other institutions which have research as one of their activities like for instance the Institute of Public Administration. It is supposed to do in-service training, consultancy and also research. It is a part of the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform. And we have the management and productivity centre, which is not far from here. It has also these three functions : training, consultancy and research in the private sector and public corporations. Then we have the Institute of Industrial Consultancy, which is part of the Ministry of Industry, which carries out problem-oriented research in industry, industrial consultancy and undertakes feasibility studies in the industrial sector.

These are some of the kinds of reasearch institutions we have.

TN : Are there any private research institutes in the Sudan ?

IH : Apart from some consultancy agencies there are no private research institutions.

A national research policy?

TN : We have been talking to representatives of the four national universities. We have been down to Juba and Wad Medani and to Omdurman. And we are trying to piece together an overall picture of research policies in this country. Have you formulated any strategy for research in this council? Or do you take this piece by piece as things come up?

IH : Well, we really cannot claim that we have a research strategy. We are trying now to formulate a strategy. When this council was started in 1971, the then director, the chairman, distributed a letter to different government departments, to different university departments, to different individuals, almost every member of the staff in the university, seeking suggestions as to what those people considered the real re-

search areas were in the social sciences. Out of those suggestions, we had a small booklet, and more or less most of the work in 1974-1977 was based on that little booklet. In addition to the booklet, some research ideas are suggested by different people : Sometimes the president of the National Council for Research, sometimes the Board of the National Council for Research, but most of the time, individuals, and especially from the university. In January 1976, the National Council for Research had a conference, a number of conferences. Each sub-council had its own conference, and then all of these conferences culminated in a conference for the parent council, the National Council for Research. The participants were researchers. Invitations were extended to very many people. At the end of the conferences, they had deliberations as to the problems of these different units in the National Council for Research. And finally, they came to some recommendations. It was surprising and interesting to see that the researchers themselves thought that the pattern that we were following was not very satisfactory, and that probably the different councils of the National Council for Research should use the development plan as a guide-line and start to extract from that plan some research areas which they would follow. They should limit themselves to a few major research projects. And so, in November 1977, after this recommendation was adopted by the Board of the National Council for Research, we had our own board here meet. And we agreed on a list of topics, which were more or less based on what the plan contains, either in terms of objectives of the plan or what we read as some of the problems of the development process in the country. The first, number one area would be something like the monitoring of development itself: the development process and the kind of changes that it produces, the pattern that may emerge in terms of different income distribution, urban-rural migration. This is a large umbrella, under which almost everything actually could be studied. It is so large that sometimes you don't really know what it actually means. A second area, which is probably a little more specific : The plan aims at two kinds of *self-sufficiency* : self-sufficiency in food and self-sufficiency in financing. The food self-sufficiency we should have attained in some items two or three years ago, but the financing self-sufficiency is expected to be achieved in 1993 -1994. So the board has agreed that this would be an area which should be studied. We also see that for example the public sector in this country is gaining a very large place in our society and economy. So far very little has been done in terms of studies of the

public sector. There have been very many commissions, but the public sector as such had not received any serious attention. So this was elected as one of the areas to be studied. Also the process of *rural development*. We talk a lot about rural development. Most of our politicians have stated in some form or another that their strategy for development is to help the poor. It has always been assumed that the poor live in the rural society, the rural sector of the society. But so far, we as a developing nation, in the professional sense know hardly anything about it. We see things taking place, we may agree or disagree with what is going on. But it is very difficult, it is very difficult for us to justify our positions on the basis of empirical work. Our knowledge of rural society is very, very meagre, if I may put it in this manner. I hope it will be a challenge to social science methodology and findings. Maybe some time in the future, not in this century, in the next century or so, social science may have a little bit of a revitalization process coming from the empirical findings from the studies of societies in the third world. Another area we also talk about is *integration*. We want this country to be a unified country, but with cultural diversity. The issues of integration and unity are very sensitive issues. So far we have not done anything about it, but this is an area that we have been instructed to do some work on.

Another area which we also thought is probably worth looking into is that the economy is becoming so complicated, so complex, that something like a *national market* is almost emerging in the sense that one price has a base, and then you add to that base unless it is transport or this or that. Government policy a few years ago was to add a tax on sugar, it was just a tax on sugar, but it is no longer true now. They just put a tax, increase the tax on petrol, the price of petrol. And the ramifications are almost totally abnormal, you know. So, some modernisation of the economy is probably called for. Whether we would be able to do that or not, I don't know. Of course, this is not a research area. But this is a service area, which researchers could hope to provide. There are a few other areas, I don't remember them right now. But these are the major research areas concerned.

We defined some time ago what we consider to be three main areas of interest for people working in these fields, what one may call *basic research*; *applied research*; and what we termed *routine research*, if one may call routine operations or improvement of routine operations, research. We thought, then, that we should leave basic research to people in the university; and that we should do the applied research, especially if

it is the cause for an interdisciplinary team, it may take a longer time and it involves empirical work. And, of course, the routine operations, we leave them to government departments. But we feel that even this division now is not realistic. One would like to see people working together as much as possible and we should try to support as much as possible university researchers to undertake research that may combine basic aspects of research as well as the empirical aspects of research. So going back to the original question, it is very difficult to say that we have a research strategy as such. There have been practices, and we have been basing our attitude, if one may put it in that way, this is a milder form of putting it, on the basis of our practices.

Participation and research

TN : You refer to the lack of knowledge about the conditions of rural development.

IH : Yes.

TN : Now, there is a lot of talking going on about participatory democracy. What do you think one can do in practice to involve people in participation, when there is such lack of knowledge?

IH : I think the first point is to start forms for research. I think most people in this country would welcome any sort of government philosophy that is based on participation and democratization, irrespective of their ideologies. As an issue as such, it is not really a controversial one. But the problem is with the practice. And in practice so far, in the last six or seven years, there has been a lot of confusion. We don't know really what the new structures have produced. Sometimes one doubts whether the new structures were ever at all built to produce what is aimed at, you know. It so happens that I come from a small village, in the Gezira. And when the minister of local government talks about power, distribution of power, I find the way he defines power sort of amusing, nothing more. His view of power is that no-one should hold more than one office. There are five committees in the village, but there is one person who is the president of all of them. We have the medical assistant, not from the village, but he is very active, he is very dynamic, and so on. He is the secretary of all of them, and also the treasurer for all of them, you know. So, if the concept was to reject the idea of holding more than one office, then the whole thing has failed. And I am sure my village is not unique. It is probably more typical than unique. So definitely this is an area in which more and more of us are now convinced that some research has to be done.

The danger of overspecialization

You know that in the University of Khartoum there is very little empirical research in the social sciences. The council can help to persuade some social scientists to do such work. If social scientists are to contribute something to this country, they had better start to get better knowledge of our own developments. In order to do that they have to carry out a lot of empirical research. Theory too is sometimes all right especially in economics.

I really think that geography has something to offer. But unfortunately certain geographers make the same mistake that many other social scientists have already made. They are trying to specialize in very narrow fields. Geography is a good subject for synthesizing, relating nature and man. This is very important. But now you don't find this in the geography department in Khartoum and in most of the American universities. There are geographers who are geologists and so on. But geographers such as Leboff, encyclopedic geographers, are disappearing. They compete with specialists. Their purpose becomes dubious. People start to doubt their usefulness, because there are other people who can do their job. This is where we have our problem.

HT : Do you know the work of Torsten Hagerstrand, a noted Swedish geographer? He is a very broad-minded synthesizer. Another such geographer is an Irish geographer, Anne Buttimer. There is also a Swede, Gunnar Ohlsson, who used to be a professor at the University of Michigan, a very philosophical type of geographer.

Tradition and modernization

IH : These are the kinds of geographers that I appreciate. Professor Lebon was one of them. He taught me for four years. It was really entertaining. He was a very serious man with a philosophical frame of mind. He was very much interested in literature. He was an economist. The drive towards specialization makes this type of geographer a very rare species.

HT : I have a question about the issue of tradition and modernization and the danger that certain local values are destroyed by implementation of research—development schemes—what do you think about that issue ? Tradition versus modernization?

IH : I would say that the conflict is of our own making. I think it would be a mistake to think of tradition as something inhibiting to change and development. I think in tradition there are many elements that

could carry our society forward. So always to think that there is a conflict between tradition and change is probably not very wise. The American social scientists have made their names on factors inhibiting to growth, such factors being thought to be related to traditional societies, or what have come to be known as traditional societies. I never found this argument persuasive as a student in the United States. And when(. . . inaudible name) talks about break-away from traditional society, he describes traditional society as a society that calls for a revolution. I am not a logician in any way, but my common sense tells me that this is nonsensical. How to go about criticizing the internal logic of the argument or its content, I don't know. But I think it is just rubbish. (Laughter.)

Societies, even if they are left to themselves, have conflicting elements within them, whether they are traditional and closed societies, or advanced, unclosed societies. And the role of social science is to study that conflict. It is no longer, I think, valid to talk about traditional societies as closed societies. So whether people like it or not, there is this flow between what one may call traditional society and modern society. Research could help very much if it tries to understand what values these traditional societies really want to keep and to view development ideas from that perspective.

9.3. ABDEL HAMID OSMAN AND OSMAN ABDALLA (INTERVIEW)

Abdel Hamid Osman and Osman Abdalla were professors in the faculty of veterinary science at the University of Khartoum, when we interviewed them in 1981. Osman Abdalla was *ex officio* a member of the Agricultural Research Council at that time in his capacity as dean of the faculty of veterinary science at Shambat. (Cf section 3.4 above).

OA : I will tell you about something which is developing very well. We have a National Council for Research (NCR). When we have research projects which are very expensive, we ask them to help us. They are always willing to help us. They are always interested in research projects of an applied nature, which are relevant to the development of the Sudan.

TN : What is the role of NCR ? Is it just a funding body? Do they carry out research on their own ?

OA : NCR has a number of specialized councils: an Agricultural Research Council, a Medical Research Council, a Technological Research Council, an Economic Research Council.

They have their committees and they consider very big problems of research policies.

NCR is helping the government in planning and execution of research projects of national importance.

TN : What do they actually do in the council, say in the agricultural sub-council ?

OA : They always consider the agricultural problems in the Sudan, and they try to design projects which will lead to the solution of these problems. They encourage the faculties to do research on these problems.

TN : You get proposals for research from the sub-council?

OA : Yes, we do.

AHO : We get invitations to make contributions to their discussions.

TN : Would you say that the main function of the Council is to discuss these matters ?

AHO : ... and to define policies. Their job is to plan and to budget. They have also an advisory function. This council should initiate, plan and also supervise the budgeting for research.

TN : We are familiar with the terms of reference. We have read the statutes of NCR. We are now curious to find out about the *actual* functions of NCR. There are often wide gaps between statutes and practices.

AHO : In most cases their priorities are not ours. What can we do? So far they have not rejected any good sound research project, but theoretically speaking they can do that. In order for their thinking and our thinking to run on parallel lines, we should have more representations. Those are the ones who foresee the problems and make up plans for research. They have the plans and the money. Therefore they can influence what research will be done in the country.

OA : The budget of NCR is supposed to be quite good. They have good ideas. I don't think that our representation is really meagre. The chairman of the Agricultural Council for Research was dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science. The deans of the Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Science are *ex officio* members of the council, so they are always there. The problems that need to be researched are suggested either by academicians or people from the ministries. A problem is that some of the people concerned do not have access to NCR. The farmers and the livestock owners have no channels to go to NCR to get help. They do not know where to go. We do not have the facilities to go to the countryside to be aware of those problems.

NCR should have built channels from the organization to the country, to the farmers and to the livestock owners. NCR should have access to the ordinary people so that they can find out what needs to be researched.

TN : This seems to be a common situation in all countries.

OA : In the Sudan we lack an efficient farmer's organization . If there existed official organizations of cattle breeders, sheep breeders, cotton planters, and so on, then they could come to the faculties and to the National Council for Research and present their problems. They might even contribute a little bit of money for research.

9.4. AHMED HASSAN EL JACK (INTERVIEW)

The following couple of pages are taken from the interview with Dr. Ahmed Hassan El Jack, dean of the faculty of economic and social studies in the University of Khartoum, which took place in 1981. (Cf. section 2.4 above.)

TN : Could you tell us about the National Research Council?

AHJ : I think that the Agricultural Research Council, which is a part of NCR is really useful. They play the role of a catalyzer rather than doing research themselves.

They cannot do good research, because they don't have high calibre scientists. They are useful to the extent that they initiate research and give money to it.

TN : What are they actually doing in NCR? They have compiled a list of projects. What else have they done? How do they spend their time?

AHJ : They are not really clear about their orientation. They have employed people as assistant researchers with the intention of developing them into full researchers. Unfortunately this process has gone very slowly. The people who come to them end up either here or in another university like the University of Gezira.

They try to develop their capacity for research by sending people to do higher degrees. When these people are ready with their higher degrees they leave the Council. I happen to know most of the people who were there. They don't think that the atmosphere is conducive to research. NCR is just like a government department.

TN : Certainly this was the original idea of NCR, that they should have their own researchers.

AHJ : Yes, that is true, NCR wanted to be a research body. But I think that was a wrong ambition. NCR ought to be a policy-making and financing body. What they have tried to do and failed to do is to develop their own research.

TN : Do you get any assistance from NCR ?

AHJ : Sometimes we do. I am working now on a Canadian project. I got the money for it through the Research Council. There is a personal element here. It so happens that for a long time either the director or the chairman of the Economic and Social Research Council belongs to this faculty. That helps us to get money.

TN : Have they formulated any research programme ?

AHJ : Yes, at a very highly theoretical level they have certain programmes in mind, but actually nothing came out of it, again because of lack of researchers.

IAO : Do you think that the conference which was held last year about settlements of nomads, was valuable for research ?

AHJ : I am sorry, I am supposed to be teaching outside the university, but I will answer that question very quickly. This is a topic of great importance for our society.

9.5. SADIG RASHEED (INTERVIEW)

The interview with Dr. Sadig Rasheed, the first director of the Development Studies and Research Centre at the University of Khartoum, took place in 1979. (Cf. section 5.2 above.)

TN : As to your relationship to the National Council for Research, how do you coordinate your activities? Do you compete or do you cooperate ?

R : Competition is definitely out of the way. I will put it this way, we complement each other and do a lot of cooperation with each other. Do you know the structure of the National Council for Research? It is a national body which has a number of specialized councils, a technological council, an agricultural council, an economic and social research council and so on and so forth. The function of the National Council for Research, or rather one of its primary purposes, is to cooperate on a national level with a view to achieve whatever goals may come out of research, etc. etc. So our centre has cooperated with the National Council in a number of their activities. For example, I was a member of the team who drafted the Sudan paper for the United Nations conference on science and technology. I participate in their other activities in the field of applied policies on science and technology, policy instrumentation and implementation and so on and so forth. At the same time I have very good connections with the Economic and Social Research Council. A member of the council is actually a colleague of ours. So we cooperate in a number of activities together. We participate invariably in their activities and they participate in our activities. Actually we are going to cooperate more closely with respect to particular projects. For example we are envisaging a national sort of programme to improve the capability of the ministries of planning and agriculture and so on, to cope with the problems of rural planning and rural developments. This programme has many facets of applied research: workshops, training, which will lead to a diploma in rural development and planning. This will be coordinated at a national level. There is a national overseeing committee, which will later on apportion tasks with a view to create different capacities. We are already cooperating on this.

TN : Is the National Council for Research a purely planning organ?

R : It is mainly a coordinating organ.

TN : Do they carry out new research?

R : Not really, I mean it is mainly an organizing body.

9.6. ABDAL-GHAFFAR MOHAMMAD AHMED (INTERVIEW)

The social anthropologist Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar Mohammad Ahmad has amongst other things been director of the Economic and Social Research Council. The interview with Dr. Abdal-Ghaffar took place in 1981. (Cf. section 5.3 above).

TN : Have you got any relations with the National Council for Research ?

AG : The National Council for Research is supposed to be guiding all these institutes (the universities etc. T.N.). Unfortunately I am now speaking as an ex-director of the Economic and Social Research Council. I don't think it is doing its job in a proper way.

It does not really have the ability to control institutions of an academic nature. It is not an academic institution training-wise and quality-wise. For example the Economic and Social Research Council which is a part of the National Research Council should do the job that we are carrying out here. Since according to its constitution it cannot teach, it becomes very limited as far as areas of research are concerned. Financially it cannot even do that job in a proper way. In terms of creating policies and checking priorities I don't think that it has been successful enough.

TN : Do you think that there is any point in having a council of that kind ?

AG : As it has functioned for the last five years I don't think it should be there.

TN : On the other hand, do you need some coordination between the different universities and institutions?

AG : Definitely yes, but the coordination and the umbrella should not be allowed to mushroom the way the National Council for Research has done. The central body of it, the president, the secretary and two or three specialized people in each area is enough, but the four councils and even other committees branching out of these is too much. It amounts to duplication in many ways.

10. ON COMPLEXES CAPABLE OF DEVELOPMENT
(HAKAN TORNEBOHM)

INTRODUCTION

A philosophy of development is concerned with progress in fields of activities and features related to progress such as inertia and crises.

Disposition:

- (1) We will first deal with progress, etc. in fields of research,
- (2) and then with these features in fields of activities in general,
- (3) with the relations of progresses, etc. in research-practice complexes, and
- (4) with the tasks of a philosophy of development.

Progress in a field of research in a factual science

Let X be the territory of a field of research \hat{x} . The states of affairs in X at a particular instant of time may be split up into sets as follows :

- (a) K , which is the set of all known states of affairs,
- (b) K_b , which is the set of all states of affairs which are knowable, and
- (c) K_w , which is the set of all states of affairs in X which are worth knowing.

These sets are projections on X from \hat{x} .

- (a') To K corresponds the body of knowledge which has been produced within \hat{x} .
- (b') K_b is determined by various presuppositions of research, namely *external* ones, how the research activities are organized, institutionalized and financed, and the general cultural and social context, in which \hat{x} is embedded, and *internal* ones, how researchers are educated, their habits of communication and their paradigms.

The notion of paradigm is a crucial one in a philosophy of scientific developments and also (as we anticipate) in a general philosophy of development.

A paradigm of an individual researcher is a structure composed of:

- (a) his *interests*, what he *wants* to do,
- (b) his *competence*, what he *can* do,
- (c) his *world picture*, consisting of general views (in many cases including valuations and aspirations) on that part of the world which is subject to investigations in his field, and finally
- (d) his *view on his own field of research*, how it is related to other fields of research and to its territory, what constitutes good research, etc.

This view which is highly value-loaded includes a strategic component.

A strategy of research is composed of :

- a set of tasks, which researchers regards as specially important ones,
- a general view on procedures, which will lead to desired results, and
- an ideal of science which gives guidelines to be followed in dealing with the tasks belonging to the strategy.

Thesis: The paradigm of a researcher performs a regulating function in his work and is thus a presupposition of what *he* contributes to the development of his field. It is not the only presupposition though. Other factors also play an important part : what his colleagues have done and are doing, how his work is organized and the reward system administered by the research community to which he belongs, etc.

How does a paradigm act upon an investigation ?

It determines *inter alia* how a researcher prepares a new investigation by setting up an initial research programme.

A research programme may be conceived of as a structure composed of :

- (a) a set of assumptions or hypotheses H about that part of the world which is going to be investigated,
- (b) a set of tasks or problems P attached to these assumptions: untested hypotheses are always accompanied by tasks to test them.

Some confirmed hypotheses (= new items of knowledge) are accompanied by tasks to explain states of affairs described by them,

- (c) a set I of intellectual tools and in some cases also hardware tools to be employed in dealing with tasks belonging to the research programme,
- (d) a critical assessment Cr of the items H, I and P which has a control function, and lastly
- (e) a tactical plan Pl, which serves to steer the next step in an investigation. Pl includes a selection of tasks and methods and may also include requisitions of new resources which will be needed in order to carry out selected tasks, such as evidence in the case that a task selected is to test an hypothesis.

In sum, a research programme may be represented as a pentad (H, I, P, Cr, Pl).

We can employ this model in forming a representation of an investigation and *also* of a research project :

$$\infty > (H, I, P, Cr, Pl) \infty > ,$$

according to which an investigation (a project) is conceived of as a running research programme. Results represented by (H,I,P)- triads are transformed in an internally regulated process :

The internal regulation is composed of a control factor Cr and a steering factor Pl.

Using this model we may answer the question how a paradigm regulates an investigation as follows :

The world picture component of a paradigm contributes to the assembly H of hypotheses.

The strategy component supplies some of the tasks in P, some of the tools in I and some of the criteria employed in critical assessments of results (as represented by (H, I, P,) -triads).

Thesis: A paradigm may be characterized as a complement to the internal regulation which is embedded in an investigation.

Paradigms in a field of research

Let us start out with the two sets :

K of known facts and

Kb of knowable facts in a territory X of a field of research \hat{x} .

(The third set Wk of states of affairs in X worth knowing will be considered later on.)

Progress in \hat{x} are changes in K and Kb, which are considered to have positive values.

- (a) There are accumulations : New items of confirmed hypotheses (= pieces of knowledge) are assembled.
- (b) The pieces of knowledge are organized in syntheses of various kinds : explanatory patterns, narratives (as in history), and theories (as in physics).
- (c) New instruments of research are produced in investigations which are employed in procurement of evidence, in forming explanatory patterns and theories. These instruments contribute not only to the development of K, but also to the development of Kb.
- (d) It may happen that hypotheses which have been confirmed earlier will be replaced later on by other hypotheses, which will take their place after discriminating tests. If they deserve to be confirmed more than predecessors, such replacements amount to qualitative improvements in a body of knowledge.
- (e) Tasks which were too difficult at an earlier stage may become treatable at a later stage, thanks to improvements in the arsenal of knowledge producing tools which are assembled in the process of knowledge production in the field.

Changes in Kb

We have already mentioned that knowledge formations by way of investigations will have effects upon the set Kb of what is knowable. Kb may also change in other ways than by the production of new tools of research within investigations.

Paradigms of research undergo changes in two different ways:

(1) In a passive way

The interests and competences of the researchers in a field are far from static. They change as new facts become known and as research experiences are gained.

The world pictures of the researchers are affected by the accumulation of new knowledge and their views on research undergo modifications as a field of research changes character.

(2) In an active way

We come now to a realm of philosophy. Researchers in a branch of science (in a wide sense including the humanities) are not only engaged in investigations. Some researchers raise and discuss queries of a different kind from those questions which crop up within ongoing investigations.

They raise world picture questions and strategical questions, which are very similar to those which occupy philosophers. They take a stand on these queries and present arguments *pro* and *con*. Such occupations may be described as philosophical thinking within a field of research.

A field of research may thus be conceived of as a complex composed of an inquiring and a philosophical part. The philosophy *in* science is concerned with paradigms. It is concerned with attempts at articulations of paradigms (which are never more than partly articulated), with critical assessments of paradigms and with modifications, hopefully leading to improvements of paradigms. Philosophical activities within a branch of science are specially intensive in situations which are experienced as crises by the active researchers. They aim at diagnosing the causes of crises, which very often are located in defects in the paradigms and they aim at finding appropriate cures for these defects. Creative and successful work on paradigms in a field of research may bring about extraordinary innovations. New traditions of research are initiated after such philosophical endeavours. Philosophical thinking in a science is instrumental in bringing about a widening of the realm of what is knowable.

Thesis : Philosophies *in* sciences are thus vitally important to the progress in fields of research.

Knowledge interests

We will first distinguish between the interests of active researchers in a field X with the territory X and those of other people.

The interests of the researchers are directed both to X and to their field X . These interests are related to and affect each other more or less strongly. The interests of a researcher are also interdependent with the other ingredients of his paradigms, with his competence, his world picture and his view on science including its strategical component.

The interests of non-researchers differ, depending upon whether they are practitioners concerned with X in one way or another or whether they belong to the general public. Practitioners may wish to produce changes in X , which are regarded as desirable by them or they may wish to protect X from changes which they regard as harmful. They may play the role of *innovators* as far as X is concerned or the role of *protectors*.

We will argue later on that even professionals outside science have paradigms similar in structure and function to paradigms of research.

Anticipating this thesis we claim that the interests of practitioners in a part X of the real world are interdependent with ingredients of their paradigms, including strategies.

We conclude that the knowledge interests of practitioners in a piece X of the world differ from those of researchers. This fact is very important in establishing connections between research and practice. (We return to this later on.)

The interests of the third group of people, (the public at large) in X are concerned with human conditions, with welfare, well-being and contentment on the one hand and with sufferings on the other. These interests again are different from those of the two other groups of persons. These differences will give rise to an important theme in development strategies, the *participation* issue.

Corresponding to these kinds of interests we may form three sets of what is worth knowing in a part of the real world:

- Wk1, what researchers want to know,
- Wk2, what practitioners want to know, and
- Wk3, what the public wants to know.

It is desirable that the differences between these three sets be diminished as much as possible. This can be accomplished

- (a) by the establishment of well-functioning research-practice links (Wk1 and Wk2 come closer).
- (b) by inviting the public to participate in various stages in development projects (Wk2 and Wk3 come closer).

Two main types of paradigms of research

The world pictures of physicists are completely value neutral. They assume that their territories are composed of material and possibly also immaterial objects which interact with each other in various ways.

A world picture of this kind, which may be characterized as objectivistic, carries strategical consequences which may be characterized in this way: The ideal of science prescribes that the researchers should attempt to produce maps of the world, which are coherent (as physical theories are) and realistic to a high degree (i.e. they have a high degree of truth).

In order to produce maps with these merits physicists make use of objective methods.

In short they employ *objectivistic* strategies.

Paradigms of this kind may be described as *scientistic* ones.

They are appropriate in sciences such as physics, the territories of which consist of natural objects and nothing else. They are not appropriate in all sciences.

The sociocultural part of the world is different from the world of atoms and other parts of non-living nature.

All sociocultural complexes have an objective and a subjective side. They are impregnated by meanings and values, and they are populated by human beings.

Transactions between subjects and objects take place in these parts of the world.

These transactions can be described as follows :

Persons assimilate cultural goods in acts of interpretation and assessment of values. They combine what they have assimilated into personal syntheses and they publicize what they have created in the seclusion of privacy. These transactions constitute what we may call *sociocultural metabolism*.

Thesis : Developments in the sociocultural world are impossible without such metabolisms.(Just as no development from a fertilized egg to an adult individual is possible without biological metabolisms.) These features of the territories of the sociocultural sciences cannot be grasped, if researchers in them have paradigms of the same kind as the physicists.

The strategies of research in these fields should include *interpretative* methodologies concerned with meanings and they may also include methodologies for *critical assessments* of values, in addition to methodologies for mapping objective features in the territories of their fields.

Paradigms with these properties may be described as

hermeneutical (if critical assessments are not catered for) or

hermeneutic-critical, if such assessments are included in the investigations.

So far we have not specified the characteristics of the part X of the world to which we have attached the three sets :

- K, what is known,
- Kb, what is knowable, and
- Kw, what is worth knowing.

If X belongs to unorganic nature, then these sets may be well adapted to scientific paradigms, which are appropriate to a field of research $\hat{\phi}$ with such a territory.

If, however, X belongs to the sociocultural world (e.g. if X belongs to the complex S D of developments in the Sudan) then well-functioning paradigms have to be hermeneutical or hermeneutic-critical.

Fields of activities

All fields of research are fields of activities of a special kind. A good deal of what has been said about fields of research is valid for all kinds of realms of activities. We claim that the following theses are valid for all productive fields of activities:

- (1) Activities have presuppositions, which include external and internal ones.
- (2) These presuppositions are located at different levels.
- (3) The internal presuppositions include paradigmatic ones at the level of individuals.
- (4) A paradigm of a professional is composed of :
his interests, his competence,
a world picture about a relevant piece of reality, and finally of
a view on his profession including a strategic component.
Paradigms in professions are thus similar in structure to paradigms of researchers and
- (5) they have similar functions. They belong to the presuppositions of professional work. They serve as regulators in addition to regulators imbedded in professional activities, and they supply some of the criteria employed in critical assessments of projects in which professionals are involved.
- (6) Paradigms are not the only regulators of professional work. Professionals are usually members of organizations which set conditions on the work carried out inside them.

Projects

A major part of professional work is associated with projects. We may conceive of a project as similar in structure to an investigation. We have

presented a model of inquiries which may be described in a more general way as follows :

An investigation is a sequence of transformations of results regulated by means of critical assessments accompanied by tactical planning.

This description fits projects in general. thus also projects in fields of activities outside science.

Species of paradigms in a realm of practical work

Engineers are frequently engaged in projects aiming at the production of commodities for a market.

Such projects are assessed by criteria of *feasibility*, and economic and technical *efficiency*. Engineers in developing countries tend to regard institutions (of various kinds) of western type as more desirable than traditional ones. Their work is intended to contribute to modernization.

We will describe paradigms such as theirs as *technocratic* ones.

Such paradigms and projects governed by them are appropriate in certain areas of development, such as road building, transport, irrigation, etc., but they are not appropriate in every field of development. If human conditions with cultural and social values are implicated in development work to a large extent, then other kinds of paradigms are called for.

In our project we have come across paradigms of a non-technological kind. The University of Juba is oriented towards *ecodevelopment*, stressing the importance of protecting environments and cultural milieux.

The University of Gezira is geared towards rural development for the benefit of "the poorest of the poor" in rural areas.

We will provisionally characterize these paradigms as *human-ecological* ones. A third kind of paradigms is the *Islamic one*.

There are fairly clear affinities between technocratic paradigms and scientific ones and (perhaps not quite so evident) affinities between non-technocratic paradigms on the one hand and hermeneutical and hermeneutic-critical ones on the other hand.

We will stress these affinities when we turn to our next topic.

Reflections on research and practice

(1) Bonds between technocratic projects and scientific research

Work governed by technocratic paradigms tend to be linked to research of a scientific nature within complexes normally described as *research and technical development*.

The function of the researchers is to provide objective knowledge and technical know-how, destined to improve the competences of the professionals to initiate and carry out efficient projects.

Such projects tend to exclude that part of the public which will be affected by the outcomes of the projects from the planning and implementation phases. They tend to become involved only in so far as they raise a resistance. In short, technocratic projects tend to have a low degree of participation of non-experts.

As we noted previously, scientific paradigms are appropriate only in investigations of territories to the extent that it is proper not to reckon with subjective sides of reality as well as of meanings and values.

The low level of participation in these projects is a risk factor. It may happen that such projects may harm some people including "the poorest of the poor".

Such effects would accumulate and give rise to what may be called "*a crisis of development*", if technocratic-scientific practice-research bonds completely dominate the global field of developments.

(2) *Bonds between non-technocratic projects and research*

We have in mind projects aiming at helping people to improve their conditions in social and cultural respects at the level of small communities. Such projects have a high level of participation. The experts have respect for local traditions and know-how. They want to work together at all stages with the main beneficiaries of the projects.

They are very much concerned with the possibility of harmful effects of well-intentioned projects. They assess their projects not only on the basis of the criteria of *feasibility* and *efficiency*, but also on the basis of what may be called criteria of *sensibility*, according to which projects ought to be shelved if they are regarded as too risky or if they are not accompanied by other projects with protective functions.

Such projects have to be linked to research in ways other than technocratic ones. They have to be linked to research which is governed by hermeneutical and hermeneutic-critical paradigms serving functions other than scientific research. The research aims of these kinds of projects should have elucidating effects and should raise the ethical competence of the practitioners. Humanities and soft social sciences like social anthropology are appropriate complements to projects with these aims.

Tasks for a philosophy of development

We claimed in the beginning that philosophies of development are concerned with progress: progress in science, progress in fields of practical activities, and progress in developing countries.

Progress in a field may be accompanied by inertia and regression.

So all these features are relevant to philosophies of development. Researchers engaged in discussions of paradigm issues are very much concerned with queries on favourable and unfavourable conditions of knowledge production.

Even professionals outside science may be engaged in discussions of issues pertaining to their paradigms. We may thus reckon with philosophies in practical fields : in engineering, in medicine, in agriculture, etc., having functions similar to those of philosophies in science. They serve to overcome inertia and to further progress, with which the participants in these intra-professional philosophies are directly involved.

There also exist other kinds of philosophies related to progress. There are philosophies *of* science.

Philosophers of science are concerned with progress in a more indirect way than scientists-philosophers in particular fields of research.

They are concerned with general queries belonging to issues concerning the relations between knowledge and reality, concerning the links between theory and experience, concerning different kinds of research, including the relationships between natural and sociocultural sciences, concerning roads to knowledge, etc.

Philosophy of science may in different ways be of service to active researchers in particular disciplines, when they are dealing with paradigmatic issues:

- by widening the scopes of their reflections,
- by furthering interdisciplinary contacts,
- by uncovering the most general presuppositions of research,
- by raising important issues before researchers become forced to take them up when they find themselves in crises, and
- by relating research to other cultural and social activities.

Just as philosophies *in* particular sciences are related to philosophy *of* science (an established discipline) we envision that what we have called philosophies in professional fields of work are related to would-be philosophies of professions. All these philosophies *of* should be concerned with progress. We conceive of them all as constituting a global philosophy of development, concerned with issues of development of a very wide scope.

This paper has served to give a glimpse of what such a philosophy of science might look like and what questions it should deal with.

One main task of such a philosophy is to uncover the main types of paradigms of development and to get hold of issues which have to be raised in attempts to articulate them, to criticize them and in attempts to make them better.

Summary

Philosophies of development are concerned with *progress* in various fields of activities belonging to the sociocultural world.

A field of research is a special kind of such field. All fields share a number of common features. We will begin to consider a field of research.

There are two kinds of developments in a field of research: *knowledge formations and paradigm developments.*

Paradigms belong to the presuppositions of research. They serve to govern investigations.

A model of investigations (which may also be regarded as a model of a research project) is presented :

$\infty > (\text{a result, a critical assessment of the result, a tactical plan}) < \infty$

Paradigms are carried by individuals.

The paradigm of a researcher in a field \hat{x} with the territory X is a structure composed of

his *interests*, what he *wants* to do;

his *competence*, what he *can do*;;

his *world picture*; and

his *view of his field*, which includes a *strategical* component.

A strategy has this structure :

(a set of tasks of a general nature, a methodology and an ideal of science).

Paradigms change in two ways :

(1) In a *passive* manner:

Other changes in a field will bring about automatic changes in the interests, the competences, the world pictures, the views of science and the strategies of research.

(2) In an *active* manner:

Some researchers may attempt to articulate paradigms, submit them to critical assessments and they may also try to modify them and possibly also to create new ones.

These activities are so similar to philosophical thinking, that we may refer to them as philosophies *in* science as distinct from philosophies *of* sciences.

There are two main types of paradigms in science:

(1) *Scientistic ones*:

The ideal of science component of these paradigms prescribes that an atlas should be produced with a high degree of fidelity and coherence.

These paradigms are appropriate in sciences such as physics, in which parts of the world are investigated which consist of objects only.

(2) *Hermeneutical and hermeneutic-critical ones:*

The methodologies in these paradigms prescribe procedures of interpreting meanings and of assessing values.

Such paradigms are appropriate in the human sciences in which parts of the sociocultural world are subject to investigations.

This world includes not only objects as is the case with unorganic nature, but also subjects, meanings and values.

Interpretations are concerned with meanings and critical assessments of values.

In a field of activities outside science we find projects which can be conceived of as sequences of result transformations regulated by critical assessments and tactical planning.

The activities in such a field are moreover subject to presuppositions of various kinds including paradigmatic ones.

The paradigm of a professional is composed of:

- his professional interests,
- his professional competence,
- his world picture, and
- his view of his profession which includes a strategic component.

Paradigms in fields of practical activities are subject to the same two kinds of changes as are paradigms in fields of research.

We may accordingly postulate that there also exist philosophies in various professions. They are concerned with paradigmatic issues.

We distinguish different kinds of paradigms in practical fields of activities :

- technocratic ones*, mainly concerned with the material culture, and
- non-technocratic ones*, governing works geared towards improving the human lot.

Paradigms of ecodevelopment and rural developments and Islamic paradigms of development belong to this family.

There are different kinds of research-practice bonds:

- (a) Those of R D type (scientific-technocratic bonds).

We find them in the sectors of transport and industrialization.

- (b) Those which link non-technocratic social and cultural work to the human sciences.

Bonds of both these kinds are needed in a developing country.

If bonds of the first kind are strongly dominating, then the risks are grave that crises of development will occur.

Philosophies of development have tasks related to those of philosophies in development.

They should serve to improve the competences of professionals to deal with paradigm developments in their own fields in the following ways.

More general issues are raised than those which are directly related to specific professional activities. As a consequence the perspectives of the professionals will become wider.

Many of these issues concern relationships between various fields of activities inside as well as outside science. Many of them pertain to developments at large.

EPILOGUE

The research system in the Sudan is a complex, with the best-established research institution in the country, the University of Khartoum, in the centre. Around this core, one finds the three other national universities, a number of institutes attached to the universities and the ministries, and a great number of research stations in fields like agriculture and veterinary science.

The development research policy in the Sudan may be said to be a parallel to the general development of the country. After a building-up stage, which began after the economic recession in the thirties, the University of Khartoum became an independent institution in an independent country in 1956. The research side of the University was developed in the seventies, when the undergraduate teaching system had been firmly established. The creation of the Graduate College is a milestone. The creation of the National Council for Research around 1970 is another milestone, which coincides with the short era of scientific planning on Soviet models. The free market ideas which have taken over now are paralleled by a research scene which is essentially characterized by free enterprise and entrepreneurship within the framework of the universities and other state-supported institutions.

In the preceding talks with researchers in the Sudan at all levels, from well-established professors to young research assistants, a number of issues which are prominent for those who are carrying out research in the Sudan have been touched upon, and a number of the problems which inevitably are linked to research under conditions of economic and technological underdevelopment have come to the fore. Some of the issues are of such a pervasive nature that virtually everybody who is doing research in a country like the Sudan has to take a stand in relation to them, implicitly or explicitly. To those issues belong such themes as : tradition and modernization, participation and endogenous development versus planning from above and exogenous development, integration and national unity versus the right to preserve one's own culture and form of life. The views of the researchers we have talked to on those issues belong to the core of their philosophies of development, which in their turn are vital parts of the research paradigms and research practices to be found in the Sudan.

It would be foolhardy to try to sum up the views of all the participants in the preceding dialogues in a neat formula. But we think one can discern at least one general tendency in the foregoing talks : a general feeling of scepticism with regard to Western models of development, a pragmatic attitude as the result of some decades of experiments in development, and a search for viable

alternatives to the established models and concepts of development, based on respect for the values, needs and hopes of the people concerned.

A *sine qua non* for research under conditions of economic and technological underdevelopment is self-reliance. The researcher himself has to find ways and means to overcome the obstacles to research which block the way all around him : from basic facts like lack of petrol which may hinder him from going to the library or office or his chosen area of fieldwork, lack of up-to-date literature (due more to the lack of hard currency than to lack of allocations to the research institutions) and lack of publication facilities, to lack of time for research and study due to the complex system of social obligations to one's family, relatives and friends which is the fabric of social life in the Sudan. Add to this the difficulties of recruiting high-calibre researchers to a research system operating under such conditions, and the perhaps even greater difficulty of keeping the best - qualified personnel within the system because of the attractive salaries one gets on the Arabian peninsula.

And what does one find? In spite of all the odds, a thriving research scene, an impressive number of extremely well-trained, imaginative and resourceful researchers, and a vast area still waiting to be explored

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