Learning to be Sudanese? : the role of Qur'anic schools in Sudanese education from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium to the present day

LEARNING TO BE SUDANESE?:

The Role of Qur'anic Schools in Sudanese Education from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium to the Present Day

Haroon Leon Forde

Birkbeck University – PhD Thesis

Birkbeck College – University of London

HAROON LEON FORDE

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

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Abstract

Quranic schools in Sudan are part of the tradition of Khalwa education dating back to the Funj dynasty of the 16th century. At the height of its popularity in the late 19th century under the Mahdiyyah regime it was the only permissible schooling system. This exclusivity changed during the colonial Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (AEC) period 1898-1956 when Sudan's secular schooling system was established as a competitor. This resulted in increased diversification of families' strategies for securing their children's futures. The concomitant demands on students' time in attending secular schooling has challenged the importance and position of Qur'anic education within the Sudanese education landscape.

This thesis draws on AEC reports (1902-1952) in the Durham archive to examine the role of Qur'anic education in the development of Sudan's modern education system. These reports do not include Sudanese voices about the education policy of the new regime. To address this absence, this study also draws on research with Sudanese middle-class families and spans education from the Condominium period to the present day. This group in Sudanese society was essentially formed by and developed within the Condominium administration and has played an important role in the late 20th-century in the growth of the private education sector; partly in response to the National Congress Party's policy to Islamicise education from 1990.

The thesis contributes original empirical material to debates in sociology and development studies about the place of Qur'anic schooling in education across sub-Saharan Africa. It argues that attempts to exploit Qur'anic education politically and educationally have been countered by the steadfastness of this schooling system in maintaining its identity as a religious-cultural education. As a result, whilst Sudanese communities have engaged in other types of education for socio-economic mobility or security this has not conflicted with Qur'anic schooling serving their Muslim identities.

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for this part of my life journey. There are many individuals I would like to thank, beginning with my supervisor Professor Karen Wells, to whom I am indebted for your honesty, belief in my ability, numerous track changes and continual support. Professor Marloes Janson, for providing support and your interest in my doing well. Dr William Ackah, Dr Gabriella Beckles and Paulette Williams for providing a much-needed platform, from which I took much strength and encouragement. Dr Jasmine Gideon for your kindness and time.

I am forever grateful for the support of my family who committed to this PhD with me. My Mum Malikah Moore, who is a light, constant role model and the 'bestest' ever! My Dad Nicholas Forde who I am certain would be proud. Nuriyah and Sankara, who have provided the motivation for Baba to keep going. My Granny who is the foundation of everything we have been able to achieve. Grandad, for cultivating my interest in history with all those books. Uncs (Douglas Muhammad) for your unwavering support; your words of inspiration at the airport all those years ago helped confirm this is what I wanted to do. Rasida, for the musical distractions and Christina and Paul for your kindness in providing me with a sanctuary to work, I am very grateful.

Thank you to the participants in this study, who selflessly shared your time, life histories and insights with me to the benefit of this study. Your kindness is much appreciated, and I wish I could thank you each by your names, as you deserve so much acknowledgement. Shaykh Babiker Ahmed Babiker, for your teachings, wisdom and for opening the doors to Sudan for me. All the Sudanese people I have met along the way who have taken an interest my research.

Thank you to all the people who have provided support and inspiration along the way: baby Noon, baby Iman, Amal and the Magzoub family, Aunty Valerie, Darcy Rogers, Paul Macintosh, David, Legs, Janet, Dianne, Anne and Darren Rougier, Natalie Noel, The Forde family, The Jogghe family, Mr Shakespeare, Ms George, Ms Yiacoumi, Richie (Gladesmore School youth worker), Pamela (Westminster youth service), Renee (Hackney After school provision), Umar Toure, Rakin Misbah, Ishmael Yasin, Najeeb al-Fulbe, Mustafa, Phillip Campbell, my CrossFit peeps, my college tutor Amanda, Professor Eleanor Gordon, Shalisha Smith, Milena and friends at Staffordshire University, and anyone I may have forgotten to mention by name, thank you.

Note on the Use of Arabic Terminology

For Arabic words and phrases written in this thesis I have not included Arabic script and have opted to use transliteration alongside an English translation to the nearest meaning. In addition, for Arabic words in a plural form, I have resisted the use of the anglicised 's' to denote the plural and have chosen to transliterate the plural form. For example, I use the plural transliteration 'Khalawi' meaning Qur'an schools in Sudanese Arabic rather than adding an 's' to the singular Khalwa.

In this study the use of the letter S in parenthesis following the mention of the Prophet Muhammad (S) is a contraction of the Arabic phrase for 'peace be upon him'.

List of Photos and Tables

Figure 1- Sudan today (post-2011) - McCormack and Thomas (2014)

CHAPTER 1. Learning to be Sudanese: The Role of Qur'anic schools in Sudanese Education from the Condominium to the Present Day

Introduction – Situating this Study

This study situated in the field of international development focuses on education in Sudan following the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (AEC) government in 1898. It is concerned with the contribution of Qur'anic schooling to the development of Sudan's modern education system and the impact of Qur'anic learning on the Sudanese middle-classes.

To achieve this, this study is formed of two parts of analysis. The first, is an examination of the development of the Sudanese modern education system, the function of Qur'anic and other schooling in that process and examines how these factors have informed Sudanese ideas of self, religion, and social mobility. The examination of Qur'anic and other schooling is largely drawn from data collected from AEC government reports between 1902 and 1953 in Durham University's Sudan Archive. Through my analysis of this data, I present a valuable framing and timeline of Condominium education and how its policies and decisions to use Qur'an schools and their students were crucial to the establishment of the modern Sudanese schooling system.

The second part of the analysis is an evaluation of Sudanese middle-class educational experiences, attitudes, and their decision-making about Sudan's schooling options. Importantly this part of the research inserts Sudanese voices alongside the archival reports from which they were omitted. The Sudanese middle class were chosen as a focus based on their emergence during the Condominium period and their role in the growth and development of the private school sector under the NCP regime (1989-2018). Their inclusion in this research provides records of Sudanese educational life histories in each decade from the 1950s to the 2010s. These qualitative contributions are an important addition to research on Sudanese education adding experiences, context, and discourse through Sudanese voices into the cannon.

Academic research into Sudanese education thus far has tended to analyse education policies under the NCP (Khalifa et al, 1997; Breidlid, 2005, 2010; Fincham, 2018) or the history and development of modern Sudanese schooling (Beshir, 1969; Sharkey 2003; Jeppie, 2012) without the inclusion of people who lived through it, meaning these participants' inclusion offers a new direction to research on the development of modern schooling in Sudan.

There are three seminal academic contributions detailing the historical development of modern Sudanese education, Griffith (1953; 1975), Sanderson (1961; 1975) and

Beshir (1969). Griffith (1953, 1975), a former education officer and first director of Bakht-er-Ruda teacher training institute, recorded insights about the development of secular schooling from the founding of the institute in 1934 until independence. However, the primary focus of his research was state secular schooling and not Qur'anic. As a result, his examination of Qur'anic education during the period is minimal.

Similarly, Sanderson (1961) examined the development of secular schooling in Sudan as part of a comparative study of northern Nigerian educational development. However, the focus was on parallels between British education policy in both countries. Sanderson's work (1975) was also interested in the development of girls' education, which she had experienced first-hand as head teacher at a leading Sudanese school for girls. Once again, Qur'anic education's role in the development of Sudanese education, is omitted due to Sanderson's primary focuses.

Perhaps the best-known contribution to the history of modern Sudanese education is the oft-referenced work of Beshir (1969). It offers a comprehensive overview of education under the AEC, giving a sequential history of the period and includes Qur'anic schooling. However, it does not provide enough analysis of the political and social events of the time, which impacted the development of education in Sudan. For this reason, a strength of my study is its analysis and contextualisation of Sudanese education under the Condominium.

To further my own research, I have drawn on studies from the social sciences of anthropology, linguistics, development, and sociology as well as history. I have been mindful of Brenner (2001) and Asad (2009) and their reminders to social scientists that in studying an Islamic community, that Islam is organic and subsequently varied in practice, adherence, and levels of faith. Consequently, I am conscious that research into Islam and Muslims, whether as individuals or communities, cannot be categorised as work about a homogenous global community. Therefore, I have adhered to Asad's (2009) premise that what should be analysed are collections of items and practices related to Muslims' locations, outlooks and social interactions with each other and others. As a result, what I have researched and analysed is archival data about Qur'anic and other schools' function, to inform a specific analysis of a subset of Muslims in Sudan.

Qur'an schools have a commonality due to their employment of memorisation as the method of learning. However, similarly to the communities they serve, it is possible that factors such as, localities, local traditions and practices can help to distinguish them one from another (Boyle, 2006). Therefore, this research into Sudanese Qur'anic education and its place in Sudanese Muslim lives aims to accurately convey the institution's importance in the lives of the study's participants based on the discourse they shared during interview.

These participants' educational life-histories as Sudanese middle-class Muslims are relevant to this study based on this social groups impact on education during two significant periods of 20th century Sudanese education. The first impact was the

result of early AEC education policy, which was designed to develop a small, educated stratum of Sudanese society; whose function was to fill minor roles in government ministries and private enterprise (Currie, 1931; Beshir, 1969; Sharkey, 2003). This led to small cohorts of Sudanese being educated in elite schools that prepared and distinguished them from the rest of society in terms of qualifications and proximity to power. As a result of their unique schooling, these men came to view themselves as equal to their colonial overseers. For that reason, they eventually began to agitate against the Condominium and called for Sudanese independence (Deng, 1984; Sharkey, 2003). When independence arrived, they were both well positioned and ready to take control of the newly freed state.

The consequence of the establishment of a colonially educated middle class was a decline in status of men who had been Qur'anic and Islamically educated. As a result, the value of Qur'anic education was contested by the arrival of colonial-established schools. This led to Qur'anic education enduring an ambiguous status during the colonial and post-colonial periods.

In the early imperialist period prior to the establishment of secular education in Muslim Africa, Islamic education was given pragmatic value by newly formed colonial governments. These administrations viewed this type of schooling to have use in offering literate young men. They were also a foundation on which to build new schooling systems, as was the case in Sudan, Egypt and India (Sanderson, 1975; Kaba, 1976; Eickelman,1978; Umar, 2001; Wells, 2021).

This resulted in Islamically trained men being appointed to roles such as, clerks in government and as overseers of Islamic courts by these regimes. The roles were a continuation of jobs that Islamically educated men had carried out in autonomous Islamic governments or sultanates before colonialism. For example, in the regions and former sultanates that today make up Sudan, these roles were maintained by those Islamically educated, having been established under proceeding Turco-Egyptian, Sultanate of Darfur and Mahdiyyah regimes (Eid,1986).

However, once colonial powers had begun to establish their own schooling systems, promoting unfamiliar pedagogy and certification, the value of Islamic education to both the colonial authorities and citizens declined. Consequently, its use and application within colonial infrastructures was eventually relegated to the oversight of religious practices only, thereafter, ending its general proximity to and input over the structures of power (Brenner, 2001; Jeppie, 2012).

In Sudan, the formation of the AEC in 1898, echoed this process. Initially Qur'anic school graduates were employed in government departments as junior clerks. And Qur'an schools and their students formed the foundational cohorts of elementary vernacular schooling. This was achieved by the Condominium administration, through the enticement of stipends. However, once the aim of establishing

vernacular schooling was accomplished, Qur'an schools and their students found themselves on the periphery of Condominium education (Beshir, 1969).[1]

The Sudanese middle class would also play an instrumental role in education during the latter part of the 20th century. In 1990 Omer al-Beshir announced that all tiers of state education would be Islamised and Arabised (Breidlid, 2005). The prioritisation and implementation of these Islamist policies in schooling curricula reflected the pan-Arab and pan-Islamist ideology of the Omer Beshir regime. This re-orientation of education included prioritising Arabic as the language of instruction over English. It also lowered and changed requirements for students to attain the Sudanese national education certificate for university (Breidlid, 2005).
The middle classes viewed these changes as a disruption to Sudanese education and reacted by removing their children from state education into fee-paying private schools. In doing so, it secured their children's access to qualifications such as, the Baccalaureate and later IGCSEs, as well as English language instruction. They believed these schools use of British or American curricula would ultimately secure their children futures with continued financial mobility (Breidlid, 2005, 2006; Fincham, 2018).

Before the NIF/NCP regime, private schooling had carried a negative reputation amongst the Sudanese. State schooling was believed to be of the highest quality until the Nimeiri government of the 1970s, which led to stigma amongst Sudanese that private schooling was for students who were unable to achieve good grades through merit, hard work and without additional support. However, the decline of state schooling under the Nimeiri regime and in the lead up to the Arabisation of state education by the NCP regime helped to usher in the development of a new tiered system of schooling. In it private schools emerged on top, state schools in the middle and Qur'anic education at the bottom.

The rise in private education in Sudan has reflected the wider growth of the private school sector across the African continent. It was estimated that by 2020 students engaged in private education would make up 20% of the continent's total student population. This projection was interrupted by the Covid-19 outbreak but had been expected to rise to as much as one in four students by 2021 (Falola, 2020). In Africa in general, the effect of the private school sector on how other types of schooling such as, Islamic, state, and indigenous education are received, has alongside the failures of African governments, in part been attributed to the rise of the continent's middle-classes (Falola, 2020). In Sudan, this pattern has been followed contributing to what Brenner (2001:14) refers to as 'new forms of social inequality', whereby those who were economically mobile, can afford private schooling and have more chances of securing or achieving further social mobility.

[1] There was an exceptional period in the 1920s, in which the influence of Frederick Lugard's concept of indirect rule spread throughout British ruled territories in Africa. In Sudan, the Lugardian epoch led to a brief period of financial and strategic investment in Qur'anic schooling (Beshir, 1969; Seri-Hersch, 2017).

Given the middle classes' impact on 20th century education in Sudan, analysis of their motivations and attitudes towards engagement in Qur'anic and other schooling is fundamental to answering whether Qur'anic schooling has any effects on framing their Sudanese Muslim identity.

The Founding of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium and its Education System

A significant portion of this research examines the establishment of the modern Sudanese education system under the AEC between 1898 and 1956. This section briefly details the history of the unification of Sudan in the early 19th century which culminated in the establishment of the AEC by the century's end. It will address why the Condominium administration desired to develop its own education system.

The unification of Sudan began in 1820-21 when Turco-Egyptian Pashas colonised and unified the former kingdoms and provinces that make up Sudan today [2]. Egyptian rule of Sudan, lasted for five decades, until 1881 when the anti-colonialist Mahdist movement of Muhammad Ali gained momentum and established territorial strongholds across the country. This culminated in the defeat of the Turco-Egyptians and their British support (under the leadership of General Gordon) by the Mahdiyyah army in 1885. The victory signalled the end of Turco-Egyptian rule and the commencement of a thirteen-year Mahdiyyah period (Collins and Deng, 1984).

The embarrassment caused to the Egyptians by the loss of Sudan and to the British by the death of General Gordon meant that regaining Sudan became a priority. For the Egyptians, the matter tainted its historical self-image and regional legacy. And for Britain as a world power the death of General Gordon by the inferior Mahdiyyah led to public outcries for retribution. The subsequent British reclamation of Sudan from the Mahdiyyah regime under the command of Lord Kitchener and with Egyptian support, led to the establishment of the AEC in 1898. This novel concept on the surface meant an Egyptian and British partnership in the rule of Sudan. However, with Egypt a British protectorate at the time, the reality was that the partnership was unequal and Britain the more dominant party. As Collins concludes, Egypt's inclusion was no more than a matter of saving face in its former colony (Collins and Deng, 1984).

Early Condominium rule was a time of rapid economic expansion for Sudan and required an infrastructure and workforce to reflect and manage the country's fast-paced development. The Condominium as a response introduced a tiered education system, which by its end in 1956, included schools at elementary, primary, intermediate, secondary, and higher education levels. As explained by James Currie (1934), the first Condominium Director of Education, three key education objectives were identified by the new administration at the turn of the twentieth century.

[2] The exception to this unification was the Darfur Sultanate which would not become a part of modern-day Sudan until 1916 and the collapse of Ali Dinar's rule at the hands of the British.

These were the formation of an artisanal class of workers, the development of a small bureaucratic class to fill minor posts in the country's civil service; and adequate education for the Sudanese masses to enable the population to contribute to the development of the Sudanese economy and understand the machineries of government (Sharkey, 2003; Jeppie, 2012; Seri-Hersch, 2017).

The masses referred to in this statement included a portion of enslaved Sudanese and their children. Putting an end to the trade of slaves in Sudan was the signed agenda of a joint British and Egyptian convention in 1895. Although this would not end the practice of slavery immediately, when the AEC was formed in 1898, manumitted slaves were amongst the groups envisioned to provide important labour for the development of infrastructure including roads and railways amongst other tasks. This development of infrastructural, agricultural and small industrial workforce would need literacy and numeracy skills. By 1905 government administrators had decided that Sudanese slave communities were the most fitting for labourious unskilled work and created the Central Labour Bureau to oversee and target their labour (Sikainga, 1996).

The founding of the schooling system established in part to address this need is what is today the modern Sudanese education system. Its establishment is significant for this study, as it underlined the beginning of a period in which Sudan's earlier established Qur'anic schooling system would have to learn to compete against and also work within the policies of consecutive governments.

The Emergence of a Sudanese Middle-Class

The inclusion in this study of the opinions and experiences of the Sudanese middle class is allied to their emergence as a class group, which began with the AEC establishing the Gordon Memorial College. The institute was designed to create a small group of well-educated Sudanese whose schooling was designed to take on junior roles in the administration of Sudan or in private enterprise (Governor-General's Report, 1902). To recruit suitable students, the government turned to the sons of well-established tribal leaders, landowners, allies, and even former Mahdist leaders (Sharkey, 2003:35). These groups were viewed by the administration as the cream of Sudanese society. Those who were accepted for admission to Gordon College, were taught a British school curriculum and became a uniquely educated stratum of Sudanese society.

The values instilled in these young men through their education not only separated them from the wider Sudanese public but also directly from their fathers in terms of ideas and outlook on the global position of Sudan (Sharkey, 2003). These young men viewed themselves as worldlier than their national compatriots and as shifts towards nationalism took place in Egypt during the 1920s, they too began to embrace nationalist causes. The connection between colonial schooling and nationalism which took place in Sudan was not unique in Africa; anti-colonial nationalist movements were forged through colonial schooling across the continent, including in Tunisia, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania (Sharkey, 2003:20).

Therefore, the significance of Sudanese middle classes during the Condominium period, is not only linked to their schooling pathway and occupations. It is also due to their spearheading of calls for nationalism. This was typified and advanced through movements such as, the White Flag League of the early 1920s and later by the Graduates General Congress founded in 1938. Both were noteworthy voices for Sudanese nationalism and proved difficult for the Condominium regime to ignore (Deng, 1984; Berridge, 2018).
As a result of their education, status, and roles within the administration of Sudan, the middle-class was in a prime position to take control of Sudan at independence (Sharkey, 1998:20). This commenced with the Sudanese Sovereignty council, coalition made up of five members of the Ummah, National Union and Southern Liberal political Parties. This coalition was intended to lead Sudan into its post-independence era. However, its rule lasted for two years and was ended by a coup d'état led by the Commander of Sudanese Military Forces General Ibrahim Abboud. The coup marked the beginning of several periods of military rule and have resulted in Sudan spending more time under military government than civilian rule in the post-independence period.

As the early Sudanese middle class developed, comparisons were made with the Egyptian middle classes (effendiya), some of whom were employed in the Condominium administration between 1898 and 1924. As a result, the Sudanese middle-class would also come to be referred to as the Sudanese 'effendiya' (Trimingham, 1949; Abdel Rahman, 2008). The name paid homage to the Egyptian professional classes who had begun to dress in European suits and tarbush hats in Egypt during the Ottoman period.
Trimingham (1949:257) analogously described the Sudanese middle classes as '… those Sudanese who have acquired a modern education, an occidental wardrobe, and a disrupted cultural and religious life.' He was also of the opinion that the Sudanese Effendiya lacked distinctness due to their contradictory secular and religious world views, about which he observed.

> He will seek modern medical treatment but will not long resist his family's persuasions to visit a Feki. He will show an attitude of agnosticism with his special friends one day and be the defender of Islam with the crowd the next (1949:259).

Trimingham's early observation of the Sudanese middle-class described them as oscillating between two states. He infers this dualism shows an attachment to Sudanese Islam practice and detachment from it in equal measure. In this study, I investigate this duality as demonstrated through their financial investment in private education and extra-curricular investment in Qur'anic schooling in the evenings for their children. As a result, I am interested in understanding the ways in which middle class Sudanese Muslims navigate commitments to their Islamic faith and impart this to their children through education, whilst also investing in their social mobility.

Today, the middle classes continue to play a socio-political role in Sudan. This was reflected by middle class districts Burri, Old Omdurman and Shambat in Khartoum, being at the forefront of action for democratic change as part of the 2018 revolution ending the 30-year rule of the Omer al-Beshir regime (Bakhit, 2020:919). This stratum also actively participated in the Transitional Sovereignty Council aimed at moving Sudan towards democracy after the 2018 revolution. With its members including lawyers, trade union leaders and local politicians before its dissolution, following the military coup of General Abdul Fatteh Burhan in 2021.

Situating Qur'anic Schooling in Sudan

There have been Qur'an schools across the Sahel since its Islamisation begun in the 13th and 14th centuries (Seri-Hersch 2017:3). In Sudan prior to the arrival of the Turco-Egyptian Pashas in the 1820s, Qur'anic schooling was Sudan's main schooling system and was often attached to Sufi Brotherhoods (Bashir 1969:8). Under Ottoman rule (1826-1885) secular schools were introduced and included both 'western-model primary schools and vocational schools (Pruess, 1983).

Following the defeat of the Turco-Egyptian regime by Mahdist forces in 1885, most non-Qur'an schools were closed. For example, missionary schools that had been granted permission to open under the Turco-Egyptians were prohibited from teaching and shut. This led to the reestablishment of Qur'anic schooling's prominence under the Mahdiyyah. By the end of its reign in 1898, there were 800 Qur'an schools in the old capital Omdurman alone, 15000 across the country in total, and an estimated student population of 60,000 in attendance (Bashir, 1969:21; El-Rayah, 1999:607; Osman 1979:356 as cited in Seri-Hersch, 2017).

The importance of teaching Qur'anic Arabic (classical) in these schools cannot be overstated. This is because it is the language in which the Holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S), and as highlighted by Elrayah it is '…the repository of the predominant part of the intellectual legacy of the Muslim Ummah' (1999:604). Students who memorised the Qur'an would as its preservers become a part of this repository, giving reverence to the high status of classical Arabic language [Fus-ha]. In what is now Sudan, in the regions of Darfur and Sennar, classic Arabic was recorded to have been used for official documents since the 17th century and was the official language of the Turco-Egyptian administration used in official correspondence between 1821 and 1884 (O'Fahey and Spaulding, 1974; Elrayah, 1999).

The Qur'anic schools in the pre-Condominium period did not solely teach Qur'anic memorisation and offered a broad education. For example, Eid (1985) documents that during the Funj and Turco-Egyptian periods, Qur'an schools included three types of teachers, Sufi Shaykhs, teachers of Ilm [knowledge] and teachers of the Qur'an. Accordingly, Seri-Hersch (2017:3) explains that Qur'an schools were also recorded to have taught subjects such as arithmetic, Qur'anic exegesis and jurisprudence.

Beshir (1969) suggests that what was taught in these schools, worked well in attending to the traditional needs of an agricultural Sudanese Muslim society with minimal contact with the outside world.

However, the concept of a closed Sudanese society as alluded to by Beshir is problematic for two reasons. The first was that prior to the Berlin Conference 1884, the demarcation of Sudan's respective borders with its neighbours Ethiopia and Egypt remained open to interpretation. The second reason was Sudan's use by African Muslims as a well-established pilgrimage route to Makkah via the Red Sea. For example, these routes were used by West African pilgrims from what is today Nigeria, Niger, and Chad. Some of these pilgrims when forced to abandon their pilgrimages established new communities in Sudan (Bawa Yamba, 1990:4; Searcy, 2011:83-85). Therefore, in contradiction to Beshir, what can be inferred is that Sudan would not have been limited in its contact with the outside world.

Today in Sudan, Qur'an schools permeate cities, towns, and villages alike and are often found attached to mosques as extended quarters. The positioning of mosques in towns and villages is usually at the centre and traditionally indicate their importance in the lives of Muslims and as a place of gathering. The attachment of Qur'an schools to these central places of worship allows them to share in this importance and preserves these schools that have become synonymous with good religious practice (Bedri, 2013).

Qur'anic schools are used by both children and adults in Sudan as part of a life-long education option. They are also a pre-school alternative to kindergartens for children. Generally, they are non-government pre-schools and along with fee-paying private schools total 38% of all student enrolment outside of the government school sector (Ministry of General Education, 2012). As part of Sudan's current education policy, they are a prerequisite for entrance into primary schools alongside kindergartens, although this is not always enforced (Breidlid, 2005).

As an education system in Sudan, Qur'anic schooling continually reproduces itself, constantly providing hosts of new Qur'anic institutes and teachers. This was noted by El-Magboul (1991:66) in his study of Qur'anic schooling in Umm Dubban, commenting 'the continuity of Khalawi, (is) before one becomes old, a new one is established.' As a result, this is also true of Qur'an teachers, for whom the connection or attachment to Qur'an schools is extended. This is because an estimated 88% of former students who had learned to read and write in these institutes, returned to Khalawi as Qur'an teachers (Nur, 1976; Eid 1986). Similarly, my own experience after a year spent in a Sudanese village in Gezira state in 2009, pointed to similar outcomes for Qur'an school graduates, with local Qur'an teachers all having graduated from Qur'an schools nearby. This in turn feasibly indicated the limited career options available to Qur'anic schooling graduates.

The uniqueness of Qur'an schools in Sudan when compared to those in most other sub-Saharan Muslim societies, is that beyond being a symbol of religious education, they are also first language institutes. Most students will already be well versed in

local Arabic dialects, although not necessarily the classical version of Arabic taught. This means that vocabulary and meaning are easily transferred to students. This is a difference between Sudan and other sub-Saharan countries such as, Gambia, Burkina Faso, or even nearby Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, where students may learn phonetics, recitation and grammatical points of Arabic for Qur'anic study but do not have daily interactions with it as a living language. As a result, Qur'an schools in Sudan do not only embed a religious ethos but also first-language socialisation and literacy.

As a schooling system that pre-dates the arrival and introduction of secular education on a major scale by the British-Egyptian Condominium, Rashid and Sandell consider Qur'anic education to be the oldest non-formal system of education in Sudan (1980). Additionally, Lynch et al (1992) note that while Qur'an education's historical value is difficult to approximate, it has played a significant role in the preservation of nationhood whilst continuing to impart religious standards for more than 400 years. This is also in keeping Eid's premise that Islamic nationhood did not begin in Sudan before the 16th century (1985).

By the late 19th century, the Mahdiyyah regime (1884-1898) established Qur'anic schooling as the state education system of Sudan and banned other forms of schooling that had been taught under the former Turco-Egyptian regime. However, this was short-lived and changed under the subsequent regime of the AEC (1898-1956). During this period, Qur'anic schooling filtered in and out of the education mainstream as the regime developed its broader secular education programme.

The Condominium's use of Qur'an schools set a precedent for their use by later government regimes. Consequently, until this day, they have continued to oscillate between their use in education programmes to promote an Islamic ethos such as, the latter Nimeiri period and Beshir regime). Or the margins when considered a system reflective of and better suited to the old traditional Sudan such as, the early socialist Nimeiri period and Saddiq al-Mahdi periods (Beshir, 1969; Preuss 1984; Lynch et al, 1992; Breidlid, 2005).

The inclusion and exclusion of Qur'an schools from the education mainstream is found throughout literature on Sudanese education during the twentieth century. It alludes to the constant battle for a place in education of Qur'anic schooling. For example, in the 1910s they had to compete for students against newly established hybrid Kuttabs, which had gained popularity in other countries connected to the Muslim British Empire, including Egypt, offering secular education with an infusion of some religious schooling.
There was a turnaround in the 1920s, when Qur'an schools were heavily promoted by the administration, and Beshir (1969) concluded this was because they could be used as a vehicle for the AEC to provide elementary education. However, by the 1930s, the education department decided Qur'an schools were undependable due to poorly trained teachers and the incompatibility of Qur'an school pedagogy with secular education. Consequently, they were relegated to the periphery and replaced by sub-grade (pre-elementary) schools (Governor-General Reports – GGR, 1928-

1935). Yet it was not solely the methods of teaching used in Qur'an schools that were the issue. According to Eid (1985), the decline in status of Qur'an schooling under the Condominium reflected long-established unsympathetic attitudes towards traditional schooling within the Anglo-Egyptian regime.

It is worth noting that the Condominium's incentive for using Qur'an schools throughout the 1920s and 1930s was recognition of their capacity to provide a manual workforce with much-needed basic literacy skills and to guarantee a higher number of students than Condominium schools, as families continued to access this type of education. It is also worth noting from Sudan Education reports of that period housed in the Sudan Archive that such was the popularity that some Kuttab schools in the same areas were closed, as many Sudanese opted to return children to the Khalwa system (GGR, 1928 -1935). For this reason, what is indicated is that whilst Qur'anic schooling may not have been popular at an administrative level, it continued to resonate with the Sudanese population.

In spite of this, doubts about the Khalwa system continued throughout the Condominium and became even more pronounced towards its end. This is because jobs once held by foreign nationals, particularly in areas of Government became localised as part of a broad Sudanisation policy in preparation for independence. However, these opportunities were only available to those educated in the modern schooling system, and who could present certification. This resulted in the education Khalawi provided being further alienated from what had become mainstream schooling, as families sought the certification and economic stability that other types of schooling seemingly offered (Eid, 1985).

Sudan gained its official independence on 1st January 1956 ending the AEC era. Whilst independence ushered in a new period of Sudanese history, it did not immediately alter the educational ladder system, its embedded schooling tiers and status. According to Pruess in his comparative analysis of Qur'anic and Western education in rural Sudan, this meant.

> … First there is the hierarchy of elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools on the Western model… Second, there is a less rigidly structured hierarchy of Islamic schools... At the lowest level, there are the Koran schools (Khalawi) of both day school and boarding school types, which are similar to the precolonial Koran schools in terms of organisation, structure and subjects for study (1983: 7)

Such was the lowly position of Qur'an schools that by 1970 they had all but been excluded from education sector planning (this may have also been an effect of the Sudan Communist Party's successful coup in May 1969). Lynch et al (1992) describe it as a failure of the early Nimeiri regime to not include Qur'anic education as a part of its education overhaul, the New Education Policy (NEP). This was despite Qur'an schools' continued role in providing literacy to generations of male and female Sudanese alike. However, in 1978 now rebranded as an Islamist regime, Nimeiri's

government reintroduced Qur'an schools into the mainstream, with the intention of them becoming the foundation of elementary education expansion, similarly to what had taken place under the AEC (Rashid and Sandell, 1980; Hajjar, 1983). Qur'anic schooling endured an unsettled position in mainstream education system prior to the NCP regime. Yet, Lynch et al (1992) reason that if previous governments had succeeded in homogenising Sudanese education, then the outcome would have been the loss of Qur'anic schooling as a standalone alternative education source for parents unconvinced by secular learning.

As a result, Qur'anic schooling remains relevant in Sudan. However, there are academics who suggest that this is in relation to specific pockets of Sudanese society rather than the overall population. For example, Preuss' (1983) assessment is that the religious training and lifestyle exhibited in Qur'an schools are more compatible with rural communities than secular schools. And Bedri (2013) argues that Qur'an schools have been useful in bridging the enrolment deficit for girls in schools as some ethnic groups such as the Bila and Rashaida do not allow girls to enter state education but are satisfied for them to study the Qur'an.

However, Lynch et al (1992) view the reach and significance of Qur'an schools to be broader than just specific groups of Sudanese society. They conclude that Qur'anic education plays an important role in preserving Sudan's Muslim values, whilst also promoting literacy to poor and remote communities, such as the Bedouin nomads (1992). Similarly, Khalifa et al (1997), remark that Qur'anic education represents traditional sociocultural values, norms and attitudes of most individuals and groups in Sudan. Khalifa et al was written during the Tamkeen period of the 1990s, during which the NIF/NCP regime strengthened its ideological hold over the Sudanese population. It was a period marked by the regime's successful alienation of political opposition (Mann, 2015) and implementation of policies that claimed to return education to the Islamic values the regime wanted to reinstall. Pertinent to this thesis, it was the latter that influenced some of this study's participants to choose private schooling for their children.

In the context of Sudan, Lynch et al (1992) believe Qur'an schools to be useful in negating class social structure and influence. They conclude that the Qur'an schools of Sudan are exemplary in their fairness because they provide students from lower classes access to the same education as those from the middle classes, although they offer no empirical evidence in support of this claim. However, as a Sudanese lifelong learning institute they claim the incorporation of students of all ages, old and young attests to the schools' egalitarian ethos and inclusiveness (1992:56). Yet, I believe this claim fails to consider the educational options that are open to middle class Sudanese that are not accessible to Sudan's lower classes, such as the option to leave Qur'anic education and enter private schools.

Criticisms found in research about Qur'an schooling and its teachers in sub-Saharan African (Eickelman, 1978) are present in research of the Qur'anic system in Sudan (Pruess, 1983; Lynch et al, 1992; Khalifa et al, 1997). Pruess in his comparative study of Qur'anic and secular schooling in Sudan argues that 'the chalk and talk' method of

teaching means that students are censored, unable to ask questions about what they are learning and banned from expressing any form of doubt about what they have been taught (1983:23). In keeping with this, according to Khalifa et al (1997), a culture of learning like this emphasises conformity, submission, and obedience, and is characterised by the heavy power dynamic that favours teachers and students' subordination. Criticism of Sudanese Qur'anic teachers is in the work of Lynch et al (1992) who conclude a lack of training has prevented Qur'an teachers from being able to teach wider syllabi that incorporate non-Islamic subjects. However, in their critique they do not acknowledge that this is not a designation of Qur'anic schooling.

The possibility of hybrid Islamic and secular schooling inferred in the work of Lynch et al (1992), is found in Pruess (1983) who highlights a respondent's plan to revive his grandfather's Qur'an school, whilst adding subjects, such as mathematics, science, and geography to traditional studies of Islam and Arabic and implementing grades and examinations (1983). Bedri (2013), discusses the idea of a newer version of Qur'anic schooling, similar to the hybrid models located in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, such as Nigeria, Mali, and Mozambique (Luanay, 2016; Boyle 2006; Brenner 2001). Bedri proposes that the administration of these religious schools should not be left to the Qur'an teachers, Fakis or Sheikhs but to the Ministry of Education for them to become a part of the country's-controlled education system (2013). However, in relation to Bedri's last point, under the administration of the NCP regime, a portion of the country's Qur'an schools were both funded and controlled by the state's Ministry of Religious Affairs. As a result, some of these Qur'an schools are similar to secular schools in that they can be either state run or private institutions, which Bedri does not reference in her chapter.

This overview of the limited academic research on Qur'anic education in Sudan, has highlighted the need for new research to be developed. This will bring literature on Sudanese Qur'an schools in line with the attention of academics given to these schools in west Africa such as, Senegal, Mali, and Nigeria (Ware, 2020). The materials about Qur'anic education in Sudan do have some consistencies with other regions of sub-Saharan Africa such as, competing against state and private schooling, or its role in providing literacy to communities with no other or limited access to schooling (Newman, 2015). These themes exist because of the binding foundations on which Qur'an school models are built, the Qur'an itself, and the cross-pollination of cultures across the Sahel and regions where Islam's influence reached.

At their core Qur'an schools are dedicated to religious education and the making of good Muslim citizens, however, their portrayal as static and unchanging sites is misleading. This becomes important in the analysis of their function during the AEC and navigation of its widening educational landscape (Tibawi, 1972; Al-Awani, 1989; Khaleefa, Erdos and Ashria, 1997).

The Impact of Secular and Qur'anic Education Converging in the Same Space

To answer my research question 'what role did Qur'anic education play in the formation of modern Sudanese schooling?', The role and development of modern secular and Islamic schooling in Sudan and more broadly across sub-Saharan Africa are analysed. In doing so, I review the position and advancement of these two types of schooling with an interest in how the arrival of modern secular schooling in Sudan's primarily Muslim states and communities led to changes in how Qur'anic education was valued amongst its Muslim populations. The implications of these two education systems existing in the same spaces in the context of Africa, as emphasised by Louis Brenner are

> These two types of schooling (Qur'anic and modernised) produce very different kinds of subjects who are subjected to, and inculcated with, very different technologies of power. If this process is neither conscious nor intentional, it is nonetheless not without significant effect (2001:16)

As well as technologies of power, the use of classroom technologies has also influenced perceptions of each type of schooling and their outcomes for children. For example, in secular schools, the availability of learning apparatus such as blackboards and notebooks, individual desks and chairs changed how familiar learning methods at Qur'an schools were received. As a result, sitting on the floor and the use of writing boards (Loh) were believed by education policy makers to be inferior methods to those used in secular schools (Kaba, 1976:416; Launay, 2016).

More recently, to regain a foothold in the education landscape, Qur'anic education has adopted some of the practices and technologies commonly associated with modern secular schooling. The merger of the two types of schooling is seen in the form of Islamic hybrid schools which have been relatively successful in Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Nigeria on the continent (Boyle, 2006; Holmarsdottir, 2013; Bonate, 2016; Luanay, 2016).

In early 20th century Sudan, the insertion of technologies into learning spaces and changes to students' dress (European clothing was adopted in elite schools) met with some opposition from fathers who had studied in traditional Qur'an school environments. They perceived these changes to be impersonations of European ways. To find a middle ground, consultations amongst educationalists discussed the viability of trimming the legs of school tables and chairs to bring children closer to the ground once again (Griffith, 1953:5; 1975).

The embrace of Frederick Lugard's policy of indirect rule in British ruled Africa in the 1920s, led to agreement from the Condominium administration that children should not impersonate the dress of Europeans and resulted in students being discouraged from wearing outfits that were not traditionally Sudanese. During this period, agitations from educated Sudanese (middle class) for more civil, financial, and political rights led to a shift in the regime's outlook about educating this specific

section of the local population. A new emphasis was placed instead on investment in mass education of the Sudanese through an elementary education in Arabic and shifting the emphasis away from elite schooling. Qur'an schools were well placed to carry out this role, through their teaching of Arabic literacy. This led to their re-emergence in Condominium education planning from the mid-1920s into the early 1930s (Deng, 1984; Sharkey, 2003).

The Use of Qur'anic Schooling and its Synonyms in this Study

The terms Qur'anic education, schooling and learning are each used in this study to denote traditional and hybrid Qur'anic education. At times references are also made to the broader scope of Islamic education in general, under which Qur'anic education falls. This understanding is commonplace amongst academics, although Emile Roy (2020), views Islamic education and Qur'anic education to be separate branches of what she instead defines as Muslim education. For Roy Islamic education signifies learning that takes place in formal school institutes, whilst Qur'anic education is reserved for informal schools. However, this is not a common understanding, and it is widely accepted that Qur'anic education falls under the umbrella of broader Islamic education as an elementary form of learning that is based in Qur'anic memorisation (Boyle, 2005, 2006; Ware 2014; Nur, 2020; Haron, 2020; Ogunnaike, 2020;). Education in Qur'an schools, although primarily associated with young people, in an African context is also lifelong learning pathways, which adults may join or return to memorising the Qur'an at any point in their lives. This differs from a western understanding of elementary schooling and requires the reader to divorce Qur'anic schooling from expectations of learners' age that they may associate with secular schooling.

A Qur'an school in Sudan is widely referred to as Khalwa or its plural Khalawi and both the Arabic and English terms are used in this study. The term Khalwa is derived from Arabic language and is commonly explained by its root gerund 'kh-la-wa' which means to seclude oneself or remove oneself away from distraction. This meaning is also a signifier of the historical connection between Qur'an schools and Islamic mysticism, Sufism. The practice of 'kh-la-wa' is one that is popularly associated with Muslim ascetics attempts to purge themselves of worldliness through seclusion. The connection between Qur'an schools and Sufism in Sudan, is exemplified by the Sammaniyah brotherhood and its oversight of two of the country's most popular Qur'anic education institutes located in Wadafani and al-Zeriba.

These two Qur'anic institutes have remained independent during the government of the NIF/NCP receiving little to no interference from it or the Department of Religious Affairs (est 1965), under which monitoring of Khalawi falls. The non-engagement of the government with these particular schools was demonstrated by the meeting and rare foray into politics of Al-Zeriba's figurehead, Shaykh al-Bur'ai with the regime's ideologist Hasan al-Turabi (Salomon, 2016: 184 - 187).

Identifying Muslim Praxis and its Connections to Iman (Faith)

Bakheit (2020) in his examination of Muslim education policies and epistemologies underscores how Muslims concepts of knowledge are often framed by an understanding that is related to their spiritual goal of attaining heaven and proximity to God in this life and the hereafter. Emphasising this point, Ogunnaike (2020:423) in his study of Islamic philosophies in Africa, concludes that the epistemology of seeking knowledge for Muslims is 'imbued with sacred and existential character.' This 'sacred and existential character' may not be revealed by modes of research that want to document tangible signifiers of praxis such as dress, frequency of ritual, social and cultural expectations and measures of conservatism or piety that are revealed by Muslims during interview.

In the context of research into Muslim engagement in Qur'anic schooling, this can result in negative conclusions about Muslims' continued attraction to this type of learning in the modern age. The outcome of which are descriptions in the literature of education at Qur'an schools as archaic, narrow-minded or miseducation (Kaba, 1976; Eickelman, 1978; Roy, 2020). It is worth noting, this viewpoint is not always in keeping with the experiences of former Qur'anic education students (Tamari, 2016).

Contrasting the views of an archaic education system, Boyle (2006) explains Qur'anic schooling as the first step in students' Islamic education and spiritual journeys which broadens as students' progress. In offering this explanation Boyle sheds some light on why Muslim engagement with Qur'anic education persists. Likewise, Ware's (2014) discussion of the spiritual and physical practice of 'ingestion' in which students drink an ink solution made up of their Qur'anic writings to literally imbibe the Qur'an, demonstrates a nuance within Qur'an school settings that illustrates more takes place than simple memorisation. Qur'anic education is part of a religious epistemology and as explained by Ogunnaike's (2020:421), each type of education is founded with a pedagogical approach that is in turn underscored by an epistemology.

The connection between the pursuit of knowledge and the spiritual is ever-present in Muslim discussions of education and the intertwining of these two elements is also eschatological. For example, according to a hadith, an author of beneficial knowledge in this world reaps its reward after death (al-Timirdhi, 864). Therefore, the pursuit of knowledge and its function for Muslims should represent more than just retention. This point was highlighted by the popular 8th century Muslim Jurist Imam Malik, who said 'Knowledge is a light that Allah places wherever he wills. It does not consist of memorising many narrations (Elias, 2014).' Accordingly, Muslim ascetics associate knowledge with providing light to the life of this world (Rosenthal, 2007; Nur, 2020). One of the methods through which this connection is achieved is through Muslims commitment to memorisation and ingestion of the Qur'an (Ware, 2014; Nur, 2020).

My awareness of the importance Muslim communities place on seeking knowledge and its connection to the metaphysical (Boyle, 2005, 2006; Ware, 2014; Nur, 2020; Ogunnaike, 2020) has therefore informed my approach to this study. In addition, years spent living in Muslim communities in Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have provided insights into what steers Muslim families' educational choices. Whilst socio-political and economic factors are definite influences in Muslim families' choices about education, the depth of metaphysical connection equally impacts the decisions about Qur'anic education and influences whether a family steers towards or away from this type of schooling or combines it with secular schooling.

Education as a Research Focus

The educational foci of this research are primarily the development of state education, Qur'anic schoolings' role in that process and private education's importance to Sudanese middle-classes since 1990. These three types of schooling are interconnected in their development under the Condominium. This is because students from Qur'an schools were enrolled in early Condominium elementary and primary schools. Concentrated efforts to establish private Sudanese education began during the Condominium era through international community schools and 'native schools' (ahliyah), both of which were initially allowed to operate with a degree of independence and outside of the restrictions of formal education controlled by the AEC.

Ahliyah schools started as Sudanese community enterprises by parents, who were frustrated at children's progress and opportunities in Condominium education. This movement was inspired by the early example of independent schooling of Babiker Bedri and the Ahfad school for girls founded in 1907. While they were becoming established these schools drew their students from existing Qur'an schools and state schools (Mohammad, 1969; Sharkey, 1998; Seri-Hersch, 2017:5).

The country's private international and religious schools for Armenian, Egyptian, and Greek Orthodox communities were solely for the children of immigrant workers, and Sudanese access to them was restricted until the last two decades of the Condominium. In this study, there is brief reference to other types of schooling established during the period such as the niche technical, missionary and the late formation of girls' schools. The changes and impact of these types of schools were marginal and took place at the edge of the education system, in comparison to the main issue of Qur'anic vs secular education and Arabic vs English language instruction.

In this study I have chosen not to include the development of education in South Sudan. The primary justification for this decision is that my research focus has been Sudanese Muslim approaches to education, which meant that the majority Muslim population of north Sudan was more relevant. Moreover, northern, and southern education were divided and administered through separate policies between 1898 and 1948. Therefore, attempts at the unifying these two parallel schooling systems

did not take place until it had become clear to the AEC regime that north and south Sudanese integration was imminent. Reflecting the protracted separation of the two systems under the Condominium, South Sudanese education was documented in official education reports under its own heading. And it was not until a year after independence in 1957 that most southern schools were overseen by the Ministry of Education in Khartoum (Seri-Hersch, 2017).

The Merit of Incorporating Sudanese Life Histories and Its link to Decolonisation

In the post-colonial period, there have been consistent demands across the humanities and social sciences for decolonisation of the literature on African education and the admission of non-Eurocentric viewpoints into the canon. In International Development, the educationalists Abidogun and Falola (2020) have called for studies of education in Africa to include the re-centralisation of indigenous learning systems, in acknowledgement of African contributions to schooling which predated or continued to work in the shadow of education introduced by colonial powers.

This study's contribution to the theme of decolonisation is in its readdressing of the official narratives in the Condominium archives, by inserting Sudanese voices and accounts alongside it. The need to redress how the development of Sudanese education took place, is based on readings of early academic contributions such as, Trimingham (1949), Griffith (1953; 1979) Beshir (1969), and Sanderson (1976), in which the overviews offered do not incorporate Sudanese viewpoints. Instead, each of these studies is either reliant on the colonial archive, imperial ideologies, or experiences of British civil servants in Sudan.
As a result, the telling of Sudanese education has become about what has happened to Sudanese communities through education policies, without discourses from the people most-impacted by education policy – students and their families.
Importantly, the addition of participants' life histories demonstrates the complex decision making that takes place for Sudanese when appraising three key elements of the purpose of education: what it means to be Sudanese, what it means to be Muslim and what it takes to secure economic security.

The Organisation of Chapters in this Thesis

Following the introduction, the second chapter of this study is a literature review of Qur'anic education in Africa. It draws on academic analysis of Qur'anic schooling in education, religion, and development to understand the function and purpose of Qur'anic schooling in colonial and post-independence societies on the continent. The chapter is divided into sections about how Muslims choose secular and religious schooling, how these two types of schooling impact each other in the same educational space and memorisation as a pedagogical method. Chapter 3 details the

research design of this study and the methods have been chosen to gather data that is useful in answering the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter 4 is the first of three archival research chapters. It is an examination and chronological account of early developments in modern Sudanese education and examines the AEC's ambivalence towards Qur'anic education between 1902-1910. It is followed by chapter 5, an analysis of the general expansion of the Sudanese education system between 1911 and 1930 and the key role government subsidised Qur'anic schools played within it. The final archival chapter is number 6, an analysis of the Anglo-Egyptian administration's abandonment of Qur'an education between 1930 and 1952 when the last of the regime's annual reports was compiled. To end the chapter an education account of a participant named Hasan is shared to add a Sudanese voice and perspective about education under the regime.
Chapters 4-6 argue that the use of Qur'anic schooling by the Condominium was exploitative, yet fundamental to the existence of a sustainable education programme. It demonstrates that the use of Qur'anic schools by the regime was pragmatic, as was the entrance and eventual embrace of secular schooling by most Sudanese Muslim communities.

Chapter 7 begins the examination of contemporary attitudes about learning and evaluates the education policies of the NCP regime and their impact on the Sudanese education system from 1989 onwards. The chapter provides an annexe to support and contextualise some of the decision-making of Sudanese families that is the focus of chapter 8. Using the educational life histories of research participants, the chapter offers detailed experiences of Sudanese education from the late AEC until the recent NCP/NIF regime. In doing so, it situates indigenous Sudanese experiences alongside the British official records analysed in the previous chapter, from which Sudanese voices were omitted. The participant contributions demonstrate the broad considerations, compromises and solutions middle-class Sudanese families implement to achieve education that is holistic in its address of secular, cultural and religious needs.

Through these chapters I argue that the use of Qur'anic education by these members of this social group is a practical decision that is intended to provide cultural and or religious education to embed ideas of Sudanese Muslimness but not academic education. The final chapter draws the themes of my research together and establishes the contribution of this thesis to the field of educational development through its demonstration that the function of Qur'anic schooling has always been clear and understood by Muslim communities. It argues that issues arose for Qur'anic schooling in Sudan at two key points in the twentieth century. At the beginning of the century when the AEC used it for a purpose for which it was not designed as part of its agenda to build a modern education system and workforce. And later in the century, by the NCP regime who sought to exploit it as part of an Islamist agenda that led to the image of Qur'an schools being tainted when the regime fell in 2018. I argue that these lessons are useful if applied to development agendas such as Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goal 4, where the use of Qur'anic education is proposed as a solution to developing literacy.

CHAPTER 2. Literature Review

Introduction

There are an estimated 273 million Muslims living in Africa (2013), and Qur'an schools serve an important function in educating and embedding Qur'an students into an Islamic way of life. These schools are characteristically associated with Orthodox Islamic societies and are primarily private enterprises operated by Muslim owners or communities. Alongside the traditional Qur'an school model there also exist government controlled and subsidised Qur'an schools, as well as hybrid models that merge Islamic and secular education (Owusu-Ansah and Iddrisu, 2008). In this chapter about the literature on Qur'anic schooling in Africa, each of these Qur'anic schooling models will be referenced. However, the primary focus will be on literature about traditional Qur'anic schooling, its students and its pedagogy.

Qur'anic schooling has a long history on the African continent, which at its height between the 13th and 18th centuries provided systemised schooling in many African regions (Bashir, 1969; Omer, 2006). Given its longevity on the continent, Wagner (1989) proposes that Qur'anic education is an African indigenous system of learning due to its existence as a pre-European colonial education system. This position is based on the broad definition of indigenous African education as systems of knowledge that have been embedded into societies and cultures over significant periods of time, which may also be underpinned by religion (Mawere, 2015:59; Dei, 2020). However, it is a definition that is more commonly used to classify oral rather than written educational traditions (Prah, 2017).

A contrasting position is held by Falola and Abidogun (2020) and Sifuna (2020), who maintain indigenous education and Qur'anic/Islamic education are distinct domains. They argue that Islamic and western education models are both later incursions into the African educational space, rather than born out of the continent itself. Whilst Wagner's assessment is based on Qur'anic education pre-dating European incursions on the continent, it is only framed by the arrival of European colonialism and the import as part of it of the western education model. However, Falola and Abidogun's position considers the impact of Arab colonisation in Africa's East coast such as, the 17th century establishment of the sultanate of Zanzibar. This would also encompass the arrival of Qur'anic education into these regions and explains why they consider Qur'anic and European secular education to be colonial legacies.

How Qur'anic education is viewed by academics has implications for its role in the decolonisation of African education as called for by Abidogun and Falola (2020), Sifuna (2020), and Emeagali (2020) who seek the re-centralisation of indigenous education. However, whether or not it is an indigenous African education system, Qur'anic schooling functions to ensure that young people are embedded in an Islamic way of life. It has influenced prevailing attitudes to childhood, education,

dress (Reichmuth, 2000) and has cemented what Kaba (1976) defined as a 'collective consciousness', in its service to African Muslim populations.

These schools have also played a useful role in spaces where there is an underrepresentation of other types of schooling available to young people (Baba, 2012). Qur'anic schooling has opened access to education for nomadic and agrarian communities using itinerant school models for children who would not otherwise have had the opportunity to study. These features of Qur'anic schooling have, led to policy driven interest in its function as an education provision. And under the lens of Education for All (EFA), it has provided an alternative schooling option to support EFA targets being met in countries such as Nigeria and Kenya (Baba, 2012; Kenyan Ministry of Education, 2012).

Even where other forms of schooling are available, Qur'an schools continue to make up an important part of the education landscape (Eickelman,1978; Butler, 2016). Scholars have found that poor children from urban centres were more likely to engage in Qur'anic education than their rural counterparts (Boyle 2006, Sobhi 2006). The Sudanese participants in this research study have also shown that urban Qur'an schooling continues to function. Despite this demonstration of engagement in Qur'anic schooling in urban environments, Pruess (1983:32), Saul (1984:73), Bawa-Yamba (1990) and Tawil (2006) each maintain that it is a schooling system better suited to rural settings.

The adaptability of Qur'anic schooling to both rural and urban settings stems from its low cost. Qur'an schools do not require many resources to function and are able to use local materials, such as wood to carve student's writing boards (loh). Fortier (2016) explains this practice aids Qur'anic education to easily transfer and adapt between settings. Omer (2006) and Hasan and Robleh (2004) conclude that as a result of its low-cost Qur'anic education is an economically viable education model for many families.

During the colonial period, the introduction of secular school models into African Muslim societies in Nigeria and Sudan, led to both colonial and Islamic educational institutions competing for the same students (Sanderson, 1975). In the region of Kordofan in Sudan amongst others, this led to initial resistance to secular education from the majority of Muslim communities, where Qur'anic education maintained a foothold. However, this would eventually give way to embrace of secular schooling and by 1924, vernacular school projects were actively piloted in the regions, as the potential for social mobility proved to be enticing (Governor General Reports, 1905; 1924). And towards the end of the colonial period, headmasters had usurped Qur'anic teachers' educational importance to Muslim parents (GGR, 1942).

The successful implementation of secular school certifications also affected the status of Qur'anic teachers and graduates in the colonial period. The growing number of secular school graduates who held these certificates, ultimately spelt an end to the need for the early incorporation of Qur'an school alumni in colonial administrations as clerks in countries such as, Morocco, Nigeria, and Sudan (Beshir,

1969; Eickelman, 1978; Umar 2001). Prior to this, these alumni had been viewed by colonial administrators to be the organic intellectuals of Muslim societies (Brenner, 2001). However, with their own pool of educated personal Qur'an educated employees were no longer required.

Identifying the chasm that has developed between African Qur'anic schooling and government administration since the colonial period, Brenner (2001) explains, Qur'anic and secular education socialise their students in very different ways and settings, in addition to using resources that are unalike. Consequently, the outcome has been that students from the Qur'anic or Majlis system are significantly less likely to be presented with avenues into state bureaucracy or politics. Hoechner (2012) contends in her analysis of the Almajiri Qur'an school system in Nigeria that developments in regional infrastructures are also culpable for the outcomes of Qur'an students arguing that part of the Qur'anic systems detriment has been that 'changes in the local political economy during the past century relegated the Almajiri system – once a reliable preparation for successful adult life – to the economic, social, and political margins' (2012).

The distinction between the pathways created for children in secular or Qur'anic education has resulted in Muslim parents' growing devotion to secular education and the potential it offers for social and economic advancement (Reichmuth, 2000). Whilst on the other hand Qur'anic school graduates are seen to be committed to religious and customary scholarship, rather than commerce and social mobility (Brenner, 2001).

Scholarly interest in Qur'anic schooling continues to describe and analyse changes to its status in African Muslim societies, whether in the colonial period (Rahman, 1967; Beshir, 1969), in post-independence Africa (Kaba,1976;) or its continued and future role in sub-Saharan African education (Hoechener, 2013; Luanay, 2016, Butler, 2016; Mfum-Mensah, 2017; Haron, 2020; Abidogun and Falola, 2020). To date the focus of most research into this type of schooling in sub-Saharan Africa has been its western region (Ware, 2020). Exceptions to this are, Decker's (2010), Sessemann (2016), Loimeier (2016), Bonate's (2016) historical studies of Muslim education in Tanzania, Kenya Zanzibar and Mozambique and Nur (2020) on western Sudanese Qur'anic schooling.
As a result, most research has primarily been in Anglophone and Francophone countries such as, Boyle (2005;2006) and Hoechnor (2013) in Nigeria, Idrissu (2005) in Ghana, Ware (2014) and Newman (2015) in Senegal and Moore (2013) in Cameroon amongst others. This according to Ware (2020) means that what takes place in Qur'anic schooling in Arabic, Swahili or Nilotic regions of Africa is often missing from discussions of Qur'anic education in sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite the disparity in frequency of research on Islamic education in west and east Africa, the general production of psycholinguistic, sociological, and anthropological accounts of Qur'anic pedagogical practices have sought to understand its effects on the communities engaged in this type of education (Moore, 2013). In the wider context of the continent in general, Moore cites the research of Wagner (1993) in

Morocco, Brenner (1991) in Mali and Santerre (1973) in Cameroon as seminal examples of this rich body of academic work.

In the following sections I evaluate relatively recent works on Qur'an schools from International Development (Boyle, 2005; Hoechner, 2014; Abigodun and Falola, 2020) anthropology (Newman, 2016; Butler, 2016), and linguistics (Moore, 2013) amongst other social sciences. In the first section, 'Qur'an school, secular school and the idea of doubling', I look at research that analyses the effects of doubling (simultaneous attendance at Qur'an and secular schools), on schools, education authorities, parents and children, as more and more students attend Qur'anic and secular institutions at the same time.

The discussion about doubling that takes place in the literature is important to this study as it offers two contrasting positions. The first, is that Muslim children are distracted from their full-time secular education by studying at Qur'an schools (Moore, 2013). The second, is that Muslim children are easily able to separate and distinguish their secular and Islamic learning through 'collapsed plurality' (Butler, 2016). Both positions are challenged by participants in this study who view the incorporation of secular and Islamic education to be a part of a holistic approach to learning which caters to the economic needs of life (secular) and social and moral behaviours that produce successful Muslim citizens and positive reward in Muslim eschatology (Islamic).

The second section is concerned with how secular and Qur'anic education have come to borrow from each other, how this practice is lively and dividing opinion amongst Muslim communities. Lastly, the third section is a critique of the polemic academic positions on the practice of memorisation in Qur'an schools and Islamic education in general, which lends itself to the examination in this study of the framing of memorisation, which according to some of the participants in this study was used as a method in both their Qur'anic and secular learning.

Qur'an school, Secular School and the Idea of Doubling

Research on Qur'anic schooling often explores the premise of two worlds colliding through education. This is represented as a clash between tradition in Qur'anic schooling and modernity in the form of secular schooling and the (secular) nation state. Research comparing secular and Qur'anic education (Pruess, 1983; Launay, 2016), questions its place in societal development (Hoechener, 2012) and explores African Muslim communities' abilities to navigate the two systems of learning at the same time (Moore, 2011; Butler, 2016).

In Sudan, like elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, Qur'an students will either board or become day scholars, who transfer between schooling systems as part of their school day. For participants in this research, day attendance of Qur'an schools was the common practice. Therefore, in this section I will draw upon some of the current discourses in the literature about Muslim children attending both Qur'an and secular

school, known as doubling (or duality), firstly through the work of Moore (2011) and Butler (2016), which represent two main positions before evaluating the works of others.

In the study 'Moving Across Languages, Literacies, and Schooling Traditions' (2011), linguist Leslie C. Moore discusses the premise of school doubling through ethnographic studies of Muslim children who attend both state and Qur'an schools in Northern Cameroon and Minneapolis USA. The study seeks to understand the implications of two languages converging on each other through the child and if this leads to poor application or focus towards one or both languages.

Although Moore's study is primarily concerned with second language interference for bilingual children, it also asks wider questions about whether it is plausible for two systems of learning to be the simultaneous focus in a child's education. For example, some her Cameroonian Muslim participants believed doubling enabled children to gain transferable skills from one education system to another, particularly in literacy. However, other parents, concerned about the moral fibre of Muslim children, were adamant that state education could not cater to the spiritual and moral needs of their children; a point that entrance into Qur'anic education addressed. However, Cameroonian state educators disagreed and dismissed the moral education argument and claimed Muslim children lost time that would be better used in secular studies. Moore's conclusion was that doubling ultimately hindered young Muslims' socio-linguistic and cognitive development, due to what Cameroonian state educators surmised was the influence of Qur'anic education's passive learning style and superstitious worldview (Moore, 2011).

While many of Moore's respondents were sceptical about the value of split schooling or doubling, Butler's study of Quran and secular education in Niger viewed successful doubling to be possible (2016). He used the idea of 'collapsed pluralities', to argue that children have the capacity to compartmentalise their studies without interference between schooling. He focused on children's ability to transition without elision if these education systems do not interact. To convey this point, he used the metaphor of a child transitioning from his state school uniform into his Islamic dress to illustrate a shift in application that is both cognitive and physical.

However, Fortier (2016) and Hoechner (2012) veer towards Moore (2011) and indicate Qur'anic education requires sole dedication. Fortier's research into Qur'anic and state education in Mauritania proposes that most children do not double their studies. Rather she argues that students delineate their schooling by prioritising secular education during the academic year, preferring to use longer school holidays as a time to learn the Qur'an (a practice that was also employed by some of my participants). Fortier deduces that the separation of the two schooling systems is not based on one's precedence over the other, but instead due to Qur'anic education's singularity and need for specific attention that will lead to its ingestion.
Similarly, in Hoechner's ethnographic study of the Almajiri in Kano, participants expressed their view that memorisation is only possible if students are allowed to focus solely on the Qur'an with no other materials to distract them. This they see as

a justification for delaying students' entry into other educational disciplines even if the subsequent school is also Islamic (Hoechner, 2012). There is also an alternative position presented in Bonate's (2016) historical study of Muslim education in northern Mozambique, in which the distinction between the two types of schooling becomes unnecessary when state and Islamic education merge in the form of hybrid schools.

The later chapters of this thesis will demonstrate that for participants in this study distinguishing Qur'anic and secular learning was not paramount. This was because participants were at peace with the different purposes the two educations served in their children's lives. What will be illustrated is that unlike in Moore (2011) there was not any disruption, or requirement of Butler's (2016) intuitive separation of secular and Qur'anic learning.

Sharing, Borrowing and Resistance - Tensions between Quranic and Secular education and the Position of the State

In this section I address Qur'anic schoolings adaptability and openness. This offers contrast to the assessment of Qur'anic education as conservative, moribund and a drag on governments' reform policies (Brenner, 2001; Boyle 2006; Moore 2013; Newman 2015). The section reveals how in response to the introduction and emergence of secular learning into educational landscapes across Muslim African communities were forced to either borrow from, make concessions to, or resist their new competitor secular schooling. These changes in Qur'anic education allowed it to remain relevant to communities it had once exclusively served.

Changes to the economic structure of countries have impacted on Qur'an schools. Beshir (1969:8) suggests the abolition of Sudan's slave trade by the AEC in 1924 changed attendance at Qur'an schools. He claims the removal of slave labour of Sudanese non-Arab Muslims (from regions such as, north, and south Kordofan) forced families to employ children's labour instead in family homes and fields. The consequence of which was less time for education.

In another example of the impact of economic changes on Qur'anic education, Umar (2001) explained the 1970s' economic boom in Nigeria, had two outcomes. The exodus of people from rural to urban areas in search of opportunities to be a part of the country's burgeoning prosperity. This led to a reduction in the number of students attending Qur'an schools and consequently forced Qur'an teachers who had been reliant on gifts from families for their livelihood to seek other means of gaining income such as, the making of amulets and recitations for people's health.

Another change to Qur'anic schools comes from the cross-fertilisation between secular and Qur'anic pedagogy. For the most part, borrowing secular pedagogy is contextualised as a reflection of evolving standards in modern childhood, which have become increasingly globalised, and no longer entirely local (Hoechner, 2012). Pedagogy can no longer be considered exclusively secular or exclusively religious if

they ever could. Boyle (2004) and Daun and Walford (2004) assert that Qur'an schools are endorsed by governments in Morocco and Egypt as pre-school institutes because the socialisation that takes place in Qur'anic schooling lends itself to citizenship building and the premise of exemplary studentship. On the other hand, Brenner (2001), Decker (2010) and Roy (2020) each highlight that the establishment of hybrid school models in Muslim communities has demonstrated Islamic education's willingness to borrow and incorporate subjects and pedagogy from secular learning.

The presence of secular learning has altered the way in which Qur'an schools operate. Kaba (1976) on Ghanaian, Malian and Ivorian Qur'anic education, McIntyre (1982) on north Nigerian Qur'an schooling; and Lynch, Qaribullah and Omer (1992) on Sudanese Qur'an schooling each study the period of the 1970s and detail some of the implications and adjustments Qur'anic schooling has made as a result of competition it faced from secular school institutions and their establishment in Muslim communities.

The ramifications of the two education systems coming together made it inevitable that some Qur'an schools would have to alter their model. For example, some itinerant Qur'an schools became static and fixed to communities to gain attendees. This removed the importance of travel imbued in Islamic education and the relationship between seeking knowledge and travel for Muslims. As Kaba (1976:411) clarified

> '…travels were seen as noble endeavours consistent with the Prophet Muhammad's saying to his followers: 'learn and go in quest of knowledge even into China; for the acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent of every Muslim.'

McIntyre, in keeping with Kaba (1976), further illustrates how the tradition of travel for knowledge once dictated students would join Qur'an teachers in neighbouring towns or villages. He suggests an added benefit was that students were allowed to study without disruption before returning to help their families during the harvest. The development of secular schooling in Muslim communities interrupted the Qur'anic education process. Families growing recognition of the value of formal qualifications provided by secular schools, soon saw them become the priority. This resulted in fewer boys leaving home to pursue Qur'anic education in other villages or regions. This along with secular education beginning earlier than Qur'anic forced Qur'an schools to adapt, by accepting younger students and establishing schools that were focused on local communities rather than influxes of students to compete (McIntyre, 1982: 26; Levtzion and Pouwels, 2010).

According to Lynch, Qaribullah and Omer (1992) in Sudan, competition between secular and Islamic education programmes meant adjustments to Qur'anic education were not just in terms of the physical setting, alterations were made to the Qur'an school calendar, so that it remained accessible to students who were attending

secular school. Consequently, this also had a wider impact on children's significance to local economies, as the new Qur'an school calendar interrupted children's availability for employment during the harvest season. This was not one-directional and secular education was also affected by the government's failure to assess the importance of agriculture to some local economies, leading to disproportionate absences.

These examples from Kaba (1976) and McIntyre (1982) and Lynch, Qaribullah and Omer (1992) each demonstrate the difficulties that Qur'anic education has encountered since the arrival of secular learning. However, they are also illustrations of its capacity to work in rural and urban setting, and preparedness to adapt even if this is pragmatically. And has ensured that Qur'an schools have continued to maintain relevance.

Heskitt (1974), Eickelman (1978), Pruess (1983), Gesink (2015) and Tamari's (2016) research recognise additional ways in which the introduction of secular schooling impacted Qur'anic education. The introduction of early hybrid schools in north Nigeria, merged secular subjects with Qur'anic learning, although according to Heskitt (1974) this proved unsuccessful. However, comparatively measurable success was displayed in 1920s Sudan when active attempts were made by the AEC to somewhat rebrand its subsidised Qur'an schools by fusing literacy and numeracy into their curricula (GGR, 1924 -1929; Heskitt, 1974; Pruess, 1983).

Eickelman (1978) and Gesink, (2015), assert that similar processes had begun earlier in 19th century Egypt, where the grand Islamic education institute al-Azhar had been compelled in respond to popular calls for freedom of interpretation of Islamic texts that were used to educate its students and the threat of European-style education to introduce secular devices such as formal curricula, new subjects and entrance and course examinations.

More recently, Tamari (2016) has made claim that in Mali and much of west Africa, Qur'an school classrooms have begun to change with the introduction of print materials to replace manuscripts and apparatus such as blackboards. He proposes such alterations to classrooms will be encouraged by NGO and governments' desire to develop Qur'anic education. However, these observations are not so much based on his own research and lean on observations of Loimeier (2001, 2002) in neighbouring Senegal some years earlier. However, the point is evidenced by Brenner (2001) in his Malian Islamic education research who asserts that for Islamic schools to be legitimised they needed to embrace the Ministry of education's curriculum. Yet contrary to the application of government pressure Boyle (2006:483) cites examples of Moroccan and Nigerian Qur'an schools willingly offering after-hours schooling to complement children's learning in their main school and points to this being evidence of their ability to 'adapt and change in response to local demands, despite their reputation as being quite conservative and unchanging.'

Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations' policy drive for educational change and subsequent labelling of resistant Qur'an school as conservative and

unchanging is a recurring theme addressed in Qur'anic education research and is present in the work of Kaba (1976), Boyle (2006), Owusu-Ansah and Iddrisu (2008), Hoechner (2012), Moore (2013), Newman (2015) and Mfum-Mensah (2017). Both Newman (2015) and Mfum-Mensah (2017) concur that this is a prevalent issue across Africa generally and use examples from Ghana, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tunisia respectively.

However, Hoechner (2012) emphasises that it is not Qur'an students but the Qur'anic school institutions that are resistant to change. She does so by documenting the case of some of her Almajiri participants whose attempts to engage in secular or other types of learning at hybrid schools were ended when their Qur'an teacher found out and required them to leave immediately. This example from Hoechner of a traditional Qur'an school discouraging its students from engaging in secular schooling provides evidence for those who argue it is an institute that is reticent of embracing change. However, Owusu-Ansah and Iddrisu (2008) in their retrospective study of Islamic education's modernisation in Ghana over the course of the 21st century concluded the willingness of Islamic school owners to adjust learning or implement changes requested by governments and NGOs is dependent on assurances their function will remain as intended, to learn the Qur'an and instil Islamic values.

Similarly, Newman (2015), explains that when pressure is applied to Qur'an schools to change their curricula in order to access government financial resources it is often met with resistance. The consequence being that these schools are then marked as conservative and stubborn. This viewpoint only shifts to progressive if a school complies with intrusion into its curriculum. She concludes that failure of education policy makers to consult local communities is in part to blame for the impasse created. Kaba's (1976) earlier assessment dismissed Qur'an schools' inflexibility, and he argued that conservatism was better related to secular schooling and its promoters' reluctance to acculturate to the Muslim environments it had entered. He claimed that had this happened then it was likely Qur'anic education would have all but disappeared and that its preservation as a form of Islamic identity has been in response to secular education's unflinching position. Kaba's claim could be viewed as problematic as is not evidenced in his research. However, subsequent research by academics such as, Yamba (1990), Daun and Walford (2004) as well as participants in this thesis have demonstrated Muslims concerted use of Qur'anic education as a means to inculcate Muslim cultural identities feared lost in secular education.

McIntyre (1982) and Baba (2012) propose that interactions with local or governmental authorities have little bearing if any on Qur'an schools' ability to do well financially or in terms of reputation. McIntyre (1982) suggests the development of relationships and investment from local communities is of more importance and will ultimately guarantee the preservation of a Qur'anic institute. Whilst Baba (2012) infers the success and preservation of Qur'an schools are solely reliant on the personality and pedigree of Qur'anic teachers, seemingly dismissing the input of local authorities. However, his conclusions are drawn specifically from his research on Nigerian education, whose federal authorities he explains do not regulate

religious education institutes. This guarantees these religious schools a degree of autonomy, that also coincides with their marginalisation.

In contrast, rather than citing the tension between education authorities and Qur'an schools, Tamari (2016) argues Qur'anic and secular education come together as the result of two factors. Firstly, a new generation of Qur'an school teachers who have taught in the madrasa system rather than traditional system which has exposed and encouraged the incorporation of new pedagogical methods. The second factor is the return of well-travelled educators to their hometowns, who bring ideas of learning from outside home and implement them. He cites the case of a well-travelled Malian school director who introduced physical education into his Qur'an school.

Although Tamari is well-cited, the research underpinning his claims is slim.
His data is based on short periods of research, specifically his month-long stay in a Mandinka-speaking area of Gambia, which took place in 2004. His first recorded fieldwork in Mali was in 1998 and his last in 2011. Given his chapter was published towards the end of 2016, there is no consideration given to the likely impact of 2012's civil conflict on Malian education, its economy, or the state. The addition of data accounting for any impact the conflict would have been useful or at the very least a caveat in the text highlighting how the conflict may alter the reliability of the data he has shared. To preface this point Rashid, Hasan and Robleh (2004) highlight 'Even in states with relative security, the lack of resources limits the opportunity for children to attend schools.'

Since the colonial period Qur'anic schooling has demonstrated its recognition of the relevance of secular schooling to Muslim communities. This has been demonstrated through the development and growth of hybrid schools across the African continent, which merge Islamic and secular learning into their curricula. During the colonial phase this was either done in conjunction with government administrations or through community entrepreneurship. In Sudan, the Anglo-Condominium education department attempted to introduce hybrid schooling to the masses by converting subsidised Qur'an schools in the late 1910s and 1920s. They later abandoned this model in favour of vernacular education, due to failures in achieving targets, removing subsidies, and forcing these schools to revert to their traditional output (GGR 1921-34). Seesemann (2016) cites similar projects founded by Muslim communities in 1940s Mombasa, Kenya which he states struggled to endure the decade.

Interest in the continued development of these education institutes is conveyed in the research of Brenner (2001), Boyle (2004), Tamari (2016), Seesemann (2016) and Roy (2020). Each of these studies gives attention to the development of this education model under different names according to the nation state such as, the Medares or Madrasa in Mali and Sudan and Islamiyya schools in Nigeria.

Roy (2020) differentiates the hybrid Madrasas from traditional Qur'an schools. Rather than viewing Qur'anic schooling as the elementary phase in broader Islamic education, Roy instead defines Qur'anic education as non-formal schooling and

Islamic education as formal schooling. An opinion that is also implied by Boyle (2004:122), who asserts Islamiyya schools '… now have more in common with public schools than traditional Qur'anic schools…'. In this study of Malian Medares, Boyle considers them to offer better preparation for modern living due to their similarity to public schools rather than traditional Qur'an schools. As a result, she claims they offer pathways into politics and social mobility that Brenner (2001) had concluded were not available to children studying in traditional Qur'anic schools any longer.

This section has highlighted examples in the literature of Qur'anic schooling adapting along with societies and their evolving requirements. The significance of hybrid schooling to this research study is that the model offers a solution to the issues raised in the previous section about Qur'an schools' singularity (Hoechner, 2012; Fortier, 2016) and the disruptiveness of engaging in secular and Islamic schooling separately (Moore, 2011). Instead, the model embeds Islamic culture sought by Muslim parents for their children, removes the need for a forced distinction or prioritising of one learning model over another, which usually falls in favour of secular learning because of the expected certification and pathway to financial security later.

Contemporary Positions on Qur'anic Memorisation

At the heart of Qur'anic education lies the method of memorisation, which students of this type of schooling use in their endeavour to preserve either the whole Qur'an or a portion thereof. This practice known as hifz [memorisation/preservation] requires years of dedication and perseverance from a Qur'an student, who upon successful completion will become known hafiz (preserver). This honorific carries much symbolism within the Muslim community and denotes a person endowed with the blessing and responsibility of the revelation sent to the Prophet Muhammad (S).[3]

This section analyses the viewpoints scholars from international development, sociology, religion, and anthropology hold about the method of memorisation used in Qur'anic education and the place of Qur'anic education in contemporary schooling. It also demonstrates that the scholarly research interest of academics has some bearing on the conclusions that are drawn about memorisation. Therefore, it will highlight the positions of academics who view memorisation and understanding to be distinct from each other (Boyle, 2006) and those who view memorisation as encompassing a series of processes that lead to embodiment of the text.

In the context of Sudanese education, memorisation under the AEC was criticised for its use in Qur'anic schooling (GGR, 1933), although it was also used in elementary schools. There were attempts to phase out its use with the development of the Bakht er Ruda teaching college in 1934. However, as underlined by some participants in this study, it is a practice that continues to be used, to teach secular subjects even in Sudan's private schools.

[3] The (S) after the name of the Prophet is an abbreviation often used in text for the term for peace and blessings be upon him.

Some scholars view memorisation of the Quran as having cognitive value and suggest other processes are also taking place for Qur'anic students, some leading to eventual embodiment of the Qur'an by its preserver (Brenner, 2001; Boyle, 2006; Ware, 2014; Nur, 2018, 2020). Holger, Daun and Geoffrey (2004) explain that possession of knowledge in Islam can be both attained and revealed. This dual function of knowledge acquisition is meant to increase faith and spiritual insights. For this to be achieved the Islamic academic Abukari (2014), states knowledge acquisition of the Qur'an must be accompanied by righteous practices conveyed in its verses to benefit the memoriser and wider society. This premise is in accordance with the description of the Prophet Muhammad (S) as the 'walking Qur'an' in a hadith from his wife Aisha (Siddiqui,1990: hadith 746). Pruess (1983) in his study of Qur'anic schooling in Sudan suggests the act of communion between God and his servant when memorising the Qur'an has the power to effectively imbue the preserver with positive spiritual and character changes. These scholars' place significance on the importance of metaphysical occurrences that take place within the process of Qur'an memorisation.

For this reason, Boyle (2004, 2006), Brenner (2001) and Ware (2014) all suggest the need to view Islamic education in its entirety and imply that Qur'anic schooling and memorisation as its core method of learning represent the elementary stage within a series of educational processes that take place thereafter. For example, Brenner in his oft-cited text on the Madrasa system in Mali surmises,

> '…The Qur'an, of course, is both the highest form of knowledge which God revealed to mankind and the first body of knowledge which is taught to young children. At first glance, this arrangement seems paradoxical, if not contradictory. However, the pedagogical methods employed are fully consonant with the principles of an esoteric episteme in which layers of meaning are revealed gradually as an individual progresses through successive stages of learning' (2001:19).

Without consideration of the values alluded to by Brenner (2001) or Ware's concept of embodiment through Qur'an memorisation (2014), it is easy for the method of learning employed in Qur'an schools to be viewed as wholly un-engaging. However, when understood in the context of the full programme of learning intended by Islamic education, the purpose of Qur'anic education becomes clearer. As Ware elucidates

> Human "bodies of knowledge" are made, not born. Islamic learning is brought into the world through concrete practices of corporal discipline, corporeal knowledge transmission, and the deeds of embodied agents… from this viewpoint some of the non-sense of the Qur'an school may make sense after all (2014:8)

In spite of this, some scholars concern is more material and about whether Qur'anic schooling gives suitable preparation to its students for the wider society around them. Zerdoumi (1970), Eickelman (1978), Hoechner (2012) and Hansen et al (2016), each view the system to be out of touch with the requirements that modern education transfers to its students in readiness for life today. Hoechner (2012) contends that Qur'anic memorisation without understanding is not beneficial to its students and also out of touch with more contemporary pedagogies. Later researching the Almajiri Qur'anic education system like Hoechner, Hansen et al (2016) also conclude its position in contemporary Nigeria is one of irrelevance which leaves its students in a state of unpreparedness, as it cannot ensure students receive a proper elementary education.

In terms of cognition in Qur'anic learning, academic discussion centres on whether memorisation intellectually benefits students. Zerdoumi (1970) argues that memorisation in the Qur'anic schooling system does very little to spur students' thinking or socialisation into wider society. The position is countered by Wagner and Spratt's (1987) longitudinal study of cognitive outcomes for children in Qur'anic pre-schools in Morocco. They found children who learnt to memorise at Qur'an schools had better serial memory skills than their counterparts who had not attended pre-school. Similar outcomes were also expressed by participants in this study who had gained memorisation skills at Qur'an school in complement to their private education. Boyle (2006) and Nur (2018) in his study of western Sudanese Qur'anic learning, each signal that there are cognitive benefits of mnemonic practices in the pursuit of Qur'anic preservation and highlight the unique cognitive value their incorporation give to Qur'an students in terms of recall. The western Sudanese mnemonic practice documented in Nur (2018) is not employed in all sub-Saharan regions but the inclusion of them into cognitive debates of Qur'anic education is important in presenting the spectrum of learning and methods within the education system.

Eickelman (1978) and Boyle (2006) draw different conclusions about Qur'anic education's overall value. Boyle's research in contrast to Eickelman generally emphasises Qur'an education's place and relevance in contemporary societies. However, their opinions do converge due to their conclusions that advancements in technologies available to communities mean memorisation is no longer required. For Eickelman, ending mnemonic memorisation will lead to freedom to interpret the Qur'an which he felt did not exist (1978). However, this reasoning and calls for a shift away from memorisation are problematic as they imply that the status of the Qur'an to Muslims is similar if not the same as all other books. As a result, this opinion fails to consider the Qur'an's sanctity, the honour given to those who care for its preservation and the blessings that Muslims believe they achieve in doing so.

For academics from both viewpoints there are layers presented in the discussion on memorisation in Qur'anic learning. For example, Eickelman (1978), believes the failure of Qur'anic schooling to prepare students for modern life results from the Qur'an itself as the source and basis of the knowledge system, which itself is

unchanged and unaltered. Therefore, he believes that any attempts to change how students learn and commit the Qur'an to memory, will be met with justifications for the continuation of memorisation based on centuries of its successful application and results. Yet, according to Brenner (2001) Qur'anic education's most avid supporters do not standby the system as a trusted way to create individuals who will take the Muslim world forward today. Although, they do vouch for its function in socialising young Muslims into an Islamic way of life.

Conversely, Boyle (2006) infers that negative conclusions about Qur'anic schooling and its modern relevance often fail to consider that Islamic education's continuum begins with Qur'anic memorisation as its narrow and specialised foundation (in contrast to secular schooling's broader foundation, wherein students study multiple subjects) and belongs to a series of processes that eventually expand, enlightening the student further than the rudimentary stage of memorisation suggests when the sacred knowledge could be better understood.

Academic discussion on the merit of memorisation in Qur'anic education will continue to take place based on the research interests and priorities of the scholars evaluating its use. These discussions will centre on countries where hybrid schools exist, and where the shift away from traditional memorisation has begun. This process is not new and Leblanc's (2000) study of Qur'anic education in Cote d'Ivoire suggests this has been ongoing for more than half a century. And the debate itself even longer as highlighted by Gesink's (2015) claim that discourses around the value of Qur'anic memorisation can be traced back as far as the nineteenth century in Egypt.

Signalling how to approach research into broader Muslim praxis for anthropologists of Islam, Asad (2009) offers salient guidance that is also salient for research into the function and value of memorisation in Qur'anic learning and asserts

> 'Islam as an object of anthropological understanding should be approached as a discursive tradition that connects variously with the formation of moral selves… and the production of appropriate knowledge'.

Asad's premise of 'appropriate knowledge' offers a guiding framework to approach research into Qur'anic memorisation and learning. It is reasonable to accept that whilst the Qur'anic education system is a form of schooling like any other, it is not required to merge or scaffold onto secular education or what are deemed by some academics to be requirements of contemporary society. This is because it is also reasonable that this form of religious education cannot be leveraged for secular means, as it exists in a different moral and epistemological universe. Requiring the researcher to recognise as stated by Ware (2014:3) that

> ‘Qur’an schooling can also serve as a window onto an Islamic way of knowing. After all much can be learned about what people believe knowledge is by paying close attention to how they attempt to transmit it to one another’

As a result, it may be that Qur’anic memorisation has firstly become a cultural signifier of learning and then secondly a part of pedagogy - recognisable to parents, students, and teachers alike, although at odds with what some academics deem to be necessary for secular scientific learning.

Secular and Islamic Education and the Muslim Parent

Qur’anic learning as a cultural signifier for African Muslims is demonstrated by its role in the education of many of the participants and their children featured in this study. This means it is important for this research study to analyse what has formed sub-Saharan African Muslim parents’ attitudes towards the Qur’anic schooling system in the literature. This includes, reviews of both contemporary and historical reasons African Muslim parents have conveyed in the literature for persisting with Qur’anic education despite its comparatively limited opportunities for social mobility, as well as parents’ reasons for embracing or resisting secular forms of education offered both by the state and privately.

Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane (2004) divide Muslim parents into three categories. Parents who try to immunise children against western socialisation in school by firstly placing children into Qur’an schools. Parents who willingly enrol children into secular schools, unconcerned about its impact on their children’s identity, instead focusing on the opportunity it provides for social mobility. And parents who purposely keep children out of state education because they view Qur’anic schooling to be sufficient.

Both the first and last categories of parents according to Sanderson (1975), Reichmuth (2000), Brenner (2001), Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane (2004), Idrissu (2005), Baba (2012), Bonate (2016), Obed-Mfum (2017) and Seesemann (2017), detail some wariness and mistrust of secular schools among African Muslim parents. According to these studies this stems from factors such as, the legacy of Christian mission proselytism, colonial impositions on African Muslim communities, the European presence in Muslim communities and the introduction on unfamiliar technologies into learning spaces.

Obed-Mfum (2017) concludes that exchanges between Christian missions, colonialists and Muslim parents resulted in complex feelings about the arrival of secular education in Muslim societies. An example of which is demonstrated by Bonate (2017), who relays that during the Portuguese colonial period, Mozambican Muslims concerns about fervent Catholic proselytism, resulted in their resistance to mission and colonial schooling. Once the influence of the Catholic missions was lessened, Muslim families willingly engaged in these schools no longer viewing them

as a threat. Baba (2012) also argues that in northern Nigeria Qur'an schools came to represent anti-colonial sentiment and became beacons of resistance in Muslim communities, spearheaded by Qur'anic teachers.

However, what these communities believed they were resisting against appears to be layered. Idrissu (2005) in his study of northern Ghanaian Muslim communities, determined that colonial administrations had restricted Christian missions in Muslim regions and that the existential threat of proselytism therefore did not exist in the way that it was perceived to. The outcome for northern Ghanaian Muslims, was that secular education was introduced into the region three decades later than the rest of the Gold Coast and not by British colonial authorities but instead by the Ahmadiyya movement. However, Baba (2012), acknowledges some initial resistance from Muslim communities in northern Nigeria to the education work of missionaries. Although, it was the British administration that ultimately chose to ban them from the north. The motivation of the British administration in both examples, was to ensure dissent was limited, local communities were not antagonised by Christian threat and that regions remained peacefully in the hands of the administrations.

Seesemann (2017), frames the notion of resistance by Muslims and any symbiosis between Christian proselytism and secular schooling as being misaligned. He proffers that the idea Christian missions controlled secular schooling's insertion into Muslim communities was incorrect. Instead, similarly to Idrissu (2005) he claims that it was primarily the work of colonial administrations. However, the result of this misperception of the function of secular schooling, meant that it was incorrectly viewed to have a proselytising agenda by Muslim communities.

Contrary to the assertions of others, Sanderson (1975) and Brenner (2001), omit the premise of protecting religion entirely in relation to Muslim resistance against secular schooling in Sudan and Mali respectively. Sanderson (1975) proposes that Muslims disinclination towards secular schooling was the result of its promotion of technologies and science, which were deemed to be in opposition to Qur'anic learnings literary tradition. And Brenner (2001) concludes that resistance was the consequence of secular schooling being introduced by the Tubab (white men), who were looked on as useless and socially disruptive.

Maintaining the premise that Islam as a tradition is attached to the coming into being of moral selves (Asad, 1986), resistance to secular schooling outlined in the research in the previous paragraphs highlights this. It points to the building of moral identities, resistance to manipulations of colonial administrations and Christian missions and what these resistant communities deemed to be appropriate knowledge for their children. For example, Bell suggests that in Mali, decision making about appropriate education is predetermined by the potential of the available education systems to give students 'Baraji', divine reward (2015: 49).

Muslim parents' determination to resolve what constitutes the best for their children in this world and the hereafter, leads some parents to seek compromise between secular and Qur'anic learning. Kaba (1976) detailed parents in Mali, who to

find a solution removed their children from both secular French schools and Qur'anic schools to send them to hybrid Islamic/secular schools on the basis that they would receive both a modern and Islamic education. This compromise which seeks to address the dual needs of Muslim children's education sits in agreement with Abdullah (1982:43) that Muslims are 'open for concepts which come from different fields of knowledge provided that they fit the Qur'anic perspective.'

For some African Muslim parents, the function of Qur'anic education is to educate about and preserve an Islamic way of life, embedding the Muslim identities that these parents want their children to inhabit (Kaba, 1976; Bawa-Yamba, 1990; Reichmuth, 2000; Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane, 2004). Kaba (1976) in his research into Muslim minority communities in Ghana and Guinea, explained that non-integrated Qur'an schools had been key to preserving the small communities' Muslim identity and in preparing children for traditional community roles as traders, teachers, and administrators. Bawa-Yamba's (1990) study of west African pilgrim communities in Sudan, offers examples of his participants, who refused to engage in formal state education because they believed it contradicted Hausa and Islamic values. A point confirmed by the author who stated its potential to corrode Hausa values. And despite the Majority Muslim population and government of Sudan, state education was viewed to conflict the particular interpretations of Islam the communities held.

These Hausa pilgrims' conclusions about secular education in Sudan are in keeping with Breidlid's view that 'a national curriculum is in a way a sense of constructing a national identity where certain values are promoted, others are not… it most certainly means that the cultural heritage of many school children is not being valued (2003:86). Therefore, the Hausa pilgrims demonstrate that endangerment to cultural heritage from other Muslim populations can also lead to resistance.
As a result, Reichmuth (2000) deduces 'Islamic learning in and of itself, even at the most elementary level of Qur'anic education, creates and reinforces basic differences between Muslims and non-Muslims' (2000:419). A conceivable requirement for Muslims or Muslim communities concerned about the preservation of their own way of life or threats to it. As highlighted by Kaba (1976) and Bawa-Yamba (1990), this threat may also extend to becoming subsumed by bigger and more dominant social groups around them, even if also Muslim.

Bawa Yamba's (1990) text on Hausa pilgrims in Sudan and Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane (2004) about West African Muslim parents, present the differing suspicions of respondents towards secular education. Conversely, in Helen Boyle's essay 'Memorisation in Islamic schools,' which is also based on research on West African Muslims, the conclusion appears to be very different, highlighting overall engagement with secular schooling by Muslims

> 'The archetypal model (Qur'an school) is growing less and less common across the Islamic world… Public schooling is commonly perceived by parents, teachers, and students themselves as offering more options for economic advancement

through university enrolment and employment. Indeed, many traditional Islamic schools have closed as their student population has diminished' (2006).

Boyle (implicitly) disputes Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane's argument about Qur'anic education and Muslim parents whose children access them. Instead, she views parent's assessment of Qur'anic education and the schools themselves as being in a constant state of evolution, reflecting the evolutions of the communities, to remain relevant and as traditional ideas of the Qur'an school's function disappear (2006). On the other hand, Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane (2004) see Qur'an schools as static and parents in stasis owing to historical opposition to colonial education.

However, if basing this on the premise that it is important to view Muslims and their choices on how they view themselves then, Daun, Okuma-Nystrom and Sane's participants themselves conclude that

'Muslim educational arrangements are a substitute for or a compliment to primary schools and that education is not purely an economic matter for parents and children and must be seen from a holistic perspective, i.e., the whole life situation of the child should be considered (2004:181)

The notion of 'Muslim education' as a substitute or complement to secular schooling is not recent and has been show in research into colonial and contemporary Muslim societies alike. Kaba (1976) explains that towards the end of the colonial period, northern Nigerian Muslim parents did engage with western education and sent children to colonial schools but found there were not enough schools to cater for their populations and led to high dropout rates. This was deemed to be counter-productive to Muslim advancement and led communities to establish hybrid Islamic schools through the Subbanu associations. In Boyle's (2014) later research into state and Islamic schooling in Mali similar outcomes were shared. She concludes that a 10-year period in which state education battled against over-crowding, over-populated classrooms, and declining quality caused Malian parents to turn to the alternative provision offered by an expanding religious education sector. Both studies demonstrate Muslims concerns also centre around receiving the best outcomes for their children according to what that is deemed to be.

I have shared the viewpoints of Muslim parents in the literature about their reasons for engaging in Qur'anic learning. However, it is also important to acknowledge that the decision-making does not always remain in Muslim families' hands. Instead, there are at times external factors which dictate how Muslims will arrive at their decisions about schooling. For example, Hoechner (2013) in her paper on peripatetic Qur'anic students in northern Nigeria, points to other factors, such as economics and demography and writes about rural families that opt for the Almajiri education system 'such families often have few alternative educational choices as the modern

schooling accessible to them tends to be both poor in quality and financially burdensome' (2013), implying that the Qur'anic education their children enter into is based on a pragmatic decision in response to a lack of options.

The Development of Africa's Middle-Class

The participants whose educational experiences frame the analysis in the later chapters of this study each self- define as being amongst Sudan's middle class. What defines this broad categorisation of class continues to develop in Sudan and across the African continent. What defined middle classness during the colonial period and since calls for African nations' independence were realised has broadened to incorporate a much wider collection of roles within societies. For example, Melber (2022: 144) explains, its evolution means terminology used in the 1970s such as, 'labour aristocracy, state class and bureaucratic class,' have today fallen under this umbrella term middle-class. This section will examine academics' discourses about the wider African and Sudanese middle class.

In awareness of the broad use of the term middle class and its evolving nature, according to Abdul Rahman (2008:81) sought to frame its meaning in the following way,

> 'The middle class is a transitional stage in the life of nations. It is a changing stratum in changing circumstances and therefore has no static definition. Experience shows that the middle class might be composed of: 1) the educated strata, 2) the intellectuals, 3) employees in the state bureaucracy, 4) teachers and 5) the army in accordance to the historical experience of nation formation.

Those who fall into these categories according to Mercer and Lemanski (2020:2) are usually placed there based on two particular markers '…wealth defined by income and status, emphasising the role of education and occupation.' Darbon (2018) finds the concept of an African middle-class in relation to these markers to be problematic. She argues that data highlighting the growth of Africa's middle-class is less about its emergence than it is about demonstrating that the continent is not detached from current developments in global markets, even if the connection is tenuous.

Neubert and Stoll (2018) and Breines (2021), each write in acknowledgement of the continent's burgeoning middle class. However, each also concede, present economic and sociological frameworks used to analyse its development do not capture its uniqueness in the context of class. Neubert and Stoll (2018) rationalise that this is because they are often designed to analyse class within an American or European context. Underscoring these limitations in relation to the analysis of African middle-classness, Breines (2021) uses the interwoven familial and financial bonds in Ethiopian society, to demonstrate why these frameworks fail to accurately gauge

details of wealth and assets, in part due to the many directions in which money flows.

Lentz (2020) and Melber (2022) also note that there is more to consider about the African middle-class than measures of income and occupation. Each ask for the inclusion of nuances such as, lifestyle, kinship, networks, regional background and language as contributing factors. Their recording of these interrelated cultural aspects of class, have led to Lentz and Melber calling for more research into the function of each.

Darbon's (2018) earlier raised issue with wealth and occupation as chief markers of middle-classness is bypassed by some academics who seek to move beyond this it in search of more inclusive markers of middle class. For example, Mercer and Lemanski (2020), Lentz (2020), Omer and Maglad (2020) and Breines (2021), claim markers of middle-classness should also be based on the stratum's multiple functions in societies. Mercer and Lemanski (2020) suggest a subtle function, whereby the stratum's input into societies is guided by their self-reflection and future projections. For Lentz (2020), this input can be as significant as upholding democratic values. Similarly, Omer and Maglad (2020) emphasise the middle-class as a bridge that prevents polarisation of societies, subsequently reducing inequality and social conflict.

However, it is clear that Melber's research in particular, is reluctant to place as much importance on the role of the middle class in societies as Omer and Maglad (2020) suggest. Instead, she contends that the middle class have no say on the distribution of wealth and minimal tangible examples of social impact, such as, the development of social programmes for the betterment of society. Melber argues that rather than being at the forefront of these social changes, 'middle classes often play at best a mirror role in these processes beyond the pursuance of their own interests (2022: 445).' Melber is also determined to give perspective to the suggested impact the middle class have on African societies. She argues that current projections of its growth are incorrect and that evidence suggests that since the financial crash of 2007/8 its growth rate in Africa has declined.

Also affecting the African middle-class' impact on societies is Therborn's (2012; Lentz, 2020) premise that the political inclinations of the middle class are often 'situationally optimistic' and primarily governed by self-interests. It can be argued this point was demonstrated by the Sudanese middle class following Omer al-Beshir's 1990 declaration that education policies in Sudan would adhere to his government's Islamist framework (Breidlid, 2005). Rather than actively resisting emphatic changes to Sudanese education, the middle class instead used their financial strength to invest in private education for their families, whilst state education began its decline. From a methodological viewpoint, this group inclination to use financial ability to secure better education adheres to a kind of social practice that enforces a difference between it and other social groups (Lentz, 2020).

This need to secure private education in the wake of al-Beshir's changes to state schoolings was likely to have been guided by desires to secure social mobility and financial security through education, with schooling being a key instrument in producing and securing social status and class membership (Lentz, 2020). Therefore, even if some amongst the middle class would have preferred to stay in the bounds of state schooling the social and class status newly attached to private schooling dictated otherwise.

According to Lentz (2020), in the context of education, this is a familiar trait of the middle classes in the global south, for whom education is viewed to be an unarguable solution against potential poverty and life on the periphery of society. Emphasising just how important education is to the middle class and as demonstrated by participants in this study, Lentz (2020: 451) goes on to explain

> In spite of the increasing inflation of educational credentials (see for example Foster 1980; Parker 2013: 14-15) and increasing rates of unemployment among school and university graduates, education is still regarded as an investment that does, by and large, improve one's access to better-paid employment. Many studies show how middle-class as well as aspiring middle-class parents therefore devote much money and energy to supporting their children's education (berry 1985; Donner 2008, Abelman 2003).

However, it would be disingenuous to suggest that the middle class do not resist government's ideological positions at all and it is entirely possible that the middle class will establish their own political ideas that to not necessarily align with that of those in power (Lentz, 2020). For example, in Sudan, it can be argued that the middle classes played a significant role in the fight for democracy due to their activism in the 2018 revolution, that led to the downfall of the 30-year Beshir regime. According to Bakhit (2020), the revolution's springboard middle-class suburbs such as, Burri, Omdurman and Shambat in Sudan's capital. The protests in these residential areas were led by young professionals and university students, who spurred on by their access to digital technologies gave the movement traction.

The Sudanese Middle-class

In keeping with the early definition of middle class in Sudan shared by Trimingham (1949); Sahal (1999) and Sharkey (2003), record and accept that during the early colonial Sudanese period (pre-1924), the definition of middle classness was the preserve of members of the educated Sudanese community known as the 'Effendiya.' These men had graduated from Gordon Memorial College and went on to fulfil minor roles in the civil service or private enterprises (Sahal, 1999; Sharkey, 2003). However, Abdul Rahman (2008) importantly notes, the term 'Effendiya' represented a very small segment of Sudanese society, namely those living in the urban swell of the capital Khartoum, who were distinguished by their education. As a

result, Abdul-Rahman (2008) argues that this definition does not encapsulate other branches of the middle-class also in existence in Sudan at that time, such as, merchants or rural middle class (Collins, 1976).

Since independence in 1956, what has defined middle classness in Sudan (and across the African continent in general) has broadened considerably since the early definition used by Trimingham (1949). For example, Collins (1976), Niblock (1987) and Sikainga (1996) categorised roles such as high-ranking civil servants, merchants, Sufi leaders, tribal leaders, landowners, co-directors of foreign firms, and wholesale distributors, to also fit into this category, broadening the limitations of Trimingham's early definition. In relation to the wider continent, Melber (2022) proposes that there are an additional nine categories of 'new middle-class' that require more research, in order to understand fully their function in African class and social structures.

The proposition that the middle class are a narrow and heterogeneous group is debated by participants in this study. Although they self-define as being middle class, there is resistance to the idea of them forming a monolith, particularly from those who moved into the class bracket as a result of education and social mobility. In relation to this, Lentz (2020), highlights class position can change and is determined by factors such as economic developments and whether or not social security systems are in place.

However, according Lentz (2020) there also exist some continuities about middle-classness in the global South. Lentz posits that it has primarily been constructed on the basis of ethno-regional heritage and race; and states this has been consistent since the 19th century.
Reflecting on the participants in this study, it is clear that there are particular unifying factors. For example, all participants are of north Sudanese Arab or Nubian heritage (Sharkey, 2008: 30). Although their historical influence in Sudan proceeded the 20th century colonial period, these two Sudanese communities benefited above all others in terms of education, enterprise and civil service employment during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, giving them an essential head start in terms of social mobility. Moreover, as a result both were instrumental in the development of Sudanese political and nationalist consciousness in the lead-up to independence (Sikainga, 1996; Sharkey, 2008; Lentz, 2020).

Amongst the participants in this thesis, there are other layers that intersection in the make-up of this group. Within it there are those who would consider themselves to be actively religious, Sufi, politically-religious, agnostic, socialist, traditionalist and modernist. Validating the inclusion of multiple intersections when researching the middle class, Lentz (2020:460) asks whether there is a need for rigid distinctions and uses the example that someone may have worked in the city for the majority and enjoyed the lifestyle that it afforded them, before retiring as a traditional elder to their birth village. Re-emphasising the broad make-up of the middle class and its use as an umbrella term. However, Darbon (2018) questions whether this broad

categorisation of class in an African context has led to an amalgamation of groups of people who are essentially unrelated.

As detailed by the participants in this study, the Sudanese middle class have suffered from the country's economic decline. As a result, job roles that once guaranteed middle class status such as working in the civil service, no longer carry give the economic flexibility they once afforded, destabilising many within this social bracket. In general, Omer and Magal (2020: 30) note that the historic financial and social privileges attached to public sector employment have all but disappeared due to privatisation of public services and consequently the reduction of public bodies and the civil service. The life histories of participants in this study will highlight some of the impact that the shrinking of the Sudanese middle class has had on their ability to spend and decision making about children's education (see the al-Hamoudi family in chapter 8).

Conclusion

The literature has shown to some extent the growing interdependency between Qur'anic and secular education. It has highlighted the function of Qur'an schools as a cultural mooring, and as a form of resistance against state and formerly Christian authority, as well as its role as a source of education. It has demonstrated that for some Muslim families, secular schools are valued for increasing children's chances of social mobility and providing opportunities to engage with newer technologies. This for some has been after children are believed to have been embedded in an Islamic understanding by first attending Qur'an school. It has also shown that Muslim families are willing to enrol their children in both forms of schooling simultaneously or sequentially (Butler, 2016). The literature has demonstrated that Muslims decision-making about education is complex and determined by multiple considerations. Amongst these for the middle-class Muslim families who form the second part of this thesis' analysis this includes attempts to secure schooling that will secure children's social status and mobility. The chapters to follow will examine Sudanese education, the function of Qur'anic schooling since the current education system's genesis under the AEC, and discourses of Sudanese middle classes. Each aspect presents a valuable addition to the limited English-language canon on Sudanese education development.

This study uses the history of Qur'anic schooling in the Sudanese education system alongside middle-class Sudanese Muslims viewpoints on the value of Qur'anic schooling to analyse this social group's position about its function for them and place in instilling Sudanese Muslim identities. On the surface, this social group's departure from state education into private education in the 1990s and during the 30-year tenure of Omer al-Bashir, represented a considerable shift in the education landscape. It seemingly cemented Qur'anic education's place in the margins of the education system amongst this stratum. However, as chapter 5 will examine and demonstrate it has not been entirely dismissed by the middle-class and they have

found new ways to engage in Qur'anic education in some form and with differing motivations.

CHAPTER 3. Research Methods - Introduction

The research design and methods I have chosen are used to examine Qur'anic education and its value in the context of Sudanese schooling and whether it informs ideas of being Sudanese Muslims amongst its middle-class strata. In the broader milieux of modern Sudanese society since the AEC to the present, Qur'anic education has served both an educational and religious function in the lives of Sudanese people. And as demonstrated in the chapters that follow, it has also been used as leverage by various governments of Sudan only to have its status removed and its significance placed at the periphery of education.

The literature reviewed in the previous chapter demonstrated that several factors are considered by African Muslims when deciding to engage in the types of schooling available to them. It also demonstrated ways that Muslims have found to sometimes engage in more than one kind of schooling. This according to the literature is usually secular learning with Qur'anic schooling as a complement to it. The methods used in this study have been chosen to investigate the value of both types of schooling to Sudanese middle-class Muslims, and whether or how their purposes differ for this social group. To achieve this, I have also examined the position of Qur'anic schooling under the banner of state education since its establishment by the AEC.

This is pursued through two forms of data gathering that have informed my analysis. The first is archival, in which I spent 12 months from November 2019 researching information about AEC education held in the Durham University Sudan Archive. This data is analysed and presented in chapters 4,5 and 6 of this study, which encapsulates the treatment of Qur'anic education by the Condominium administration between 1902 and 1952 in sub-chapters. The primary focus of this section of the thesis is the examination of Qur'anic education's value within the Condominium education structure and evaluates its journey from ambivalence to development to abandonment under the regime. I use information about other types of schooling that were a part of the education system such as primary, secondary, and vernacular schools to give comparative analysis of Qur'anic education's function and station during the Condominium colonial period.
The second part is data collected through interviews with middle class Sudanese participants that are used to contextualise their experiences of education policies and schooling in Sudan since the AEC and subsequent decades ending in the 2010s under Omer el-Bashir and the NCP. These interviews form chapter 8 of this study, presenting and examining participants' educational histories of their secular and Qur'anic education.

The methods I have chosen were designed to answer my two research questions. 1) what role did Qur'anic education play in the development of Sudan's secular education provision; and 2) What is the significance of Qur'anic education to the identities of middle-class families now?

Researching in the Sudan Archive

To address question one during the condominium period I accessed materials housed in the Durham University Sudan Archive. Access to these materials were important to the process of constructing an analysis of education under the AEC. It is the only available archive of reports from the British-Sudan period. Access to it enabled me to track the development of the modern Sudanese education system and the function of Qur'anic within it. The documents of interest related to the introduction and spread of different types of schooling including, primary, vernacular, secondary and further education. However, most importantly, the documents gave insight into the Condominium's use of Qur'anic education to develop its student populations and how the period sparked the necessity of Qur'anic education competing with and navigating the introduction of secular schooling into the Sudanese educational landscape.

My specific interest was in government materials from the British period of rule over Sudan from the beginning of the AEC in 1889. Reports on Condominium education were compiled as a part of the Governor-General's annual reports under the section titled 'Education Department'. The intended audience of these reports was the British government and although Sudan was not a part of the Colonial Office, the reports on Sudan functioned in the same manner as a Colonial Office report. Sudan reports commence and are available in the Archive from 1902 onwards, following the start of Sir Reginald Wingate's governorship, prior to which only intelligence reports are available. Given the large volume of data from the Sudan archive reports that I have used to form my analysis in chapter 4, I have chosen to use footnotes rather than in-text citations to reference their use.

There was a break in the full publication of reports during the First World War, when summaries of education and other regime activities were given in a memorandum from the Governor-General, rather than on individual departments. There is no record of reports for the last 3 years of the Condominium. This is because by 1953, British administration of Sudan was essentially in name only, with many of the key functions of government handed back to the Sudanese and signalled the end of all contributions to the British record of Sudan. In total, I extensively researched all 49 of the available Governor-General reports and available memorandums. I was also able to expand my knowledge of some of the briefly reported information in the memorandums, due to its mention in subsequent reports and the use of secondary information available in memoirs of the first Director of Education, James Currie published in1934.

The Governor-General reports in the Sudan Archive have been digitised and I viewed them through the Durham online archive centre. Each section of the Governor-General's reports in the archive are written in English and as such there is a noticeable absence of sentiments and voices that are Sudanese. So much so, that when the first Sudanese Director of Education El-Sayyid Abdel-Rahman Ali is appointed by the Condominium in 1948, it is documented without an opening

statement from him unlike the tradition of previous yearly reports by British directors.

Despite the general absence of Sudanese voices in the reports, demonstrated alongside the development of Condominium education, was how Condominium education gave birth to the Sudanese middle classes, referred to by Trimingham (1940) as the 'Sudanese Effendiya.' Sharkey (2003) cites the emergence of this group and distinguishes them from their fathers' generation in terms of level of education and worldly outlook citing these factors as the effects of schooling via Gordon Memorial College and other schools in the higher tiers of Condominium education and how this framed a new type of educated and certified Sudanese. Significantly, this group of Sudanese took over the country's administration at independence. And the reports evidence through British eyes (namely the Directors of Education), the middle classes' achievements as students, career paths, and orchestrations and moments of resistance to the Condominium regime. Also underscored throughout the reports were the growing aspirations of the Sudanese and their evolving understanding of Condominium education as a tool for social mobility, whether as a pragmatic response to the changing climate of Sudan or fully embraced.

The Education Department's report contains detailed text of the annual progression of each type of schooling from 1912 onwards each report included tabulation of the types of school, their number and their total student populations, with a total of all schools and student populations at the bottom (however, a dedicated section for subsidised Qur'an schools was not added until 1923). The text of each report was divided into sub-headings for each type of schooling under which paragraphs included information about how well students developed, changes to their curricula, increases in school and student numbers related to requirements of the economy, intended developments for each type of schooling and issues with students and parents.

Furthermore, I analysed the yearly memorandum of each Governor-General, which offered less detailed summaries of each section of the overall report. As there was some crossover between the work of different Condominium departments, activities that were mentioned in conjunction with the education department, I also cross-referenced to the relevant department section of the report. For example, a part of the early remit of the Education Department was to provide clerks for the Rail Department, and so it was useful to understand how that had been documented in both Departments.

To begin my analysis of the data from the reports I created a series of initial codes followed by more permanent codes as I became more familiar with the data. I read and reread each year of Condominium education data along with my attached brief notes several times. This was all collated, written and stored in note form using Microsoft OneNote. By doing this I was able to differentiate what was useful and what was less so. For example, information I had gathered about South Sudanese education, whilst useful in building my understanding of the Condominium's overall Sudan education project was put aside because of its different trajectory and

complete separation from the processes that took place in northern Sudan until 1948. This process was an early part of my classification of the data and began the phase of coding information into loose headings (i.e., southern Sudanese, northern Sudanese, Wellcome Trust information and technical education).

As part of the process of understanding the data in the reports, I read each report several times. Each report divided the education of North and South Sudan into different parts of the report. Therefore, information that specifically documented northern Sudanese education where my interest in Qur'anic education is situated and that I deemed to be useful to my research questions I copied into Microsoft OneNote.
In this application, I created a different section using sub-pages for each year which denoted a published annual report in a folder named 'Condominium Annual Education Reports.' In each of these sections I used sub-headings according to the type of schooling that was referred to categorise my notes such as, primary, vernacular, upper, technical, and elementary. Later, as Condominium education expanded, I used additional sub-headings such as girls' education, mission schooling, subsidised Qur'an, and sub-grade schools. I also included a sub-heading for commentary and overviews of the education landscape written by the education directors including their opening summaries of Sudanese schooling and concluding remarks. Using the star and exclamation icons in OneNote I further highlighted excerpts that I thought were of significance in developing my research.
Once again, I reviewed the data I had captured several times for its usefulness either keeping or removing the star icon to reflect its significance. At this point based on the significance of the data, I began to write summaries of key events that took place in education under the AEC that would contribute to the framing of chapter 4 and its sub-titles.

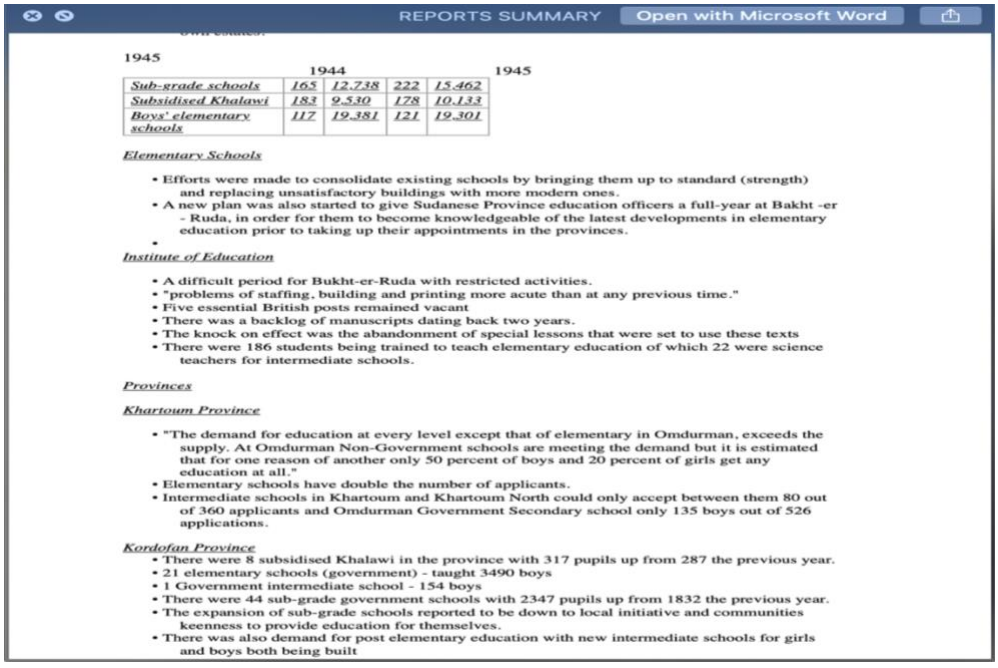

Figure 2 – Example of Report Summary

Thereafter I began colour coding it into the following way: data that helped to build a timeline of events detailing the commencement of a project, a period in education or an outcome; data that specifically referenced Qur'an schools or its students; data that highlighted other types of Islamic or vernacular education such as, the school of Teachers in the Vernacular and Qadis at Gordon Memorial College; training and pedagogical development and lastly, references to Sudanese social or educational resistance. This system of coding was useful in helping to locate and refer back to information detailing precise information I needed to support or evidence my analysis.

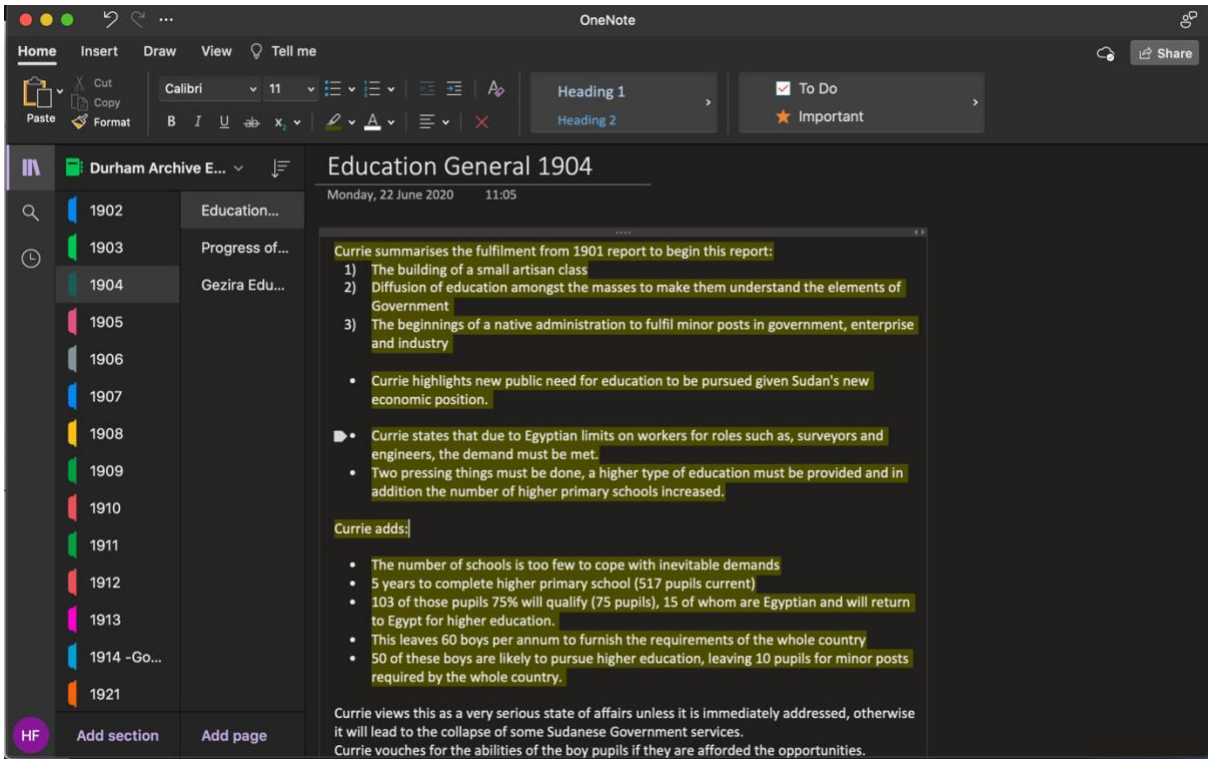

Figure 3 - Picture of Note Organisation in OneNote - Coding for Timeline of Events

My approach to data analysis of documents from the Sudan archive was to unearth contextual information about the function of Qur'anic schooling (Drisko and Maschi, 2015). My use of the Governor-General reports examined the development of AEC education, based on the wording of British civil servants. Where possible I extracted any indications of how the Sudanese felt about Condominium education to examine what was inferred about Sudanese attitudes towards education implemented by the Anglo-Egyptian administration. Examples, of this that came out of the archive were Director of Education James Currie's expression of frustration in 1907 at the lack of take up of Condominium schooling in Kordofan and White states respectively and his reference and acknowledgement of Sudanese Qur'anic educations value to the indigenous population, which I deduced would not have been mentioned if there was not some Sudanese insistence on the merit of Qur'anic schools.

Overall, the Governor-General's annual reports detailed developments in Sudanese communities' positions towards education under the Condominium, despite actual

voices of Sudanese not being present. For example, in the 1905 education section of the annual report[4] there are examples of Communities' in Kordofan and White Nile provinces' resisting Condominium education, as both states historically were deeply affiliated with Qur'anic education. However, by the end of published reports five decades later, there are concerns and frustrations from parents of children in these same communities at the poor provision of Condominium schooling. The archival materials were also a useful starting point to inform me as the researcher about Sudanese post-independence education continued incorporation of the Condominium schooling model until its disregard in 1969 under General Nimeiri. This in turn complemented the second part of my research, whereby I interviewed respondents who either went to school during the latter stages of the Condominium or who were amongst the first cohorts of students in the decade after independence. The development of education under the Condominium has served to help me understand the sentiments towards and critiques of current education in Sudan as shared by participants in interviews, who ranged from those educated in the pre-to the post-independence periods.

There were occasions when I found researching the archives to be both emotionally testing and fatiguing. This was in terms of the language used by the British to describe local populations, cultures, and philosophies, all of which were at points referenced disparagingly in the reports. For example, in the first-two decades of reports, the language used was divisive and sought to categorise Sudanese based on race or colourism. According to Sharkey racism and classism were present in Sudanese society due to the country's slave trade, although it was more aligned to African or Arab heritage than skin tone. However, because this existing dynamic supported British notions of superiority it was accented and promoted (2003:32). What this then meant for me, a Black male reading the opinions of the British in the reports was a consistent reminder of the prevailing attitudes that bred superiority and inferiority complexes between white and black societies during the colonial period.

Engler and Strausberg (2011) remind those who research archives that the documents found within them are written to enhance a particular point of view and are also written with particular audiences and reasons in mind. Whilst I accept the validity of Engler and Strausberg's point, this did not lessen my struggle with the British colonial vantage point of reality. As a result, reading through the reports remained a challenge. The problems that the archives presented were not resolved, as there was not any specific training available to me as a researcher about how to navigate problematic language and stances presented in archival materials. This is something I would wholeheartedly like to see changed, through the widening participation mandates that many archives, universities and museums claim to have. The experience I had in relation to the archive meant that I found solace and good counsel outside of these institutions, in conversations with people in my network who had also encountered similar issues in their research.

[4] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

My Position as a Researcher

My interest in Sudanese culture began in 1999 when I first accepted an invitation from some UK-based Sudanese friends. I later returned in the late 2000s and some Arabic language courses at the African International University in Khartoum. During this time, I spent a period living in a village in Gezira state learning about Islam and using the opportunity for Arabic immersion whilst voluntarily teaching English language. Living in a village setting was good for my language skills but it also allowed me to become closer to Sudanese communities.

Amongst those with whom I spent a considerable amount of time were the students of a local Qur'an school who I often ate with and slept on the same site, although in separate quarters. The interactions with these students sparked my interest in Qur'anic schooling, as I was often intrigued by the endeavor and personal sacrifice such as students leaving families in other provinces, having to financially rely on strangers for food and board and of course their willingness to commit the entire Qur'an to memory. In addition, I was also intrigued by the peripheral status of these students in the village. Often their primary interactions with locals came through religious duties such as, leading prayers or opening local events with recitation of the Qur'an.

Although for different reasons, I initially related to this feeling of being on the periphery in the village due to my inability to converse in Arabic and would often feel left out or unconsciously forgotten until this improved. Part of the students' reason was because of their very specific reason for being in present amongst their hosts and anything beyond that may have crossed boundaries of the villager and Qur'an student contract. This aspect of their existence in the village was a catalyst for wanting to understand Qur'anic education, its history and how it is perceived.

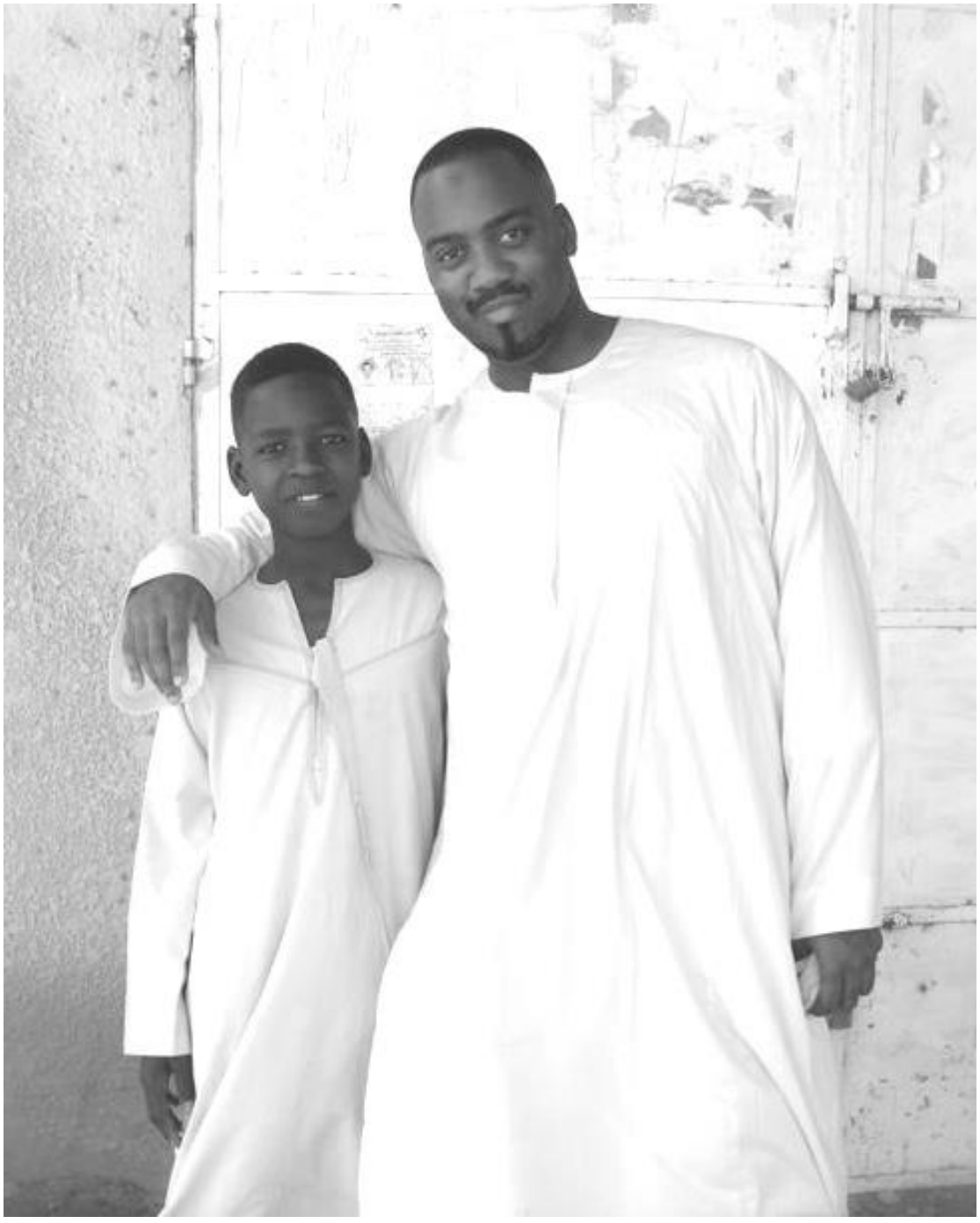

Figure 4- Picture of Author and Qur'anic Student Circa 2009

Some of the relationships I established during my time in Sudan helped me to gain access to participants for this study. And when these friends who became conduits for participants told them about my life and time in Sudan, there was often intrigue but also a sense of trust and openness. This was often displayed when I met participants by questions such as, what made you come to Sudan? How long were you here? And when will you come back having tasted the Nile water? Sometimes there were attempts to meet in person such as, “I am coming to London in the summer, and it would be good to meet in person and talk more about your

research." Or "I have a cousin in the UK, maybe speaking to him/her would also be useful for you, I'll put you in touch."

On reflection, my Muslim background helped participants to believe that I would be diligent in answering my research questions. Prior to these interactions and interviews I was concerned that my being Muslim might lead participants to filter the information they shared in order to be seen in a good light religiously. However, the opposite took place, and they were often unguarded about their own religious practice. Perhaps my detachment as a non-Sudanese from the Sudanese Muslim experience allowed that, as there were not the same cultural expectations or judgements attached to sharing life stories with me. Nevertheless, I chose to navigate this potential issue by not imposing too much information on my own practice into dialogue. I chose to do this, so that participants did not feel challenged, and from a personal standpoint so that I did not feel burdened to playout a performative version of my own Islam.

Research Participants and Gaining Access

The inclusion of participants in this study alongside including Sudanese discourses into the research, is designed to address the part of this research which evaluates the role education plays in the formation of Sudanese identity. It aligns with my research into how the development of the Sudanese education system since the Condominium has framed middle class attitudes towards Qur'anic schooling.
As addressed in chapter 1; by inserting Sudanese participants' life histories into this research, my intention is to include middle-class voices into the discourse about education. It is an important perspective to be examined about the effects of Sudanese education, as the middle-classes have encapsulated two significant periods in education since the AEC. The first is the emergence of a Sudanese middle-class through the education policies of the Condominium administration. The colonial regime chose to educate and sculpt this class of Sudanese to be leaders amongst the Sudanese people. This was illustrated not only through their education under the Condominium but also by their inheritance of power when Sudan gained independence in 1956. According to Sharkey, it was their education during the Condominium and subsequent financial mobility resulting from the positions and proximity to power that influenced politics in Sudan leading into the post-independence period and following decades (2008:30).

The second significant period have taken place over the last 30 years. Since 1990 and the declaration of the Islamisation of education by Omer Beshir and the NIF/NCP regime, the middle classes, along with the country's elite have invested in the private education sector. As well as monetary investment in private education, there has been a noticeable lack of engagement with the other types of schooling in the country. This has impacted the status and reputation of private schooling positively whilst consequently, having the opposite effect on state and Qur'anic schooling. However, for many middle-class families their connection to Qur'anic education has

not diminished and has been incorporated into the education of their children. Participants were sought for this study to provide insights into their opinions of Qur'anic education value, their decision making about it and wider education and how they have navigated these processes over the decades since independence.

I interviewed 11 members of the Sudanese middle classes about their education and their decision-making regarding their children's schooling. The participants in this study were selected based on three definitions of the Sudanese middle classes representing the early and mid-late condominium period and latter post-independence period. The early representation of the middle-classes is taken from Trimingham's (1949) definition of Sudanese 'effendiya' for students educated in the elite Condominium schools and groomed for minor roles in the Administration. The second definition is based on Niblock (1987), who included Sudanese high civil servants, merchants, Sufi leaders, tribal leaders, and landowners as further representation of Sudanese middle-class-ness by the end of the Condominium. The last definition is based on Collins (1976:11) who included 'contractors and agents, wholesale distributors and co-directors of foreign states and firms' in his analysis of the post-independence period.

Participants were chosen to provide multiple micro-perspectives on the pedagogy, routine, and role of Qur'anic and other schooling in the lives of people from this stratum. The use of multiple types of participants from the Sudanese middle class, and generations, as opposed to one homogenous group, for example, just Sufi leaders, was designed to ensure that a spectrum of views were available in this study. It is possible that interviews with Sufi leaders at the exclusion of other groups within the category outlined by Niblock (1987), would have narrowed the breadth of opinion about Sudanese education.

Another reason I selected this group of participants was that historically the Arab Muslim heritage of this cohort meant that during the first-three decades of the Condominium they were given precedence over other Sudanese groups in education. This included selection for primary and secondary schooling for the sons of prominent landowners, Sufi leaders, and tribal leaders (Shayukh) at Gordon Memorial College and other elite institutes. It is therefore no coincidence that each regime since independence has reflected the political dominance of those with Arab heritage. Their precedence was born out of the Condominium's interpretation and acceptance of existing feudal structures in its push to create a low tier indigenous civil service sector. Once graduated and evermore aware of the pushback of colonies against European powers after the Second World War, the growing importance and influence of middle strata groups such as the Graduates' Congress can be seen over Sudan's socio-political development. For example, the Congress' influence is mentioned in the Education Department reports of the 1940s, in which they are documented arguing for improvements to education provision that reflected the culture of Sudanese (Seri-Hersch, 2017:11; Sharkey, 2003:86).

The use of local gatekeepers helped to provide access to participants in this study. These gatekeepers were primarily from amongst social groups I had been a part of

during my time in the country. Other participants were gained through introductions and suggestions that stemmed from discussions around my research. There were also some participants, who having been interviewed offered access to other members of their families. The al-Hamoudi and Fareed families were examples of these fortuitous moments, in which an interview with one participant led to suggestions that I should speak to other family members for more context. Whether or not participants had received Qur'anic education, state or private schooling prior to university was not relevant to their being chosen, as their engagement in one of these types of schooling was something that I sought to explore with them during interviews.

Each of the respondents had either lived, studied, or settled in Khartoum at some point during their lives. This is unsurprising given the centrality of Khartoum, not only in terms of its geographical location, but also as the locus of Sudan's government administrations dating back to Turco-Egyptian rule. It is also the centre of Sudanese commerce and where the most prestigious educational institutes in both private and state school sectors are located. In addition, as the focal hub for social, political, and economic trends it was expected that most participants would be connected to the capital.

The Khartoum-influenced perspectives of the participants work as a complement to the centrality of Khartoum in the Condominium and later administrations' education frameworks. It also informed the study about participants' opinions of their own or their children's education at state, Qur'anic or private schools in the capital. Although Khartoum is a central theme in the participants' educational life stories, wider regional perspectives are captured and give viewpoints on education outside Khartoum. For example, a-third of the participants also experienced some of their schooling in the east or north of the country.

The definition of Sudanese middle classes in this study are taken from those given in the writings of Trimingham (1940), Niblock (1987) and Collins (1979). In keeping with these definitions, the participants met the criteria as explained below:

The Fareed Family – who meet the criteria of three groups from the Sudanese middle classes. Abdul-Wali is a merchant and CEO of a trading company and prior to the most recent disturbances was a member of Sudan's transitional council. Hasan is a former foreign company director and worked in the Oil and Gas industry in the Gulf. And Noora currently works as a consultant in artificial intelligence. The family is also a part of the non-Sufi brotherhood and political movement – The Ansar, the followers of the family of the Mahdi of Sudan.

Al-Hamoudi family – meet the criteria of Sufi leadership due to Hiba and Omar's father's prominent role in the Ismailiyah Sufi order, their private education and respective work in media production and international development. Their uncle Khalil, was formerly an adherent of the Ismailiyah and a former foreign company manager in keeping with Collins' definition of the middle-class (1979)

Insaaf – is a director of a European INGO whose first year of higher education coincided with Omer al-Bashir's declaration of an Islamist ethos all levels of Sudanese education in 1990. Her father was also a professor at the prestigious Khartoum University.

Hamid and Khary – meet the criteria of immersion in a Sufi brotherhood through their attachment to the Samaniyyah Sufi order. They are also from a family of landowners and high-ranking civil servants, due to their fathers' ownership of several 1000-acre farms and his former role as a government agricultural director.

Mohammed Jafar – is a development consultant for foreign states and firms, and has worked with the British Embassy, British Council and European Union on justice and education programmes.

A key factor in choosing these participants was their religious background. This was due to the interest in Qur'anic education of my research and meant that the particular focus of the study was Sudanese Muslim voices. As a result, Christian communities from South Sudan and Sudanese-Egyptian Coptic communities that reside in Sudan, were purposely not consulted for this research project because of the specificity of information needed. However, it is worth noting, as highlighted by some participants that education in Christian denominated schools is very much a part of the Sudanese Muslim educational experience and dates to the early Condominium period.

The respondents who have shared their life histories represent experiences of education from the late Condominium to the 2010s. The sample is small and as a result, viewpoints that they share are not generalisable to all Sudanese middle-class. However, the participants offer insights into how the Sudanese middle class, weigh-up, operate and navigate Sudan's educational landscape, particularly since the 1989 political dominance of the NIF/NCP regime. For some participants, the regime's policies and programme of Islamist socialisation impacted their own education. For others it was their children who were affected having been educated, born during or after the NIF/NCP came to power. It is important to analyse the decision making about education of these parents in particular, as each of them were educated in state schools at a time when they were considered to offer a quality education but have since opted for private education for their children.
The data given by participants to this study has demonstrated they and their networks' expectations and views of Qur'anic and other types of schooling. It has also illustrated what they hoped to accrue through enrolment of children in this type of schooling or its alternatives. Moreover, participants responses provided data to address a part of the research questions about what the perceived effects are on families from their social group that invest in Sudan's different kinds of schooling. And how these impact children's future lives socially in terms of religion and culture as well as economically, in terms of securing or enhancing social mobility.

Semi-Structured/ In-Depth Interviews

Interviews began with introductory questions to get them used to the process of responding to my questions. These initially focused on personal details such as, the age to confirm the period in which the respondents were educated and its connection to education policies implemented by the specific regime of that time. Other introductory questions were about the region of Sudan respondents were from to understand the types of schools available in the region; and whether they engaged in Qur'anic education or not growing up.

In addition, I asked questions that encouraged respondents to share their opinions on the languages of instruction during their schooling. These questions were important for me to understand how the frequency of exposure to Arabic and English in their education framed their views on each languages' importance, Sudaneseness and social mobility. For those who are parents, questions also focused on their decision making regarding their children's education and sought to explore the motivations behind their choices. Likewise, I asked participants who hoped to start families in the future questions around the same themes to examine what they thought would be their most likely decisions about their children's education.

I carried out 11 individual interviews and 3 joint-interviews. Each was approximately between 1 -2.5 hours. Conversations were fluid and the only disruptions occurred if prayer time had arrived at which point, we would break to pray; or if there was a slight connection issue such a frozen screen or significant delay. It was my intention to give respondents the platform to share and elaborate on their life histories, with minimal disruption from me. As emphasised by Jackson and Russell (2010) chronology is not the objective of life histories and the interviews followed this premise, aside from periods in which I asked structured questions. Therefore, participants were able to weave in and out of events as memories returned and were able to return to points multiple times to elaborate.
Following this pattern of interview, meant that at times I was required to allow the conversation to veer direction slightly, because I did not want to discourage the interviewees openness or fluidity. Using this method to gain information did mean that I had some data that was not entirely relevant. However, as Marvasti (2004) highlights there will always be a process of reducing data and so I viewed this to be a part of that process.
All interviews were carried out through one of four methods. Individual Face-to-face interviews, individual online interviews (owing to the pandemic as well as civil unrest in Sudan); an asynchronous interview via WhatsApp voice notes and lastly, through online and face-to-face joint interviews. None of the participants requested to see the questions prior to their interviews and were satisfied with the information that had been shared in the information and consent sheets that I forwarded to them when making initial contact.

Face-to-Face and Online Interviews

The opportunity to have face-to-face interviews was limited by my inability to travel. This was either because of Covid restrictions or because of civil unrest in Sudan. However, I was able to hold three in-person interviews with Sudanese participants based in the UK. These meetings took place in quiet surroundings such as an office space I was able to use for interviews, where there was not a chance of disruption. Admittedly, the limitations on face-to-face interviews meant I had to look for an alternative method to use and I chose online interviews.

Online interviews are a relatively new approach in qualitative research based on the emergence of voice over internet protocol (VoIP) technologies in the form of video conferencing platforms such as Skype, Zoom and Microsoft Teams and mobile applications such as WhatsApp and FaceTime (Tomas and Bidet, 2023; Archibald et al, 2019). In this post-pandemic epoch, the literature has begun to look at online interviews' merit as a standalone method, resulting in positive changes to its position as a lesser alternative to face-to-face interviews (Tomas and Bidet, 2023; Deakin and Wakefield, 2014; Oates et al, 2022).

Prior to this, the consensus had been that face-to-face interview was the standard bearer for interview methods. Online interviews were viewed to be a technological innovation and were compared to telephone interviews rather than face-to-face (Hart, 2021). However, the shift in comparison from telephone to face-to-face began a decade ago as Skype-based interviews analysed to be a challenge to the traditional face-to-face method in qualitative research (Deakins and Wakefield, 2014)

Amongst the benefits of online interviews, I found that it alleviated some of the financial constraints might have limited my travel and access to participants. The use of online interviews widened my research capacity and enabled me to interview participants in Egypt, Sudan, the UAE and the UK, which I would not have feasibly been able to do through travel. This aligned with James and Busher (2012), Deakins and Wakefields (2014), and Tomas and Bidet (2023) premises that online interviews give researchers ability to interview beyond restrictive locational boundaries, challenging and widening the idea of what constitutes space or geographical location.

Literature about online interviews points to concerns about it potentially obstructing rapport building between researchers and interviewees (Hart, 2021; Weller, 2017). It is claimed that this is due to the forfeiture of subtle physical cues made by interviewees, which researchers use as part of their analysis of responses in physical interview settings (Hart, 2021). This position is contested by Archibald et al 2019:4), in their paper on the use of Zoom for data collection, who cite feedback from online interviewees about their own ease in reading nonverbal cues when interviewed on screen. However, It is this concern about online interviews that is used as a justification for the continued preference of face-to-face interviews for this mode of data collection (Weller, 2017:2; Tomas and Bidet, 2023:1).

Nonetheless, general opinion on the importance of rapport building in qualitative interviews varies. One position is that it is an important component of interviews that allows trust to develop with the interviewee, leading to open and informative dialogue. Hart (2021) in her article about researchers' practice of deep listening to their interviewees argues for the need to be in physical settings in achieving this kind of rapport and subsequently against online interviews for that reason.

In contrast, an alternative position hold that the importance of rapport building is overplayed, and its proponents propose that it can be disruptive to the interview process. Academics who hold this position refer to the 'social desirability effect,' which takes precedence and leads interviewees compelled to answer in a manner that is pleasing to the researcher with whom they have bonded (Oates et al, 2023; Marvasti, 2004:19).

My research into online interviews as a method for this study raised the debate in qualitative research methods' literature about online interviews affecting rapport building due to the omission of physical cues (Weller, 2017; Archibald et al 2019:4; Hart, 2021; Tomas and Bidet, 2023). However, I didn't experience obstructions outlined by Weller (2017) and Hart (2021). Instead, I was able to build rapport easily online between myself and the participants. This I believe was helped by an earlier process that began with email contact in which a series of emails were sent between me and potential participants. These emails included, an overview of the research, how I had been put in touch (if a gatekeeper had helped gain access), my responses to any questions or anxieties about my expectations of the participant when contributing and their availability. This meant by time the interview began participants had a level of familiarity with my expectations and manner.

This was followed up at the beginning of interviews sessions with informal chat before any recording of formal questions and answers. The space for respondents to ask questions after interviews was also given and helped participants to gain additional information should they need it about my intentions for the data, research question, and my relationship to Sudan and allowed space for them to gain clarity and feel involved in the study (Hart, 2021).

Hart (2021:4) explains the use of questions at the end of an online interview to gain feedback from the interviewee, a method I also followed. However, on reflection it is possible that my use of this time to receive feedback might not have been the most suitable. It is possible that participants would have benefited from a break between the process of the interview and their being asked for responses about it. An alternative to this choice could have taken the form of an anonymous questionnaire that minimised any risk that participants felt either obligated to give responses they were not ready to give or compelled to give positive feedback because I was on screen in front of them.

Zladkowska et al (2022) suggest online interviews are better time-bounded than face-to-face interviews, as the former does not include the element of hospitality

associated with the latter. However, this was not my experience of either type of interview. Instead, the pressure or lack thereof on the time of participants seemed to guide the duration of interviews. For example, the participants who lived in Sudan were 3–4-hours ahead, and aside from interviews which took place at the weekend, those which took place during the week were in the evening. This meant participants were home when we spoke and were happy to invest considerable time talking to me. Therefore, the average online interview lasted between 1.5-2.5 hours.

There were other considerations that were factored into this time span such as some participants requiring breaks in the interview to prayer, at which time they would request a pause in recording. Surprisingly, these 10-minute breaks did not spoil the momentum of the interview with the participants able to pick up on the last point made and, in some instances, the time pause was beneficial in that it allowed interviewees to process some of my questions further allowing them to elaborate on their answers.

The option of online interviews presented two choices about how the interviews were to be conducted, either synchronously or asynchronously. The choice of a synchronous interview required more planning than asynchronous interviews around the coordination of time and participants' availability to speak with me directly. The second option of asynchronous interviews or remote interview (Oates et al, 2022), was useful as it offered the option to ask questions to participants unable to commit to an online video or voice interview. This method of interview proved useful during the online interview phase when a participant Omar from the al-Hamoudi family became difficult to tie down for an agreed session of follow-up questions after our initial interview. This was due to his work in media, which involved constant travel. The use of asynchronous interview removed my and Omar's own anxiety around trying to fit into each other's schedules and allowed the dialogue to stay open.

Research into the use of asynchronous interviews often discusses its use in building of dialogue between the researcher and participant through a series of emails (James and Busher, 2012:191). However, in this study the use of the term asynchronous interview differs and is used to instead highlight interview dialogue that was carried out through the use the WhatsApp Messenger's voice note recording feature. The use of WhatsApp voice notes presented the opportunity to forward pre-written questions to the interviewee that were listened to and answered using the same method.

There were multiple benefits to using an asynchronous interview method. Firstly, it allowed the participant to remain in the study rather than opt out due to their travel obligations. Secondly, it gave the participant time to reflect on their responses rather than answer immediately (Oates et al, 2022:6). Moreover, it offered an opportunity for questions and answers from the researcher to be clarified or elaborated on without the requirement of arranging a follow up online or physical interview, which would have compromised my time, travel and finance that had already been affected by the pandemic.

The interviews in this study were primarily synchronous and this was my preferred option for interviews. This was due to the live interaction between me as the researcher and the interviewees that it provided. For example, the conversations were a lot easier to develop as live conversation helped to build both the interviews' momentum and the levels of comfort for me and the interviewees. There were subtleties such as, the interviewee being able to see my reaction to new information shared and taking confidence from that, by elaborating or being reflective.

In contrast, the asynchronous interview whilst a useful method given the circumstances, was slightly more stilted, disjointed and limited by the respondent strictly replying to what had been asked without any real inclination to elaborate. This meant that clarification of meaning was needed during the asynchronous interview process, and I would have to go back over questions in a manner that was not required in synchronous interviews. Whilst it has been argued that these distinctions are what differentiate face-to-face interviews and online interviews, I would argue that the omission of subtle prompts, and nuances in behaviour that supposedly manifest during online interviews were in fact distinguishable between the synchronous and asynchronous types of online interview instead.

Joint Interviews

Joint interviews took place with members of the Fareed family and with the brothers Khary and Hamid. These were not focus groups in the traditional sense but instead were joint-interviews in which my interview questions were asked and both participants would share their responses, sometimes contrasting or informing each other of gaps in their understanding of the political or educational climate of the time discussed. They were a positive experience for me, as they facilitated conversations between different generations and age groups of each family and allowed me to capture data about some of the different experiences they had had of Qur'anic and Sudanese education in general. For example, speaking to Khary and Hamid demonstrated that although they were only a few years apart in age, the education ladder was changed by the Bashir regime between Khary and Hamid's entry into secondary school, meaning Hamid essentially repeated the same year twice. It is probable that had I just interviewed Khary and Hamid separately, as was my initial intention, I suspect these details of their schooling and its effect on their learning would have been missed.

The idea of joining family members together for interview, some after having spoken to them individually was not a part of my initial design and grew out of an interview session in which I was introduced by Noora from the Fareed family to her grandfather Hasan. After interviewing Hasan individually on Zoom I texted Noora to re-join and conclude the interview. Hasan and Noora began to discuss the interview questions after she asked her grandfather how he had found the interview process and how he answered questions about the place of Qur'anic education in the family. They began to discuss their answers, with Hasan filling in gaps about his life story

that Noora heard for the first time. Based on this conversation I asked if they would also share their feelings together about some of the other questions. The texture that this method brought to their earlier answers was useful and helped me to understand how the family had begun its educational journey. For that reason, I also used this method with Noora's father Abdul-Wali. The result was that it gave me useful data to examine about how the Fareeds had continued and adapted their relationship with Qur'anic education over 3 generations.

This also produced some moments of clarity for members of the Fareed family about their parents or grandparents' educational decision making. For example, Noora had assumed that the decision to attend Qur'an school was based solely on her family's religiosity. However, the joint interview with her father revealed how his own experiences of schooling and prejudice had determined much of his decisions about his children's education, including the need to embed them in Qur'an schools.

As joint-interviews had worked well with the members of the Fareed family, I emboldened to ask the brothers Hamid and Khary if they would do a joint-interview. This method was particularly useful when they reviewed the school experiences of their children and created some moments of comparison between the two brothers. An example of this was when Khary spoke of his concerns for his children as they did not yet speak Arabic fluently. He pointed to his Hamid's children being fluent as they were born in Sudan, which led on to Hamid reflecting on the positives and negatives of that for his children after having to adjust to a new life in the UK. Another example was the effect of policy changes to education that took place between the brothers schooling and it was their conversation with each other during the interview that highlighted the changes to the education such as, the introduction of single-sex schooling or changes to secondary schooling the meant the curriculum changed from 9 to 16 subjects in the 4 years between Khary entering secondary school and Hamid joining him.

Processing Interview Data

The process of analysing interview data took place immediately once all interviews were completed. This process started prior to me making interview transcripts, as I listened to the recordings several times to become familiar with them and the emerging themes. This process allowed me to begin to mark the times of noteworthy points made by the participants before revisiting them once the transcriptions were done. During this process, I also listened for any tonal markers that clearly identified or indicated how important sentiments were conveyed and again marked these times down in my notes, under a heading for each participant. This was useful in helping me to examine the depth of feeling shared about discourses by the participants and helped in framing some of the data into the emerging themes that were used in the participant sub-chapters later. For example, my decision to write extensively about the effects of private schooling on Hiba's Sudanese identity was the result of the tonal markers that illustrated her

emotiveness about the topic, such as her sighs and indignation about the lack of Sudanese socialisation in her private school.

The actual process of transcription initially took some time. This was because most of my interviews were recorded through Zoom as MP4 files. Therefore, before I began to transcribe, I first had to use Adobe Media Encoder to alter the files to MP3s, separating the audio from visuals. Following this, I then used Microsoft Stream to convert the MP3 files into VTT file transcripts. The resultant transcripts were generally accurate and the only issues with the finished transcripts I incurred were with parts of the interviews in which me and participants used Arabic words or phrases, which I then corrected.

As well as participants' tonal markers being a useful of indication of their sentiment, listening to sections of the interviews that were not scripted with pre-written questions allowed unexpected themes to emerge. These were then highlighted in the transcripts using Microsoft Word and recorded in another document as potential topics for the analysis and writing up stage of interview data. An important example of this a subject from the interview with the participant Mohammed Jafar, whose discourse about the economic climate and financial struggles of his children opened further discussion about the effects of the Sudanese economy on the middle-classes in general. Subsequently, this became an important topic in that sub-chapter in contextualising the financial strain private schooling places on some middle-class families, resulting in their opting to pragmatically put children into state schools. Once these topics were documented I began the process of choosing the themes that were in keeping with my research questions.

However, other themes that emerged from respondents' answers were the result of the semi-structured questions used during each interview. As a result, based on participant responses to these types of questions I was guaranteed themes I had identified to be of interest early on based on the literature would be addressed. These included experiences of combining Qur'anic or private schooling, who accesses religious education in Sudan and what were the influences over the choices of schooling that parents made for their children.

Informed Consent, Ethics and Anonymity

Each participant was sent an information sheet and a consent form to sign either via email or WhatsApp messenger. The information sheet outlined the nature of this research project, what I hoped to achieve with the data they shared, what they were agreeing to contribute towards, how their contributions would be used.

Since my participants are all Muslims, I made some considerations pertaining to religion in the ethics of this study. For example, it was important for me not to homogenise the participants and not giving a singular meaning to their ritual practices, use of symbols and to focus on how participants self-identified (Bird and

Scholes, 2011). This was apt because I was not researching one particular religious community located at a focused site in Sudan. Rather I interviewed participants from across the spectrum of Sudanese Muslims who identified as Sufis, Ansaris, liberals, and non-practicing.
I used the same considerations regarding whether the Muslim participants came from an urban or rural setting. This was because connotations attached to religious practice in rural settings can infer a religious tradition that is untainted and unworldly when compared to religious practice in urban settings. And as Asad (2009:8) explains '… neither form of Islam has a claim to being regarded as "more real" than the other. This informed my approach to the research and helped me to recognise that emphasis on certain religious practices were to an extent steered by the surrounding environment such as the ability to practice Taffakur (reflection/contemplation) being arguably easier in a rural environment due to the slower pace of life. However, this did not discount commitment of Muslim participants in cities but instead demonstrated participants differed on what they emphasised in their religious practice.

Conclusion

The methods I have chosen provided the tools to understand the two aspects of my research into Qur'anic educations place within Sudanese education from the AEC to present. By collecting data from the Sudan Archive at Durham, I have found that the AEC's engagement with Qur'anic schooling began with ambivalence under James Currie, before moving into a period of attempted development and financial investment. However, when AEC funded Qur'an schools did not produce satisfactory results, it led to their abandonment by the regime.

What I have also found and concluded in the following chapters, is that within that process that led to its abandonment, Qur'anic and broader Islamic education was not necessarily at fault. Instead, the failure was with the Condominium administration and its inability to assess and see Qur'anic education for the purpose for which it was intended to serve Sudanese Muslim communities. As will be shown, this was demonstrated not only by Qur'an schools eventual drop in status and the offer of alternative schools in competition to it, but also by the failings of the Condominium to care for higher Islamic education when under its control at Gordon Memorial College, leading to its removal and placement back with the Sudanese Ulama in 1913.

Similarly, the analysis of data I gathered through interviews has been beneficial in garnering information about the middle-class section of the Sudanese population that emerged out of the Condominium education period. It has helped to examine how over the last 30 years they have altered the position of private schooling through their endorsement of and engagement in it. And how as a result, it transformed from an education setting for those unable to cope with the state education system, to a highly sought mode of education producing the most competitive students in Sudanese society. As will additionally be demonstrated in

the latter chapters of this thesis, the use of these methods led to the collation and examination of data that has demonstrated how the Sudanese middle-class have altered the way in which Qur'anic education is taught, by moving it away from the spaces it has traditionally occupied. I also conclude that the Sudanese middle-class have found a way to include Qur'anic education into their children's schooling that is comfortable for them and have always recognised its function in developing good Muslim citizens. Therefore, its incorporation alongside other schooling does not conflict the pursuit of social mobility or security.

Figure 5 - Map of Sudan (Post-1915 Merger of the Darfur Sultanate) Pre-South Sudanese Cessation in 2011 (Texas University)

CHAPTER 4. Ambivalence: Qur'anic Education and the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium 1898 - 1910

This chapter begins the analysis of the role of Qur'anic schooling during the period of the AEC of Sudan. It examines the educational policies of the Condominium and subsequent changes to the schooling landscape that saw education move from its Qur'anic emphasis under the proceeding Mahdist regime, to a broader education system that incorporated Islamic education into secular school institutes, and for a time secular subjects into subsidised Qur'anic schools. Each sub-chapter examines the contribution of the Condominium to modern Sudanese schooling and its impact on and framing of Sudanese families understanding of the purpose of education.

The Beginning of Condominium Education: Attitudes of the Government towards Qur'anic Schooling: 1902 – 1910

This section about the 1902 – 1910 period of AEC education examines data collected from the education sections of official British annual reports about the first decade of AEC rule. They were compiled by the first Director of Education James Currie (1900-1914) and are a record of the initial stages of the regime's education development, policies, and implementation. In them, Currie at times writes in first-person to describe the evolution of Sudan's new education system and resistances it encountered from local communities.
In reports as early as 1902 there is mention of Qur'an schooling. However, it is in reports written between 1907-1910, in which Currie shares his interpretations of the state of Qur'anic education in Sudan. In doing so, he acknowledges its Islamic cultural heritage and his ambiguity about it as a system of learning. These more subjective comments from Currie are not present in the reports of later directors of education, which are detached by comparison. Contextually, Currie's reports were compiled at a time when the Qur'anic schooling system was associated with the preceding Mahdiyyah regime and their favour of it over all other types of schooling. This would have likely been in the consciousness of the population and British officials like Currie when documenting his thoughts.

An Early Education Heavily Influenced by Egyptian Schooling

Although the British were the dominant partner in the AEC, with their consent, it was Egyptian education and education personnel that influenced the beginnings of Sudan's new education system. The bulk of teachers were initially supplied by the Egyptian Ministry of Public Information and the syllabi taught was modelled on Egypt's education system during this early period. Only in small but significant details would the two systems differ. In Sudan geography was taught in Arabic in elementary schools whereas in Egypt at this level it was taught in English. This seemingly small difference infers an indication of the Condominium's level of early

investment in elementary level education that would cater to most young Sudanese and suggests that English was not deemed useful for a population with a primary vocational focus on the agricultural and railway industries.

Egypt helped to shape Sudan's new education system under the Condominium and its own education system had itself undergone many changes and developments during the mid-late nineteenth century. Although structures such as the established position of the country's Grand Qadi still existed and held some influence, Egyptian education had veered away from its religious roots to a more secular and science led approach, which in turn led to a fall in the standing of religious education. Falk-Gesink (2015:17) describes nineteenth century Egypt as teeming with debates about the content of its education system. She notes that the period is marked by Egyptian historians for the deterioration of religious schools as government priorities shifted towards the upkeep of newer secular schools. This was also coupled with Egypt's premier religious educational institute Al-Azhar growing debates about religious education and the neglect of science that had left Egypt behind countries in the west (2015:17,29). Therefore, it is probable that the misgivings Egyptian educationalists had about the quality of Islamic education and their push towards secular schooling would have been transported to Sudan.

The Condominium's reliance on Egyptian education, saw it provide teachers, headteachers, policy staff and syllabuses to Sudanese Condominium schooling until the late 1910s. Given the debates that had taken place about Islamic education in Egypt, it is unsurprising that this coupled with Sudanese Qur'an schools' association with the Mahdiyyah that they were not chosen to be a part of the regime's early schooling system.

The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium: Its Early Anxieties about Qur'anic Schooling, The Mahdiyyah and the Potential for Impending Revolt

The Condominium government would have likely inherited some of its misgivings about Qur'anic education based on education changes that had taken place in Egypt its protectorate, although this did not stop the Condominium education department from engaging with Qur'an schools entirely.[5] The regime also had its own reservations about Qur'anic education that were informed by its observations of the national climate and sentiment.[6] Fear of a Mahdist-style revolution involving Qur'anic students were legitimised by Qur'an schools association with the former regime, in which they were the only school option and in which students were obliged to recite the litany and prayer of the of the Mahdi 'Ratib-al-Mahdi' (Eid, 1985: 357). This would have represented a concerning form of socialisation into the Islamic Sudanese society the Mahdiyyah propagated and which the new administration had recently ended.

[5] GGR, 1902
[6] GGR, 1907:567

Another cause for reservation about Qur'anic schooling was connected to the threat of an anti-government uprising from some of the country's Sufi Turuq (brotherhoods). Although their influences over Sudanese society had been restricted under the Mahdiyyah (a result of its comparably conservative Islamic ideology), most Sufis brotherhoods had still openly shared anti-colonial sentiments. The possibility of a threat from the Sufi orders was legitimised by the AEC's awareness of Imam Mahdi's Sufi roots as a former allegiant of the Sammaniyah brotherhood, and his later appeal to the leader of the Libyan Sanusi order to be his regional vicegerent (Searcy, 2011).

The new administration also had to contend with the threat of uprisings from local ethnic groups against taxations and authority. The outcome was that the potential for some sort of uprising to take place loomed over the society for approximately the first two decades of Condominium rule (Collins 1976: 6). To contest and subdue the influence of followers of the former Mahdi, Sufi Turuq and general Sudanese anti-colonialism, the Condominium funded rival religious officials from Egypt including the position of the country's grand Mufti to teach in Sudan. This was done in the hope of tempering religious fever and pacifying opposition against foreign rule through insurgency or revolt.

As an educationalist James Currie believed that much of the potential of an uprising to the government laid in the population's ignorance. By establishing Condominium schooling he thought low levels of literacy across Sudan would be addressed. In turn, this would lessen the likelihood of the appearance of another Mahdi-type figure. Demonstrating how he connected low literacy to ignorance and naivety, he also felt that raising literacy levels would address his concerns about literate Sudanese charlatans who were revered by the masses and able to command and exploit them religiously and financially.[7]

However, according to Osman Eid (1985:347), much of the Condominium's apprehension about Qur'an schools and their association with the Mahdiyyah was unwarranted due to the institutions themselves being in a state of transition out of the Mahdiyyah period, including the removal of the Mahdi's now banned litany. Accordingly, the premise of Qur'an schools being potential breeding grounds for a Mahdi-type uprising under the Condominium is questioned by Elrayah (1990:60). He argues that the Mahdiyyah's preoccupation with war against British and Egyptian forces, meant minimal investment or attention was paid to Qur'an schools by the regime. A more justifiable concern would have been Qur'an schools' continued connection to Sufi Turuq that opposed the regime and had historical influence over Qur'anic education (Karrar, 1992:137; Jeppie, 2011:55). However, this also proved to have little basis.

[7] GGR, 1908

The Building of Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Education and Qur'anic Schoolings Early Place within It

The Condominium administration set about developing its school system immediately and this included schools at elementary, primary, and secondary level. Despite the Condominium's concerns about Qur'anic education, these schools were embedded in Sudanese Muslim society and as a result some were also included in the Condominium's education structure. For the Sudanese population Beshir determined that Qur'an schools addressed a societally held view that religious education is a duty in Islam (1969:30). This viewpoint was also encouraged by the honour and blessings with which those who memorise the Qur'an are later rewarded in Islamic eschatology.

The Condominium regime had its own motivations for incorporating some Qur'an schools in its education plan. Its initial engagement with 320 Khalawi (Sudanese term for Qur'an schools) was small in comparison to the 15000 under control of Mahdiyya and illustrated the Condominium's caution. Yet in the 1902 Education Report it was noted that these schools were responsible for teaching of 4983 boys, significantly more students than were in any other type of Condominium learning at the time. These schools offered James Currie readymade populations of students, locations and buildings that would allow his department to spread its programme of education across Sudan at a more expedient rate than building the education system from scratch. The use of Qur'an schools was a pragmatic and practical solution to have the new education system up and running, expediting the development of a workforce capable of responding to the growing economic needs of the country.

Currie aim was to use Qur'an schools to develop a programme of schooling at the education system's lowly vernacular level and it was intended that students would be taught the rudiments of elementary subjects such as basic arithmetic and geography (in Arabic), alongside the continued memorisation of the Qur'an.[8]
For teachers at Condominium sponsored Khalawi it meant a regular salary and they were paid between 20 to 30 Egyptian pounds per month (£E).

In contrast to the government Khalawi teachers, teachers in regular Qur'an schools, which were not supported by the education department, did not receive a fixed wage. They depended instead on gifts from their students and their families. However, this support was not dependable and would intermittently take place at annual festivals or on the occasions on which students completed memorisation of the Qur'an, with the teacher then receiving gifts such as maize, millet, a sheep or goat.

Therefore, the benefit of having a government sponsored Qur'an school to teachers was clear. Yet not all British administrators were convinced that Qur'an schools were an adequate starting point for developing Sudan's secular education. Lord Cromer

[8] GGR, 1902

the Consul-General of Egypt, for example, '…felt that the Koranic schools were useless for the training of required clerks, technicians, and junior officials' (Sanderson 1975:433). As the Consul General of Egypt Cromer may have taken this view, based on his experiences there.

Currie himself believed that Sudan's development had been impaired by the illiteracy of the masses and dominance of Qur'anic education. While pressing these schools into service for elementary mass schooling was a pragmatic solution for mass education, at higher levels, Currie also sought to replicate the model of the Egyptian Kuttab in Sudan. The Kuttab model was a school model that used the method of memorisation found in Qur'an schools, but which focused on secular learning and the study of the Qur'an as a subject rather than whole curriculum (Daly, 1987). However, the progression made in opening these types of school was comparatively slow due to finances and bureaucracy and only two Kuttabs were established by 1902, one at Dongola and the other at Berber. Other key locations during this period such as, Wad Madani the capital of Gezira state, and regional trading towns Rufaa and Kassala remained without a Kuttab. [9] Once new Kuttabs were established, the first cohorts of students would be the sons of Faqis (scholarly religious teachers) who after a year's education would return to their fathers' religious schools as teachers. Having qualified in Government schools these teachers would then become eligible for government grants if the schools showed good performance, which infers they were required to incorporate numeracy and literacy into their curriculums.

The desire to use Kuttabs to progress secular education in Sudan was also in keeping with what Sanderson described, as a general push towards a western style education system in which Islam, rather than being the overarching epistemology driving schooling (as with Qur'an schools), would be taught as a subject alongside basic literacy and numeracy. This in effect placed the Kuttabs in direct competition with Qur'an schools (Sanderson 1975:433), by similarly addressing elementary education but offering subject variation that was suitable for the development of Sudan's artisanal class.

However, according to Beshir (1969:6), there was little distinction between Kuttabs and Qur'an schools meaning he did not distinguish between them believing they were essentially one and the same along with madrasahs. And Daly (1987) points to the continued use of the same rote method in these schools in Sudan, as late as the 1930s. However, whilst these schools each taught at the same level, there was a distinction between what was taught and the frequency of it. In Qur'an schools the primary focus remained Qur'anic memorisation, whilst the literacy and numeracy were the core subjects at the others. However, the Kuttab schools gave the government oversight over the education offered at the schools and socialisation of Sudanese children. This could not be claimed about the entire Khalawi system, and subsequently, many of these schools were outside of government control.[10]

[9] GGR, 1902
[10] Currie, GGR, 1908

By 1903, and despite the intention to bolster vernacular education, in which students would learn in Arabic (or a occasionally a language predominant in a specific region), a budget of £E 1000 per year meant that work on this sector would be relatively limited.[11] Although now limited by a restrictive budget, Currie envisaged that each Sudanese province would eventually have a Kuttab providing a four-year curriculum. Currie believed he could expedite this development by supplementing the department's limited funds with the introduction of a local education tax in provinces that were not already bound by other local taxes such as, agricultural tax.

For these schools to be built once funds were secured, teachers were needed. and finding teachers who were qualified to teach in either Arabic or English had become a challenge for the education department. This was in part due to Egypt's focus on its own problems and its saturation of locally qualified teachers. This left Sudan with no immediate solution to its teacher problem, making clear to the education department that for its vernacular education system to proceed, indigenous teachers would have to be trained. Daly notes that this was initially achieved by training six Sudanese shaykhs to teach reading and writing and to do basic arithmetic, who were then sent out to teach at existing vernacular schools as a short-term solution (1987:243). That only 6 teachers could meet the needs of the new school system, indicates how small the vernacular school project was at the time.

Outside of the need for more teachers, by 1904 Currie and the administration had recognised that the Sudanese economy could not rely on the import of an Egyptian workforce. Therefore, it was imperative that at least a part of the local population be educated to fill the economy's demand for engineers, surveyors, and other professions, in which there was certain to be a shortfall as the economy continued to grow. Even though according to Sikainga (1996) this was not an indication of Sudan's shift to large scale enterprise, the embedding of the AEC's economic plan required manpower, and according to Currie, the number of graduates produced by the department's higher primary schools did not match pressures to develop the country's workforce at an expedient rate.
In 1904 there were 517 boys enrolled in higher primary schools, where students were taught a five-year syllabus. Although each year group was expected to produce 103 graduates, only 75 of these would qualify for roles as clerks, surveyors, and engineers. 15 out of these 65 graduates were Egyptian and were highly likely to return to Egypt for higher education. Out of the remaining 60 eligible graduates, 50 would choose to continue their studies in secondary education. This realistically left 10 graduates per year to furnish the pressing needs for skilled graduate workers as

This need to control the message in schools and socialisation that Kuttabs now offered was highlighted in 1908 by an attempted uprising against the government aimed at reinstating the Mahdiyyah. This revolt led by a former Mahdist soldier named Abdul Gadir Wad Habouba, served to heighten existing government anxieties about religiously inspired revolt, and the government Kuttabs, not Qur'an schools, were viewed as a means through which to purge Sudanese society of potential threats and to correct the 'ignorance of the masses' – See Bashir (1969: 31).

[11] GGR, 1903

engineers and surveyors. Yet, in spite of these concerns about the turnover of eligible workers, the 1904 report stated that plans to build a workforce through the development of Sudanese education were well under way.[12]

As Director of Education, part of Currie's remit would have been to appeal for funding for his department, in competition with other sections of the Condominium administration. His ability to highlight areas of need and demonstrate their severity would be key in petitions to increase funding from central government. The reports represented a way in which to make such appeals. Consequently, Currie's claim in the 1904 report that government services would collapse without immediate action must also be read in this context. For example, Currie simultaneously laid plans for the development of technical schooling, the extension of Gordon Memorial College and was awaiting the signatures of the British governors of Gezira and Sennar to establish vernacular schools in their provinces.

By 1905, the Education Department's Kuttabs, had enrolled 1537 boys, of whom 1227 boys were from indigenous Sudanese backgrounds, 220 boys were Egyptian and 86 recorded as non-Sudanese other. The lack of additional funding and staff continued to hinder the development of the Kuttabs and Currie hoped the issue would finally be addressed in the coming year. However, seemingly in contrast to Currie officials from other government departments viewed the development of its higher primary schools' priority in keeping with their desire to produce students to furnish Sudan's civil service. Once this goal had been achieved then it was likely that their attention would turn to vernacular and technical education.[13]

At this point in Condominium education history, the margins between the different types of school available to Sudanese students were quite narrow. For example, the distinction between what constituted a higher primary education and likewise a higher vernacular education, appeared to be made on the basis that the former taught English language as a subject in its curriculum, whilst the latter did not (a point later demonstrated by the conversion of a higher vernacular school in Berber into a higher primary school in 1906).

In 1905 there were descriptions from regional governors in the provincial dedicated sections of the annual Condominium reports of some Sudanese indifference and resistance to the expansion of vernacular education in the provinces of Kordofan, Dongola and White Nile.[14] Kordofan had a high reputation for Qur'anic education, which was also likely to be well embedded in the other regions too. And it seems likely that this would have led to Sudanese resistance to colonial, secular schools. The primary role of education under the Condominium was to aid the economic growth of Sudan through the provision of a suitable workforce. Addressing this in his article 'The Education Experiment in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1900-1930,' Currie states:

[12] GGR, 1904
[13] GGR, 1905
[14] Ibid

> ‘One guiding principle had been adhered to throughout – all education endeavour was co-ordinated with the carrying out of a definite, large-scale economic programme embodying a collective government policy, and ancillary to it (Currie, 1934: 368).’

This meant as the economy matured it was part of the education department’s remit to ensure that the schooling system responded to economic developments by providing a steady flow of appropriately skilled workers.

In 1905, the rate of economic growth punctuated the Condominium’s need for qualified skilled workers. The government’s expectation was that this golden period would continue and would require industrial development for the foreseeable future. Currie instructed the higher vernacular schools in Berber and Rufaa to focus education on practical skills in anticipation of the projected industrial upsurge. This emphasis also carried over to the upper school at Gordon Memorial College (GMC) which was ordered to slow its focus on educating clerks and civil servants and turn its efforts to a more technical syllabus. [15]

A second justification for the new directive given to Gordon Memorial College was that there were not enough students transitioning from the six feeder primary schools into the college. At the time, these primary schools produced 30 boys who were eligible to begin secondary education. At the time, the number of boys the education departments wanted to transition from these schools to Gordon College was 200 boys. For that reason, the education department decided, if the number of boys entering the college improved in the following year the curriculum would be set to return to its original focus.

The change of focus did not alter GMC’s design as Sudan’s premier education institute, and from amongst its student cohorts Sudan’s proto-ruling class would emerge as it continued to produce the most well-educated boys. Even at this juncture in which its students were given a more technical focus, Currie was keen to distinguish them from unskilled technical workers by establishing good pay and ensuring that the jobs were pensionable. [16]

Preparation for the industrialisation of Sudan affected schooling by altering their curriculums and removed focus from the production of specific groups of workers. However, it also impacted communities in particular locations, alongside schools and their students. For example, when it was decided that the headquarters of the Sudanese railway should be moved from its home in Halfa to Atbara, the exodus of railway workers and their children led to a significant drop in the number of attendees at the higher primary school there and its subsequent closure. And in contrast, a new school due to be opened in Port Sudan acknowledged the potential of the location due to its significance as a centre of import and export via the Red Sea. Likewise, at Wad Madani, also an important commercial centre, a new school

[15] GGR, 1905
[16] Ibid

would open in 1906 in addition to the already established higher primary schools at Khartoum, Omdurman and Suakin.

The Technical College was given a funding boost in 1905 that allowed 110 boys to join, and money was also allocated for scholarships of £100 per year. It was intended by Currie that once trained these students would return to their home districts, providing a supply of needed skilled labour. For instance, Currie's Education Department and the Director of Railways planned to produce an annual supply of 14-year-old boys 'of good physique and sound elementary education' to work for the railway department. To ensure the cohort of students were completely invested, parents were made to sign apprenticeship forms as a guarantee that the children would not simply take the bursary and quit.[17]

The social structure of Sudan during this period was made up of a social hierarchy that the British did not challenge. As a result, education in the Condominium's more prestigious schools such as its higher primary schools or GMC was reserved for the sons of Arab groups, tribal leadership, and landowners (Sharkey, 2003). However, at the technical colleges early student intakes were from communities that were categorised by the Condominium as indigenous Black African. [18] Arab-heritage communities were not initially interested in joining the technical colleges which Currie concluded was due to the attitudes of "…a slave owning class… with considerable contempt for manual labour."[19] This was likely an accurate assessment, substantiated by connotations attached to some of the jobs that the college provided training towards. For example, although the slave trade had been abolished in 1899 and slavery significantly curtailed under the Condominium with scores of former slaves manumitted, a job as a stone mason still evoked the role of a slave in the collective memory of some more privileged Sudanese communities, despite its newly applied and attractive salary (Sharkey, 2008:29; 2003:32).

By 1906 there were a total of six higher primary schools attended by 762 boys, an increase of 251 from the previous year, which mirrored the increase in demand for the services of boys with a higher primary education to fulfil roles such as clerks in private companies.[20] By the mid-point of the decade, it was clear that the technical schools were succeeding in educating a Sudanese workforce capable of building the country's economy. This educated workforce was also a corollary of class categories that would see the growth of the Sudanese middle-class, as societal distinctions were made between those who had acquired a secondary, primary, technical, and vernacular education. As a result, it was apparent that Qur'anic schooling as a form of vernacular education and importantly students engaged in its pursuit inevitably found themselves at the lower rung of the social mobility ladder. This would likely affect the status of religious education as parents began to want their children to be enrolled in schools that would offer better life opportunities.

[17] GGR, 1905
[18] Used to denote non-Arab heritage, being from a former slave class and from provinces to the south or west of the country.
[19] GGR, 1905
[20] GGR, 1906

However, vernacular education continued to address the need to educate the masses to some extent, and with funds raised from the education tax, schools continued to be opened in Kamalein, Rufaa, Messalamia, Menagil, as well as a large Kuttab in Wad Madani. There were also vernacular schools under construction in Singa and Sennar and after initial resistance to government-led vernacular education in Dongola, a school was to be built in Korti. Such was the pace of construction of the vernacular model that by 1907, there were a recorded 1280 boys studying at vernacular institutes, up from 935 in 1906.[21]

Race and Vernacular Schooling, and James Currie's Ambivalence Concerning Qur'anic Schooling's Role in Educating the Sudanese

The 1907 annual report represents the half-way point in James Currie's tenure as Director of Education. In this report he expressed in some detail his thoughts about the history of vernacular education in Sudan at this point. The report gives us insight into some of the motives that influenced his decision making up until this stage of Condominium education, as he offers an account of the role of Qur'anic education and his overall perception of this indigenous education system.

Currie begins by giving an overview of the education that existed in Sudan and other Muslim lands prior to colonisation and explains:

> "In former days vernacular education was given in two types of schools, both common to Moslem countries, the Koran school, where boys learnt the book by rote and the more advanced school, where the principals of religious law and other subjects were expanded to young men who intended, ultimately themselves to become divines (clerics) or kadis (Islamic judges)."[22]

Traditionally in Muslim countries the two types of school mentioned by Currie represented the primary and higher educational levels within an Islamic education system were, once grounded in the Qur'an (memorisation), students would then broaden their understanding of Islam through further education to learn Islamic subjects such as, jurisprudence and theology. This system was suitable for Islamic societies prior to European occupation of their lands but as shown in debates on education in nineteenth century Egypt, it was deemed to not be innovative when compared alongside advances in education that had taken place across western Europe at that time (Falk-Gesink, 2014).

Currie explained his belief that "Some of these schools did good work, but the majority were not only useless but actually deleterious to the health and intelligence

[21] Ibid
[22] GGR, 1907

of the boys."[23] Whilst Currie needed to validate the introduction of the Condominium's education plan, his wording also shows an accurate understanding of the function of learning through Qur'anic education, as well as of a society that had been invested in the idea of learning prior to the British arrival. However, the education department had a clear mandate, which was to build a workforce fit for the development of Sudan and it would have been unbeneficial to the administration to frame religious schools in any other way than as being useless or deleterious, particularly given Curries somewhat strained relationship with Lord Cromer (Daly, 1987, 246).

Therefore, justifying the transfer of education's primary focus away from Qur'anic text, Currie shared his belief that three-or four-years after the reconquest of Sudan, the Condominium administration had provided something better than the Qur'anic education system in the form of Kuttabs. These Kuttabs, as earlier mentioned, were a step towards a Western style educational system in which Islam was taught as a subject (Sanderson 1975:433), developed to replicate the Egyptian model, they were supported in Sudan through government grants.

At the time of Currie's writing two problems remained. The first being the lack of qualified teachers to support the expansion of Kuttabs, a problem that would not be properly resolved until the establishment of a training college for indigenous teachers. The second problem was local suspicions and resistance to Condominium education, namely, whether it had been designed, like missionary schools to encourage boys away from Islam towards Christianity. This problem even extended to the Condominium's flagship school 'Gordon College' (Sharkey, 2003: 34).

Pockets of distrust of the new state education system did not simply disappear from Sudanese communities; leaving Currie perplexed as shown when he wrote "even when they came offering the gift of free education." [24] His response also indicated a level of ignorance about the perceptions of Anglo-Egyptian colonialism. Deng (1984:217) highlights the Sudanese referred to the Condominium regime as the new Turks in reference to the country's former Turco-Egyptian colonisers and details one of his participants believed the Anglo Egyptians to be just as tough. Nonetheless, Currie emphasised that there had also been a noticeably positive shift in public attitude towards government schools, as evidenced by people's acceptance of the education levy in support of local vernacular schools across half of the country's provinces as earlier documented by the shift in attitude in Dongola.

In this section of the report Currie accepted that prior to the Condominium, Sudan had been a fully functioning society in which learning through Islamic education had been a core element tied to the country's governance with the scholars initially trained at Qur'anic schools playing a pivotal role, as acknowledged when he wrote:

[23] GGR, 1907
[24] ibid

> "In the Sudan, spiritual leadership, which is partly acquired by learning, partly transmitted in the blood, has always carried great temporal powers; in the last century, inter-tribal disputes were settled, buildings raised, wells dug, and communications consequently reopened by the faithful scholars of a doctor of the law (sharia) and the idea of education as a training for all activities of civil life is no new one." [25]

Currie appears to view Sudan's education as a merger between the old and the new, with both having value. This point is expounded through his use of an example of a small Sudanese vernacular school housing 30 to 40 students and two teachers. One of the teachers was an elder Qur'an teacher who whilst only specialising in this subject carried significant local influence. The second teacher was a young man who taught all the school's secular syllabus. This parable-like example highlights how the old and new education systems of Sudan were intertwined; the younger teacher offered the keys to social mobility in a modernising Sudan, whilst the older teacher held the respect and influence over the community. The older teachers position in the community was therefore needed for the time being for families to begin to accept Condominium education and the modernisation of Sudan to take place. However, the direction of the education showed that the older teacher's usefulness was pragmatic and arguably did not hold any other value with the education department, and I will later argue that this was also the position of the Qur'anic education system in general of which he was the embodiment.

Included in this section of the report was another rationalisation for the Condominium's education plan which was based on what Currie believed to be the new education system's capacity to bypass traditional class structures of Sudan. These traditional class structures included the enslavement of non-Arab Sudanese groups, creating a hierarchy that the British were slow to challenge (Sikainga, 1996; Sharkey, 2003). However, it was felt that education presented an opportunity for a fresh outlook on class in Sudan through its appeal to all facets of Sudanese society.

To demonstrate that education was available to all classes and that it brought improved prospects for social mobility, Currie comments that social mobility is now possible for, 'the son of a black private soldier who wants his son to dress in tarbush and trousers whilst sat on an office stool. However, it is possible that the student may also be the son of an ultra-conservative sheikh or his wife who have no desire for their children to dress as an Egyptian clerk.'[26] However, it is clear that there were limitations to the expectations that the son of a black private soldier should have in terms of social mobility. Whilst the opportunity to be educated existed for more Sudanese, in reality skilled technical education could only be accessed via GMC through its Department for Manual and Technical Training, ostracising those who were more likely to be educated in an elementary school (Sikainga, 1996).

[25] Ibid
[26] 1907

Yet, Currie's thoughts on class and education are insightful, briefly delving into what he understood of existing attitudes towards race and class. In addition, they indicate what social mobility looked like to social groups at both ends of the class spectrum in early Condominium Sudanese society. Categorisations of race and class were already prevalent before the Condominium, but the presence of the British did little if nothing to change them. For example, on the subject of enslaved and formerly enslaved Sudanese, Sikainga explains that Ruldolph Slatin the Inspector-General of Sudan (1900-14), actively discouraged manumission. Despite the British and Egyptians having signed to end the slave trade in Sudan at a convention in 1895, he believed this would negatively impact the Sudanese economy (Sikainga, 1996).
In keeping with this, Sharkey writes 'The British appear to have absorbed some of these attitudes, in the form of an "Arab/Black" classification system that easily dovetailed with their own prejudices and notions of race (2003:32).[27]Sharkey argues that rather than creating a system of equality as implied by Currie, the reality was that existing local hierarchies were respected and continued through Condominium education policies. Arab students were favoured for academic education over technical education and Black Sudanese aspired to posts such as, clerks and administrators (2008:29).

Currie's words highlight that an Egyptian working in Sudan's government represented a position as part of the country's elite, to which those on the lower rung of Sudanese society aspired. For those classed as Black, mimicking the dress and occupations of Egyptians clerks signified social mobility. Of note, was that their aspirations were not to be like their more prominent countrymen in the country's hierarchy such as, the Shaykhs the Condominium had willingly allowed to maintain their social status. Instead, they sought to be like one of their colonisers, the Egyptians, whose attire perhaps better represented a modernising Sudan.

In contrast, ultra-conservative Sudanese' preference was not to replicate the dress code of Egyptians, highlighting recognition of their already privileged place in the hierarchy of Sudan. It is conceivable that the ultra-conservatives resented the positions Egyptians held, and once educated at an institute such as, Gordon College, their children would eventually fill these posts. More nuanced, was that amongst these ultra-conservative families were former leaders of the Mahdiyyah (Sharkey, 2003:35); and whilst the dress of the Egyptians appealed to lower-classed Sudanese, it threatened the complete end of the Islamic society these former leaders once controlled.

By 1908, the pace of development in education slowed due to issues with the country's finances. This affected many areas of education but none more so than the progression of already stagnant girls' education, which now lagged far behind that of boys under the Condominium. This was due to the Condominium's assessment that boys were at the forefront of developing a Sudanese workforce. This meant at that

[27] The bursaries given to black Sudanese boys to attend technical schools two years prior can also be viewed through the prism of race and what was expected for specific racial groups, in this instance it was a continuation of manual work.

time, girls' education was not controlled by the education department and was instead attended to through the work of mission schools and the anomaly of Sudanese enterprise at Sheikh Babiker Badri's school for girls in Rufaa.[28]

Currie believed that at GMC's 'Training College for Teachers and Kadis', students lacked the fundamentals of an elementary education, hindering students' development. Currie noted that students were engrained in the method of rote learning from their Qur'anic education and accordingly the slow introduction of newer methods of teaching did not detach them from it. As a solution, it was decided that boys would be primed for the college at a younger age by providing them with the foundations of a primary education before enrolling at the College.[29]

Currie acknowledged that recruiting boys at a younger age would not be without potential effects on them. One of which was that students might become more Europeanised in their ideas and consequently find it difficult to relate to their Sudanese environment and duties within it.[30] Yet, despite the risk of European socialisation many prominent Sudanese families happily sent their children to learn.

The growth of vernacular education presented Currie with similar conundrums, as more families sent boys to school recognising that secular school was now held the prospect of social mobility. Kuttabs in Sudan were designed to provide a simple education in reading, writing and arithmetic and "to dispel the dense ignorance and superstition," which Currie felt left the masses open to religious exploitation,[31] perhaps a reference to the possibility of a Mahdist revival. However, what he did not want was for boys to move away from work with which their families had been traditionally associated, and so Currie mentioned in the report that he wanted to discourage distaste for the agricultural work of their fathers. Here we see the Condominium attempting to manage expectation and ideas that an education brings.

The Education Department was clear that it wanted its Kuttabs to be distinct from Qur'an schools, as was demonstrated by the desire for the Kuttabs to only employ teachers qualified through the Education Department and not local Qur'an teachers, Currie thought that otherwise the "atmosphere of the school will remain merely that of the existing local Khalwa, whereas one of the main objects of the scheme should be to let in fresh air and light from the outside world."[32] . under Condominium rule, society was changing at a pace, and it was felt that both the education taught, and methods of instruction would need to develop to reflect that.

At the decade's end, there had been clear progress made in the development of the new education system and by 1909, all vernacular schools were issued with a code of regulation and memorandum of aims to standardise what was being taught.

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[28] 1908
[29] Ibid
[30] Ibid
[31] Ibid
[32] Ibid

Kuttabs were divided into two types based on their location, first class Kuttabs, which were in large towns and second class Kuttabs everywhere else.[33] Kuttab students were admitted between the ages of 7-10 and were primed to work in agriculture or private trade.[34] Education for the Kuttabs student was generally designed to give them rudimentary literacy and numeracy that would allow them to read, write, do basic sums and should they come into contact with government bureaucracy know how to function. Whilst there were no official barriers to a vernacular educated student entering a primary school, it was believed that most parents would not be able to afford to fund a primary education where some fees were required, thus ensuring that the promise of social mobility would be chimeric for most students.

The outcomes and expectations of a student who received a primary education and one who received a vernacular education were markedly different. On graduating, the primary school student could expect to enter an upper school or the secondary school at Gordon Memorial College, join the military school as an officer cadet and settle into a career as a clerk in government or as head of an existing family business. The students at primary schools would have been sons of the merchant class, existing government employees or land holders (cultivators). Underscoring this point, by 1910 there were only 775 boys in attendance at Condominium primary schools in comparison to thousands in vernacular schools, illustrating how niche primary education was designed to be.[35] Despite this, take up of vernacular education illustrated parents and children's hopes that this was now a route into professional work.

According to Currie for the Condominium and its education department the period '… until the outbreak of the Great War was a one of steady advance, economic development and Pari passu (on equal footing) educational progress (1934: 367).' It was also a period in which Qur'anic education faced competition from the newly established Kuttabs, which were deemed to be better managed and more useful for the task of modernising Sudan. As a result, both the usefulness of Qur'anic schools and their pedagogy were left in doubt by the prevailing attitudes of the administration and its education department.

[33] No other distinctions are given other than the location, perhaps illustrating the precedence given to Sudan's growing urban centres.
[34] GGR, 1909
[35] GGR, 1910

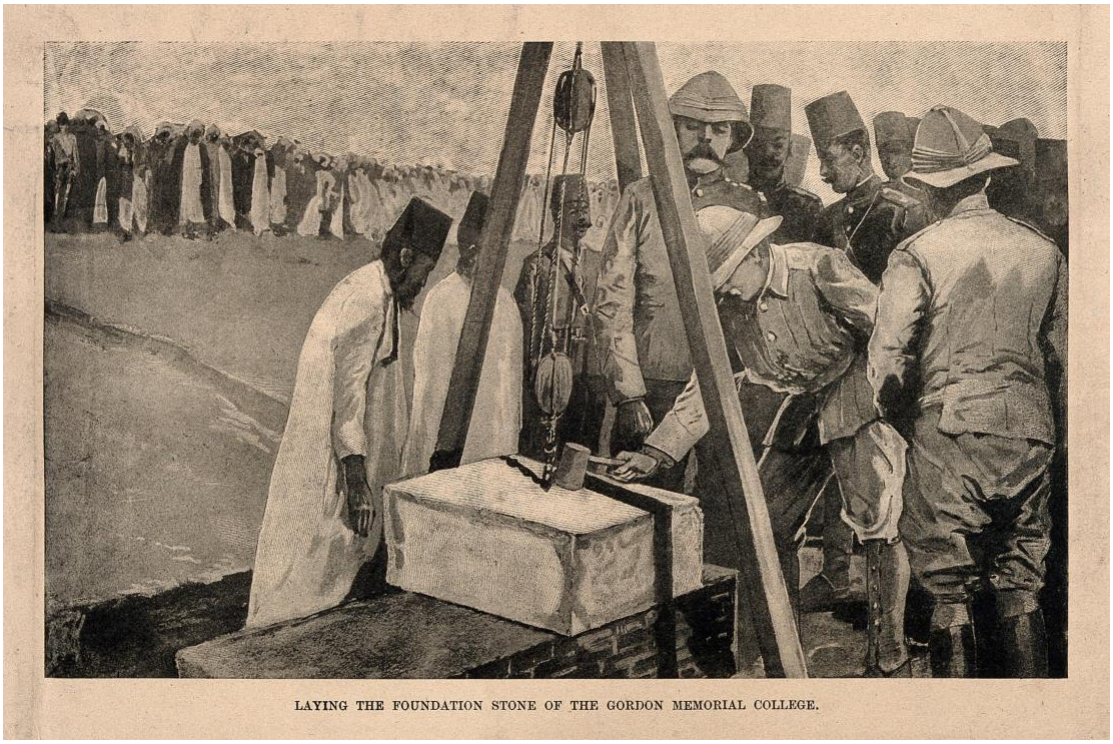

Figure 6 - Image of Foundation Stone Laid at Gordon Memorial College (Wellcome Library)

CHAPTER 5: Expansion – The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium and Its Investment in Islamic Education

1911-1914 – The end of Pre-World War One Education and the Administration's Courting of the Ulama

This section examines three important developments in pre-World War One Sudanese education: the standard of Qadi training at GMC; the strengthening of the relationship between the Condominium and the Sudanese Ulama; the end of James Currie's tenure as Director of Education

The first is developments and issues in the work of the education department concerning Islamic education. At Gordon Memorial College, the School of Qadis[36] had come under the scrutiny of the Grand Qadi of Sudan for the low standard of education trainee Qadis received, and consequently how this affected their ability to work in the country's Islamic law courts. Although the British maintained control of criminal and commercial law in Sudan, personal laws related to the Sudanese were left in the hands of the Qadis. It meant that they played an important role in creating a functioning civil society, although the British retained the right to overrule any decisions Qadis made that were not to their liking (Salomon, 2016).
Students at the School of Qadis during this time were primarily sought from Qur'an schools, as was in keeping with the traditional Islamic educational route of memorisation of the Qur'an as an elementary step before the pursuit of broader Islamic knowledge (Boyle, 2006). The progress student Qadis were making had received sharp disapproval of its quality by the Grand Qadi. For example, in 1907 Lord Cromer, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, complained to Wingate that the Grand Qadi's expectations of students' education at the college were too high and religiously rigid (Salomon, 2016). His disapproval of the school of Qadis, rather than encouraging a review of the provision at Gordon Memorial College, instead led the education department to question the validity of the educational pipeline between Qur'anic schooling and higher Islamic education.

Coinciding with events in the school of Qadis but outside of the education department's remit, the second occurrence was the development of a relationship between the Condominium and Sudan's Islamic hierarchy the Ulama. The fostering of these relations led to the establishment of the first government sponsored Islamic College in 1913. Its founding meant responsibility for higher Islamic education would be removed from the education department (Jeppie, 2013).

The third occurrence took place in 1913 when James Currie ended his tenure as Director of Education after 15 years. Unknown at the time this decision would segue into the start of World War One which affected funding disrupted education's expansion for the rest of the decade. As discussed in the sub-chapter to follow, Currie's resignation would also usher in a new phase and direction for the schooling

[36] A Qadi is a judge in the Islamic law courts, who can make legal decisions based on the Qur'an, traditions of the Prophet Muhammed, Precedence, and interpretation.

system, heavily incorporating Qur'anic education during the post-war 1920s. The war-period additionally meant that elaborate annual reports on the AEC were paused in favour of short written memorandums by the Governor-General of Sudan, which contained little detail on education.

The 1911-14 period: Investment in Sudanese Teachers, and the Struggle to Fund Education's Expansion

By 1911 the Condominium's education department had presented its 12th contribution to the annual report on the finances, administration, and condition of Sudan. The education section highlighted the considerable growth that had taken place since the new education system was implemented just before the turn of the century. As a result, James Currie's dual role as the director of the education department and as Principal of Gordon Memorial College was no longer sustainable and led to the reorganisation of senior leadership within the education department and the creation of an 'Assistant Head of Gordon College' to relieve Currie of the day-to-day operations of the College.[37]

In the 1911 annual report, Sudan's Governor-General Sir R. Wingate's addressed his memorandum to the Consul-general of Egypt and defeater of the Mahdiyyah Lord Kitchener. In it he outlined specific problems that had affected educational development such as, issues in staffing the higher primary school programmes, in part due to the gap left by Egyptian schoolmasters returning home. Subsequently, a solution was to send some Sudanese teachers to the American school in Lebanon to further develop their skills, before joining higher primary schools on their return.[38] An opportunity for further study of this kind for Sudanese (boys/men) was an indication that changes in the country's personnel were beginning to take place and underlined the administration's recognition that Egypt, Syria and Lebanon could not be permanently relied upon for education staff, meaning the indigenous population would be given an active role in education, as well as, other government sectors.

A reoccurring concern was the matter of funding, a shortage of which hampered the pace at which school programmes could be progressed. Competition for funding from the multiple departments of the Condominium government also affected the education department's ability to advance areas of its education plan. For example, it had hindered the expansion of the secondary school syllabus into a fourth-year programme until 1911 when finances for this endeavour were finally secured. [39]

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[37] 1905. *Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan*. [Report] University of Durham, b1712072. Durham

[38] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

[39] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

Analysis of these Condominium education reports indicate that the policies and provisions of the education department were directed towards the education of boys, with girls' education taking a clear backseat. In justification, the education department cited an ongoing lack of funding as reason for delays in a government-led programme of education for girls. The continual postponement led to increasing calls from factions of Sudanese society for girls' education to be addressed. Nonetheless, despite Condominium failures in this regard, local enterprises and Christian missions had already begun to cater for the education of girls and in the 1912 report, Wingate acknowledged the work of missions as '… the principal means for girls' education in the country.'[40] The education department's own work in this sector would not properly begin until 1913, almost fifteen years after Condominium education had begun.

The Politics of Condominium Governance: Higher Islamic Education's Role in the Allegiance between the Condominium and the Ulama

At the commencement of the Condominium period, there was great concern and anxiety among the British about the latent potential for Sudanese revolt.[41] Although the fervour for uprising remained under control for the most part (pockets of tribal uprisings against foreign rule and taxes remained (Collins, 1976). in order to encourage it to remain so permanently, the Government sought to make a series of allegiances with prominent authorities from amongst the Sudanese population. In principle these were two specific groups amongst the Sudanese elite. The Shayukh,[42] who controlled landownership and leadership amongst prominent tribal groups,[43] and the Ulama[44] of north Sudan, who influenced and helped shape many the population's religious practices (Jeppie, 2012:51).

The British viewed the Ulama as important actors in the installation of peace and authority over Sudan's northern population, recognising the influence Islamic scholars carried over public opinion. As the regime which followed the Mahdiyyah, the Condominium needed to undo the Mahdiyyah's calls for a return to a puritanical version of Islam, the establishment of a Shari'a system of governance and the

[40] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

[41] Robert Collins writes in the introduction to 'The British in Sudan 1898 – 1956' edited alongside Francis Deng, about the frequency of messianic uprisings in the early Condominium which led to British paranoia about security long after this threat had subsided.

[42] Shaykh – literally an elderly man. However, the term is also used to describe learned or spiritually endowed religious leaders, as well as men of good standing and prestige such as landowners or those of influence. It was initially from amongst the sons of this group (landowners/tribal or clan leaders) that cohorts of students were primarily chosen for the country's elite primary and secondary schools.
This practice continued for some time into the Condominium. For example, when Darfur became a part of unified Sudan in 1916, the sons of its Shayukh were chosen for schools established firstly in El-Fasher and later in Nyala.

[43] I have chosen the literal translation from the Arabic language of (قبائل) rather than the term 'ethnic group' which uses another word in Arabic.

[44] Scholars of the Islamic faith. The singular is -alim. Also sometimes called the '*fuqara'*

banishment of foreign rule from Sudan. These ideas had spread across Sudan and had become entwined in the fight against poor social conditions faced by the Sudanese population under the Ottoman-Egyptians who the Mahdi and his followers successfully defeated in 1885.
The collapse of the Mahdiyyah at the hands of joint Anglo-Egyptian forces did not signal the disappearance of the desire for an Islamic saviour and emancipator from Sudanese minds.[45] The theme of uprising also continued (although not always along religious lines), and both were continually uttered during quashed attempts at revolution against the newly established Condominium (Beshir, 1969). For example, in 1906 the Talodi uprising took place in response to the manumission of slaves by the local administration (Sikainga, 1996). The liberation of slaves was also an active cause in the Mahdi-inspired troubles of 1908 under the leadership of Wad Habouba, himself a former Mahdist (Currie, 1934:368; Collins, 1984; Sikainga, 1996;).

Therefore, forging relationships with Islamic scholars, was designed to send a message to the general population that Islamic authorities were willing to work with the non-Muslim colonial administration. However, if the message was to permanently succeed it also had to be truly acknowledged by the Ulama. One of the ways in which the Ulama's support could be guaranteed, was for the regime to invest in the production (education) of future Islamic scholars in Sudan, with the aim of giving the British the much-desired overseership over this influential group.

This venture served several purposes for the Condominium as part of its long-term goal to strengthen governorship over the population of north Sudan. For example, it helped to ensure that from that point on there would be a level of uniformity to the voices of the Ulama. Another advantage was that a domestic institute of higher Islamic learning would deter Islamic studies students from travelling abroad in pursuit of further study. Given the popularity of travel to al-Azhar University in Cairo for this purpose, it was hoped that an Islamic institute in Sudan would temper any potential for Sudanese students to become influenced by the growing radical and anti-colonial sentiments they might otherwise encounter in Egypt (Jeppie, 2012:51).

To work in conjunction with the Ulama was a continuation of policies used across Muslim populated regions, where according to Islamic tradition these scholars are religiously viewed to be the heirs of the Prophets (Tirmidhi, 2007). Moreover, in these regions the entwining of scholars of Islamic knowledge with political and economic authorities was not unusual. The presence of Islamic scholars within these institutions did not begin to change until after the full establishment of secular education systems by colonial governments (Brenner, 2001). This in turn led to the eventual marginalisation of Islamic scholars as religious intellectuals but no longer the most educationally respected actors in these societies (Dilger and Schulz, 2013).

Allegiances were made possible on the basis that the British presence in the north of Sudan was not designed to be a threat to the Islamic faith of the majority population or to have religious authority over them. This resulted in assurances from the

[45] According to Carole Collins there were continually claims of a new Mahdi each year until 1914 - Collins, C., 1976:6

Condominium that religious instruction would remain Islamic in northern Sudan, and that education at the elementary level would be taught in Arabic. Lord Cromer viewed these types of concessions as essential both politically and personally, explaining that "for political reasons it is an unavoidable necessity. In the second place, from every point of view, I prefer a religious to an irreligious Mohammedan (Cromer 1904 as cited in Rahman, 1967)."

The British approach in granting concessions to the country's Islamic scholars illustrated that the regime's recognised that 'order, hierarchy and identifiable men and places were absolutely necessary to invest in and cultivate if colonial hegemony were to be secured (Jeppie, 2012: 52-53).' However, concessions were not made without the prospect of gain and a prerequisite given to the Ulama, was that each Alim had to be aligned with the Condominium's policies and way of doing things (i.e., not deemed to be radical or Sufi, with the exception of the Khatmiyyah brotherhood that had opposed the Mahdiyyah regime) (Sanderson 1976:72; Sharkey, 2002: 56; Jeppie 2012:51). In acknowledgement of the Ulama's alliance, an institute for the production and training of Islamic scholars and court judges were planned on the site of the Omdurman Grand Mosque (Ma'had al-Ilmi). In the meantime, whilst the preparations for this institute were ongoing, trainee Qadis were to be taught at Gordon Memorial College as part of what was named the 'School of Qadis and Teachers in the Vernacular.'

The British policy in northern Sudan was generally one of non- interference in the religion of the people and therefore no proselytising by Christian missions. This policy did not garner support from Christian missions already working in Sudan such as the Church Missionary Society or Christian organisations at home in the United Kingdom. And as, M.M. Rahman highlights in his PhD thesis 'the Islamic policies of the Government of Sudan 1899 -1924:

> The inclusion of the Islamic teachings in Gordon College made the Sudan Government liable to attacks of some sections of the British public. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference vigorously attacked the Sudan Government on the said score. "Gordon College" the Conference remarked, "though launched as a memorial to a great Christian with the money of those who wished to honour him as such became the chief Muslim training institution (Edinburgh Missionary Conference 1910 cited in Rahman, 1967: 58)

For Christian missions stationed in northern Sudan the policy was a point of contention. However, as a concession to the missions they were free to continue to convert in South Sudan, where most of the population followed 'traditional' beliefs Sharkey, 2002). The approach of the Condominium towards missions in the north symbolised a departure from practices that had been employed by colonial administrations elsewhere in Africa, where missions had not typically been restricted in this regard. According to Seri-Hersch, other British territories at the time such as the Gold Coast or East Africa were subject to a more laissez-faire approach by their

colonial administrations that allowed the development of education to come via Christian missions, whilst Sudan differed as there was an operational state education strategy (Seri-Hersch, 2017). The expectation that the freedom to convert and spread Christianity would continue, were highlighted by the outcomes of the key missionary event of the period, the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910, where greater emphasis had been placed on proselyting in Africa (Lukose, 2014).

However, despite the contention that it caused amongst missions, the policy of non-religious interference unquestionably contributed to the relationship the Condominium established with north Sudan's religious authorities. In addition, agreement to fund and support the education of trainee Qadis and Islamic scholars would have sent an important message to the Sudanese that the newly established colonialists would not undermine Islam in northern Sudan and would not try to undermine Islamic education.

The entrustment of Islamic law education to Gordon Memorial College under the British was a positive step in the colonialists' attempts to build bridges with key figures in the local population. The ulama's work alongside the British in Islamic education and to build what would become Mahad al-Ilmi, represented a coming together of secular and Islamic schools of thought. Notably, it demonstrated an openness in the approach to how Islamic education was developed by the religious scholars overseeing this project, with work in cooperation with the British inevitably meaning a level of compromised was needed.

Part of the compromise was consideration by the Ulama of matters of value to the British in education which were not of the same importance in Islamic education. For example, Islamic education was not ordinarily dictated by a specific academic year, continuing based on the need and progress made by students, whilst the British wanted an academic calendar with dates and holidays outlined for the institute. Additionally, Islamic education is viewed as lifelong learning and entry into institutes remained open across age groups. However, the British required both a minimum and maximum age of entry. Moreover, in Islamic tradition a scholar who had reached a specific level of learning was able to offer opinion on various matters from his qualified position, yet as scholars linked to the school authorisation of who would speak on behalf of the school was essential inhibiting this freedom. (Jeppie, 2012:53).'

From the standpoint of Islamic education, planning at the Mahad-al-Ilmi denoted a counter-position to the perception of Islamic education, its institutions, and scholars as static and uncompromising in their attitude to the introduction of new methods. This viewpoint of Islamic education has not always been well founded, and whether willingly or pragmatically, as Dilger and Schulz highlight, 'prior to and during colonial rule, institutions of Islamic knowledge transmission were repeatedly subject to structural and pedagogical reform' (Dilger and Schulz, 2013:367).

In addition, what can be inferred from the Ulama's work alongside the Condominium is that the Ulama, who had chosen to do so recognised the permanency of the latest

colonial administration. Hence, by working in conjunction with the Condominium rather than against it, these learned men had individually secured their positions as certified Islamic scholars, along with whatever rank and recognition this brought. Subsequently, they were also able to concretise what may have otherwise become an unstable and marginal position for Islamic education in the Sudan's rapidly changing educational landscape.

As Director of Education and Principal of Gordon Memorial College, which hosted the School of Qadis, to James Currie the relationship developed by the Condominium with the ulama was symbolic of the alliance bearing fruit, as underlined (with hindsight) in part one of the article 'The Education Experiment in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1900 - 1933:

> 'The fact that the local leaders of Mohammedan opinion were willing that their prospective judges should be trained in the Gordon College was a gratifying and, so far as is known to the writer, a unique testimony to the mutual confidence that at an early stage had been established (Currie, 1934:365).

The relationships developed with Islamic scholars, impermanent residence of the school of Qadis at the country's flagship secular education institute Gordon Memorial College, and later establishment of the first Islamic higher education institute under the Condominium each represent a step made in the realisation of control over the Muslim population of the north by the administration. Nonetheless, there were several other features to the Condominium's relationship with Islam and the development of ties with the Ulama represented one aspect. Another involved the deployment of force to silence calls made in the name of Islam against the regime; and as documented in the 1912 annual report, a year prior to the opening of Mahad al-Ilmi, uprisings were still being quieted, such as, that of a new claimant to the title of Mahdi named Akasha Ahmed in Kordofan, who was killed by government forces along with his small band of 11 disciples, illustrating another more militant stance in the Condominium's relationship with Islam. [46]
In addition, there was also the importation of religious scholars from Egypt, aimed at quelling religion-infused anti-colonial resistance by providing a counter-position to Sufi leaders and factions with who there was little cooperation, particularly in jurisdictions where the government's presence was not as visible (Collins, 1976:6). Therefore, the founding of Mahad al-Ilmi and alliances forged with the Ulama should be considered as specific interventions in the governance of Sudan, designed to bring co-operation between coloniser and Islamic authority (Jeppie, 2012:57).

<u>Negotiating Difficulties in Hosting Islamic Education: Complexities in the Case of the School of Qadis</u>

[46] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

As touched upon in the previous 1900 – 1910 section the school of Qadis had become a tool in the governance of Sudan. As a site for Islamic education with Gordon Memorial College, the school held two unique positions within the College. Firstly, it was a section of the college which had not been instigated by the education department itself but instead by the Condominium's legal department.[47] And secondly, it appeared to be regarded as a non-British affair despite its Condominium funding, as was reflected by its position in the College as the only school which did not have an English instructor as its principal and with courses taught solely in Arabic.

By 1911, the training of Qadis (judges), at the Gordon College school for Qadis and Teachers in the Vernacular, represented a problem to the country's Islamic authorities and as a result to the Education Department. This is because graduates were deemed by the Grand Qadi of Sudan, Shaykh Mohammed Maraghi on the basis on leaving exams he had reviewed, to be below the standards required to successfully work in the country's Islamic law courts.[48] As Grand Qadi Shaykh Maraghi represented the highest authority amongst Islamic scholars within the nation state and attention had to be given to his findings.

Issues at the school of Qadis were not new and in the 1908 report James Currie had previously written about his concerns regarding the rigid rote learning style of students, which he believed teaching at the school had been unable to penetrate. Worryingly, Currie also conceded that his ability to measure learning at the school of Qadis had been stifled by his lack of Arabic language skills and as both principal of Gordon Memorial College and Director of Education this would have proven problematic in his gaining an overview of this aspect of education at the college. [49] However, it was in the interests of the education department to correct any problems at the school. Although, the retention of Egyptian Qadis had proven to be a problem for the Condominium due to their receiving better salaries at home, indigenous Sudanese Qadis also saved the regime money by being paid less than if they had been imported from Egypt (for example in 1908 this saving was £E100 per year).

The grand Shaykh's desire to improve the knowledge base of graduates who were entering the law courts as assistant Qadis and delving into matters of Islamic law undoubtedly came from a place of deep concern, given the issue had entered the law courts with the first cohorts of graduates transitioning into work. It can also be inferred that this issue presented an opportunity for the Ulama to open dialogue about Islamic education because of their concerns and in turn strengthen their position on the direction in which it was headed under the Condominium, considering the soon to be built Mahad al-Ilmi.

[47] Ibid:53
[48] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905
[49] Ibid

In the 1911 report, Currie reflected on the multiple factors that had compromised the training of Qadis at the College. He argued that the number of eligible officials needed for the Islamic law courts to function properly was at that time lower than required, and that consequently, pressure to produce officials at the rate needed versus the 10-year period the College had been opened was bound to affect the quality of the Qadis leaving Gordon Memorial College. As a result, whilst accepting the Grand Qadi's critique of the Qadi division, Currie felt that it was unsurprising that the standard of students was still in development and bearing this in mind held that the College had essentially done its best in the years in which it had been opened. [50]

In addition, sites from which students has been selected to attend the school of Qadis was also an issue. Until 1908, boys had been chosen from the country's Khalawi and vernacular schools after which a small cohort was introduced with a primary education. Currie remarked that the standard of students and early graduates reflected the educational institutes from which they had arrived. To fully remedy this issue, it was decided that the next cohort of student (1912) would instead be taken from one of the five existing primary schools, where a solid foundation in general education had already been built unlike in the elementary school system. [51]

The education department's resolution had implications for Qur'anic schooling, whilst further entrenching the premise that the department had no trust in this type of education. The new pathway contested and disrupted what had until this point been the orthodox route of progression from the Khalawi, where students learnt mastery of Qur'anic memorisation before moving onto further studies in specialised Islamic education subjects such as, Islamic law.[52] In addition, it also highlighted an intervention into Islamic education that was unlikely to have been sanctioned in conjunction with or by the ulama, given what would have been implied about their own standard of learning. Qur'anic education already faced competition for pupils from the Kuttabs and Currie's solution to the poor standard on graduate Qadis signified another direct challenge to the significance of Qur'anic education.

The decision to fully integrate students from the primary school system into religious education at the expense of Qur'an school educated students can be viewed retrospectively as a strategic gamble. For instance, in the 1908 report Currie also shared his concern that primary school students may become detached from Sudanese culture and apathetic towards Islam, because of European socialisation at school (however, he also recorded the same concern about school of Qadi pupils). Education at Condominium primary schools was designed to socialise boys in a manner that would distinguish them socially and eventually economically from those who graduated at the lower-tiered elementary vernacular or Qur'an schools. With

[50] Ibid
[51] Ibid
[52] Traditionally, a religious student completed memorisation of the Qur'an proceeding in further Islamic study towards the position of a scholar (in the Islamic Sciences such as, knowledge of jurisprudence, knowledge of Law, Knowledge of the Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, and Qur'anic interpretation. For example, to become a Judge (Qadi) a student would need to study both Fiqh and Sharia.

the pathway into higher Islamic study having primarily come via the elementary stream until that point, this may have been a point of consternation for the already educated primary students, who possibly viewed a clerical post within government over the role of a religious cleric.

Information in the reports did not explicitly state that the education department lacked the experience needed to develop and oversee an Islamic law programme, but Currie's earlier admission in 1908 of his personal inability to assess the quality of learning taking place at the school of Qadis indicated otherwise, as did the subsequent addition of an Arabic speaking Englishman to the school to teach history. As did the creation of a curriculum containing both general and specialised knowledge that left students grounded in neither. [53] However, the solution he offered in gradually replacing Qur'an students with pupils from the primary schools highlighted that such an admission was not openly made by the Condominium administration in whose view the issue remained a Sudanese one. To that end the opening of the Mahad al-Ilmi in 1913 would relieve Gordon Memorial College of the burden of Islamic education and place it back into the hands of the Ulama who had seen fit to raise concerns about it.

Conclusion of the James Currie Period

1913 concluded James Currie's tenure as principal of Gordon Memorial College and the Director of Education in Sudan. In his final report Currie noted what he believed had and had not been achieved during his incumbency. Summarised, amongst the achievements of his department was the education of a niche class of professional Sudanese, who as the period progressed would no longer be by-products of the old system of learning in which Qur'anic schooling was relied upon.
The diminished role of Qur'anic education under Currie meant its role in the development of clerical as well as religious graduates was critically lessened, for a time severing the role of Islamic education in the development of non-manual secular professions. In addition, Currie also used primary school students to address issues he observed in Islamic education based on these students having a better understanding of the fundamentals of core school subjects.

The creation of a schooling system by the Condominium at large had two features. The first was economic and was implemented through the production of a broad workforce at its elementary, primary, secondary, and technical schools. All students at these schools were intended to address the requirements of a growing economy alongside Sudan's administrative needs and could either be expanded or reduced according to demand.
The second was political, and the education system was also intended to dampen religious fervour and deradicalise latent pockets of resistance that existed amongst the population. As Currie shares in the 1913 report, the education system had

[53] Report by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan, 1905

provided ‘‘the strongest bulwark against any recrudescence of the religious fanaticism which for many years constitute(d) a lurking danger in this country.”[54] Moreover, the inclusion of Islamic education and instruction into school curriculums at all tiers (although to differing degrees), served the purpose of alleviating fears of parents about the possibility of conversion of young boys to Christianity and indicated that the Condominium was not interested in interfering with the faith of the people, only in containing its scope (Rahman, 1967:57).

Coupled with the education department’s role in the steady expansion of secular schooling and its mandate to temper religious uprisings through education, was the use of its flagship institute Gordon Memorial College in fostering degrees of cooperation between the Condominium and the Ulama who had co-signed a share of higher Islamic education in the Qadi School to the site. This achievement both educationally and politically was not insignificant by any means and as Currie would later reflect in the first part of his two articles about his time in Sudan; at the turn of the Imperialist First World War, with confidence built from this allegiance Lord Lloyd on behalf of the British was able to address Sudanese Ulama and state:

> …that we have never interfered with any man in the exercise of his religion... We have assisted the men of religion. We have built and given assistance for the building of new mosques all over the country. The Kadis and others have received a free and thorough education in the Qur'an and in the tenets of the Mohammedan religion (Lloyld, 1933:333 as cited in Currie, 1934:365)."

The departments worry about the slow pace of educational expansion existed throughout James Currie’s time. With the Sudanese population an estimated four million during the period, and only 4,770 boys enrolled in government schools in 1912, it was clear that access to state education for most Sudanese boys and girls was still a long way off. Nevertheless, the Condominium’s agenda was not to provide a mass education programme for the Sudanese. Despite this the department was able to argue that it had improved access to education outside the Qur’anic schooling sector, with the number of schools and students expanding year on year, its overall achievements were well summarised by Currie who wrote:

> From 1906 until the outbreak of the Great War was a period of steady advance, economic development and pari passu (equal step/footing) educational progress. A large secondary school, a military school for officers carefully selected from natives of the country, Training colleges for schoolmasters, for judges of the religious courts, for engineers and for surveyors, all came into existence, and schools of Agriculture, medicine, and civil law were under contemplation (Currie, 1934:365).

[54] Ibid

Equally, there was also success from a Sudanese position. For example, Sudanese Ulama had also succeeded in preserving and embedding higher Islamic education's place in the new Condominium. The impermanent yet strategic positioning of the school of Qadis at Gordon Memorial College guaranteed that for several years Islamic law students were positioned in the same location as new secular educated Sudanese elite. In addition to the critique of what was taught to Islamic law students by Ulama, the school also allowed these students to be exposed to the potential the college offered its pupils in much the same way as other students within the grounds. And this included its networks, activities and methods of socialisation that would allow them to successfully navigate British and privileged circles.
Likewise, Qur'anic teachers and schools that worked under the Condominium also helped to embed Islamic education within the Condominium's educational framework and whilst the use of Qur'anic schooling was pragmatic for the administration, and directed at the lowest tier of education, the result was that this type of schooling which had been historically vital to Sudanese communities continued to remain relevant both educationally and culturally.

Nationalism, Indirect Rule, and the Condominium's Substantial Investment in Qur'anic Education: 1920 – 1930

Introduction

The Condominium's investment in the expansion of education had paused due to World War One, however, by 1920, its expansion had resumed. As this section will demonstrate, an important factor in this was financial investment in and further incorporation of Qur'an schools into Condominium education. The section argues that the regime's introduction of indirect rule policies during the period were in opposition to the growing nationalist agenda of the burgeoning Sudanese middle class (educated at higher primary schools and GMC). The section also highlights how in response to this perceived sedition by those educated in government higher primary schools and the GMC, the education department decreased its spending in its higher tiered education. Instead, it placed its focus on elementary level Qur'anic schooling, where challenges to Condominium governance and the policy of indirect rule were now deemed to be less likely due to the traditional societal view Qur'an schools endorsed.

Following the assassination of the Governor of Sudan General Lee Stack in Cairo in 1924 all Egyptian civil and military personal were expelled from Sudan as a punishment and as a precaution against sedition amongst the Sudanese. From the Condominium regime's standpoint this move was justified, as nationalist sentiments amongst the small, educated class grew encouraged by the coming to power of the Wafd nationalist party in Egypt the previous year which desired to renegotiate the terms of the Condominium (Vezzadini, 2015).
During the period of negotiations General Stack's assassination took place. The British used this to their advantage and ended Egyptian hopes to rebalance the power dynamic in the Condominium, exiling them in the process (Vezzadini, 2015). Amongst the Sudanese anti-colonial and nationalist activism, was demonstrated by the White Flag League uprisings in 1923-1924, which increased British paranoia about the potential for educated Sudanese to become politically motivated which would have a bearing on where the focus of education turned during the rest of the 1920s (Vezzadini, 2015).

The period ushered in the administration's pragmatic turn to the indigenous population to fill the roles left behind by the Egyptian exodus. This included critical labour demands for the completion of railways and at the Sudanese Railways' headquarters in Atbara, where these roles would subsequently be taken up by formerly enslaved Sudanese from regions such as, Berber, Dongola and Karima amongst others (Sikainga, 1996). It also coincided with the introduction of indirect rule to Sudan and in education meant that Qur'anic schooling would be placed at the centre of the Condominium's expanded educational programme as this section will discuss.

Perhaps the biggest indication of Qur'anic schoolings rehabilitation in the education department, was its sudden inclusion in the education reports of the 1920s and

thereafter, following previously minimal references to it. This was due to the perceptions of the former director of education James Currie about Qur'anic education and its students. To Currie these schools were low-functioning alternatives to the Kuttab model at the elementary education level and to indicate their status both their institutes and number of students were excluded from reports. That early reports did not tabulate figures might appear to be a justification for this, however, Kuttabs, primary and industrial school numbers and students were each noted in written form under the paragraphs dedicated to these schools. Qur'an schools' sudden inclusion in the reports of the 1920s indicates that these schools had continued to operate unofficially whilst the education department had chosen to ignore them.
In keeping with early Condominium education policy of offering the children of the Sudanese elite admission to the higher tiers of education, a government school for the children of elite Darfurians was opened in the regional capital el-Fasher in 1921, which was followed by a second school in the town of Nyala along the same lines later that year. [55] In addition, there was also the inclusion of students and schools run by private enterprises belonging to diverse local communities such as, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic Egyptian, and local Sudanese. These types of schools were described in education reports in a separate section to the state funded schools.

These schools' presence in reports, demonstrated how the slow expansion of education under the Condominium had affected some of the country's minority and economically privileged religious communities, whose educational and religious needs were not sufficiently addressed. In Khartoum specifically, where the population was cosmopolitan in comparison to many other provinces, the development of these primarily religion-oriented schools highlighted state education in north Sudan prioritised the religious needs of the Muslim majority and minority religious communities desire to not be subsumed.

However, the inclusion of private enterprise schools in education reports was a statement of the education department's growing need for oversight of all types of education which by the 1920s it had begun to place within the boundaries of its control. Further evidence of the regimes growing control of all types of Sudanese education had also been demonstrated through its role in the formation of elementary and higher Islamic education under the state.[56] This was in addition to the education department's tight hold of mission schooling in the north where conversions to Christianity through education were banned whilst in the south of Sudan proselytising was allowed. Therefore, at the beginning of the 1920s the only type of schooling that was not entirely subject to the education department's oversight was Qur'anic, as many of its schools continued to work outside its parameters. However, this would change significantly as the decade progressed.

[55] Following the defeat of Sultan Ali Dinar by the Anglo-Egyptian in 1916, Darfur's status as a tributary Sultanate was removed and it officially became a part of Sudan.
[56] The development of Islamic education was initiated by the law department during a period of forging relationships with the country's ulama (Islamic scholars) and handed over to the education at a later stage.

Educational Development: The Condominium's Transition from Ambivalence to Expansion of Qur'anic schooling

In 1921, the number of boys in elementary vernacular education increased to 8,728 from 7,610 the previous year.[57] This demonstrated steady progress in the expansion of Condominium schooling provision at this level, however, no there was no indication of whether this increase also included the number of schools. Along with this growth, the curriculum taught in Kuttabs was extended from a three to a four-year programme and included lessons on hygiene, natural history, geography, and general knowledge. The broadened curriculum brought the scope of what was taught in elementary schools closer in line with primary schools in the educational tier above.

However, there were two distinctions between elementary and primary education which remained. Firstly, all subjects at the elementary level were taught in Arabic as agreed by the Condominium in efforts to build bridges with Sudanese Ulama (Cromer as cited in Rahman, 1967). However, in primary schools, students studied in English except for classes on religion and Qur'anic recitation, which were taught in Arabic but students' hours in taught classes dedicated to these subjects decreased year on year as students progressed through school.
The second distinction was in the outcome of education for students in either of these school models. Successful graduation from primary schools meant students received the National Education Certificate. This allowed graduates to work in the government administration, clerical jobs, or private enterprise. However, education in one of the Kuttabs did not guarantee the same certification or level of job.

The expansion of elementary vernacular education slowed in 1922 due to poorer than expected economic performances across most of Sudan's provinces (Currie 1922 or footnote). Although the number of pupils registering for elementary vernacular schools did not halt entirely there was a significant deceleration of school registration. In 1921 pupil numbers had risen by 1118 but in 1922 the number increased by just 87. This outcome impacted the development of trainee elementary school teachers, as was illustrated by the department's decision to immediately remove a class at the Vernacular Teacher's College, reducing the year's cohort of trainee teachers from 58 to 36. [58]

After the successful piloting of a programme of subventions (financial support) for Qur'an schools in the provinces of Rufaa and Blue Nile, the programme was extended to the regions of Dongola and Halfa in 1922. The education report of 1923 marked this progression by including figures for its subsidised Khalawi for the first time since reporting began. [59] The figure showed that the number of subsidised Qur'an school students stood at 889.

[57] GGR, 1922
[58] GGR, 1923
[59] Translated as Native schools in the report of 1923.

The emergence of Subsidised Qur'an schools saw 'traditional Khalawi', previously managed by or attached to local mosques or communities, turned into 'Khalawi Nizamiyyah [administrated][60], under the control of the education department. The addition of these schools allowed the financially restricted education department to circumnavigate its constraints, allowing it to maintain an increase in pupil numbers. This was achieved by using the existing infrastructure of the Khalawi to expand elementary education.

Subventions for Qur'an schools were allotted with the expectation that schools and teaching standards would improve. Specifically, improvements were to be reflected in the application of newly introduced secular subjects into the curriculums of subsidised Qur'an schools. According to Eid (1985, 358), training was primarily offered in the form of short courses, in which teachers were trained in how to teach subjects such as Arabic, arithmetic, and basic jurisprudence. However, upskilling of teachers was not mandatory. The consequence of this decision was that outside of inspection teachers were not obliged to make changes to their methods of teaching and meant subjects that had been introduced into subsidised Qur'anic school curriculums were likely to be taught with the same approach as Qur'anic memorisation.

Supervision and inspection of these new government schools was problematic for the education department because they were not obligated to follow a code of conduct, as the Kuttabs had been since 1900. Although memorisation of the Qur'an was the Qur'an was the chief aim of all Qur'an schools, in other respects they varied from one province to another. For example, Mohamed Nur describes the 'mnemonically oriented type of Qur'anic education' in the Darfur region as unique (2018:234). Whilst other factors such as geographical location would have affected students' continuity of learning. By way of illustration, if a school was in a rural or agricultural region, where harvesting took precedence, school would be suspended. However, children at a Qur'an school in an urban setting, where their labour was not depended upon in the same manner, would not have faced the same barriers to continuity of learning.

Nonetheless, the education department hoped that such investment in already established Qur'an schools would mean that the building of new Kuttabs which would involve additional costs of building materials and labour would not be incurred. And it was stated in the department's 1923 report that the subvention project was viewed as 'endeavouring to reconcile economy [financial restrictions] with development.' [61]

Great Britain. High Commissioner for Egypt the Sudan (1923) Report on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan. London: H.M.S.O.

[60] The term 'Khalawi Nizamiyyah' is used by Osman Mohammed Eid, 1985: 358
[61] GGR, 1923

From the take up of Qur'an school subventions under the scheme by established schools throughout north Sudan we can infer that the education department's investment in this indigenous form of education was welcomed by the Sudanese. It would have additionally been understood by Sudanese communities to be a validation by the Condominium of the importance and permanency of Qur'anic education in Sudanese life. Vitally, for the Condominium's education agenda, endorsement of Qur'anic education by the state, allayed the fears of Sudanese families who had previously been suspicious of the intention of Condominium education. The authorisation of Qur'anic education by the state meant that education under the Condominium was no longer seen as a vehicle for children's conversion to Christianity. Moreover, it meant that principles of Islamic citizenship such as how to be a good Muslim were also assured under the Condominium education banner.

The rapid advance of students and Qur'anic schools registered under the education department suggests a significant portion of Sudanese families were not entirely resistant to education under the Condominium once their fears about a loss of religious learning had been allayed. Opportunities to opt into Condominium education had been limited and as a result the number of children registered under its control was small in comparison to the number of children educated outside of the remit of government (as the growth of Qur'anic education throughout the decade would show).[62]

Moreover, the programme of subventions for Qur'an schools gave parents the opportunity to continue their children's education in a learning system with which they were familiar, only now functioning with the same recognition as any other type of school. And until the government's shift towards Qur'anic education, they had chosen to continue their own educational pursuits through entrepreneurial endeavour and unrecognised by the Condominium and its records.

Parents were also aware of changes and developments in society, such as the progression of industries other than agriculture and the expansion of urban centres around them. [63] Employment in these industries required certified schooling in a government elementary school or apprenticeship through education industrial schools. To give their children access to these industries and a chance at social mobility parents would have made the pragmatic decision to enrol their children in Condominium schools.

Outside of the urban centres, rural participation in subsidised Qur'anic schooling was very popular, with these schools easing the education department's challenge of meeting learning needs in the country's harder to reach rural areas; especially as Qur'anic education could be both fixed and itinerant. In keeping with this premise Beshir states that the Khalawi offered:

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[62] GGR 1920-1930

[63] Such as Kassala where not only was the railway department headquarters stationed but along with Khartoum and Omdurman where industrial schools had helped to produce a Sudan artisan class.

> "… A simple system serving the needs of local tribes, supplying local educational needs, religion, reading, writing and simple arithmetic. The Khalwa became a means through which the agricultural/rural classes could receive some medium of schooling (1969: 59)."

The number of students attending these types of schools in 1924 reflected the department's new reach and increased by 50 percent from 1811 pupils to 2700 from the previous year.[64] Expansion of the scheme continued in the provinces in which it had been launched and was also extended to the Kordofan and White Nile regions, which brought the number of Qur'an schools under the education department's inspection to 78.

The number of subsidised Qur'an schools now neared that of Kuttabs, which stood at 95. The appeal of Qur'anic education to significant portions of north Sudanese society, negatively impacted the Kuttab school model. its advance signalled an immediate fall in the number of boys attending Kuttab institutes, and according to the 1925 report, this was a direct result of subventions that had been issued to Khalawi.[65] [66] During this period, both Qur'an schools and Kuttabs used memorisation as their pedagogy and the introduction of basic secular subjects into subsidised Qur'anic curricula removed a distinguishing feature of the Kuttabs. And it would have been during this period that Beshir's premise that the function of Qur'an schools and Kuttabs was the same would have been most relevant.[67]

In the second half of the 1920s, Condominium education recovered from the effects of its stagnation resulting from WW1. The effect of the war on Sudan's development in general had been significant and was illustrated by economically important projects such as, the Gezira agricultural scheme (proposed prior to WW1) finally coming to fruition following the completion of the Sennar Dam in 1926 (Young, 2017). In education, in 1926, six Kuttabs closed as a result of poor rates of attendance in locations where Qur'an schools had been issued subventions. This was a period of decline for the Kuttab system. In the same year the number of pupils in attendance of subsidised Qur'an schools surpassed that of pupils in Kuttabs. The result was 293 subsidised Qur'an schools with 8422 registered pupils and 88 Kuttabs with 8196 pupils.[68]

In the 1927 education report, Qur'anic schooling documented by the new Director of Education[69] to be 'the best means of spreading a medium of education amongst the

[64] GGR, 1924
[65] GGR, 1925
[66] According to the 1925 report, money the department had saved through its subsidised Qur'an school programme was directed to the expansion of the much-neglected state education of girls.
[67] 1969:6
[68] GGR, 1926
[69] In 1927 there was a change of director of Education with Mr J.G Matthews taking over form Mr E.N. Corbyn who was in post for one year due to the latter's ill health.

masses.' [70] The expansion of Qur'anic schooling under the Condominium gave the education department access to great numbers of students. For example, by 1927, there were 13,077 children educated in 400 subsidised Khalawi and these rising numbers continued to validate the department's investment in Qur'anic schooling.

The offer of basic education via Qur'an schools supported the Condominium's economic agenda, which was primarily agricultural. Part of Qur'anic education's appeal to the government was that it did not offer the specialist training given at industrial schools or qualifications of a primary education. For young men in rural settings their inability to access skilled work offered in urban centres would incentivise them to remain in rural regions and apply themselves to agriculture.

Sanderson argues that the attention given to Qur'an schools in the 1920s was undoubtedly purposeful in rural areas and slowed academic achievement and the expansion of other types of schooling.

> 'Not only was there less education: the kind of education provided changed. Greater emphasis was placed on elementary Koranic education in rural rather than urban areas… These boys for the most part would not aspire to government employment as very few of them transferred to elementary schools: the number of boys attending elementary schools (Kuttabs) was simultaneously decreased. In fact, the number of boys in government elementary schools did not reach and pass the 1923 figure again until 1931.' (1976:77)

Therefore, development of Qur'anic education whilst expanding educational engagement under the Condominium, also played a role in slowing rural to urban migration, limited vocational choices, and tied young people to 'the work of their fathers', as the former director of education James Currie had once explicitly hoped. [71]

The 1927 report also indicated that the popularity of Subsidised Qur'anic schooling had become a burden on the education department's resources. This was due to factors such as, demand from Sudanese families for more Subsidised Khalawi and the need for continual training of Qur'anic teachers as well as the undertaking of school inspection.[72] However, despite signs that the subvention programme had been hastily expanded, the programme continued to expand, and the following year numbers had risen to 17,280 pupils at 489 Qur'an schools.[73] ; This doubled both student and Qur'an school numbers in just one year.

The success of the Qur'an school programme led education department to decide to remove the first year of schooling from its Kuttab model, with the idea being to now use improved Qur'an schools as feeder institutes directly into the Kuttab's second

[70] GGR, 1927
[71] GGR, 1908
[72] GGR, 1927
[73] Ibid

year (Beshir 1969: 59). Although this change represented some crossover between Qur'anic and secular schooling, from the perspective of the government, Qur'anic education remained the lowest tier of its elementary schooling system, which was why the Kuttabs offered no pathway into Qur'an school in return.

However, from the perspective of the Sudanese Muslim population, the removal of the first year of Kuttab education would have had a positive meaning, as it guaranteed that children would first be embedded in a foundation of Qur'anic education prior to entering the Kuttabs. A point that would have been important for those families, seeking to immunise their children against any form of education that could lead to religious and cultural loss (Daun, et al, 2004).

Confidence in subsidised Khalawi was again highlighted in the 1929 report, which detailed that Qur'an schools were actively teaching reading, writing and arithmetic and were "extremely popular."[74] Despite the omission of Sudanese voices from the Condominium regime's education reports, the choice of phrase 'extremely popular' itself is insightful, and its use here suggests Sudanese families' preference for, as well as trust in their own system of schooling.

Given the relatively short reign of the Condominium, parents of children attending school during the 1920s were not significantly detached from the Mahdiyyah era. Therefore, an attachment to Qur'anic education would have remained through the high status of the Qur'an for Muslim communities. Parents would also be able to recount or would have heard tales of Qur'anic education's high status under the Mahdiyyah regime, in the last decolonised period of Sudan's recent history. As a result, not only was Qur'anic education synonymous with being a Muslim, but it was also synonymous with the development of the idea of Sudaneseness that would for come to the fore in the 1930s and 1940s (Sharkey, 2008).

The 1920s, represented a period in which Qur'anic education emerged from the margins through subsidisation. Families embrace of this was reflected in the scores of children who entered these types of schools officially. However, as the preservation of Qur'an schools outside the education department's control highlighted, Sudanese educational entrepreneurship continued with some families choosing to actively educate their children outside of the Condominium's education framework. This was not limited to Qur'an schools and in 1927 the Ahlia (community) schools were established as private education institutions by a syndicate of leading Sudanese figures unhappy with the Condominium's education provision.[75]

The Ahlia schools were designed to have an educational trajectory in keeping with government schools and were not based on traditional Qur'anic education. They symbolised Sudanese approval of secular education as well as their ability to administer their own secular schools programme (Sanderson, 1975: 436). Their appearance outside the Condominium education framework along with non-

[74] GGR, 1929
[75] GGR, 1927

government Qur'an schools illustrated Sudanese parents' determination to have a voice in the education given to their children[76].

In 1930, the education report highlighted department concerns about that the quality of subsidised Qur'an school education, which was not in keeping with its expedient rate of expansion. Consequently, in some regions preparatory classes were added to selected Kuttabs in anticipation of the arrival of boys into the second year with a substandard of education, which made the prospect of them successfully graduating unlikely. As a reflection of growing concern about the poor output of Qur'an schools, the number of Kuttabs rose once again in 1930, increasing from 81 to 87. Nonetheless, by 1930 there were 798 Qur'an schools attended by 28,669 pupils.

Evidencing the Factors Surrounding Qur'anic Schooling's Growth during the 1920s

The official position documented in 1920s education reports was that economic restrictions on the development of Condominium schooling had led to greater inclusion of Qur'anic schooling. And though this was a factor in its inclusion, there were also socio-political factors that influenced the education department's subsidisation of Qur'an schools. As Sanderson argued, it was not convincing to solely link changes which took place in education in the 1920s to 'economic stagnation and financial depression in the post-war period (1976:76).'

At the turn of the decade there was mounting concern from British Condominium officials about uprisings which had taken place in Egypt during 1919 and the potential for anti-British influence to penetrate Sudan. As a result, at the start of the 1920s Egypt's position within the Condominium had become fragile, as British mistrust deepened. This fragility resulted in the Keown-Boyd report, which recommended the staggered removal of Egyptian army and civil servants from Sudan (Sharkey, 2003).

The Keown-Boyd report was followed by the publication of the Milner Commission report in 1921. Both reports highlighted Condominium mistrust of Egypt and its potential disruptive influence on the Sudanese. For instance, the Milner report encouraged the Condominium administration to avoid educational mistakes made in Egypt, which had led to well-educated Egyptian civil servants becoming too ambitious and demanding a foothold in their country's administration (Trimingham 1950:225; Sharkey, 2003:89).

The Condominium became suspicious of well-schooled Sudanese urban intelligentsia it had educated (Sanderson, 1975:436; Sharkey, 2003:89). It sought to contain this group and dampen intellectual thought which would develop nationalist sentiment

[76] The permanence of these schools in the education landscape would be demonstrated by their recording in education reports of the 1940s (GGR 1942-44; 1947 and 1948).

and continued rebellion. As Helen Sharkey explains in Living with Colonialism: nationalism and culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

> The Milner report and the Dual Mandate registered both the growing presence of local educated elites in the colonial administrations of British Africa and the challenge that they posed to British imperial authority (2003: 90).

Given the threat from educated Sudanese, the administration purposely stagnated the progress of secular education and as Sanderson states, 'there was a definite undermining of fundamental education for long-term benefits for at least a decade (1976:76).'

The reports' recommendations highlighted the Condominium's shift from the influence of prominent colonial offices in Egypt and India, towards the policies of 'indirect rule' that had emerged from Frederick Lugard's governorship of Nigeria and culminated in his 1922 treatise 'The Dual Mandate.' The Condominium regime hoped that indirect rule implemented in Sudan, would secure long-term colonial control, economic prosperity, and administrative efficiency (Beshir, 1969:56; Sharkey 2003:90).

Indirect rule saw the Condominium devolve elements of its authority which granted control to Sudanese communities in matters of local (but not national) governance. In practice, local leaders (shaykhs, village chiefs and landowners) were given the power to administer the collection of taxes, and pass judgements on basic civil and family law cases. This became a common practice in British-colonised Africa. As Mamdani (1996) explains the British saw a way to maintain rule through what he calls 'native authority', which helped to control colonised societies under the guise of rights of heritage and tradition. The result was the insertion of regional or provincial native authorities who would do the bidding of the colonial administration. According to Mamdani, no other European colonisers pursued this policy with as much enthusiasm as it was the British (1996: 48).

By transferring some control to localised traditional authorities, the Condominium was alleviated of its reliance on the growing pool of 'educated natives.' This was important for the regime as the educated classes had become increasingly influenced by occurrences in Egypt. They had also gradually begun to challenge the concept of colonisation and called for nationalisation, resulting in their quickly becoming irritants to Condominium authority (Collins, 1976:6; Sharkey, 2003:90).

An outcome of the shift towards indirect rule, was the 1922 'Nomad Sheikhs' Ordinance (and later Sheikh's Ordinance)' based on recommendations from the Milner report and granted local administrative powers to local Sudanese leaders. As Sanderson proposes it this ordinance and not poor provincial performance

mentioned in the 1922 education report[77] that led to the government's investment in Qur'anic education (1976:74). Both Sanderson (1976) and Sharkey (2003) argue that the consequence of this was a period in which the education department no longer keenly supported GMC or primary schooling in the same manner. For example, they received less financial backing, and more emphasis was placed on parents to contribute fees, whilst financial support for Qur'an schools, particularly in rural regions increased (Sachs, 2013).

In 1924, two significant events took place, the first caused tensions between the British administration and Sudanese population and the second further heightened existing tensions between it and Egypt. In Sudan it was the breakout of approximately 150 uprisings throughout Sudanese towns in the middle of 1924 (Niblock, 1987:167). These uprisings were inspired by the nationalist call of the White Flag League, and both surprised and outraged the administration and led to rapid changes in the regime's overall approach to the governance of Sudan.

In education these repercussions were demonstrated by changes to how schooling was organised, and the content of subjects taught removing any allusion to revolt or world ideology. The result was that the modern education offered in prestigious schools during the first two decades, was intentionally stagnated to offer no more than the rudimentary requirements to allow the staffing of minor governmental posts (Sanderson, 1976:76; Niblock 1987:176; Seri-Hersch, 2017:4). These intentional changes to education aimed to stymie the continuation of revolts against the Condominium considering the leaders of the White Flag Movement having been well educated.

The second event was the assassination of Sudan's Governor-General Lee Stack in Egypt in November 1924. This led to an immediate deterioration in relations between the two partners in the AEC. Recommendations from the Keown-Boyd and Milner reports to expel Egyptians from Sudan were swiftly implemented; and resulted in the banishment of all Egyptian personnel. In education this created a vacuum of qualified teachers at all Condominium schools except Qur'an schools. According to James Currie (1934:46) 'Sudan had lost its best teachers' and forced the administration into pragmatic changes to develop its other types of education (Collins 1976:6; Fluehr-Lobban, 1990:616).

Consequently, Condominium approaches to education became more calculated to manage the politics and aspirations of Sudanese. Qur'anic education was useful to this end in that it did not promote thinking that was worldly and maintained the distinction between the colonised and colonialist that education at Condominium primary and secondary schools had unintentionally weakened. The regime decided that its higher tiers of education would continue to provide clerks for the administration of the country but with a narrowed educational framework. However, this did also extend to some sections of Islamic education and as Jeppie explains in the education of the ulama (Islamic scholars) for the Islamic law courts it

[77] GGR, 1922

was decided they should only be schooled to elementary level to sufficiently run the law courts with Qur'an schools providing the perfect pathway (2011:58).

Prior to the 1920s, Qur'anic education had been scorned by Condominium administrators. However, it became an important component in the expansion of education in the post-Lugard era. This new purpose under the AEC, moved it away from its earlier position on the margins of the Condominium, to one of great importance in the spread of education amongst Sudanese communities (Beshir, 1969:59; Jeppie, 2011:58).

At government primary and secondary schools, the status between the coloniser and colonised had become less distinguishable as students became enriched with education and ideas from outside Sudan. At Gordon Memorial College, the adoption of European clothes had become an indicator of students internalising their western education and led to Condominium fears that higher education had bred increasing ideas of equality with the British colonisers. To deter this blurring between coloniser and colonised, the authorities discouraged western dress in favour of the traditional Sudanese Jellabiya at its schools. These actions were not necessary at Qur'an schools where dress remained in line with traditional social norms and the differences between Sudanese and colonialist remained unchallenged (Sharkey, 2003:60).

Another occurrence that helped to move Qur'anic education from the periphery was the thawing of the administration's stance after 1915 towards some of the country's Islamic factions it had previously shunned. Early government policy (1898-1915), saw the administration forge relationships with traditional ulama, who it believed had influence over the Sudanese people through traditional Islamic legal opinion (fatwa). The ulama were believed to offer a universalist version of Islam which crucially was not considered to be confrontational to the country's newest administration (Salomon, 2016). Conversely, other Islamic factions in Sudan such as, Sufi brotherhoods[78] and Mahdists were positioned at the other end of this spectrum by the Condominium regime and were regarded as heretic, fanatic and viewed with great suspicion and contempt (O' Voll, 1971:213; Niblock, 1987:171).

However, British sentiment towards these groups would change, as the growing threat of a British presence in the Middle East gradually soured relations with the Ottomans. This fell to its lowest in 1915, as the Ottomans sought to raise Islamic sentiment against the British. The Ottoman's rallying call encouraged the idea of 'one Ummah'[79] of Muslims that it hoped would lead to opposition to the British presence. On these grounds, the universal emphasis of Islam supported by Sudan's Ulama became problematic. Although the British did not abandon the ulama, it became important to the Condominium that relationships with Islamic groups with a singular focus on Sudan were built, to distract from any potential calls against the British under the banner of Islamic universalism, which it was felt might be spread to the Sudanese masses (Niblock, 1987:173).

[78] Excluding the Khatmiyyah and Hindiyyah. These two Sufi brotherhoods were embraced by the Condominium owing to their earlier anti-Mahdiyyah position.
[79] Ummah - Community/body

This change of policy resulted in Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi (son of the Mahdi of Sudan and de-facto leader of the Ansar)[80], being in brought in from political isolation after being closely monitored along with other leaders of the movement. He was also joined by Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani of the Khatmiyyah and Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi of the Hindiyyah Sufi brotherhoods. These two brotherhoods had historically held anti-Mahdist regime positions, and were courted by the government with the intention of securing their positive influence and aid in ruling the Sudanese.
These three Islamic leaders' importance grew in 1915, when the British acknowledged where Sudanese religious adherence laid and that the version of orthodox Islam it had hoped to propagate to the masses was not taken up (Salomon, 2016). Therefore, the British conclusion was that adherence was not to the ulama as had been hoped but instead to the leaders of the Sufi brotherhoods and Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi (O' Voll, 1971:217; Niblock, 1987:173).

The courting of these popular Islamic leaders was a positive outcome for Qur'anic education, which had been pushed to the margins due to it being synonymous with the Mahdiyyah as its preferred schooling method. It had also been an institution closely associated with Sudan's Sufi centres whose influence the government had wanted to disrupt. The shift of the Condominium towards this indigenous education system, whilst heavily influenced by indirect rule, also coincided with the emergence of these three significant leaders, two of whom, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, would later become founders of two of the most popular Sudanese political factions, the Ummah and National Unionist parties respectively.

The emergence of subsidised Qur'anic schooling under the Condominium during the 1920s was also in part due to post-war economic restrictions but also multiple other factors including the regime's embrace of indirect rule and recognition that popular Islamic support was to be found in the camps of the two Sayyids. Qur'anic education's position in the 1920s showed that it had not disappeared in the post-Mahdiyyah era. What was highlighted was that prior to the 1920s under AEC power, it had continued to function despite the introduction of formal schooling controlled by the education department.

This was evidenced by the number of Qur'an schools that were subsidised by the Condominium during the 1920s and their detrimental impact on the former successes of the Kuttab model. What was illustrated was a schooling system that had preserved itself, and made adjustments to the new expectations it carried now that it was at the centre of Condominium education. As seen through its incorporation of new subjects and learning styles into its curriculum.

[80] Followers of the Mahdi of Sudan and its subsequent movement were known as the Ansar meaning 'aiders'.

CHAPTER 6: Abandonment: Qur'anic Education from Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Education's Centre to the Periphery

The Founding of the Bakht er Ruda Training Institute and its Implications for Qur'anic Learning: 1930 - 1939

Introduction

The 1930s in Sudan are summarised to have been a decade of 'administrative conservatism' in which financial development and risk did not occur until it was clear that the mother nation Britain would enter into war in 1939 (Young, 2017). However, changes that would take place in education indicate that this was not entirely true. The successes of subsidised Qur'anic schooling during the 1920s should have seen Qur'anic schooling firmly embedded into the Condominium education framework for the foreseeable future. However, as examined in this chapter, the prominence that subsidised Qur'an schools had enjoyed during the early period of indirect rule was short lived. The founding of a training college for elementary school teachers and the release of two reports, the Winter Committee in 1933 and the De La Warr in 1937 each weakened the place of Qur'anic education in Sudanese education during the 1930s and weakened its foothold of the previous decade in Condominium schooling.[81]

By the late 1920s, doubts had been raised about the suitability of Qur'anic education to deliver part of the Condominium education plan. They were centred around doubts about the capacity of the subsidised Qur'an schools to deliver a standard of education that would allow students to enter the second year of Kuttabs.[82] The led to a change of approach in the 1930s that saw the re-emergence of Kuttab schools and increase in its students, having fallen in the 1920s due to the popularity of subsidised Qur'an schools.

The 1920s as defined by James Pruess was a period in which the Condominium regime had '… not only established a school system on the Western model but also attempted to reform indigenous Islamic schooling with the introduction of Western ideas and practices (1983:7). However, by the 1930s its belief that Qur'an schools were malleable enough to implement reforms had disappeared. Part of the problem was that the Condominium had failed to acknowledge differences between Qur'an schools and other types of schools within its education system. Its other schools such as primary, intermediate, and secondary prepared students for government employment.[83] Yet the aim of Qur'anic education was to prepare students for life as

[81] GGR, 1933;1937
[82] GGR, 1929
[83] V.L. Griffith after a period as a school inspector became the head of the first elementary teaching college, school and curriculum development institute, Bakht er Ruda.

good Muslims through memorisation of the Qur'an (Griffith 1953:6). In addition, Pruess suggests that geography also played a role in creating some distinction between the Qur'anic and other types of schooling. He suggests the primarily rural locations of Khalawi produced a completely different student and culture to those emerging from the primarily urban western school. And the outcome according to him was that the school system caused a gap between the culture of the western school student and the rest of the population (1983:7).

This chapter analyses the next phase of elementary education in the period 1930 – 1941 and addresses it effects on Qur'anic education. 1941 is included because it is a part of the final report compiling 1939-1941 (the combing of reports continued throughout the Second World War). The chapter evaluates key events and changes which took place around subsidised Qur'anic education such as, an intentional shift of elementary education towards ruralisation, and recommendations for elementary education made in both the Winter Committee and the De La Warr Commission's respective education reports. It also reviews the landmark opening of Sudan's first dedicated education training institute at Bakht er Ruda in 1934. I argue that each of these events were key to the development of the Condominium's educational framework during the 1930s and were of detriment to the status of Qur'anic education during the period.

In addition to the archival reports on the finances, administration, and condition of the Sudan from the period, this section also draws on the accounts of the first director of the Bakht er Ruda Institute V.L. Griffiths, about elementary education in Sudan. Two of his books about Sudanese education, An Experiment in Education (1953) and Teacher Centred (1975), offer insights into educational development at the elementary level during the 1930s period, giving a first-hand account of Griffiths' experiences of the period. This includes his personal thoughts and those conveyed to him by members of his staff, particularly the Sudanese teacher trainers, who although not involved in policymaking apparently shared many of their apprehensions about elementary education with Griffiths.

A Decade of Change: Challenges to Qur'anic Education and its Function in Elementary Schooling

By 1930, many Qur'an schools given state subventions had failed to provide standards of education to justify the replacement of the first year of Kuttab schooling.[84] To salvage the programme, the solution of the education department was to provide preparatory classes at existing Kuttabs near to or in the same locations as failing Qur'an schools. In the northern provinces, attempts were also made to directly address the low standards of subsidised Qur'an schools themselves, rather than looking for a solution through alternative methods of schooling. [85]

The 1930 report acknowledged that the use of Qur'an schools was not working and had led to poor outcomes for boys. However, the number of Qur'an schools that were offered subventions continued to grow and jumped from 589 to 768 between 1929 and 1930. Subsequently, the number of boys involved in Qur'anic education also rose from 21,060 to 28,699 in the same academic year. Whilst the department's reports suggested its concerns about Qur'anic schooling, the growing number of subsidised Qur'an schools and students inferred Qur'an schools remained popular among Sudanese boys and their families.[86]

In response to the mounting concerns about Qur'anic schooling, three positions developed within the administration: The first, that Qur'anic schools were adequate as they were, providing mass schooling that gradually integrated the population into an incrementally changing society; the second, those who thought government support for Qur'anic schools should cease. The third view advocated for Qur'an schools to continue to be a pillar of Condominium education but only if they could be sufficiently improved (Beshir, 1969: 94-95).

However, the performance of Kuttabs was also a matter of concern since students graduating from Kuttabs were not adequately prepared for study at newly introduced intermediate schools. Beshir (1969:95) surmised that this was a consequence of most elementary teachers having been products of the Qur'anic schooling system. Beshir's conclusion implied that Kuttabs teachers' Qur'anic education and pedagogical style affected the quality of student leaving the Kuttabs. However, it might also be ascribed to the failure of the education department to make pedagogy or curriculum training mandatory requirements for teachers during the 1920s.

Notwithstanding these concerns about the quality of education in Kuttab schools, by 1931, the failings of the Qur'an school experiment saw the number of Kuttab students rise again. Between 1930 and 1931 their student populations rose by 1,000 pupils, some of whom would have been continuing students. In contrast, in the same year, the number of newly subsidised Qur'an schools fell to just 18 with an overall

[84] GGr, 1930
[85] Ibid
[86] GGR, 1930

decrease in the number of affiliated students. Although Qur'an schools had gained 867 pupils, compared to 1930, it was a dramatic drop from 30,000 pupils that had been recruited the previous year. [87]

Problems in education were reflective of the wider socio-economic issues in the country at the time. The global depression of the 1930s impacted Sudan and the export of cotton in particular. The repercussion was that demand for employees on the Gezira agricultural scheme halted. By 1932 unemployment in the capital was at all-time high, and an estimated 7000 formerly enslaved Sudanese and immigrants were without work and residing there, forcing the government to open alms houses (1996:150).

Also taking place in 1932, was a second conference for head teachers of Kuttabs and members of the education department to review their performance, and establish what improvements were needed for these elementary schools.[88] Measures were also introduced against Qur'an schools that failed to move students successfully onto Kuttabs. Their subsidies were withdrawn, and they were relegated in status to conventional Qur'an schools and were no longer expected to deliver lessons on arithmetic, basic Islamic jurisprudence, and Arabic language.[89]

Qur'an schools continued to record the highest intake of pupils amongst the various types of school under the education department. However, 1932 marked the first year in which Qur'anic pupil numbers under the education department declined, falling to 25,557 after many years of a rising trajectory. [90] These actions against failing Qur'an schools along with the second conference on Kuttab education demonstrated the education department's change in approach and opinion about the use of Qur'anic education. This resulted in Kuttab schools once again becoming the priority and a wane in the departments enthusiasm for Khalawi.[91]

Importantly, in 1932 in education, 'The Winter Committee' was also set up to look at 'the problem of education. The committee held Sudan's first review of education since the commencement of the Condominium period 34 years earlier (Trimingham, 1949:255).' The committee made recommendations to improve education across all schooling stages and its 1933 report paid particular attention to widening the scope of elementary education (Beshir, 1969:98).

According to the Winter Committee's report, elementary education had neglected the needs of most Sudanese boys who it was designed to give basic education to. These boys were likely to go on to work in agriculture, a sector on which the economy heavily relied (Griffiths, 1975). It noted that the curriculum of elementary educations was better suited for boys who would have careers in government or private enterprise. This point was also evidenced by the function of elementary

[87] GGR, 1931
[88] GGR, 1932
[89] Ibid
[90] GGR, 1932
[91] Ibid

schools as feeder institutes for intermediate and, less frequently, secondary school education. However, the development of students for jobs in government administration had been the reason why elite education at primary schools or Gordon Memorial College under James Currie was designed.

The committee was also dismissive of the Qur'anic school system believing it to have little educational value. It showed itself to be in the camp which sought an end to support for Qur'an schools and signalled the education department's departure from its use of the Khalawi, a momentous shift from its direction during the 1920s. Instead, the committee report recommended widening the scope of elementary education through Kuttabs.[92]

To enable the reestablishment of Kuttabs, in response to the report, the department established an elementary teacher training institute at Bukht er Ruda. The training institute was intended to repair elementary education by creating new syllabi and addressing the poor performance of elementary teachers through training. It would also train and increasing the pool of new elementary teachers available to the department (Trimingham, 1949:255).

The Winter Committee report confirmed that momentum had gathered against subsidised Qur'an schools. Subsequently, in 1933 the education department continued its reduction of sponsored Qur'an schools and withdrew more subventions from those that were failing. The consequence for Qur'an school teachers whose subsidies were removed, was relegation back to Qur'anic teaching, the loss of a regular stipend and lowered status within local education (Beshir, 1969:133; Eid, 1985:358). These failing Qur'an schools were promptly replaced with a new equivalent in the form of sub-grade schools (pre-grade) at pre-elementary level (Griffiths, 1975:35).

There were many parallels between subsidised Qur'an schools and the sub-grade school model designed to replace it. Initially sub-grades were intended to be a two-year model which once completed would signal a student's readiness for elementary school.

According to Seri-Hersch similar to subsidised Qur'an schools, the convenience of sub-grade schools laid in the fact that they could be established quickly to address the school deficit in regions that could not provide elementary school education due to limited finances (2017:4). Sub-grade schools were initially intended to be a temporary measure prior to the expansion and establishment of elementary schools in underserved regions. However, they would remain a permanent fixture of the educational landscape until Sudan's independence.

Sub-grade schools although considered replacements for failing Qur'an schools were not designed to address and advance the method of rote learning that had been used in Qur'anic education. Even with a broader syllabus, they are best described as

[92] GGR, 1932

a practical response to the problems that had been encountered in subsidised Qur'an schools. Even V.L. Griffiths the director of Bakht er Ruda, which introduced new methods of teaching did not dismiss the continued use of rote-learning in these new schools and rationalised

> …essentially sub-grade school kept level with society rather than ahead of it. This was so even where, along the northern strip of the Nile, literacy amongst the people was commoner… Even here sub-grade schools did not rise above rote-learning. Whether such rote-learned literacy is a good thing or not depends on the use to which it is put (1975:34).

The arrival of sub-grade schools further damaged the reputation of Qur'anic teachers within Sudanese society This was because sub-grade schools were run by headmasters. This position offered communities another education authority and threatened Qur'anic teachers position as the most important educationalists in communities where these schools were located. Consequently, headmasters represented modern education provision whilst Qur'an teachers were an example of archaic conservatism. Beshir claimed that as a result Qur'an teachers felt undermined, as they wielded less educational influence in Sudanese communities and encountered a further threat to their traditional means of income (Beshir, 1969:133; Sandell, 1982:50; Seri-Hersch, 2017:4).

Evidence of the Condominium's investment in Kuttabs was shown by the rise in pay teachers received and their careers becoming pensionable for the first time between 1933 and 1934. The education department's motivation for this explained by Griffiths (1975:33)

> '… if, on the other hand, elementary teachers were paid only what the country might afford for universal education, there was no prospect of obtaining a service reasonably contented and enterprising.'

The need to attract and recruit teachers to move elementary schooling in the right direction was the motivation behind the new incentives and brought elementary teachers onto the same pay scale as other civil servants in the country.[93] However, this was only manageable at the time due to the relatively small scale of the department's elementary education project (Griffiths, 1975:33).

The 1934 education report detailed some of the changes taking place at the elementary schooling level and coincided with improvements to Sudan's economy and labour market (Sikainga, 1996). This included the appointment of four education officers to advise Provincial governors about elementary education. Their

[93] GGR, 1933; 1934

appointments were documented to have been successful, with the education advisors making a positive impact on their respective provinces. Importantly, also recorded was the official opening of the elementary teacher training institute and experimental school at Bakht er Ruda in White Nile province. [94]

The training institute was designed to replicate life in Sudan's rural regions and indicated the administration's determination to direct the educational focus back towards agriculture. Until this juncture, the focus of education had primarily centred on the Khartoum region. This was illustrated by the flagship Gordon Memorial College, the Director of Education and all of Sudan's education officers being situated there (Sharkey, 2003).

Its rural location and introduction of educational ruralisation was in keeping with the Condominium's economic investment in agriculture and was a reminder of the keenness of the regime to have an agricultural society that complemented the local systems of government under indirect rule. Educational ruralisation also emphasised the regime had steered its attention away from the next generation of elite educated boys; a consequence of its continued suspicions about well-educated Sudanese located in urban centres and their calls for parity.

Initial Sudanese teachers' concerns about the Bakht er Ruda institute reflected their wider frustrations about the general quality of elementary education. As V.L. Griffiths explains, 'many Sudanese rather despised elementary education at that time and had no wish to serve in it, unless they failed to find anything better (1975).' The choice of location was also an initial point of contention, and was not well received by educated Sudanese members of Griffiths' staff team, and as Griffiths highlights in his chapter on ruralising elementary education in An Experiment in Education

> 'Its [the committee] proposal to move the Elementary Teachers' Training College out of the capital roused their deepest suspicions. The capital represented civilisation and progress, whereas the country represented backwardness and the new loathed policy of boosting hereditary rulers (1949:14).'

The chapter also conveys Griffiths' premise that the centre had been designed specifically to ruralise education at elementary level in Sudan, in the hope of turning students away from the notion of academic education towards more practical and agricultural education instead (1949:15). He also argued the institute's focus on rurality as opposed to urbanisation was an attempt to mend clear inequalities in access to education between the country's regions. When the institute was established, the capital Khartoum and its surrounding province had the country's highest concentration of schools and there was a need for provinces to gain some ground (Griffiths, 1975:14; Seri-Hersch, 2017:5). Moreover, Bakht er Ruda, illustrated

[94] GGR, 1934

the Condominium's priorities and its belief that the economy's strength lay in agriculture and remained the driver for education. Therefore, social mobility and academic prospects for the masses beyond the needs of government and industry were secondary to that.

Trainee teachers who attended Bakht er Ruda studied a four-year course with three years of general education followed by a year of practice and theory. Trainee teachers were trained using a holistic approach to education which included practical cooperation between the education department, medical, agricultural, and veterinary authorities. Also included was the use of new elementary training were pedagogical approaches, which attempted to move schooling away from rote learning. And in terms of classroom methods, this was the first purposeful distinction between Qur'anic and Kuttab education up until that point.[95]

The 1934 annual report did not record Sudanese opinions about the changes taking place in elementary education at the time, especially the opening of Bakht er Ruda. According to V.L. Griffith (1949) this omission was indicative of the minimal consultation of the Sudanese about the institute, even those who were well-educated. However, he offered some insight into educated Sudanese perspectives from the vantage point of his staff at Bakht er Ruda and highlighted.

> The new Teachers' Training Centre, then, started against the opinion of the educated Sudanese, and my Sudanese staff came from a background unfriendly to the whole proposal, which made it very difficult for them (1949:14).

Griffith also concluded that the failure of the education department to generally consult educated Sudanese about the goals of the institute was based on the subordinate positions Sudanese staff held in the education sector (1949:14).

The 1934 report showed that the introduction of sub-grade schools had led to a quick demand for places at them. However, seemingly having learnt its lesson from the rapid expansion of subsidised Qur'an schools in the 1920s, the education department insisted that expansion of sub-grades would be strategic and only in locations where 'the advantages of education can be instantly realised.' These advantages were primarily about training boys who could fill posts in areas where the workforce could be immediately strengthened. [96]

As mentioned, the earlier Winter Committee report changed the education departments perspective about Qur'anic schooling. Illustrating this point, the 1934 report concluded Qur'an schools were 'generally ineffective', except for some located in Sudan's northern provinces. The report suggested that a possible remedy for their ineffectiveness was the addition of 'literate young teachers.'[97] This

[95] GGR, 1934
[96] GGR, 1934
[97] ibid

confirmed that the department judged Qur'an teachers to be out of touch with the economic and cultural development of Sudan and the schools themselves in need of teachers who would keep pace with the country's evolution. Moreover, despite the department's reservations it had invested heavily in the subsidised Qur'an school programme and regardless of their decreased number they had maintained the highest number of students at 24,076 pupils across all Condominium schools, a possible explanation for its determination to find solutions.

The following year a proposal for a 10-year programme of expansion was accepted and work towards it was to begin in 1937.[98] The expansion project aimed to increase the number of schools, students and renovate existing buildings across all school levels in northern Sudan. At the same time, the demand for elementary education continued and the growth of student numbers at Kuttabs rose by 1260. To meet the rise in pupils and demand from Sudanese parents for school places, existing 'advanced Khalawi' were converted into sub-grade schools. This was intended to be a temporary measure with the aim that these schools would eventually become full-elementary schools once the first batches of trained teachers emerged from Bakht er Ruda.[99]

According to the 1937 education report, the Khalawi were not entirely neglected, and some regional attempts continued to improve existing Qur'an schools across the country. An example of this was seen in Blue Nile province, where 89 subsidised Qur'an schools were located, whose Khalawi teachers attended a one-month training course to better their skills. yet, this contrasted with what was taking place in the Northern province, where five advanced Qur'an schools were immediately converted to sub-grade village schools.
A positive outcome of these schools' conversion was that newly qualified teachers were offered higher salaries and improved school materials. Their conversion was attributed to increased demand for elementary and intermediate school education and were a response to increased local requests for quality education. The opening of sub-grade schools also took place in Kordofan province, and its section of the annual government report described the opening of six new sub-grade schools, despite the existence of several Khalawi.[100]

In 1937 the shifting status of subsidised Qur'anic education was also outlined in the educational Commission report of Lord De La Warr, the Undersecretary for the State of the Colonies. The report recommended a shift away from pre-elementary education at Qur'an schools and proposed lowering the age of entry into elementary school from 8 to 5 or 6 years old as an alternative. Its implementation had consequences for subsidised Khalawi and placed Qur'anic education back on the periphery of the Condominium's educational framework. This signalled the loss of part of its function, a loss of status within the Condominium and amongst some factions of Sudanese society (De La Warr, 1937:8 as cited in Beshir, 1969:112-114).

[98] This would be known as the De La Warr Educational Commission report and is discussed in the paragraphs about 1937.
[99] GGR, 1936
[100] GGR, 1937

In addition, the De La Warr report recommended that changes to Qur'an school pedagogy needed to be implemented. However, the Commission was aware that any attempts to make changes to Qur'anic school pedagogy blurred the boundaries between the requirements of state education and Qur'an schools' function as religious institutions (Beshir, 1969).[101] Taking this into account, it recognised that interference in the religious purpose of these schools would not be welcomed by many Sudanese and for this reason it was not a strong recommendation. The reticence to act on this recommendation highlighted the contradiction between what the Khalawi still represented to Sudanese communities, a site to learn religiosity in preparation for life as a Sudanese Muslim; and the Condominium's desire to manipulate to become an entry point into secular education.

In 1938, the elementary educational landscape continued to develop. Four new elementary schools were opened, and several Qur'an schools were converted into sub-grade schools[102]. The number of trainee teachers at the Bakht er Ruda institute was doubled with the intention of bolstering existing schools and opening new elementary sites. Prospective teachers were needed across all regions of Sudan as demand outstripped supply. Doubling trainee teachers was not sufficient. In the Northern Province, the demand for elementary education was stunted by its lack of qualified teaching staff and meant no new schools could be opened. In Blue Nile province the picture was bleaker, with only 3 of its 22 elementary schools fully staffed. This was dire for a region in which attendance at elementary and sub-grade school had jumped from 3000 to 5000 pupils within the space of a year. In keeping with these other regions, in Atbara demand for elementary education was five times greater than the number of places.[103]

There was no report for 1939 due to the start of WW2. The next report was published in 1941 and covered the previous two years. As had happened during WW1, the expansion of elementary education slowed. However, the war was not the only cause of delay as the education department also needed to address its neglect of schooling at the intermediate level (Griffiths 1975:78). Only one new school was opened in Sudan between 1938-1941, and this was despite new school provision having been identified as key to meet the demands of Sudanese parents for elementary schooling. The education department failed to meet demands for new premises. However, the number of pupils registered in elementary education continued to grow during the three-year period and rose from 13,773 in 1939 to 16,940 in 1941.[104]

Unable to answer the demand for Kuttab education, the department's response was to placate demand by opening more sub-grade schools and was highlighted by their increased number of 38 in 1938 to 111 in 1941. This in turn increased registration of

[101] GGR, 1938
[102] For example, according to the Northern Province section of the 1938 annual Condominium report, 3 1st class Khalawi were converted into sub-grade schools.
[103] GGR, 1938
[104] GGR, 1939-1941

boys at sub-grade schools rising from 3500 to 7714 during the same period. The numbers show that the slow development of elementary schooling did not halt the demand for access to schooling, and moreover signified that Sudanese communities had recognised the role of Condominium education in gaining social mobility.[105]

By the end of the decade, it was clear that elementary education had begun to take on a new form, through the establishment of Bakht er Ruda and its production of resources for elementary school level and training of new teachers. Choosing to replace subsidised Qur'an schools with sub-grade schools did not mean pre-Kuttab schooling had been solved. In particular, the issue of oversubscription in sub-grade education persisted throughout the decade and contrasted three previous decades. However, for the first time an overall evaluation of education had taken place in the Winter and De La Warr reports that allowed the department to address areas of poor performance, and the introduction of sub-grade schools was one of these attempts.

For Qur'anic education, the decade highlighted the precarious position it found itself in in relation to the education department as schools were converted to sub-grade institutes and the status of Qur'an teachers amongst Sudanese communities challenged through the emergence of schoolmasters. However, despite this, subsidised Qur'anic schooling did not completely disappear even if it was relegated in significance in the ongoing development of education under the Condominium.

The Burgeoning independence of Sudan and the End of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Education Era

This section analyses the final period of Condominium education, as the Sudanese movement towards independence gathered momentum. During this period, an expedient mass programme of expansion and improvement took place in education. This began in the north and was later followed by similar improvements in South Sudan. This programme directly responded to the sentiments of the Graduates' Congress 1942, where demands were made for the divided education programmes of northern and southern Sudan to be unified. This request indicated that the country's ideas of a unified independent nation were gathering momentum. It would also become a part of a bigger call from the Graduates for self-autonomy after World War Two and questioned the education policies of the regime that had framed the learning of young Sudanese since the turn of the century (Seri-Hersch, 2017:11; Sharkey, 2003:86).[106]

Educated Sudanese, held 84% of civil servant positions by the mid-1940s, with British administrators making up just 10% and the other 6% was held by those from other Arab migrant groups. However, positions held by Sudanese at this juncture were still

[105] Ibid
[106] The Graduate's Congress had been established in 1938 and according to Helen Sharkey was inspired by the similar Indian National Congress (2003:86).

considered junior in comparison to their British counterparts.[107] In the education sector a sign that this was changing came with the appointment of the first Sudanese Minister of Education El Sayyid Abdel Rahman Ali, as the Condominium acknowledged that the mantle of governance was now in the process of changing hands back to the Sudanese. Moreover, this would mean that the programme of educational expansion demanded at the Graduate's Congress needed to move at a pace that would ready Sudanese for more executive roles within the civil service.

Coinciding with calls for a larger stake in the running of Sudan were growing agitations inside Condominium schools in solidarity with developing of socio-political movements outside their walls. This caused a series of school closures, as students across multiple educational tiers voiced their support for civil and educational improvements including better wages for teachers and student union representation. Overwhelmed by the scale of protest at times, the Condominium's education reports did not engage with the causes of this unrest and framed student strikes and demonstrations as a nuisance and reflective of periods of indiscipline that disrupted education. As a result, the education department often sought to shut down student dissent through discipline or the expulsion of those it deemed to be agitators.

In relation to Qur'anic education, this was a period in which the overall number of government subsidised institutions further declined, as resources continued to be redirected to its alternative, the sub-grade school. Although there was a minor increase in the number of subsidised Qur'an schools by 1952 (the last year of annual Sudan government reports), there were only 229 subsidised Qur'an schools recorded across Sudan, and when compared to the peak number of 786 in 1932, illustrating the changed fortune and function of Qur'anic education. The fate of Qur'an schools that had had their funding withdrawn was omitted from annual reports as they were likely deemed to no longer be the responsibility of the regime. Reports during the last phase of Condominium education contained few positive comments about Qur'anic education, which was now viewed as offering little education, justifying the expansion of sub-grade schools in its place.

In keeping with the previous World War, reports from The Second World War were amalgamated and so the period begins with 1942 collated with 1943 and 1944. After 1952, annual reports were no longer issued, pointing to the significant transfer of positions and power to the Sudanese in preparation for the country's official independence in 1956. However, the five decades of existing reports demonstrated that the aim to establish an operational education system, that would provide literacy and numeracy at the elementary tier to the mass Sudanese population whilst considerably successful did also include caveats. For example, whilst considerable and well documented expansion and development had taken place, in truth, the department still served a relatively small percentage of the population. In a population of 5.5 million only 23,000 boys were in elementary education by 1947. [108]

[107] GGR, 1946
[108] GGR, 1947

It had also purposely capped the rapid growth of sub-grade schooling in 1950, after receiving feedback about the provision's quality. This meant some children would not have access to the very basics of education as a result and was counterproductive given the Condominium's education plan. However, what can be positively taken away from this decision was that the Condominium had taken on board the lessons from its expedient expansion of subsidised Qur'an schools during the 1920s period of indirect rule. What was also achieved by Condominium education was the creation of a fully detailed and functioning civil service made up of former students from the higher primary, and secondary school systems.

The End of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium: 1942 - 1952

By the early 1940s a slow but consistent programme of expansion across the provinces of north Sudan was well under way at all government school levels for boys and included the opening of two new junior schools and two new intermediate schools. At elementary level, there was an increase in the number of elementary and sub-grade schools, with the former increasing from 107 in 1941 to 117 in 1944. Although small it represented a period of expansion that followed the stalled growth of the late 1930s which was impacted heavily by an insufficient numbers of qualified elementary school teachers and the directing of attention away from elementary schooling to development at the intermediate school level.
Equally the number of sub-grade schools rose from 111 in 1,941 to 165 in 1944 and this represented the largest expansion across all levels. The number of students in elementary education increased as a result and the attendance of boys rose from 16,940 in 1941 to 19,381 in 1944, with the quality of education they received improving because of consistent new pools of teachers graduating from Bakht er Ruda.

However, whilst the numbers of other types of schools in the Condominium schooling remained consistent, during this period the number of subsidised Khalawi declined significantly. This meant that the 248 subsidised Qur'an schools that had existed in 1941 fell to 183 in 1944 and indicated that the addition of 54 equivalent sub-grade schools during the same period were seen as replacements for the loss of those Qur'an schools. Although, many sub-grade schools continued to be housed in poor structures, the education department viewed their establishment as fulfilling demand for a quality form of sub-elementary education that could meet demand in both urban and rural areas and which the education department believed the subsidised Qur'anic school experiment had failed to address.

The 1942-44 report suggested two main issues hindered the advancement of elementary education. The first was the low number of qualified teachers available to the department. This resulted in excessive numbers of student applicants for an insufficient number of school places. This was an ongoing issue from the previous decade and recent increases in the provision of teachers and schools had little impact.

In 1944 the Bakht er Ruda institute, entered its tenth year, training 150 teachers each year. Whilst this improved the quality of education offered in elementary schools, it was not at a sufficient rate to address the critical demand from Sudanese families for school places. For example, in Khartoum, of 575 applicants for elementary school places only 226 were accepted.[109]

The training institute was pivotal to the development of education at elementary level and supported the introduction of provincial education officers with a year-long programme at the institute prior to taking up their posts. The premise for this was to equip education officers alongside trainees and new teachers with a firm knowledge base of the most up to date developments in elementary education.
However, the institute was not without issues and struggled to deliver strengthened curriculums, texts, and modern pedagogy to teachers. Accordingly, amongst other things, staffing at the training institute had become a problem and the report stated that five essential posts for British staff remained unfilled.[110] This dovetailed with what the 1945 report claimed was "problems of staffing, building and printing more acute than at any previous time."[111] The institutes backlog of manuscripts to be produced meant that on occasion special training for trainee teachers had to be abandoned as resources were unavailable.[112]

Similarly to the development of subsidised Qur'an education during the mid-1920s, the number of sub-grade schools grew rapidly during the mid 1940s, jumping from 165 in 1944 to 222 in 1945. Additionally, student attendance at these schools grew by 2,679 pupils over the same period, whilst the number of Qur'an schools continued to fall with five more subsidies removed. Yet, student numbers rose slightly at remaining Qur'an schools by 603 and alludes both to education's widening sphere and some parents' preference for Qur'anic education over sub-grade schools.

The decentralisation of education meant that access and quality varied significantly from one province to another. Changes in attitude that had led to parents in the regions Kordofan and Darfur embracing Condominium education. However, the Khartoum focus of central government and relative proximity of the second capital Madani, coupled with their economic strength and industries meant that these more urbanised states were often far ahead of these rural regions.

The absence of regional parity caused issues in the outcomes of provinces in 1945. In Khartoum state schools were oversubscribed at elementary level and were cited to have double the number of applicants for school places, leaving only an estimated 50% of boys being enrolled.[113] Comparatively, in Darfur the overall estimate of boys in education was 4.2%, despite its intermediate school being oversubscribed and the addition of 4 sub-grade schools which increased the number of boys in education

[109] GGR, 1942-44
[110] No British education posts were filled during the war period 1939-1945.
[111] GGR, 1945
[112] Ibid
[113] Ibid

from 584 to 1,157 but highlighted a significant number remained out of Condominium schooling.

To justify the poor level of development in Darfur, the report listed two specific factors outside of its control that dictated the access to education it offered. The first factor was pastoral communities' reluctance to let go of boys at an age they were considered of use to herding (the report also suggested that attitudes of pastoral communities were beginning to change with parents slowly acknowledging the benefits of school). However, according to Sharkey, Darfurian communities' reluctance to engage with Condominium education, was likely due to a 'lack of interest in government, or "infidel" education and notes 'it's delayed educational development vis-à-vis other Northern provinces is dramatic (2003:40).' The second factor was the scarcity of populations across large swathes of the region, which made it difficult to establish schools. To remedy this the report suggested the establishment of boarding schools, which would mean that it was possible to draw boys from farther afield, offering them access to education.[114]

The pace of development was an ongoing issue and in Kordofan specifically, a shortage of adequate education provision from the rebranded Ministry of Education and provincial leadership had led to local communities taking matters into their own hands. The outcome according to the report was the opening of new sub-grade schools by local initiatives like the Ahlia model of the 1920s that exemplified the keenness of communities to provide education for themselves where the authorities had failed to do so.[115]

Potential improvements to the education landscape in northern Sudan arrived in 1946 with the proposal of a new education programme that would 'provide considerable advances in both the quantity and quality of education at all levels' was approved.[116] The cost of the programme was estimated to be £E2,500,000[117] and was be spread over a 10-year period that saw the annual cost of education rise to £E1,000,000 by 1956.[118] An education programme of this magnitude was the Condominium's acknowledgement that Sudan was on the path to independence and was a response to Sudanese demands for better education in preparation for a Sudanese workforce that would come to run its own country (Trimingham,1949:256; Seri-Hersch, 2017:11).

As part of the expansion programme seven new elementary schools were opened in 1946. These schools were designed to address the imbalance between urban and rural provision, with the seven schools opening in rural areas. Expansion also brought the total number of elementary schools in Sudan to 128 with 22,000 boys in attendance. In addition, 17 new sub-grade schools opened, a process that was less complicated than opening of elementary schools. According to the report this was

[114] GGR, 1945
[115] Ibid
[116] GGR, 1946
[117] £E – Egyptian pounds
[118] GGR, 1946

because the of low cost to the government and ease to spread education to the masses.[119]

Financial restrictions in higher tiered secondary schools led to protests. A common feature of the 1920s, protests had led to the ostracisation of the educated Sudanese class between the late 1920s and early 1930s. Perhaps a sign of their reintegration into the Condominium, this time disruptions instead came from secondary schools and the Bakht er Ruda education institute, where trainee teachers protested poor salaries for newly qualified teachers.

Student protesters believed the salaries of new elementary teachers failed to reflect the demands of the role or the cost of living. The result, according to the 1946 report was the loss of some trainees at the institute who dropped out due to their dissatisfaction.[120] The protests lasted for much of the first semester of the academic year, although by the second, schooling had returned to normal.

Subsidies were offered to privately run community enterprise schools from 1946 and were designed to match up to half a schools' total salary expenditure. They were also given under the proviso that they would then conform to government regulations. This was followed a year later with a more defined programme of grants-in-aid that when brought into effect allowed schools four years or older to apply for a grant of up to one third of their annual expenditure. The grants were detailed in the 1947 education report as recognition that 'these schools play a valuable part in the present educational organisation of the country and are deserving of all possible assistance.'[121]

In 1947, 71 sub-grade schools and 3 elementary schools opened in remote or rural parts of the country. There were also 20 new headmasters appointed to elementary schools. These figures demonstrated the quickest rate of expansion at the elementary school level in the two years since World War Two ended. The result was Sudan's elementary school population increased to 23,000 pupils. Although this number highlighted progress, in the context of a general population numbering 5.5 million at the time, the national education programme was still relatively small scale (Macrotrends.net, 2022).

By the latter part of the 1940s, the development of elementary education had begun to stretch the Ministry of Education's resources, and it was decided elementary education would be turned over to local government administrations in 1948. The annual report stated that the decision was fundamental to the development of elementary and sub-grade schooling but also declared that elementary schooling had become too difficult to manage on a national scale from Khartoum.[122]

[119] Ibid
[120] GGR, 1946
[121] GGR, 1947
[122] GGR, 1948

The rate of education expansion stretched the education department's resources. There were 162 elementary schools by 1948 (there were 128 in 1946) and the number of students had increased by two thousand to 25,000 boys over a 12-month period. To cater to demand the department recruited teachers from Egypt once again and from Britain to help fill the void. This doubled the recruitment of foreign teachers into Sudan in 1948 to 34 from 17 the previous year. [123] The employment of foreign teachers between 1900s – 1920s had demonstrated foreign teacher recruitment offered a short-term solution to teacher numbers but could not be the foundation of the country's infrastructure. This was primarily because of the expense incurred but also because foreign teachers eventually returned home if better opportunities arose.

Although the education training institute at Bakht er Ruda, had led to a steady stream of newly qualified Sudanese elementary teachers filtering into schools year on year, it had reached capacity and was unable to provide a higher rate of graduation. It was also stretched further by responsibilities for training new intermediate schoolteachers, development of new school text and publishing. In response the newly named Ministry of Education opened a new training institute at Dilling in 1948, that it hoped would speed up and address education's expansion particularly in elementary education.[124]

More indications of the effect of expansion on the department were highlighted by revisions to the ten-year education plan that had commenced two years earlier in 1946. The plan was put under review in 1948 and it was decided that changes were needed to reflect the fast-paced developments in elementary, intermediate and girls' education. The revised plans were then submitted to the executive council for agreement with the intention to roll out these changes in 1949.[125]

The Ministry of Education itself had also experienced change. Previous decades had meant educated Sudanese were often frustrated at not being afforded opportunities to hold higher positions within the Condominium administration. However, in 1948, El Sayyid Abdel Rahman became the first Sudanese person appointed to the role of Minister of Education, a milestone in Sudanese educational governance.[126] His appointment signalled that Sudanese were primed to become key players in shaping education in the lead to encroaching independence. According to V.L. Griffith (1953:44), the appointment of El Sayyid Abdel Rahman was a good one and he stated about his former colleague and vice principal at Bakht er Ruda 'A Sudanese of his experience and personality would be able to speak to his fellow countrymen in a way that could not but carry conviction…'. Illustrating the swiftness of change taking place, El Sayyid Abdel Rahman had only just become the first Sudanese person to be appointed Assistant Director of Education in January of the same year.[127]

[123] Ibid
[124] GGR, 1948
[125] Ibid
[126] GGR, 1948
[127] Ibid

It should be noted that appointments such as the new Minister of Education were pragmatic decisions that reflected a wider shift taking place in Sudanese societies in the form of the growing bond between Egypt and Sudan that the administration could not afford to ignore. For example, in 1946-47 Egypt had gone to the United Nations Security Council to challenge British right to rule Sudan (Young, 2017). Having previously removed Egyptian influence over the political and social aspirations of Sudanese in the 1920s by exiling of all Egyptian staff after the assassination of General Lee Stack, the influence and bond with Egypt had returned during the 1940s. According to Seri-Hersch, as a result

> "The growing fervour for the 'unity of the Nile valley' led the Sudanese Government from 1946 to accelerate the pace of Sudanisation… replacing British officials with Sudanese civil servants." (2017:11)

In the wider political sphere, the Egyptian economy had stagnated after WW2. This made Sudan's agricultural potential attractive to the Egyptian administration if it could be incorporated into a unified Nile Valley (Young, 2017). In education, aligned to political calls from Sudanese and Egyptians for 'Unity', Egyptian schools had become popular and meant that the Condominium had a serious competitor in Egypt for the minds of young Sudanese students (Mills, 2015). Given the influence Egypt had had both socially and politically on young Sudanese during the early 1920s era of the Condominium epoch, the British were aware of the degree to which Egyptian influence might spread and chose to counter this growing influence with the opening of new schools and bigger cohorts of educated Sudanese to fill key administrative roles (Seri-Hersch, 2017:11).

In addition to concerns about Egyptian influences on the Sudanese, another influence had also begun to drive the push towards Sudanisation. The Second World War had removed the veneer which had made European powers appear undefeatable. In particular, witnessing the loss of significant parts of the British Empire, including Indian independence, cemented still-colonised nations hopes of independence based on war propaganda about freedom and liberation from tyranny (Griffiths, 1975:146; Young, 2017). Although this message had been intended for Europeans, it flowed into the colonies and reinvigorated and incentivised previously stilted calls for freedom.

Until 1948, the progress of subsidised Qur'anic schooling was largely omitted from annual education reports of the 1940s. Until which they only appeared in updates of their conversion into sub-grade schools. However, the 1948 report underscored subsidised Qur'anic schooling continued to play a role in Sudan's official education output and stated 'The subsidised Khalwas continued to enjoy varied popularity in different localities. In Northern Province, for instance, there were 81 in operation, although in Kassala province only one survived.'[128] The inclusion of this small

[128] GGR, 1948

segment of information illustrated Qur'an schools had managed to survive the criticism they had received from the AEC administration and along with sub-grade schools continued to be embedded at the sub-elementary level.
Although the report suggested Qur'an schools' presence varied from district to district, it only recorded those which were subsidised and not working outside of the Condominium school framework. Nevertheless, their inclusion in the report showed that despite considerable challenges Qur'an schools had faced as part of Condominium schooling, including, declining student and building numbers, a belittled reputation and competition from sub-grade schools, they still held value in Sudanese communities.

According to the 1948 report, sub-grade schools had proven to be popular particularly '… in the more backward areas.'[129] However, despite its poor phrasing, the statement suggested that the take up of these schools had been positive for these more remote and rural areas of the country, and had brought Condominium education to hard-to-reach communities. This was not the only use of sub-grade schooling and in more developed regions some sub-grade school students had exceeded expectation. For example, in Northern province, 'a few exceptional pupils proceeded direct from them to the intermediate schools testifies to the academic merit of some of them.'[130]

However, this example was an exception and as the 1949 report denoted, the reputation of sub-grade schools amongst Sudanese families and local administrations alike was generally that of 'a steppingstone to a higher grade of school, rather than as something complete in itself.'[131] This perception disappointed the Ministry of Education, as was reflected in the report which stated that it was 'regrettable, especially as the standard of some sub-grade schools is already comparable with that of elementary schools.[132]

Even though sub-grade schools' reputation amongst Sudanese communities did not mirror that of the Ministry of Education. Its commitment to sub-grade schools was undoubtable, and it continued to expand and establish sub-grade schools despite the negative feedback. This led to the opening of new schools across Darfur in Dar Masalit and Northern Darfur and an even larger programme of their expansion in Kassala continued having begun the previous year.[133]

By 1949, 27,764 boys were enrolled at elementary schools, which was a significant increase considering only six new schools had been opened since the previous year. The report acknowledged that to provide buildings at a rate that matched student population growth continued to be a problem. The plan had been to provide 50 school buildings per year, which had quickly proven to be an unrealistic goal.

[129] GGR, 1948
[130] Ibid
[131] GGR, 1949
[132] Ibid
[133] Ibid

Consequently, the department had begun to investigate the viability of other options such as, the construction of prefabricated structures as a solution.[134]

In addition, the provision of trained elementary teaching staff did not improve, and the report voiced concerns that any quicker graduation rates for trainee teachers would lead to adverse effects on their quality. At the same time, there were ongoing issues at Bakht er Ruda with trainee teachers again in protest. On this occasion they were against the Ministry's decision to ban the formation of a student coalition. This impacted proceedings at the institute with tensions disrupting the first and second term.[135]

Issues were taking place across Condominium education in one form or another and in keeping with concerns once recorded about Qur'an schools in annual education reports of the late 1920s and early 1930s, they now appeared around sub-grade schools. Like their predecessor concern had arisen about their success in meeting the requirements of education at the level in 1949. These were followed by a full admission of deep concern in the following year's report, with the 1950 education report stating.

> "Sub-grade schools are regarded by certain sections of Sudanese opinion as making little or no contribution to the cultural advancement of the country. It is indeed a fact that these schools unless carefully supervised can quickly fall back into a condition little superior to that of a Khalwa, and this was recognised by a check imposed in 1950 on any further immediate increase. There is no doubt that sub-grade schools have an important part to play in the rural areas."[136]

The report's acknowledgement of Sudanese opinion about sub-grade schooling was important, as in the five decades in which they had been issued little reference was given to Sudanese opinion. However, Griffith argues that the inclusion of local opinion did not convey that Sudanese had essentially taken control of government education policies (1975:144). It was also an opinion which agreed with the Ministry's own viewpoint and meant a cap was placed on sub-grade student numbers for a time, which suggested lessons had been learnt from the rapid increase students in subsidised Qur'anic education during the 1920-30s.

Nonetheless, the importance of subgrade schools in providing an education under Condominium control for Sudanese boys was clearly seen by the number who were engaged in this form of education. Across Sudan 42,932 boys were recorded

[134] GGR, 1949
[135] GGR, 1949
[136] GGR, 1950

to attend 500 sub-grade schools and this doubled the number of students in subsidised Qur'anic schooling at its height in 1930.[137]

At a regional level, the important role sub-grade schools played in providing access to Condominium education was somewhat pleasing to the administration. This was emphasised by single examples such as, in Blue Nile province where 15,000 boys attended 168 sub-grade schools. In Darfur, although attendance numbers were not as good, the quality of education was believed to have improved. And the report mentioned the regional education officer for the region had stated that despite their shortcomings, the sub-grade schools remained an improvement on the Khalawi which had previously been the region's main source of education.[138]

In Kordofan province, the standard of sub-grade schools varied and was recorded to range from poor to akin to the elementary school standard.[139] This example highlighted the issue which plagued sub-grade schools, the lack of continuity in quality. Most sub-grades were not of a standard that was comparative to elementary schools, and this meant that parents viewed the education they delivered to their children to be sub-par.

The 1951-52 report is the last year in which Condominium reports were published. And at this juncture the report stated that in boys' education there were 978 schools across all levels attended by some 95, 039 pupils. Significantly, from these totals, 229 were subsidised Qur'an schools with the number of pupils in attendance registered at 10,707. [140] This number was particularly important, because it demonstrated that the cap placed on sub-grade schools had begun to affect the choices of parents regarding education at the sub-elementary level. As a result, it appeared that some had opted to return to the Qur'an school system.

This was also evidenced by the increase of subsidised Qur'an school populations highlighted in the table below. It demonstrates that in 1949 prior to the cap on sub-grade school places that in 1949 pupil numbers demonstrated a dipped by 739 on the previous year. However, between 1950 and 1952 (the final report), Qur'anic school attendance again increased, whilst sub-grade pupil numbers dropped.[141]

	1948		1949		1950		1951-52	
Boys	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils

[137] However, it is important to note that the 1950 education report collates numbers for pupils and schools for North and South Sudan together for the first time, as the ministry begins the process of merging education under a unified independent Sudan.
[138] GGR, 1950
[139] Ibid
[140] GGR, 1951-52
[141] Ibid

Sub-grade schools	321	25,640	422	33,632	500	42,932	485 (477)	41,439
Subsidised Khalwas	147	7,328	117	6,589	104	6,737	229	10,707

Figure 7- GGR Education Reports 1948-1952

The final report itself noted two factors had caused of the dip in student numbers at sub-grade schools. Firstly, the cap on the expansion of the number of schools had 'caused their number to diminish.'[142] The second factor was attributed to some sub-grade schools being upgraded to full elementary schools. However, given that the number of sub-grade schools lost between 1950 and 1952 only stood at 15[143] , this was unlikely have had such a significant impact on student numbers.

To implement the devolution of elementary education to local authorities the Ministry began with pilot programmes in Blue Nile, Kordofan and Northern Province in July 1952. It was met with some resistance from teachers who according to the report 'feared it would adversely affect their status and prospects.'[144] To ease these fears, the Ministry sent education advisors to areas that held the gravest concern, and they were tasked with the responsibility of easing teachers' apprehensions. In addition, the education advisors inherited responsibility for the running of sub-grade schools in the provinces they oversaw. [145]

Hasan – Educational Life under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium

An aim of this thesis has been to include Sudanese voices alongside the examination of AEC education policies. To demonstrate a Sudanese experience of education during the latter period of the Condominium administration, I have included the education history of Hassan a participant from the Fareed family, who was educated during the final decade of Condominium rule. As the head of the al-Fareed family, Hassan is the father of Abdul-Wali and grandfather of Noora, who facilitated our interview. It was also his enjoyment of the interview that opened the door to speak with his son Abdul-Wali (Noora and Abdul-Wali feature in the following chapter). He lives in the Gulf region, having emigrated during the oil and gas boom of the 1960s and 70s. He keeps his association with Sudan through annual visits.

Hasan was born in Omdurman during the early 1940s, into a family that adhere to the teachings of the Mahdist sect, The Ansar. The depth of the family's connection to the Mahdiyyah was illustrated by his father's management of an agricultural scheme owned by the sect's then leader Abdul-Rahman, the son of al-Mahdi. His status as an agriculturalist would have place him socially in the bracket of Sudan's lower middle

[142] GGR, 1951-52
[143] later in the report it stated 23 sub-grade schools had been lost.
[144] Ibid
[145] Ibid

class at the time, above agricultural labourers and farmers (Sikainga, 1996). Hasan's father's commitment to the Mahdiyyah, led to his death in the early 1970s in a clash between the Ansar and the leftist forces of the Nimeiri regime, which took place at the sect's headquarters and mosque al-Sayyid Abdur-Rahman in Wad Nabawi, Omdurman.

As a boy Hasan's father had left his village in north Sudan and travelled over 500km to Jazeera state for Qur'an school, where he completed memorisation of the entire Qur'an. Hasan's formal education was in state schools, and he shared that his older brothers' insistence that his father w be allowed to join his local secular school was the reason his father conceded and that he was able to attend. Otherwise, he would have likely gone to Qur'an school full-time. As a compromise, his father ensured that Hasan would attend Khalwa during each school holiday, where he would be reacquainted with local friends who attended full-time.

He first attended 'western' school in 1949, three years into the Condominium's 10-year national education programme that was designed to raise schooling standards at elementary, primary, intermediate, and secondary levels (Trimingham, 1949:256; Seri-Hersch, 2017:11). Hasan's school education was in Arabic for the first four years before transitioning into an English language curriculum except for Arabic lessons. He recalls the great anticipation he felt at the prospect of learning English

> … people looked up to people who spoke English and so you would be waiting for the second four years to learn English. And it's a prestigious thing that you go inside the kitchen and speak English to your, your mother and your sisters.

However, the enthusiasm he was able to share with his mother about his secular education was not something that he was able to completely share with his father, who although keen for his children to succeed maintained throughout the majority of Hasan's secular education that it was unlawful according to their faith. As Hasan elaborated at different points in the interview

> My father was sort of an uncelebrated Boko Haram because he thought that the school is is wrong and that we should go to Khalwa
>
> He would say all the time for that learning is supposed to be Qur'an full stop and and and not all these are worldly things

Hasan and his father's differing perspectives on education epitomise what can be assumed to be the conversations taking place amongst Sudanese families under the Condominium and offer insight into educational changes that took place between generations at that time. Hasan's father was educated during the early Condominium period at a time when Mahdist education policies were still present in

the society. The hundreds of Khalawi they established remained the main source of education for Sudanese communities. Similarly, to other Muslim majority countries on the continent in the early colonial period, a religious education offered jobs in government administrations (Beshir, 1969; Brenner, 2001; Eickelman,1978; Hansen et al, 2016; Umar, 2001).

At the time Hasan had entered school, this was no longer the case and in contrast to his father's education, his pathway demonstrated the growing influence of Condominium education in Sudanese society. Communities had begun to accept in greater numbers that secular schooling represented entry into good and stable work in the colony particularly in the civil service. The result was that the religiously educated were relegated to careers solely based around faith, as their skill set and lack of recognised certification under the Condominium lessened their value.

Hasan also concludes that his father's generation pragmatically shifted their opinions of Condominium education. He explains that to allow their children to compete in the Sudanese job market these fathers accepted that they would need to engage in secular schooling. However, they also continued to cement their children in the Islamic life they themselves subscribed to

> I think at the end of the day our fathers were convinced that secular education plus an input of Quran and living Islam is the answer rather than trying to go against the total move of going to secular education.

Hasan also asserts that the developing distinction between his father's generation and his own was seen in political alliances and perspectives. His older brother held a significant position in the Sudanese Communist Party which later came to signify the antithesis on the Ansar community during Sudan's leftist years under General Nimeiri. Such dichotomies between Sudanese fathers and sons had begun to take place as early as the 1920s under the Condominium. An example being during the White Flag League uprisings in which well-educated sons favouring independence stood in opposition to their passive colonial sympathising fathers (Sharkey,2003: 93).

Hassan attended Khalwa over the holidays the longest of which was the 3-month summer break. His Khalwa was located in an annexe connected to the Ansar community's central mosque in Omdurman. He explained that it was not unusual for mosques at the time to be built by or attached to Sufi or politically Islamic sects

> And this is not a different case from most of the Khalwas in Sudan, it belongs to a sect. See so, so the investment in mosques was substantial, I mean it's not an everyday that somebody will build a mosque. And the idea of people putting their hands together or the government building a mosque was not commonplace because, in the town there would be one government mosque. The British didn't neglect that point, they built mosques in the towns, but the towns start to grow

> up and sort of mushroom and the people who started to be finding it very difficult to walk all the way to the government masjids.

At the time that Hasan attended Khalwa, the Ansar sect and its central mosque were well known to the country's administration, had come to view Abdur-Rahman al-Mahdi as a political, business, and religious ally. This was after initially treating him with suspicion due to his family name and fear of a second Mahdist uprising (O' Voll, 1971:217; Niblock, 1987:173).

Hasan's attendance of the mosque continued into his teens until he entered a secondary boarding school in 1957. He explained that his secondary school was of a very good standard and for high achieving children, who did not have to pay fees because of their scholastic achievements. His opinion of his time at boarding school stands in contrast to current observations of state secondary schooling in Sudan. Today private education is seen to produce better outcomes for its pupils, however, in Hasan's time it carried the associated stigma that if a child's education was paid for then it was an indication that they were not academically capable. Hasan emphasised this point in relation to his secondary schooling

> but there is no way you can buy you seat in a secondary school of the government at that time. You cannot buy, so the most rich and the most well-off people were prohibited unless their children will excel and go to these schools based on their own.

His education later finished at a polytechnic. Thereafter he moved to the Gulf to work as a manager during the oil and gas boom of the 1960s/1970s. According to Hasan, this period saw him leave Sudan as part of a brain drain, in which educated Sudanese had begun to observe the decline in Sudan's education and economy, and subsequently sought opportunities in the Gulf states. In addition, he explained that it was his qualifications coupled with fluency in both Arabic and English which opened doors for him in the Gulf. These skills were seen to be an asset as he was able to communicate with both Arabs and European oil workers comfortably. He has since retired but remains resident in the region and returns to Sudan for visits.

Conclusion

This period ended primary source details from the Condominium about its oversight of education in Sudan and the country's official independence commenced four years later. What the Sudanese were left with was a functioning education system in which its own indigenous model of learning, the Qur'an school, had somehow managed to survive despite the administration's attempts to label it backwards and of the lowest standard in its tiered schooling system. One of the ways in which the Sudanese preserved Qur'anic education was demonstrated by Hasan. He found a way to incorporate the cultural and religious mooring his father desired for him by attending to Qur'anic education during the 3-month summer holiday as a complement to his government schooling.

Although introduced as an alternative to the Khalawi, the journey of sub-grade schooling was comparative to that of subsidised Qur'anic education, particularly in terms of its failings and the variable quality of its output according to the reports. This demonstrated that some of the problems with sub-elementary education was to be attributed to the education department (later the Ministry of Education); as parallel failings were evident in the administration of both schooling systems. Previous mistakes from the height of subsidised Qur'anic schooling were again made in the development of sub-grade schools and included rapid expansion, insufficient structures, and poorly equipped teachers. In relation to the quality or appropriateness of the education system left behind; Matta Arawki contended that four years after its independence Sudan would begin

> "… to examine its educational system which was founded under foreign rule to ask itself whether this system as it exists answers its needs and is adequate to insure its progress (Arawki, 1969:263)."

Arawki, wrote 13 years after independence and suggested that in the context of the newly freed nation made up of North and South Sudan it meant that the role of education in forming a national Sudanese identity was important and stated:

> "Sudanese educators are asking themselves what the aims and principles of Sudanese education should be. How can an education bring about national unity and the feeling of kinship and citizenship among the Sudanese..." (Arawki, 1969:263)

The introduction of secular subjects at all levels of education during the Condominium period impacted Sudanese families' ideas of what social mobility should look like and how it could be achieved. It shifted feudal ideas of economic power associated with landowners, Shayukh and agriculture to rail, medicine, and

the civil service as viable means of gaining economic mobility. However, these careers were not available to all students. For example, those without intermediate, secondary, technical (and later university) level schooling were excluded skilled jobs and from the prospect of a well-paid pensionable career within the civil service.

It was also the case that during the earlier decades of the Condominium the pool of young Sudanese men able to claim a high-level education had been incredibly small and women even smaller. And as the number of students who graduated from with from higher tiers of education grew from the 1930s onwards, it only served to widen the gap between 'educated Sudanese' and those with an elementary or sub-elementary education (Griffiths, 1975). Yet, elementary education did meet James Currie's original intention of education for the masses.
The aspirations of Sudanese families for higher and better forms of education belonged to the 'thoughtful Sudanese' as referred to by Griffiths (1953:144). They were not entirely satisfied with the limits of some Condominium education and wanted more as a result.

For subsidised Qur'anic education, as a form of sub-elementary schooling it was doubly impacted by its initial reputation as part of pre-modern Sudan and later by the limits of sub and elementary education which frustrated already learned Sudanese and those aspiring to be well educated. Additionally, Qur'anic schooling was viewed poorly by Sudanese who did not engage with religion as something all-encompassing, and its significance held sway with a specific religious swathe of Sudanese society. This point was explained by Griffiths who stated

> "Whereas religion maintained its prestige amongst the uneducated, it was losing ground amongst the educated, partly because of the increasing influx of western ideas, but partly because the old-fashioned religious teacher in the schools showed up poorly alongside the more lively and up-to-date teacher of other subjects (1953:146)."

As a result of these factors, in the lead up to independence, Qur'anic schooling was on the periphery of the education system because both the administration and elements of educated society held it in low regard.[146] Yet, its role in the founding of the Condominium education system was integral to the expansion of elementary level education across Sudan. Its presence within the education framework had acted as an early bridge between the Condominium and Sudan's Muslim communities, particularly those that were religious, suspicious of the country's occupiers or in rural or hard to reach regions for other Condominium schools.

[146] This point is very specific to Qur'anic education under the Condominium and does not relate to this type of schooling that continued to work outside the Condominium's margins, although it would have been affected by the number of boys who were engaging across the provinces in Condominium schools.

Qur'anic education inadvertently offered a model for its eventual competitor the sub-grade school and some of the lessons taken from the spread of subsidised Qur'anic education allowed the regime to act in the case of the sub-grade school before complete disaster struck. In addition, the method of rote learning that dominated pedagogy of the country's Kuttabs until the establishment of Bakht er Ruda, was framed around the learning method founded in Qur'an schools.

Importantly, Qur'anic education disseminated religious learning and formed citizens that were aligned to ideals of a Sudanese Muslim, and this continued both under government control and in the shade of the Condominium. Therefore, the function of Qur'an schools was not replicated in the other types of schooling offered. Even though religious education, Arabic and study of the Qur'an were available elsewhere, they were not designed to build young Muslims as intended in Qur'an schools. A point that the participants in the following chapters will also highlight.

CHAPTER 7: Interlude: Education and Its Postcolonial Arabisation and Islamisation under the NCP

Post-Independence: 33-years of Instability between the End of the AEC and Coming of the NCP

This thesis identifies and examines two key periods in the development of modern Sudanese education. The first period was examined in the proceeding chapters and analysed the early development of modern Sudanese schooling from the early to mid-20th century under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium colonial regime (1898-1956). The second period examined in the following chapter is Sudanese education under the NCP regime (1989-2019). There are 33 years between the former and latter significant epochs of Sudan's modern history. During this time the country underwent several stratocratic and civilian regime changes. This section details the multiple changes in government during this period and important events that took place in education, bringing the narrative of Sudanese governments and education up to the NCP regime's beginning in 1989.

Sudanese independence officially began on the 1st January 1956 under the power of a sovereignty council, consisting of five members of the most influential political parties, The Ummah, National Union and Southern Liberal. This coalition government was initially led by the first Sudanese Prime Minister Ismael Al-Azhari and later by Abdullah Khalil. This sovereignty council was the first of seven coalition governments that ruled Sudan in the period between its independence and the beginning of the Nimeiri regime's 16-year rule in 1969 (Salih, 1990). It would last for two years before the Commander of the Sudanese Military Forces General Ibrahim Abboud led a successful coup d'etat signalling its end in 1958.

Abboud's rule lasted for six-year, in which internationally his regime's image (at least on the continent of Africa) was of a government in support of pan-African independence. This was illustrated through its solidarity with oppressed African populations and the closure of Sudanese ports and airspace to the South African and Portuguese governments (Manoeli, 2019). However, at home the regime became steadily unpopular due to factors such as, its contrastingly militant and suppressive stance towards its so-called 'Southern Problem,' the call for South Sudanese rights in reponse to the government's Arabisation programme. This issue also dovetailed with the regime's violent reactions to growing disquiet displayed by workers and students at coordinated protests. These factors culminated in a people's revolution in 1964, that saw General Abboud resign from his position that November (Manoeli, 2019; Berridge, 2015).

Following the success of the people's revolution, a short-lived transitional government was installed, headed by Sirr al-Khatim. This began a short period of domination in the role of Prime Minster for the Ummah Party, as signalled by the

handover of this mantle to the pan-Africanist Mohammed Mahgoub in his first of two turns as Sudanese Prime Minister. His first period lasted for just over a year, before his resignation following a vote of no-confidence.

Sadiq al-Mahdi (grandson of the Mahdi of Sudan) became the next Sudanese Prime Minister.
This was the first of two prime ministerships for al-Mahdi which lasted for less than a year, and was sandwiched in between Mahgoub's resignation and return to power. However, this was short-lived and this time he was deposed. Sirr al-Khatim, Mahgoub's two periods as Prime Minister, as well as, al-Mahdi's first were epitomised by political rancour, regional disputes, and the continuation of fighting against South Sudanese militias. In addition, the Sudanese economy had continued to decline and failure of any of these governments to improve any of Sudan's socio-economic or political issues, created fertile ground for a significant shift in power. (Collins, 1976; El-Affendi, 2012; Mann 2014; Manoeli, 2019).

This shift in power arrived in the form of a bloodless coup on 25th May 1969 by General Jafar Nimeiri and the Free Officers. The last of the seven coalition governments of the period the Revolutionary Council came into being with Nimeiri as its head and Babiker Awadalla as its Prime Minister, and outlawed the majority of its political rivals in 1972 (Bechtold, 1975; Berridge, 2015). This heralded the sixteen-year domination of power by the multifarious head of state Jafar Nimeiri.

Nimeiri's coming to power did not resolve all of Sudan's issues and discontentment continued. What was different was the no-nonsense response of the Nimeiri regime. For example, within a year of coming to power the army had laid siege to the Mahdist stronghold on Aba Island defeating 1000s of staunch Ansar (aiders). There were also failed attempts to overthrow Nimeiri in 1971 and 1976 (Fleuhr-Lobban, 1990; Salih, 1990).

Where the period differed, was in the significant changes to the structure of education that took place and the widening of participation in schooling at all tiers. For example, as part of its 'New Education Policy', the Nimeiri regime immediately increased the number of places for students in intermediate schools from 24,000 to 37000. This was followed a year later by an increase of secondary school places from 7000 to 10400 (Niblock, 1987).

The changes were not as swift in regards to Qur'anic schooling, which continued to play an important role in the lives of Sudanese, especially in rural settings. It had been more or less neglected by consecutive early post-independence regimes. This did not immediately change under the Nimeiri regime, as the primary focus of the 'New Education Policy' was decidedly urban. However, this changed following the Nimeiri regime's ideological shift towards Shari'a law in 1977 (which was officially implemented as part of the September laws in 1983). As a result, Qur'an schools were brought back into the centre of educational focus from the periphery in 1979. This was driven by the government's new direction and it's need to appeal to its newly formed allyship with Islamists, and as a concession to Muslim traditionalists. It

also reemphasised the prominence of Arabic language as part of Sudanese identity by once again bringing it into focus in education (Fluehr-Lobban, 1990; Lynch, Qarib Allah and Omer, 1992; Beninyo, 1996).

Another significant change under Nimeiri was to the education ladder, which saw primary, intermediate and secondary schooling change patterns from 4-4-4 to 6-3-3. As a result, within two-years there was an addition of 3000 new classrooms across primary schools to cater for this change. Amongst other educational highlights was that by 1981, participation in schools overall had risen from 40 per cent to over 50 per cent. In addition, enrolment in primary schools had doubled, in middle schools it increased six-fold from 53,000 to 334,000; whilst secondary enrolment increased approximately eight-fold by the regime's end. All of these successes were despite the 'New Education Policy' being heavily underfunded. At the end of the regime's first decade in power, education received 4.8% of the gross national Product in 1980, a decrease of almost 3% from 1970 (Lynch, Qarib Allah and Omer, 1992).

In 1985 growing economic debt, and austerity as a result of failed development programmes and growing public expectation of an uprising, Nimeiri's reign as leader of Sudan came to an end whilst on a foreign visit (Salih, 1990, Mann, 2014; Berridge, 2015; Bakhit, 2020). A new transitional government was put in place under Nimeiri's Commander-in-Chief General Swar-al-Dihab whose short rule saw the return of a multi-party system in Sudan. For the Sudanese population, the prospect of multi-party elections meant 73% of Sudanese registered to vote. The result saw Swar-al-Dihab honourably hand over power to Sadiq al-Mahdi for his second stint as Prime Minister. However, the reality was that his majority of votes was not sufficient, forcing a new coalition government to be established. Although the coalition included the Ummah Party of which al-Mahdi was the head, it was heavily influenced by the Democratic Unionists and the National Islamic Front (NIF) under Hasan Turabi. The inclusion of the NIF and their success at the elections was a pre-cursor to the political dominance of Islamist ideologists that followed their peaceful coup in 1989. Omar al-Bashir officially took power as President of Sudan in 1989 ending the role of Prime Minister and made changes to the Sudanese educational landscape that will be examined in this chapter.

The data examined in this section frames the life histories and educational experiences that follow in the next chapter. Here I analyse the education policies of Sudan's longest post-independence regime the National Congress Party[147], which held power from 1989 until its official banishment from the political landscape in November 2019, in the wake of Sudan's popular but short-lived uprising. The policies of the NCP have shaped the recent history of education in Sudan, informing ideas of Sudaneseness through the promotion of Arabism and Islamism. This review demonstrates how because of these policies counter-movements, particularly amongst the student class, came to the fore in opposition to changes to education at all levels. The second theme of this section is an analysis of barriers to education such as, access to schooling, finance, regional disparities in education provision and attitudes towards the education of girls.

The NCP and the Islamisation of Education in Sudan: 1989 – 2019

The role of education in Sudan today is difficult to understand without consideration of the political and religious discourses that have permeated multiple governments' educational policies during the post-independence period. Of relevance to the present state of education, is the influence of Islamism, which endorses Islam's influence over all facets of society, socially and politically; and has been at the core of government education policies over the three decades of the National Congress Party's rule (NCP).

This section will also demonstrate that the policies of the NCP were not made in isolation from the policies of the regimes which preceded it and instead were part of a lineal process of the Arabisation/Islamisation ideologies implanted into Sudanese society which pre-dated independence. This section will look predominantly at the lineal position of the NCP, its overarching ideology and resulting impact on Sudanese education and educational discourse in recent literature, with reference to relevant pre-NCP regime events.

The NCP, as it came to be known in 1998, was born out of the National Islamic Front (NIF), an Islamist and political coalition, which promoted the idea of political Islam and which under the guidance of its leader Hasan At-Turabi had gained traction in Sudanese society, especially during the later spell of President Nimeiri's government. As the popularity of the NIF grew, it was not only to become well-liked on the campuses of Sudanese universities but also gained support amongst some of the country's young army officers. In collusion with these young army officers the NIF was able to stage a peaceful coup in 1989, ending the democratically elected prime ministerial role of Sadiq Al-Mahdi. Instilled in his place was Omer al-Bashir, one of the young army officers who would hold his position of power for the next 30 years.

[147] This is the name given to Omer el-Beshir's party after severing ties with Hasan at-Turabi and the National Islamic Front in 1998

Anders Breidlid, argues that the first two decades of the NCP regime, were an attempt 'to homogenise a heterogeneous ethnic landscape, supressing difference, through defining the country as Arab-Islamic (2005:253).

Breidlid's position is widely cited (Mann, 2014; Bishai, 2008; Skaras, 2018; Kindersley, 2018) and, is also supported by Salomon (2016: 93) who refers to the regime's civilisation project including 'legal, law enforcement, media and the military tools of a modern state in the service not only of governmental reform but of the moral reform of individuals as well.' As a government this reach would eventually come back to bite the regime due to its inability to maintain a sphere of influence over multiple components of Sudanese society (Salomon, 2016).

The NCP's Arabisation policy was not the first and was in keeping with regimes that had gone before. As Sharkey argues in her work 'Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The politics of ethnicity and race,' despite the repeated failure of Arabisation policies to unify Sudan, multiple post-colonial administrations continued their attempts to implement them (2008). In other words, this strategy was not as novel as Breidlid suggested.

Notwithstanding the continuities with previous governments, the NCP regime's rule led to many changes to Sudan's education system from elementary to tertiary level. For example, it resulted in the decentralisation and rapid expansion of the higher education sector which grew from four public institutions to twenty-four in seven years. This expansion was achieved through the renaming of polytechnics and religious institutions as higher education institutions and caused universities to offer two and three-year diplomas to attract and increase their income from fees (Mann, 2014; Medani, 2013; Breidlid 2005; Abbas, 1991; El-Tom, 2007).

These educational changes along with the language of instruction becoming Arabic across all tiers of education, were closely aligned with the regime's Islamisation and Arabisation policies and carried out the 1990 declaration of Omer el-Beshir that education should be based on Islamic principles (Breidlid, 2005). The aim was not to completely remove any educational discipline that was deemed to be western oriented. Rather, the aim was to evaluate these disciplines through the Islamist lens that now governed Sudan (Salomon, 2016). This strategy affected educational outcomes at all levels and led to the decline of state education across Sudan and as a (possible) unintended consequence, a rise in private education institutions.

Mann (2014) explains that the period of 1988-1999 under the NCP, in which many educational changes took place, is widely referred to by Sudanese as 'Tamkeen' (lit. empowerment) and denotes the most prevalent period of the regime's dissemination of its ideas about Islam and consolidation of its control over the state. Breidlid (2005) contends that it is important to acknowledge national educational discourse is always linked to the dominant political discourse of a country. In doing so, he uses Breidlid Fiske's premise that 'knowledge is never neutral, and that the circulation of knowledge is part of the social distribution of power' (1989: 149-150) to frame his position. For this reason, he argues that the NCP viewed 'the education

system as a hegemonic tool in constructing and solidifying the nation state…' (Breidlid, 2005: 253) and its ideal of Sudanese Muslim citizens.

Both Breidlid (2005) and Mann (2014) are in keeping with the earlier position of Sudanese academic Zaki El-Hassan (1992). In his earlier analysis of NCP higher education policy, he proposed that education in the early days of the regime became 'an exercise in ideological and religious indoctrination, an attempt to convert students into subordinate and obedient species.' El-Hassan explains that this was carried out through the expulsion of students and dismissal of teaching staff who did not share in the ideology of the NCP. Justification for these expulsions was made through the policy of Al-Salih Al'am, literally meaning in the public interest. The policy allowed the administration to muzzle independent views in higher education and acted as a warning to students to tow the party line (El-Hassan, 1992; Breidlid, 2013; Gasim, 2019).

Another fundamental argument of El-Hassan was that religious indoctrination had been implemented through the inclusion of Islamic studies as a core subject in all disciplines, with the 'unmistakable purpose of indoctrinating students according to fundamentalist beliefs (1992:1; Bishai 2008).' This point is also articulated by Breidlid (2010) who quotes President al-Beshir about 'strengthening the faith and religious orientation of young people to become free and Allah-devoted (al-Bashir, 2004)'. On this basis Breidlid summarise that the NCP's Islamisation of education at all levels was an "Islamist crusade (2010: 563)."

He claims that this in turn led to what he defines as 'the epistemicide' of other knowledge systems and the spread of a monoculture that impacted all students, particularly those who were not Muslim or considered Arab, such as the South Sudanese (2013: 119). Along with Breidlid (2005; 2013), Abbas (1991) and Bishai (2008), have also discussed NCP education policies and their effect on education that resulted in a monoculture constructed on Islamised principles and the promotion of a hierarchal Arab identity.

Both Abbas (1991) and Breidlid (2005) propose that the favouring of specific cultural values at the cost of others was likely to lead to a system of exclusion and inclusion. Abbas demonstrates who is excluded and who is included through documentation of the disparity in enrolment between favoured states of Khartoum and the North which made up 80% of enrolment. By comparison states to the west and south of Sudan, equating two-thirds of the population, only made up 20% of enrolment (1991). To those living outside of Khartoum and the North, such numbers represented the inequity and bias which gave preference to Arab Muslim communities over them. It also reinforced to these communities the existence of embedded structural prejudices, and alongside these other issues gave rise to hostilities in regions such as Darfur and the two Kordofans.

However, the work of Breidlid (2005; 2013), Abbas (1991) and Bishai (2008), may overstate that the Arabisation and Islamisation of Sudan, and subsequently education began when the NCP came to power in 1989. In reality, this process had

already begun as colonialism came to an end, as reflected by the first civil war between Sudan and its southern regions beginning in 1955 about the imposition of Arab identity of the South Sudanese. The linguist B.G.V. Nyombe, a specialist in the languages of South Sudan explains, '… there has been an obsession since independence with the political need to project the Sudan to the outside world as a homogenous Arab nation; a nation with one language (Arabic), one religion (Islam), one culture (Arab-Moslem culture) …' (Nyombe, 1994; Sharkey, 2008).

This propensity to promote Arabisation and Islamisation was also demonstrated by the second longest regime under General Numeri (1969-1985). As Sharkey explains, Numeri's regime fell in 1985, but the regimes that succeeded him continued to uphold sharia law and to insist on Arabic and Islam as national unifiers (2008: 36). Nyombe and Sharkey both highlight that the agenda set by the NCP continued a tradition and exploited a theme that had been in process for decades. Therefore, the endeavours of the NCP should be viewed as a by-product and culmination of the continued modelling of the state of Sudan as Arab-Islamic and not a new phenomenon.

Notwithstanding the continuities between regimes since independence, in 1990 a significant policy change was announced as a part of president al-Bashir's decree that education in Sudan should be based on Islamic values (Breidlid, 2010), changing the language of instruction from English to Arabic at all educational levels. This, according to Bishai (2008), led to problems with the availability of materials and to the marginalisation of various groups of students in region of Sudan, such as Darfur and Juba, where Arabic was not natively spoken.

Moreover, as well as disadvantaging non-Arabic speakers, El-Hassan (1992) argues that implementation of the NCP Arabic language policy forced changes to university entry requirements and consequently alienated non-Arabic speakers, non-Muslims, and non-practicing Muslims. This was because the regime made it compulsory for students to have credits in both Arabic and Islamic studies as part of their entry requirements for any higher education subject regardless of how well they had scored in other areas.

Abbas' (1991), article on the NIF and the politics of education and the resistance of academics about the changes taking place during the early years of the regime; claims that change to the language of instruction from English to Arabic had no meaningful pedagogical justification. He argued that Arabisation did not help students to learn better nor improve the quality of pedagogy, and only served to embed the regimes ideas of how Sudanese culture should be.

In keeping with both Bishai and Abbas, Breidlid (2012) highlights the interconnectedness of language instruction and Islamisation under the NCP and argues that Arabic language's position was already unchallenged. In part, this was due to the precedence of Islamic dogma in educational texts, and therefore Breidlid claims that an Arab Islamic culture was already prevalent even in English language text. Abbas and Breidlid's observations demonstrate that the NCP capitalised on an

Arabisation policy which had existed amongst the Sudanese elite since the colonial period. Accordingly, Sharkey (2008) cites Abd al-Rahman Ali Taha, the first education minister of independent Sudan, who stated

> … it is of great importance that there should be one language which is understood by all its citizens (Sudanese). That language could only be Arabic, and Arabic must therefore be taught in all our schools (2008: 33 as quoted in Sandell, 1982)."

The statement was made in 1949, four decades before al-Bashir's own declaration, and illustrates the endorsement and promotion of Arabic language over the Sudanese population is not a new agenda for the governing classes. This agenda according to Sharkey is called 'ta'rib' and is literally translated as the process of Arabising society (2008).

As explained by Bishai, the implementation of Islamic themes into school textbooks along with Arabic, was achieved and justified using anticolonial rhetoric and a call to re-establish Sudanese traditions and culture. This allowed al-Bashir to justify such changes to the public as positive for the country and its core Islamic values (2008). Yet despite the endeavour to severe Sudan from its colonial past, Berridge (2018), draws parallels between the agenda of the governing Islamists including the NCP and Sudan's former colonial overseers the British. This she argues is due to the agenda being that of a very small elite group, whose idea of Sudan was not in keeping with most of the society.

The implementation of an Islamist agenda into the education of young Sudanese denoted the degree to which the education sector had become a fundamental component in the NCP spreading of its brand of Islamisation. Overriding this was the government's official policy that 'knowledge of Islam was prioritised above all other knowledge (Breidlid, 2005)'. Therefore, it was in the interests of NCP to ensure that the tenets of Islam spearheaded education at all levels, even if this meant its infusion into disciplines of in which it had not previously be taught.

A theme that is touched upon in Abbas (1991) and Bishai (2008), is how the change of language of instruction English to Arabic in education led to the subsequent isolation of non-Arabic speaking communities. Yet neither writer acknowledges that English is a foreign language that is unused in most Sudanese homes. They also fail to recognise the presence of Arabic language forms in these communities. In contrast to the scarcity of English-language speakers, Arabic pre-dated the Condominium period and was already the lingua franca in markets, the indigenous Quranic schooling system and everyday society. To argue this point, El-Hassan states, 'the majority of the population may not be Arab, but they are Arabic speaking… (1992).'

Over the last two decades of the twentieth century Sudan had begun to change linguistically in three ways. One of which was the increase of spoken Arabic in

regions that had not historically used it as a first language or lingua franca. For example, according to Sharkey (2012), in Darfur in the west of Sudan its use had spread amongst communities that had arrived during the early twentieth century such as, the Fulani and Hausa, who adopted the use of Arabic. Likewise, in the south, towns, and regions such as Juba (where Arabi-juba is popularly used) and Wau also saw an increase in Arabic's daily use. It is not clear from Sharkey's writing whether the use of Arabic in these regions was a pragmatic choice, but it does illustrate the language's presence amongst the diverse and once linguistically different communities of Sudan.

Also linked to the writers' omissions, is that the promotion of Arabic language represented a return to or reclamation of the Sudanese self. The move of the NCP to reengage in Arabic language instruction as in the pre-colonial period and as attempted by previous regimes (and which continued to be taught in the traditional Qur'anic schools throughout), as Breidlid highlights, would likely have been interpreted as a return to a pre-colonial sense of identity and tradition supported by those of a broad Islamic viewpoint, even with the inevitability some groups would be disenfranchised as a result (2005). The view in some Sudanese quarters, which was endorsed by the NCP, was that English language represented the former colonial power and was therefore an imposition and affront to national identity.

Nevertheless, El-Hassan (1992), emphasises three distinct reasons why Arabic language instruction was not advantageous for Sudanese students. Each of which likely predicated the decisions of Sudanese middle classes during this period to enter their children into private schooling. Firstly, El-Hassan argued there was a paucity of teachers with an excellent standard of modern standard Arabic, which he deemed to be problematic. He cited earlier failed attempts at the University of Khartoum to institute Arabic instruction as evidence. In higher education, he believed there to be a gap between Arabic language and the modern terminology used in some subjects, which meant words could not be readily translated. And, as later supported by Bishai (2008), he was also concerned about the scarcity of Arabic materials particularly in technical disciplines. These three reasons led El-Hassan to conclude, that failure to make changes in stages rather than sweepingly would result in education's detriment (1992).

Ironically, despite the insistence that Arabic language be used to educate the masses, Berridge argues that the NCP may not have been convinced by their own education policies, particularly in terms of Arabic language instruction. Prominent Islamists at home and abroad enrolled their children in English-language medium private schools and provided them with English language lessons, during this period (Berridge 2018).

Further scepticism towards the NCP and previous administrations Arabic language policies is shown in the writing of Heather Sharkey who suggests that there were two intentions at play, which drove the Arab language policies of consecutive Sudanese regimes. She argues that:

> ‘Lip service to promoting Arabic and Arab culture also proved useful as a means of winning political and financial support from countries like Saudi Arabia and Libya. As a policy, ta’rib thereby functioned as both a tool and a cudgel – enhancing political legitimacy and power… and drawing support from abroad, while supplanting local languages with Arabic and quashing claims to peripheral autonomy (2008: 37).

Although several factors have been discussed in relation to the failings of the NCP in education, it can be argued that most detrimental to the state of Sudanese education under the NCP, was the expedient and aggressive manner in which the changes to education were delivered. According to Lynch et al (1992), in consensus with El-Hassan (1992), Bishai (2008), and Breidlid (2010), it was the speed of changes to Sudanese education at all levels that inevitably led to injustices and a loss of support. As a result, Sudanese parents, who can afford private schooling, believe that they have been left with no other option than to pay in order to give their children the chance to receive a good education, free from what Kathleen Fincham (2018) describes as over-crowding in classrooms and underpaid and overwhelmed teachers.

It can be argued that some of the principals encased in the ideology of the NCP are illustrated in Qur’anic education, which also seeks to promote Islam’s central position in the lives of its students through the use of classical Arabic and memorisation of verses which are revealed in the language; and the idea that its ingestion should produce in the student the embodiment of the good Muslim (Ware, 2014). As a result, the creation of a hierarchy in which Arab culture is given specific value is also present in Qur’anic education as the Arabs are viewed to be custodians of the sacred language of revelation. For example, a verse in the Qur’an refers to the scripture itself as the ‘Arabic Qur’an’ (The Qur’an, 12:2).

Although the NIF/NCP Islamisation policy created a favourable climate in which Khalwas operated, they did not control all Khalwas or materially support them and different Khalwas continued to represent different expressions of - often Sufi - Islam. However, the effects of the regime’s other policies meant that groups who could afford to, such as the middle classes, began to look for alternative means to educate their children.

Education in Sudan, Access, and Barriers

This section addresses some of the societal factors that impact families’ decision-making about schooling or ability to send children into full-time education. Amongst them are factors such as access to finances or a lack of finance, requiring children to participate in building household incomes. As well as these circumstantial barriers, religious interpretation or cultural practices can also affect families’ decision-making regarding education. Another more external factor is regional education disparity, which can limit families’ access to or choices of education provision.

According to Abbas (1991) at the time of the NCP coming to power, school enrolment rates had generally remained consistent with the previous decade. As an example, he cited Darfur where enrolment under the NCP remained consistent with those going back to 1984, which he placed at 36%. However, Abbas' figures did not include Qur'anic schools. This was likely to be because many of these schools are private and locally run institutes. For national recording purposes this was problematic, as in a region such as Darfur, although children may not access mainstream schooling, it is possible that they are in religious education.

However, in contrast to Abbas's fixed enrolment rate argument, Sudanese economist Ebaidalla M. Ebaidalla, claims family expenditure on education has increased since the 1990s, coinciding with many of the NCP's changes to education. He cites spending rates in the capital to be significantly higher than regions in the north, east and south of Sudan by comparison. As a result, Ebaidalla concludes, this is evidence for his hypothesis that rural and poor families spend less on education (2018). However, it is also true that whilst household expenditure has generally increased, the quality of education offered by the state has not. According to Ebaidalla (2018) consequently, a significant portion of the population who are financially able have turned to private education (2018).

Continuing the theme of general enrolment's growth Ali (2010), records that it has jumped from 37% in 1994 to 66% in 2009. However, at a regional level, the disparity in general enrolment rates was apparent between the provinces of Gezira and River Nile at 89% and the Red Sea province which languished almost three times lower at 36%. Ali concluded from these statistics that they were an indication that education represented a privilege afforded to a minority of children usually from the middle classes in provinces such as Gezira and River, along with other provinces where enrolment remained below 50% (2010).

A broader factor, in enrolment is disparity in education caused by location and is cited by both Bedri (2013) and Daoud (2013). Each argues that regional disparity acts as a barrier to Sudanese children completing their basic education. Their concern is evidenced by rural communities, where self-exemption and higher dropout rates are more commonplace when compared to children from urban areas, who are also 17 percent more likely to access education (Ministry of General Education 2012; Daoud, 2013; Bedri, 2013).

Gender also has a role in preventing the completion of basic education in Sudan. Adbelmoneium (2005), explains some parents are reluctant to educate girls because they believe there is no financial reward to be gained from their education, as it is likely that their finances will be diverted to their husbands' families when married. According to Bedri (2013), completion of education, early dropout, or removal from school, are more likely to impact girls' education more than boys in communities, where males are viewed as eventual breadwinners and a woman's place is perceived to be in the home. However, Ali (2010) concludes that preceding interest in financial gain, is tribal culture and claims this is the reason for some parents' lack of

investment in girls' education. He also states that this is coupled with legitimate concerns about girls' sexual exploitation and harassment in schools. This is affected by age variation in some schools, that can mean pupils ranging from 6 -13 in age can be taught on the same site (Adbelmoneium 2005; Fincham, 2018).

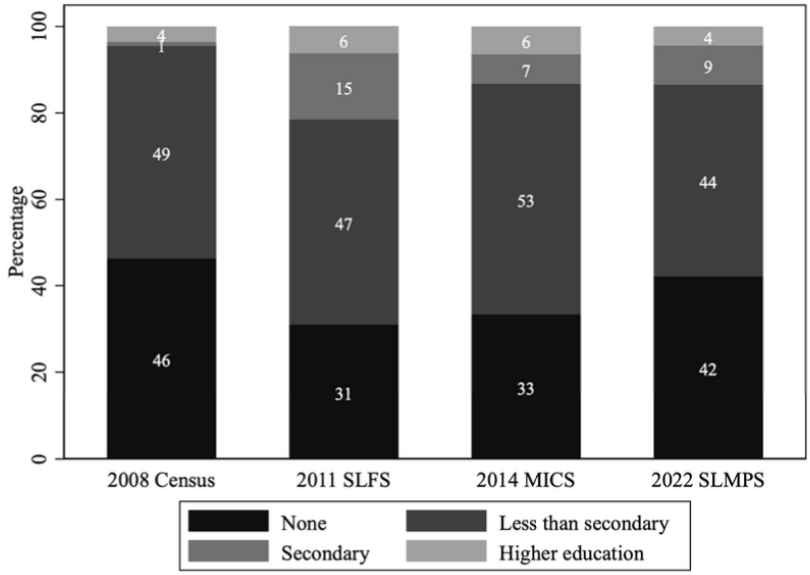
The issue of gender forms part of a wider discourse about attitudes of parents towards education based on cultural and religious understanding. As a result, views of education can vary based on what communities perceive its function to be. Farag (2013) describes the challenging attitudes towards education that exist in some communities, such as Sudan's semi-nomadic and nomadic groups, who consider education to be a lengthy and expensive process. According to Farag, this stems from community perceptions of a lack of immediate and tangible reward, rather than financial cost (2013).

When Sudanese families do encounter financial constraints, there can be issues educating their children. This in turn can lead to poor attendance or early dropout before the completion of elementary education. In some cases, this is because the child is required to make a financial contribution to the home, fulfil another role that is seen to be more urgent, because the families simply cannot afford school related costs (Hisham 2010).'

Though basic education has been free since the colonial period, a reason the noted factors have recently had such repercussions for families and their education, is that in the first two decades of the NCP's thirty-year regime, less than 2% of Sudan's GDP went towards education. Only during the last decade has it surpassed that number by point-one percent. According to Ebaidalla when compared to national spending statistics for other sub-Saharan countries such as, Botswana, Kenya, South Africa and Sudan's neighbours Ethiopia and Uganda, Sudan's represented the lowest figures between 1990 and 2014 (2018: 163).

Explaining the factors which contributed to Sudan's low spending on education, Ebaidalla (2018) cites structural adjustment program repayments, as well as austerity measures implemented in 1992, as reasons that have determined this period of low education spending. Ebaidalla also cites Sudan's adherence to free market trade since 1990 as another reason for the country's reduction in education spending. However, whilst austerity may explain the increase in household spending on education, this justification does not stand up very well when compared to the country's spending on the military during the same period.

As a result, the literature implies that children of low-income families who suffer a lack of access or continuity in education are left with ambitions and aims which are unfulfilled due to overriding circumstances over which they have little to no agency. Parents' attitudes towards education, expenses and government planning are also key factors and the economic stability of families can determine access to schooling or the schooling of choice (Bedri, 2013).



Source: Authors' calculations based on SLMPS 2022, MICS 2014, Sudan Census 2008, and SLFS 2011 report (Ministry of Human Resources Development and Labour 2011.
Note: given very different rates of reporting pre-primary across data sources, we include preschool as the highest level with no school.

Figure 8- Education percentage levels of children 6+ collated between 2008 - 2022 (Krafft, Assaad and Cheung, 2023)

Conclusion

This section has highlighted the influences of politics on the discourses and ideals that are promoted through education. Whilst as I have previously stated this is not a uniquely Sudanese phenomenon, what is acutely Sudanese is the promotion of an Arab/Islamic identity which began prior to the end of colonialism and which has continued to be replicated in differing degrees since (Berridge, 2018).

The literature also highlighted the resistance of students to the ideologies of the government elite, which left some communities on the periphery of Sudan's Arab/Islamic hierarchical system. The work of Berridge (2018) in particular, has demonstrated the influence of the AEC administration and its policies in education, in helping to form and propagate ideas of an Arab/Islamic influence. This bridges the historical analysis of the previous chapter and begins the exploration and examination of middle-class Muslim attitudes about education in Sudan that will develop over the coming chapters. In addition, it also ties in with the impact of Islamic and secular education in Muslim societies documented in other sections about the literature and illustrates the legacy of this coming together.

CHAPTER 8. How Sudanese Families Make the Country's Educational Provision Work for Them

This chapter begins the inclusion of Sudanese voices in the discourses about schooling in Sudan. It shows how education and education policies since the AEC impacted their learning. The views and opinions expressed in the files of the Condominium's education department, represented only colonial administrators framing of the development of the Sudanese education system. Despite the granular detail in many of the reports, they do not give the reader any access to the views of the indigenous population about the evolution of Sudanese education. Instead, reports are an illustration of the processes that are happening to them. Reading through the archive, the omission of Sudanese voices is palpable.

There are inferences about the sentiments of the Sudanese such as, indifference to Condominium education during its early period, followed later on by parents' recognition of the importance of Condominium education to children's prospects. There are also reports on strike action taken by students at Gordon Memorial College over the lowering of graduate wages in the 1930s (Deng, 1984:233).[148] There are recordings of student strikes in the mid-late 1940s. The strikes reflected the climate in Sudan at that time, wherein the early 1940s had already witnessed 14 strikes against labour conditions. Therefore, the student strikes were in solidarity with burgeoning anti-government attitudes in society and against the anti-union and worker stance of the education department (Sikainga, 1996).[149] However, the recording of these incidents in the reports are expressed through the prism of Condominium administrators' interests, and as a result do not offer in depth insights into motivations or qualitative accounts of local populations about what led to these moments in Condominium education taking place.

Participants in this study are from the Sudanese middle-class, which emerged under the Condominium and in part because of its state schooling policies (GGR, 1902). However, today middle-class families have lost faith in the quality of state education and have chosen to invest financially in their children's education by enrolling them in private schools. This has resulted in the transformation of the educational landscape and created differences in the standard of education offered by the private and state school sectors.

At independence, the administration of Sudan and its education system became the responsibility of Sudanese middle-class men. These men, who had received their education at Sudan's prestigious schools, were well-positioned to take up the mantle of an independent Sudan. This was partly because of their elite education under the

[148] GGR, 1931
[149] GGR, 1949

Condominium that was framed by its need to grow a pool of local civil servants to support the country's administration and enterprises. It was also due to their position at the forefront of the independence movement. However, the frequency of post-independence stratocracy (military rule) has limited the middle-classes political input. Nonetheless, their economic strength has played an important part in changes that have taken place in the recent educational landscape, particularly in relation to the emergence of the private school sector since the 1990s.

As the stratum with the financial power to choose the type of education their children engage in, Sudanese middle-classes have since the NCP regime's Islamisation of school curriculums in 1990 opted for private schooling (Breidlid, 2005). However, this does not mean that Muslim Sudanese middle-class families are completely detached from Qur'anic schooling and within this social group it continues to play a role in shaping Sudaneseness. The detailed experiences of interviewees featured in this section's subchapters demonstrate participants' perceptions of and connections to Qur'anic education.

This chapter shows that while the middle-classes have generally rejected Qur'anic schools as full-time education, the training provided by Qur'anic schools is still seen as necessary, perhaps especially for the middle class, to inculcate in their children a sense of 'Sudaneseness' and a proper Islamic disposition. Government schools are no longer perceived by the middle classes to offer either an Islamic nor an adequate secular education and, consequently, the middle classes have abandoned public secular schools for private schools.

Most of the interviewees whose education experiences are represented here were not at school during the Condominium. However, some attended school in the immediate post-independence period and younger respondents reflected on what education in independent Sudan has been, is, and should be. They show that the middle-classes have remained attached to traditional religious education in the form of Qur'anic schooling. Their attachment contrasts the premise that religious observance and belief wanes in the face of modernisation and prosperity (Deneulin and Bano, 2009:53).

A View of Sudan from the Outside, Where the Grass Appears Greener: Khary and Hamid

This section uses interviews with two Sudanese brothers Khary and Hamid, to evaluate the changes to the education ladder that took place in secondary schooling during the NCP regimes first decade in power. It also examines the views of these participants as members of the Sudanese diaspora about the country's education system and its merits in socialising children into an Islamic cultural way of life. The section discusses the desire of the participants to have engaged in a more vigorous Qur'anic education and how this sat in contradiction of the education they received and reasons for that.

Khary and his younger brother Hamid were born in Sudan in the early to mid 1980s but currently reside in London, UK. Khary has been resident in the UK for 15 years, whilst Hamid arrived and settled three years ago. Both travels back to Sudan regularly and have expressed their intention to return to Sudan with their young families. They have both subsequently had to suspend their plans of a return to Sudan due to a series of events such as Covid-19, the suspension of Sudan's Transitional government and the country's general political instability.

The brothers were born and raised in the Eastern region of Qadaref, one of Sudan's biggest farming states, bordering Ethiopia. Qadaref is known for its production of corn, sesame, and sunflowers, and enjoys rainy seasons for half of the year that mitigate against artificial irrigation. Due to the reliance on agricultural for economy of the state, its capital (also named Qadaref) and smaller towns are annually flooded for half the year by agriculturalists from across Sudan who hope to prosper from the harvest season.

Khary and Hamid are from a polygynous, well-educated family. Their father is a high-ranking government agricultural official, responsible for the taxation and charity payments on crops harvested from across the state. He also became a successful agriculturalist and landowner, owning 4 farms of 1000 acres each. As a result of their father's successes, the brothers describe a comfortable life growing up. They stated during interview that as children they were able to concentrate on their education without disruption and unlike many of the children they knew, there was not a need for the siblings to pause their studies to help with harvest seasons.

A four-year age difference, different mothers and changes in government policy during their schooling, meant the brothers' education paths followed different trajectories. For Khary, education consisted entirely of state schooling followed by university. However, Hamid was educated in a government primary school before entering a private secondary school. He also enrolled for a year in university before entering Sudan's Military College. However, Khary does not believe the differences in their education were because Hamid was afforded better opportunities by his mother and their father in the polygynous family structure. Instead, he concluded that education options were influenced by local developments in education and time. For example, the private school Hamid joined was not established until Khary's secondary education was near completion.

The changing educational landscape that the brothers encountered, meant that as the older brother Khary joined a local mixed-sex government primary school at the age of seven that was also attended by his older sister. However, within two years mixed-sex government schools were phased out in favour of single-sex schools by the Beshir administration. This led to Khary transferring to a single-sex primary school a walking distance from the family home, where Hamid would join him a few years later. Mixed schools have continued to exist in Sudan but are now synonymous with private education, whilst state schools having commonly moved to a single-sex model.

Khary explained that although his family was affluent, the schools chosen for him and his older siblings (Hamid would later be the exception) did not indicate the family's wealth and his classmates were typically sons and daughters of local agricultural workers. He believes his parents opted to send him to local government schools because of the convenience and close proximity to home. And this was the preferred option at that time rather than a private school which would have meant travel to another district further away. However, when the convenience of a private school located close to the family materialised, Hamid was sent there for his secondary education. At this time importantly for Hamid's family, the impact of al-Beshir's declaration of Islamist-influenced changes to education, meant that many of Sudan's middle-class made the decision to transition to private education in order to secure social mobility (Breidlid, 2005; Lentz, 2020).

Academic life and English Language

Hamid and Khary shared their enjoyment of school and determined that this was the result of having an over demanding father, who allowed them to choose their own educational pathways. They stated that his only expectation was that they applied themselves to their schooling. Khary referred their father's approach to his sons' education as 'kinda freelance', meaning they had room to develop educationally without an overriding fear of failure. They also mentioned that their father's approach also meant an openness to different types of education and later in this chapter claim that had there been a Khalwa in their vicinity that they may have allowed to attend it full-time. Yet, it what emerges from this chapter is that their schooling had been planned with Qur'anic education as an extracurricular activity and with state and private school as their primary source of schooling.

Although the brothers enjoyed their school journeys, there were changes to the educational landscape during their education and Khary stated that he had seen three significant changes to education take place during his lifetime. His schooling coincided with the early phase of the Beshir regime, and a change of Sudan's education ladder from the 6-3-3 primary, middle and secondary school model that had led the 1970 New Education Project under Nimeiri, to an 8-3 primary and secondary school model (Lynch, Qarib Allah and Omer, 1992). He explained this meant he and Hamid had studied under a different system to their older brother who was a few years ahead. Khary speculated that as a result, it was possible he had missed out on some learning given the removal of an entire year of study from the education ladder. In addition, he thought it was likely that he had also missed out socially on the opportunity to widen his friendship network through the erasure of middle schooling.

Two years after Khary finished secondary school, the Ministry of Education overhauled the national curriculum. For Hamid who had just begun his secondary

education, the change saw him, and other students must adjust from studying 9 subjects to 16 subjects in his first and second year. On reflection Hamid questioned the necessity of some of newly introduced subjects such as 'Knowing the Military', a sentiment that has been reflected in the latest Transitional Government's return to the 6-3-3 model and lessening of subjects.

Khary's entire schooling was delivered in Arabic apart from his English lessons, introduced when he was 9 years old. According to the brothers, recently some state schools have begun to introduce English language as early as year one. However, Khary claims that he is aware of current examples of children beginning to learn English language far later, with the English alphabet introduced at 12 years old. He argues that children who start to learn English a later age are disadvantaged in the present-day climate, in which he views English language skills to be a key component for good jobs. In contrast, Hamid regards the usefulness of English language differently, arguing that it was not valuable to young people who intend to stay in Sudan but necessary for students who would eventually go abroad.

Thereafter, Khary was able to understand Hamid's point of view and although he did not retract his view on English language's importance to Sudanese students, he pointed to the reality of the Sudanese job market explaining.

> … in Sudan we have huge unemployment, its huge unemployment, so whether you studied English or not it is very hard to find a job in your field. That's why you find a lot of people going to either Saudi or close by. And if you have a second language it's a bonus…

Khary's reasoning for why people leave Sudan for Saudi Arabia and surrounding Gulf states is in keeping with Samia Mohamed Nour's position in Technological Change and Skill Development in Sudan, in which she puts forward that the migration of highly skilled workers to the Gulf has led to a brain drain in Sudan and can be attributed in part to a lack of employment opportunities in Sudan (2013: 51-52).

According to Khary, despite beginning to learn English in school, it was not until university that he understood its value to his prospects. This was because part of his classroom instruction was in English, and he initially found it challenging to understand what was being taught. This was a frustration that was compounded by his international classmates from West Africa, who found lectures easy to understand due to their command of English language. For Khary, this was embarrassing, and he found it ironic that he was studying at Khartoum university having fulfilled the entry requirements but unable to understand his lectures, whilst students who had joined from outside of Sudan could.

Khary blamed this experience and what he assumed to be similar experiences of other Sudanese on the condition of English language in state schools. He highlighted what he viewed to be an unnecessary fixation with grammar in English lessons,

rather than the teaching of communication skills such as, conversation and fluency. Instead, his conclusion was that state school students received summaries of English language that were not fit for purpose and that could not be used to help students later in life, as illustrated by his experience in higher education.

Unlike Khary, Hamid entered a private secondary school and therefore described a different schooling experience, whereby he was able to understand the value of English language at an earlier age than his sibling, with much of the instruction being in English. He also encountered classmates whose use of English language was of a very good standard and better than his own. Whilst this meant that classes were initially very challenging, immersion within the school and the motivation to seek private English lessons helped him improve his language skills before university. It can also be inferred that the influence of different maternal lines, may have had an impact on approaches to English language taken by each brother.

The Role of Quranic Education in Creating Two Islamic Pathways

Khary's memory of his Islamic education is a combination of religious studies in primary, middle and secondary school and Qur'an school. At school, religious studies began in Year One, where he recalls learning short Surahs (chapters) from the last portion of the Qur'an, along with some sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S) and small matters of Fiqh (jurisprudence). Khary explained that each year the content of his Islamic studies curriculum became more complex, as the chapters memorised were progressively longer and the emphasis of the rules of recitation more demanding, culminating in a test or written exam at the end of each academic year.

He expressed constant awareness of the importance that succeeding in Islamic studies played in his and fellow students' education. This was because the Beshir regime had made pass marks in Islamic studies and Arabic language mandatory for students to gain the Shahada-Sudania (National Education Certificate) when leaving secondary school. Khary explained that failure to gain either of these subjects prevented students from acquiring the complete certificate, applying to most university courses and excluded students from specialist subjects at the Islamic University at Omdurman. According to Khary, this awareness and his personal interest in Islam drove him to succeed in these subjects, ensuring that his passage to university was not disrupted.

Similarly, Hamid developed an interest in Islamic studies, and in his spare time throughout his schooling attended daily Qur'an recitation circles at a neighbourhood mosque. This continued when he moved to Military College in Khartoum. There he found the company of a Qur'an teacher from Chad, who helped him to advance his recitation, learning the Warsh style alongside the more popular Hafs recitation style used throughout Sudan. For Hamid, his commitment to learning these styles of recitation outside of his formal education illustrated his religiosity. Given his passion for learning about Islam, during interview he expressed his frustration at his private

school Islamic studies curriculum not mirroring his extracurricular activities. He found teachers to be uneducated in the Islamic sciences and reliant on textbooks for rules on recitation, which differed from the knowledge in the circles of Islamic learning he attended outside.

On reflection, the brothers wished that they had studied full-time in Khalwa, and despite the privilege of being afforded private lessons in Qur'an and school subjects with a paid tutor, Khary reasoned that it must have been the lack of proximity to a Qur'an school which had led to their attendance of state and private schools.

> the only thing I could think is that there was no pronounced Khalwa next to our house in or in our city. The nearest one is the one I mentioned to you earlier, and that's like nearly three hours... 3 hours… 4 hours. I mean, if we had lived maybe in the Wad al-Fadni or Abu Izza they would've sent us there.

Hamid agreed with his brother's conclusion and believed that had they lived closer to a nationally famous Khalawi such as, Wad-al-Fadni or Abu- Izza then they would have surely attended full-time. However, it is telling that local Qur'an schools in Qadaref were not incorporated into their education on a full-time basis and signals that these reflections are given with the benefit of hindsight or not based on the realities of what their parents intended for them educationally. Whatever, the case might have been, Hamid asserted his belief that Qur'anic education holds great value for anchoring Muslims, elaborating that this was not just towards the hereafter but in this world also.

Although Khary was clear on Qur'anic schoolings usefulness to Muslims, unlike in his own family he observed that the importance of Qur'anic education had been reduced by other wealthy Sudanese families, due to what he perceived was '… a faction of society that want their kids to be westernised.' These families according to Khary were not atypical of Sudanese society in general and he insisted that most Sudanese families still engaged their children in learning at a Qur'an school. On this point, Hamid also observed that those who desired to achieve westernisation through education were strengthened in their position by the government's poor investment in Islamic education. This he said was despite the Beshir regime's early proclamations about fusing Islam into education (Abbas, 1991; Breidlid, 2005; Bishai, 2008). Hamid once again returned to his frustrations with schools' Islamic curriculum, arguing that it forces students who are inclined to religion to have to go and search for it themselves, as he had formerly done. Moreover, it was inferred from this part of the interview that his frustration was also with the fact that this struggle existed in the borders of a Muslim country.

However, Khary's general position on Qur'anic and Islamic education in schools is different to Hamid's and is derived from his satisfaction at that element of his schooling. Their dissimilarity on this point also stems from their differing pursuits of Islamic knowledge. Although both brothers received private lessons in the rules of

Qur'an by a local tutor at some point in their schooling; beyond this Khary's afterschool hours were not filled with lessons in the mosque through choice. Instead, Khary's interest was in Sufism, and he joined the Sammaniyah Brotherhood to concentrate on the spiritual and esoteric aspects of Islam.

For Hamid, the interest was Qur'anic learning that required a different approach to Islamic knowledge and rigorous adherence to rules of recitation and jurisprudence. This rigor explained what he viewed to be the contrast between what he had learnt in mosque Qur'an circles and what he learnt in school; and formed his current expectations of what school students should accrue from their Islamic studies curriculum. In addition, based on data collected from other participants in this study, who had private educations, Islamic studies was not given the same emphasis or importance as other subjects and that this is what also framed Hamid's experience.

Although Khary's extracurricular Qur'anic education was not daily, he did spend time at a Khalwa during summer holidays, a practice he said was also common amongst his school friends. For two to three months of the summer break, he along with his older maternal brother and sister would stay at a family friend's home 30 minutes outside the city. There the siblings would learn the Qur'an by writing and memorising from the Loh (wooden writing tablet). He explained that he enjoyed this experience, as it differed greatly from his normal education routine of sitting on a chair behind a single desk, whereas in Qur'an school he sat on the floor to learn and would recite in a circle of students. Khary's sentiment here indicated his enjoyment of the novelty of communal education in Qur'anic institutes and its contrast to the individualism of his secular schooling.

Leaning to his spiritual Islamic inclination at Khalwa, Khary experienced the practice of ingesting the Qur'an. This was achieved by drinking Gum-Arabic used for ink to write Qur'anic verses on his Loh in a solution mixed with water. Encouraged by his mother, Khary would drink this solution to receive the blessings of the Qur'an and spoke of the special smell that emanated from it, describing it as calming. This practice is common across Sahelian Qur'an schools, where students are taught and come to understand each verse to be sacred and subsequently seek to embody the Qur'an both physically and metaphysically. In his writings about Senegalese Qur'anic education and the practices of physical and spiritual embodiment, Ware explains this practice of 'imbibing' to be a means through which Qur'anic knowledge becomes embedded in the physical, spiritual and subconscious of its students (2014:57).

In this part of the interview, the brothers shared their different journeys with Qur'anic education and highlighted how it was fused into their lives, whether in school or as an extra-curricular learning activity. Neither viewed it to have lost significance with the majority of Sudanese society; and although Hamid wanted to see improvements in how it was taught in schools, he and Khary demonstrated their confidence in the permanence of Qur'anic education in Sudan, as highlighted by Khary's statement.,

> it's still still strong and I believe it's still going to continue to be strong. But if I had had gone back in time, I was definitely going to Qur'anic school.

Considerations for Children's Education and Their Future Selves

As Khary and Hamid reside in the UK but expressed their desire to return to Sudan during interview, I was interested in the implications that this might have for their children's future education. In the UK, Khary and Hamid's young children attend state primary schools and I wanted to understand how their options for their children's education might differ in the context of Sudan. This was a matter of interest given their individual experiences in Sudanese state and private education and expressed wish to have attended Khalwa full-time when they themselves were children.

Khary and his wife have two young boys who are a year apart and in infant school. He admitted to having concerns about their identity and heritage growing up and being educated in the UK. In order to address and prevent their identity becoming something about which they are conflicted as they become older, he explained.

> …I'm thinking now I have two little boys; I'm thinking of going to Sudan and send them there to learn Arabic because that's that's the way they should be. And then they can come back here whenever they like to when they mature.

Khary explained that he had intended to make his return to Sudan two or three years ago but had been deterred by continued deterioration in the country's political climate. This had led him to conclude that it was not the right time for his family to return and to add context, the day of our interview marked 100 days since the military coup under General Burhan, that had thrown hopes of democratic elections into disarray. As a result, Khary now hoped that he would be able to return to Sudan within a year or two and capped his time to return at a maximum of 5 years, whatever the political situation might be. His aim is for boys to become acquainted with Sudan, Arabic language, and an Islamic setting; after which he envisions that they will return to the UK at the ages of 14 or 15 in time to sit their GCSE exams. He believes that by that age the boys will be moored in their identities enough to mitigate against becoming detached from their Islamic faith and heritage.

I enquired whether his intention was to impart Sudanese culture to his boys and Khary responded in the negative and evidenced his response by highlighting that his wife was of Somali-Yemeni extraction and felt similarly. He also mentioned that his thinking was not unique and that conversations with friends whose children were of Moroccan, Algerian and Egyptian heritage had highlighted similar considerations.

Therefore, he asserted that his plans were more linked to embedding the boys in Islam than Sudaneseness. Moreover, Khary claimed that learning Arabic was crucial for his children's Islamic identity to be true and clarified:

> Yeah, because if you if you you're a Muslim essentially and if you don't know your your main language, you cannot navigate through the religion. Yeah, so you need to learn Arabic properly

Khary's use of the phrase 'cannot navigate through the religion', was anecdotal and it can be deduced that Khary meant that ability to interpret the faith with freedom was contingent on some mastery of Arabic language, as elements of the religion's framework is linked to Arabic language terminology and etymology. Otherwise, what would have implied was that most of the Muslim world across Asia, and Africa were not Muslims in the same way as a fluent Arabic speaker.

However, his assertion that the thoughts were orientated to religion over culture, his concerns about the boys' Sudanese identity without Arabic language was later expressed when he compared his children's lack of Arabic to Hamid's children, who were fluent having been born and raised in Sudan before coming to the UK three years ago. Unlike Hamid's children, Khary's are unable to communicate fully with their grandmothers or aunties when in Sudan for holiday. In illustration of concern about his boys' Sudaneseness during interview, he expressed (similarly to Hiba and Omar's father in the Hamoudi family chapter) that 'you can't be Sudanese, and you don't know how to speak Arabic language.'
On the surface, Khary's position on the importance of Arabic to his children's lives appears paradoxical, on the one hand he seems to express its importance to an Islamic identity and on the other, a significance to Sudanese identity. However, I would argue that his position on religion and nationality here illustrates their merger or the spectrum of their association in Sudan.

However, there was no differentiation between Khary and other parents in this study, who all valued the importance of children being anchored religiously and culturally but thought it equally important to have job security because of a good education. This acknowledgement has led him to concede that his children's education could not solely be based on Qur'an to secure their futures. I asked whether this meant he would send them to private school in Sudan and he pragmatically proposed the following:

> I would (will) be completely honest with you… I would make a balance; I would make fine balance between the two (Qur'anic and private). I would not let them miss out on the on the Qur'an, the Khalawi authentic way, sitting with the Shaykh at the same time. (And) Learning the westernised education because I don't want (them) to miss out.

When probed on what not wanting his children to miss out meant, Khary explained that it was a reference to their eventual return to Europe and not wanting them to miss out on the development of technology, acknowledging what Zajda (2009:18) calls 'technology-driven social stratification.' He elaborated that as the world moves on so quickly by taking them to Sudan, he did not want them to be left behind. He also articulated his worry about their ability to reintegrate into UK society seamlessly, adding that it was important that they had authentic UK accents when they eventually entered the UK job market, based on his experiences. Khary's opinions here tie in with Butler's argument that children can have educational parallels, in which days are divided between Islamic and secular education whilst not integrating. To achieve this Khary proposed

> I think, I think it's quite easy to get. It's really you could do it like because schooling in Sudan they are finished by one o'clock or one-thirty and then they can come back, have a have a nap, and then they go back for for Islamic studies or Qur'anic school because the day is very long in Sudan, it is almost 12 hours day, 12 hours night so you can, you can balance it that way.

Now thinking about his children's integration in Sudan, Khary added that his preference for his children to attend private school and not state school was based on their status as outsiders from Europe, who might be subjected to bullying, because they do not speak Arabic. His reasoning was that their chances of integrating were made more likely by enrolling in British-curriculum private schools where there is English language instruction, and the language is used by students daily making his children's transition to Sudan easier. Whilst this was the primary reason that he has ruled out Sudanese government schools, another consideration was their reputations for overcrowding, which he claims can leave some students sat on the floor whilst others are sat at tables and chairs. Khary's concern about overcrowding in state schools is also mentioned by another of this study's participants Mohammed Jafar later in this chapter, who views this as a pressing issue that is symptomatic of the decline of state schooling. There is a clear distinction between Khary's expectations of secular and Qur'anic schooling. The prospect of his children sitting on the floor in front of a Shaykh learning Qur'an is viewed to be nurturing and therefore acceptable. However, his expectations of secular schooling are different, and it should provide all of the facilities and technologies to students in order to for them to thrive including enough chairs and desks.

Hamid has experienced similar concerns about his children's integration into a new environment having left Sudan to settle in the UK. He explained there had been times they had struggled to adapt to their new setting and at a young age had displayed conflicting behaviours that arise from having learnt and lived in two cultures. This has been an influence on his decision to return to Sudan and belief it will eventually be the best outcome for his family. As an alternative strategy until he is able to leave for Sudan permanently, he has decided to invest in the children's

Islamic education in the UK. And he is currently considering their enrolment in an after-school Qur'an programme at his local mosque. In addition, he and his wife have committed to only communicating with their children in Arabic in the home to help preserve their language fluency and culture.

The al-Hamoudi Family Participants

This sub-chapter will examine the positive and negative aspects of private school education in Sudan for its students in terms of language of instruction, Sudanese identity, and socialisation. The chapter then evaluates strategies employed by the al-Hamoudi family to incorporate Qur'anic education into their children's lives, their reasons for choosing it and current views of this type of learning. Alongside this, data collected from their maternal uncle Khalil, is used to demonstrate early post-independence education and experiences of non-government schooling that although not strictly private or fee-paying denote learning outside of state schooling.

The al-Hamoudi family by profession and according to Sahal's definition (1999) are a typical Sudanese middle-class family, with a mother who runs a civil society organisation (CSO) and father who is prominent in the arts. They educated their children in private school. Two of the three siblings in the family Hiba and Omar, who I interviewed, were educated at an elite private school between 2000 – 2015. It is one of the most sought after and well-known schools in Sudan. It is and located in the capital Khartoum. It dates to the AEC period, in which students were initially non-Sudanese only.

In addition to attending private school the al-Hamoudi children also spent their summer holidays abroad, usually as tourists in various European cities. Although Omar feels his family were 'middle to upper class...not on the upper end, it was on the middle end', such privilege demonstrates that they are clearly part of the post-independence Sudanese elite. After he graduated High School, in 2016 Omar moved to the UK to study International Relations at university in London on a full scholarship. This was withdrawn in his second year and his father continued to pay his tuition fees and financially support him.

However, the families' financial abilities have changed in the years between Omar's graduation and Hiba's arrival in London for post-graduate study in 2021. She completed her master's at the University of London in 2022 and explained 'I don't think I would be here if you know, if there was no scholarship, like I wouldn't, I wouldn't be here… like it's definitely changed, its [their financial situation] changed a lot.' It is possible that this is reflective of the financial constraints that have been placed on the Sudanese middle-class, that has seen roles once described as middle-class now sat very close to the country's poverty line (Magal and Omer, 2020).

The third respondent from the al-Hamoudi family is Omar and Hiba's older brother Khalil. He and his age mates were a part of a generation of students whose education was forged in a country that had begun its shift from its British colonial to a pan-Arab identity. He started school at the age of six, a few years after

independence, and attended a Catholic school. During his school career, there were seven changes in government, including the military regimes of Generals Abboud (1958-1964) and Nimeiri (1971-1985) in the early post-independence period.

In comparison to Hiba and Omar's father, Khalil's upbringing was privileged. His father was a personnel manager at a petrol refinery, a job which meant he had to have been educated to at least secondary level during a period in which Sudan had just one recognised university. At the time his job placed him in either the middle or upper classes (Niblock, 1987; Sahal, 1999). Khalil's mother was a housewife who he described as a pious woman.

He and his siblings attended Comboni school, a Catholic school established in Sudan in 1929, to educate international students. Due to the agreement between the Condominium government and religious missions that proselytising other than Islam in the north of the country was not allowed, Sudanese did not attend. However, in 1944 this rule was relaxed, and the school was allowed to teach Sudanese students, even though the ban on imparting Catholic religious doctrine remained (Vantini, 2005). It was not considered to be a private or fee-paying school, however, the academic staff made up of primarily priests and nuns gave it a particular status as a good educational institute. According to Khalil, Comboni is what is meant by a religious school institute rather than Qur'an schools which he did not attend as a child.

Language, Identity and Belonging

> "I don't remember, and this was obviously, was a pre-reception reception, first grade and it was an English school English curriculum, British curriculum but we also had Sudanese curriculum in terms of Arabic and religious classes." – Hiba.

In this section, the al-Hamoudi family share opinions about private schooling and its effects on their identities and Arabic language use. These discourses about the repercussions of private schooling on Sudanese Muslim identity are important in understanding the motivations of middle-class parents that are later discussed about why they incorporate Qur'anic learning into their children's education.

For Hiba and her siblings, the decision to enter private and not state education created gaps in their Sudanese Muslim identity. As a result, they struggled to marry their exposure to 'British curriculum' schooling to their Sudaneseness outside their schools' boundaries. This she says was demonstrated by a limited ability to communicate comfortably in Sudanese Arabic, to a degree that would be considered authentic by the surrounding community. This in turn led to a struggle to be accepted as children culturally moored in Sudaneseness.

The al-Hamoudi family accept that their private education resulted in a disconnection from Arabic language. This outcome belies the homogenous Arabic language use that is fused to north Sudanese identity. There are multiple languages in use across the north including Hausa and Nubian, and this can result in children from these language communities experiencing similar feelings of estrangement when entering Arabic-speaking schools (Abbas, 1991; El-Hassan, 1992; Bishai 2008). However, this is likely to be less common given the widespread use of Arabic and concentrated Arabisation policies of consecutive governments since independence.

Conversely, in Sudan children who attend state schools begin to study English language at a later age than those in private school and Qur'anic schools do not teach English language. As a result, children in these types of school are more competent in their use of everyday Arabic-Sudani, and this exposure better aligns them with Sudanese culture and social cues than their private school counterparts.

Private and elite education socialisation, and the significant detachment from the surrounding culture is not a new phenomenon. Similar traits and disconnections were also seen amongst groups of students at the prestigious Gordon Memorial College (now Khartoum University), who formed the early educated middle-classes during the early Condominium period. For example, according to Sharkey (2003), Condominium private school socialisation left its school graduates with similar feelings of dissonance and a closed network, and she argued.

> Students emerged from this school regime with a shared culture that had a global reach; they were likely to know not only the latest trends in the Sudan and Egypt, but also those in Britain and farther afield. Believing that this very modernity and worldliness set them above other Sudanese groups (including, significantly, their fathers) (2003:157).

It can be concluded that from inception these types of schools have helped to create a particular kind of Sudanese student through language socialisation and specialised curriculums. Sharkey further explains how this process of socialisation took place and how ideals of Britishness were instilled in young Sudanese students attending prestigious schools since the early Condominium period.

> "Gordon College was a vocational school in the sense that it educated students to fill specific jobs in the regime. Yet, in its incarnation as a school in the British "public" style, the college also trained students "for life." It attempted to make out of each student the jack-of-all-trades, the sportsman, the man of strong character and code of service-in other words, an individual fitting the ideal of the British district commissioner (2003:163)."

However, the emergence of private school education as the preferred kind of schooling for middle class families over state schools according to Khalil, is a phenomenon that was born out of public reactions to the education policies of the Beshir/NIF regime post 1989 which meant education at all levels on the school ladder shifted away from English language instruction to Arabic (El-Hassan, 1992; Bishai 2018).

> between 1950 until 1989… we don't have, uh, private schools. The best system is the state schools. Nobody would send his child to private or a foreign school at that time, nobody… No family, whether he is rich or poor. You have to, you have to join government school [you] have to join the state school because they are the best and they're free, education in Sudan at that time was free.

Prior to 1989, Khalil claims that a child attending private school would have been viewed by his or her community as unintelligent and in need of special attention in a classroom setting or that for some other reason the child could only be guaranteed success in the education system if it was paid for. For these reasons, he says that private schooling was not popular after independence up until 1989.

Khalil's own education began in the east of Sudan four years after independence during the military rule of General Abboud. He believes his schooling signalled a time in which students in state education also received quality English Language lessons and instruction unlike today whereby Arabic has been given precedence. Khalil placed the decline in English language quality in schools on a few factors, Sudan's gradual Arabisation since independence, its Islamisation commencing during the second half of Nimeiri's government and the failure of consecutive regimes to appropriately invest in the education system.

> You know… if you notice… I think you have noticed how the English language is weakened now in Sudan, even among… among… among the university student… it started from general Nimeiri's regime, when the Muslim brotherhood came to modernize, to Arabise the system, even they imply [implemented] I remember, one of the difficult Arabic grammar… - Gatta al-Nada, balla sada - all Arabic grammar, this should be sent to (reserved for) Islamic University, not to student in this school

Khalil's argument suggests that the decline in the quality of state schooling, especially perhaps of English language learning can be dated to 1981, during the early alignment of General Nimeiri's government to the Islamic brotherhood under Hassan Turabi. In addition, he argued that the burgeoning relationship between the Nimeiri regime and the Muslim Brotherhood coincided with the emerging political influence of the Gulf states in Sudan, of which the significant Gulf-based Sudanese expat community was a factor (Woodward, 1985), and the proliferation of Salafi

religious text into Sudan's markets. And he attributes these two factors with the momentum of change to the direction of state education during the 1980s.

> …. It started with that last four years of General Nimeiri regime because Mr Turabi and his junta started to change the education system to suit Allah [they claimed] … it has nothing to do with Allah or the religion. The other influence the negative influence for those students came from they came from the… the… the Middle East schools, because (of) money [materials used in schools were either produced in Sudan or the Middle East]

The 1980s, was a decade of political change for Sudan. The Nimeiri regime ended in 1985 after military coup, before the civilian government of Sadiq al-Mahdi was instated in 1986. After three years the al-Mahdi government was ousted by an Islamist military coup in 1989 led by Omar Beshir in conjunction with Hasan Turabi. The success of the NIF coup was followed by the most overt declaration of change to Sudan's education system, with Omar Beshir's pronouncement in 1990 that education at all levels would be based on Islamic principles (Breidlid, 2005).

The decline in the quality of state education under the NIF was reflected two decades after Beshir's pronouncement by the limited spending of the Beshir regime on education, which made up 2.7% of Sudan's total GDP in 2012 (Alamin, Muthanna and Alduais, 2022). Consequently, middle class perceptions of state schooling were of underfunded and deteriorating institutions that were likely to offer fewer career options for children. For these families that could afford to financially invest in school options, state schools were ruled out.

Hiba believes her private education meant an early disconnection from the Arabic - Sudani used in society. It created a distinction between what she perceived to be the performativity of being Sudanese that was intwined in Arabic-Sudani language and her personal lived experience. This resulted in her and some of her peers questioning their Sudanese identity and was exacerbated for Hiba by questions about it from family members, who had seen the dissolution of her cultural mooring once she had begun private school. Hiba shared an example her father's regret about the effect of private schooling on his children's competency in Sudanese Arabic/Sudani:

> … sometimes he would say things like, whenever I would not know what a word is in Sudani… he said something like "I should have never taken [her] to an English school." So, I think he and… he says it jokingly, but I know what he's thinking. He's thinking that too much English is taking away from their their Sudanese, or from the Arabic, or from their Islamic, or it's all connected, you know.

In this extract, Hiba highlights a connection in Sudanese Islamic culture between language and religious identity that is also reinforced in the decision making of other participants in this study about including Qur'anic schooling in their children's learning.

Hiba explained a repercussion of being unable to communicate in Arabic-Sudani to good conversational standard with other Sudanese, is that some privately educated children make choices between local culture and the culture they are socialised into at school. She concluded that the effects of her parents' decision to give her a private education disconnected her from local and classical Arabic, and broader Sudanese culture. This led her to make efforts to reconnect to Arabic-Sudani and regain the elements of her culture she believed to be missing and tied to Arabic language.

> ... the language itself, so Arabic and Sudani are obviously speak[ing]Arabic, but it's it's very different, you know, so there's a lot of things that have to do with traditions and just knowing the different ethnicities and Sudan, the different languages, what things mean, even random things in the house. I think if I hadn't put in the effort to become connected to Sudanese culture, I definitely would have lost, like track completely.
>
> I think my Arabic changed like drastically from when I was in school. I was able to spell properly. I memorized the alphabet, so like I was much, much better and then obviously I started working and my field of work like changed me completely and then my Arabic kind of took off [in] different directions.

A second factor that aided her Arabic language development was her decision to remain in Sudan for higher education, as it allowed her to encounter students from the state school system and learn to interact in everyday Arabic language.

> … I honestly feel like if I had continued… English school and then went to an English university outside Sudan, I think I would have lost [more of her cultural identity].

The bifurcation of Sudanese identity as an outcome of private school education can lead to a marked detachment from Sudanese culture or language entirely. Hiba and Omar's oldest sibling also attended the same schools as his sister. According to Hiba her older brother has made little effort to embrace more aspects of Sudanese culture and language that his sister believes was caused by their private school education.

> Like my siblings for example, even though we all had the same education… Me and my older brother… same education, little friends, school, we even went to the same uni me and him and even had the same research project together… His Arabic is just on a different level, he doesn't know any Arabic, he can barely speak it… But I don't think he he was interested in (it)

According to Hiba her older brother's dissonance was not unusual amongst children who attend private schools in Sudan, who experience knowing, confusion and detachment from their Sudanese identity all at the same time. A consequence is that they are often viewed as inauthentic by other Sudanese who consider themselves to be in possession of symbols that represent Sudaneseness. As highlighted by Hiba's earlier experience with her father, this vantage point can take place within families where parents who have elevated themselves socially are intuitively capable of using appropriate social cues. In addition, these children can encounter othering from extended family who are unattached to their middle-class social circles as they have not secured the same level of social mobility.

An additional repercussion is that privately educated children can form insular groups that further isolate them from wider Sudanese society. The reasons they opt to isolate themselves are often two-fold. The first reason is that self-isolation acts as a means of protection from mockery about their abilities to engage in Arabic with families, friends, and wider Sudanese society through the mispronunciation of words of limited vocabulary (a point later evidenced by Hiba). The second, is that isolation becomes a means through which they can preserve the privilege they have been given, ring fencing themselves amongst social circles that are likeminded, and which possess similar exposure to other cultures outside of Sudan.

In present day Sudan, the reproduction of similar groups of young people continues to be framed around the idea of Britishness, a point that is expounded by the promotion of 'British Curriculum' schooling as the unique selling point of Sudan's private school network. Consequently, British-style education continues to dominate perceptions about a good education, the offer of higher culture and social mobility than can be found in schools offered by the state. The divide between education in state and private schooling was heightened by the NIF/NCP regime following its 1990 proclamations that state schooling and tertiary education would be reformed to produce Arabised youth (Breidlid,2012:39) whilst allowing private schools to continue to focus on a British emphasis in their curriculum, which Berridge (2018) attributed to their interests in securing the best possible schooling for their own children.

The Britain-focused curriculums which dominate private schooling socialise students into a Eurocentric gaze of the world and leads students' cultural references and understanding of history to be framed by external influences. As a result, students experience severed connections to wider Sudanese society, language, and social cues; and Hiba offered two examples of her school experience that highlighted the

limited integration of Sudanese art, music, literature, and history in her education setting.

The first example was that Hiba was only able to distinctly recall one day per academic year that celebrated or referenced a form of local culture. This she said was named Sudan Day, in which students replicated a form of the Sudanese wedding dance and this was the only representation or acknowledgement of the dominant culture around them. Hiba's second example was based on her reflections about the omission of Sudanese history from her school curriculum.

> I discovered how much [my school], you know, like sheltered and closed us. Like we didn't really have any classes on Sudanese history… my first class on Sudanese history was in Uni. In school, I learned about the British Revolution, about the French Revolution, industrial Revolution, Egyptian Roman, Greek. I never learned about Sudanese history, everything I knew about Sudan, I knew from my dad and from my mom.

Hiba believes the promotion of British-style curriculums within Sudan's private school system to be emblematic of wide-reaching cognitive dissonance beyond her own social class that is prevalent amongst all Sudanese society. She attributes this to the beginning of the twentieth century and the country's encounters with the AEC.

> Even though Sudanese people talk about the triumph of Al-Mahdi over the British and so on, they're still obsessed with the British, they're still obsessed with colonisers, or this idea that colonisers are superior, and so the needs of (our) people are inferior. So, I think English represented that, like speaking English meant you're different… meant you knew better, meant you had more, meant you were more sophisticated, meant you were more. You know you're different. So, I think they they very much encouraged that you know.

Inferred from Hiba's words is a prevailing contradiction between private school students' experiences of being mocked for not being Sudanese enough by community members and their long-held respect for British curriculum education. Moreover, the latter indicates the impact of coloniality on the Sudanese, the mental effect that remains in post-colonial societies after physical colonisation has been dismantled. Coloniality embeds tropes of inferiority to the former colonial power (in this case British) and therefore affects identity, culture, and knowledge production (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:243).

Hiba's account of her school life and how language was taught in her school curriculum, offers insights into the ways in which school complicated the relationship between Sudanese students and Arabic language. As reported by Hiba, this led to her experiencing eventual issues with Arabic, her first language. And for

some students it also led to the eventual erasure of Arabic language from their minds and tongues as they progressed through private school.

> [for] Arabic, you had the option of choosing between first language and second language and English. You had option between choosing first language and second language and I had second. So technically I had no first language like, according to the educational system, I had no first. Arabic is my mother tongue, but even that as a subject I took it as a second language and the test was super easy, it's for foreigners…
> First language was very, very tough for first language Arabic speakers. And again, this system makes no sense, because if the entire curriculum is based in English and one subject in Arabic, how do you expect people to achieve really well in first language? If you took away their Arabic, you know what I mean, if you don't even allow them to speak Arabic in the school, then how are they supposed to have this as a first language?! Most people in my class I mean all my friends we had second language, Arabic second language…

This process takes place from an early age and by secondary school second-language socialisation through English is primarily advocated. As Hiba highlighted, she, her brothers and other children were all discouraged from speaking in Arabic on the school premises which promoted their detachment from their indigenous language except in their Arabic language lesson. Hiba stated that this was the beginning of her struggle with Arabic.

In addition, the socialisation of private school children in religion is also unfamiliar to wider Sudanese society, as seen in the teaching of Islam at Hiba's school. Hiba and other children who identified as Muslim attended the class Islamiat, whilst their Christian classmates attended a parallel lesson based on their faith. From her understanding of Islam taught in state schools, by secondary school, there were two distinctions between it and the Islamic education she received with reference to language and the textbooks provided.

> What's interesting from year seven to year eleven, the Islamic classes changed to English, so now we learned about Islam in English, and we had a book from England, actually from Cambridge… Yes, so it was very different from the Sudanese Islamic curriculum that that Islamiat that was given to us from Cambridge was very different from what we did in primary school

Contrastingly, Khalil resists the idea of children being influenced and shaped by the British curriculum they receive. He admits that he excelled in English, although his Arabic language skills were poor when compared to classmates who joined from Qur'an schools. Yet, he views the relationship between his British teachers and

students as being one of reverse influence, with Sudanese culture instead impacting upon his foreign educators.

> We influence[d] them [more] than they influence [us]. They live[d] with us in the society they live[d] with us… they're highly educated teachers. They came to Sudan; they know the culture of the Sudanese people. And I always say that the British people know the cultural life and the social life of the Sudanese people. That's why they respect us.

Whilst Khalil saw the presence of British teachers in newly independent Sudan as a good thing, his niece Hiba born almost four decades later, felt the effect of a British education was that it kept her on the periphery of Sudanese society even as she entered higher education. For example, when registering for her bachelor's degree at university, she was considered to be an international student due to her IGCSE qualifications. Subsequently, it would also mean that her Arabic language skills were not considered to be of the standard required by a Sudanese higher education institute.

> … so, my Arabic level was not high, or it was not like really proper for university. So, I have to do the international classes but then it kept getting better when I graduated uni.

This section has highlighted through the educational experiences of Hiba and Omar and their uncle Khalil's contrasting outlook, how their cultural ties to Sudanese Muslim culture were affected by their private education. It has given examples of the complications that can arise socially in middle-class children's pursuit of a clear Sudanese identity as a result. The consequences of this are their feelings of being othered and at times isolated in Sudanese society. The following section will evaluate some of the strategies that are used by parents to counter some of these issues to ensure that whilst attending private schools their children are secure in their Sudanese Muslim identity and have a sense of belonging.

Navigating Khalwa and Tradition in the Experience of the al-Hamoudi Family

In interviews with the al-Hamoudi family, what emerged was the evolution of different generations' relationships with Qur'anic schooling. The interview data indicated that families' interactions with the physical buildings of Qur'an schools had changed between their father's attendance in the 1960s and their own Qur'anic learning in the late 2000s-2010s. Recognising this, Hiba intimates that for children in her father's generation attending a Qur'an school in person was very much a social norm.

> …. if you think of my father's generation or his cousins or his relatives… because when I was having this conversation with him, almost every single person who he knows has been to a Khalwa, including himself… you know everybody! So, I don't think it was an issue back then. Maybe it is now today

Over time interactions with Qur'anic schools by the al-Hamoudi family have been impacted by changed due to the broadening of education options available to them and others. For the al-Hamoudi family this included the ascendancy of private schooling in the 1990s, the family's social mobility and its subsequent influence on the class bracket that later generations grew up in. When comparing his father's childhood education during the early 1960s to his own Omar explains

> My dad, my dad came from like the very humble family from Khartoum here, so he went to to like like a Khalwa growing up. He wasn't very good at the Khalwa, and I don't think he paid attention. He says that he was great, but my grandfather would argue otherwise.

Similar to today's Sudan, during the early 1960s, a modest income reduced schooling options available to families, and were likely limited to sub-grade, Qur'anic or vernacular schools.

Although Hiba and Omar's father received his early education at a Khalwa, the push for the children to receive Qur'anic schooling did not come from him, but from their mother. Like her brother Khalil, she had attended Comboni school and did not go to a Khalwa growing up. However, according to Hiba, her mother's desire for them to receive some Qur'anic education came from her concerns about private school's effect on the children's identity as Sudanese Muslims.

> My mom is the one that insisted on the Qur'anic teachings and again her… her… her reasoning is she just wanted us to learn more Quran and I think, I think it's

> because she saw how my school was set up. I think she just thought that we would be missing out on a huge part of who we are… in terms of just being a Muslim right, and I think, I think she thought that school would sort of take that away from us

The al-Hamoudi family's relationship with Qur'anic schooling is complex. Hiba identified that it was used by her parents as a tool to connect their children to their Muslim identity. However, their leaning towards this type of schooling was conditional, with both parents being reluctant to allow their children to attend Khalawi in person, which Omar explained

> "My mom… is from a middle-class family and I remember at the time she was doing her PhD about child abuse…. Khalawi was a big focus at the time… the government was just reassessing laws of child protection and there was a big buzz about child abuse within the Khalawi… and I know that came into like a big factor within my parents' decision to make sure we got the same sort of Qur'anic education, same methodology with Khalawi, but at home… my mom was definitely insisting on that right?!"

Omar reference is about an early 2000s documentary and news reports such as, Journeyman.TV's (2011), which were damning of Qur'an schools. These reports resulted in Qur'an schools becoming prominent in the social consciousness for negative reasons, as well as a focus for improvement at governmental level. This negative portrayal has continued with journalist Fatteh al-Rahman Al-Hamdani's recent investigation (BBC, 2020) charting the use of corporal punishment and cases of child physical and sexual abuse in Qur'an schools.

Hiba placed her mother's concerns about Qur'an schools in a time in which middle class confidence about Qur'anic education was at a low. However, despite this, the function of these schools in the lives of Hiba and her peers was clear, as parents strived to ensure Muslim identity was cemented for their children. Reflecting on this Hiba explains

> … the middle class was still engaged with the with Quranic schools not as a socioeconomic option but as a a religious, you know, duty within their kids. I know of people that are from the upper middle class that sent their kids to IB schools with me, private schools, but also in the summer they were sent to Khalawi for like 3 months. You know that's the upper and same with the middle class…

Although there were concerns about Qur'anic education, as seen from the al-Hamoudi children's conclusions, their private schooling often removed links to Sudaneseness. Qur'anic education offered an indigenous learning system that was

connected to Arabic language and reinforced Muslim identity. It was understood to minimise the religio-cultural gaps between privately educated and other children.

For families like the al-Hamoudi's who wanted their children to benefit from Qur'anic education but were concerned about their public reputation, the solution was to bring a Qur'an teacher into the home. This practice is now commonplace amongst professional families like theirs. Qur'anic tutoring in the home offered the al-Hamoudi parents the chance to strengthen their children's perceived social weaknesses without disrupting full-time schooling and the prospect of a good education and career. This is point reflected on by Omar who states

> … to be honest, I don't think my dad would have not wanted us to go to like a Khalwa, I really mean what I say, he wanted the best of both worlds for us... He wanted [us] to travel. He wanted us, he blessed us with travel, he blessed us with everything but at the same time he never wanted us to forget our roots

Moreover, by transferring Qur'anic education into the home rather than an institute, parents' worries about traditional Qur'an schools are mitigated. It meant parents who were not keen for their children to experience potential discipline were able to closely monitor or intervene immediately in children's interactions with Qur'an teachers. According to Hiba, this approach has become the definitive position held by middle-class families she knows.

However, demonstrating that experiences of education differ within the same family, Khalil states that he did not have any association with the Khalwa system during his formal education. In response to a question about his parents' decision not to send him to Qur'an school. He gave an indication of how it was viewed within his household at that time, based on what he supposed would have been his father's response to the suggestion of any Islamic education for his children.

> My father was not I could say a religious person. OK, he prays, [is a] conservative Muslim is but never a you know if I could say how can I, uh, strong Muslim… But to go to religious school, I think he would have kicked me out of the house… never never never. I'm not not pious (or) against religious school but I think, I I believe… how do how do I say this to you? Religious [Islamic] schools started very late. New Sudan, especially after 1989, after Beshir and his supporters came to power.

The al-Hamoudi family have learnt to adapt to the current schooling climate in Sudan. They have used their differing experiences of education (and two class groups) and incorporated them into observations about the merit and function of both private and Qur'anic schooling for their children. In practice they have used

devices to draw on the elements that they consider to be good in both types of schooling, whilst also protecting against the elements that they perceive to be negative. In the case of Qur'anic schooling this was the possibility of excessive discipline, which they countered through home tutoring. And in the case of private education, it was the over-exposure to non-Sudanese traditions, that they countered through Qur'anic tutoring.

A Contemporary View of Qur'anic education

Since the advent of the Condominium, Qur'anic education has been in a precarious position in Sudan's education sector. During the Condominium, it had been used to bolster student numbers during the formation of the new state education system and was cemented within that system as sub-elementary schooling. At independence, it was placed on the periphery of the education system competing against another model, the sub-grade school. Later it would remerge as important in the education landscape during the Islamic period of General Nimeiri's regime as the foundation of primary schooling expansion (Rashid and Sandell, 1980).

Presently traditional Qur'anic education is viewed in Sudan schooling system's as suitable for pre and elementary education, although it is an acceptable lifelong learning model outside of this remit. In comparison to secular school models offered by the state and privately through entrepreneurship this limits the scope of Qur'anic education. This has resulted in Qur'anic education being acknowledged by the Sudanese middle classes as an important religious and cultural education form but not a type of education leading to social mobility. Therefore, the continued preference amongst middle-class families is to send their children to private schools full-time, even if of varying quality over this form of religious education.

Who accesses Qur'anic education in Sudan today is an important question in understanding the function of this type of schooling amongst Sudanese society. Based on my interview data, it is apparent that middle class families whilst engaging in a form of Qur'anic education, insist on terms that they believe are suitable to their values and needs. As a result, they have chosen the use of specific devices such as, bringing Qur'an tutors into the home as an afterschool resource where they are able to oversee student-teacher interactions.

During interview, Omar addressed what he felt was the general middle-class position on Qur'anic education in Sudan. He suggested that within his social bracket its function remained the same as when he was a young child, as a cultural education. However, he continued the prevalent discourse in these interviews that its significance to Sudan's middle-class had begun to diminish. He also believed that this was not necessarily the same for the entire Sudanese population.

> I think aside from the controversy, they're still a huge part of Sudanese society; I, I wouldn't say they're as big of a part of the middle class as it used to be and I don't

> build that on any statistics, I just build that on the idea of the deteriorating middle class, you know. But I I I do still see their importance within the Sudanese society as a whole…. they form sort of this societal connection to their religion, you know

From the perspective of middle-class Sudanese, Omar's statement raises other questions about what takes place within the walls of Qur'an schools, who then accesses this type of education and what the future of Sudanese Qur'an schooling might be in the wake of the late 2018 revolution. According to Khalil, who did not attend a Qur'an school, the answer about who is directly accessing Qur'an schools is straightforward and he stated.

> Khalwa is invented in villages, poor villages all over Sudan. To gather these kids from three I think to four or five. Led by a Shaykh, uh, to teach them, not to teach them in fact, just to memorize, just memorizing the Quran, nothing else, nothing else, at least to keep kids together in a certain age after… after… after they finish four years five years the age of education, they go to state school

In interview Hiba and Omar spoke of the types of communities that they believed both actively engaged in and sent children to Qur'an schools. Their shared opinions were derived from experiences and conversations that had taken place amongst their social circle, in addition to first-hand interactions with Qur'anic education through their respective work in media and civil society projects. Omar highlighted that in his opinion and work experience there were multiple factors and considerations that impacted and narrowed the choice of education to Qur'anic schooling for some Sudanese families.

> I think I think there is a definitely a link between lower income households and their dependency on Qur'anic schools to perform education to perform the basis of education for their kids. I think it's it's a de facto option for a lot of the… a lot of the [people] either [living on the] outskirts of bigger cities, Khartoum, al-Obeid or Port Sudan, it's the de facto option for the primary stages of education. When you have government schools that are packed well over capacity, when you have a a constant tradition of oral learning and Qur'anic learning as a predecessor to all these government schools and stuff. You have that tradition already and then you have a lot of cases in Sudan where people depend on the Khalwas to feed and raise their kids.
>
> We work in a lot of areas where there's no such thing as a contraceptive and a family that is dependent on a bunch of cattle and a piece of land would have 9 or10 kids… you know that cattle won't feed all of them. The land is not big enough for all of them to work it. So, a lot of them would, would go and spend most of their lives in a Khalwa, see their, their parents on the weekend.

Family planning was also referenced by Omar as a socioeconomic factor which he believed directly led families to enter children into Qur'anic education. However, another determiner he cited was overcrowded state schools outside of urban centres and signals a lack of regional parity in government organisation of education. This perception is in keeping with information available about continued disparity in general enrolment, student incompletion of basic education and high levels of illiteracy in some rural regions (Sudan interim report, 2012:11-12; Nour 2013; Baterjee and Ashria, 2015). Consequently, the option of a secular education does not exist for some families and Omar suggests that Qur'an schools provide and alternative where overcrowding is found and will affect children's education.

In addition, Omar referenced Sudanese communities for whom Qur'anic education is infused into their identity. In Yamba's study of Hausa permanent pilgrim communities, their view of secular education was of a largely European construct which sat in opposition to the premise of traditional Hausa education which helped to produce good Muslims. As a result, this led to families in his Yamba's study that opted to disengage children from state school in favour of Qur'anic education (1990:80).

Moreover, the position held by Sudan's Hausa pilgrim community reinforces the view that there is more than memorisation that occurs within Qur'anic education settings. It is a position that speaks to idea of Qur'anic institutions producing good Muslims. This is a point argued by Ware (2014:8) who argues that this is achieved through the ingestion of Qur'an, which then acts as a cleansing from egotism, harbouring ill will, and avarice. A position also shared by Boyle (2005) and Bakheit (2017).

Academics such as Boyle (2006) and Ware (2014), also maintain that there are benefits through memorisation for memory use and spiritual practice. Nevertheless, others are of the opinion that as a pedagogy it hinders educational development and does not encourage the exploration of ideas (Eickelmann, 1978; Tourneux and Iyébi-Mandjek, 1994; Hoechner,2012). Accordingly, in interviews with the al-Hamoudi family, the idea of memorisation as a pedagogy which narrows a child's development was conveyed.
For Hiba, her experiences of memorisation at school and in Qur'an classes at home felt limiting and resulted in her attempts to use devices with her Qur'an teachers that would allow alternative ways of learning to take place during her and her siblings lessons. These experiences also helped to shape her view of memorisation today.

> It feels like something that's not based on understanding and comprehending and questioning, and back and forth. It's just something that based on this is what it is, memorize it the way it is 'Qaal Allah, Qaal al-Rasool' no question about it. 'This is what God said, this is what the Prophet said.' You can't go back and forth in it,

> just memorize it that's it. That's why I never really, that's why I distracted my Qur'anic teacher by asking him questions about the Prophet because I felt like can we at least have a conversation

Likewise, Omar's experience of Qur'anic home schooling, meant he was not encouraged to think outside the box during lessons. Along with his work as an adult in Qur'an school communities, this has helped to shape his opinion of this type of schooling. Subsequently, he expressed that he believed the pedagogy does not encourage a passion in pupils for the Qur'an and he summarised his position on memorisation.

> My my my opinion of it is very indifferent. I believe in the core message [of the Qur'an], I don't believe in the process at which that message is delivered and performed and achieved

Despite their views on Qur'anic education pedagogy, both Omar and Hiba were aware that Qur'an schools in Sudan were not homogenous, which suggested that their points on memorisation were in reference to what is the traditional Qur'an school model. For example, in interview Hiba discussed the development of other Qur'anic schooling models in Sudan and shared

> You know a lot of the Qur'anic schools now also offer like other classes other than Quran, within Fiqh, within Arabic writing you know, a lot of kids leave Quranic schools at at like the primary level. And move on to continue into secondary education.
>
> I would definitely say that even though the Khalawi themselves in Sudan differ according to the funding that a Khalwa is provided, so some Khalawi can can actually have proper classes, and I know some Khalawi in East Sudan, in Port Sudan, for example, they look typical to a traditional school

Hiba alludes to the presence of hybrid school models in Sudan, which fuse technologies from secular and traditional schooling. Hybrid schools have been a documented part of Sudanese education since the 1980s and are similarly present elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa (Pruess, 1984:34; Eid, 1985; Bedri, 2013). However, hybrid Qur'an school models are not the focus of media reports. Instead, general perceptions of poor schooling and corporeal punishment are preserved for the traditional Qur'an school model.

For Omar, negative opinions about Qur'anic education and questions over its authenticity as an education model have been prejudiced by the external influence of western ideas about what constitutes education. When I asked Omar about

Qur'anic education's legitimacy as an education, he referred to the schooling of his father's generation to illustrate that it was legitimate source of education and pointed to specific Qur'an schools that were able to give children the input needed to merge and further their education in more secular school models.

> Well, Western understanding of Quranic schools would definitely tell you no because this is a religious based education and no matter what this education will be biased towards these religious beliefs. But my father has constantly my whole life introduced me to his workmates, who jumped from a Khalwa at the age of 11-12 to secondary education to getting their university degrees too, they weren't like me…. They didn't do primary school, they didn't do kindergarten, they just went to Khalwa until they were 12-13 and then the government allowed them to take, to enter secondary school based on the Khalwas they went to, you know?! That's an entire generation, that's my father, generation, right?!

However, in the wake of the 2018 revolution in which the NIF regime's Islamist rule ended, both Hiba and Omar believe that their generation's affiliation to Islam in a social, political and educational sphere has lessened. They cite their generation as being at the forefront of the revolution and have subsequently experienced detachment from religion since. This they say was attributed to the regime's exploitation of the Sudanese people's affinity towards Islam.

Consequently, both Hiba and Omar feel that by its association with the former regime, the position of Qur'anic schooling within Sudanese society has declined further. They cited overall religious fatigue as a key aspect towards this. In addition, they also referenced the alleged use of Qur'an schools as a tool in the promotion of the regime's ideology. For example, when asked whether Qur'anic schooling will eventually disappear in Sudan Omar shared

> I don't think it'll just decrease in size… erm it might not, but I think it's appreciation and value within society will decrease… Definitely, where our society is going through like an overcorrection, I feel like the barriers of a dictatorial regime that used Islam has been pushing this society to fear any signs of Islamic rule and Quranic education even though within its essence has nothing to do with politics, it's a big staple of politics. You get what I'm saying? Because if you're trying to rule people using Qur'an or Islam like they did. and I say using because they incorrectly used it then Quranic schools are a good place to start if you're trying to roll people like that…

In his answer, Omar appeared to be unsure whether Qur'anic institutes would eventually disappear, but it was clear that he felt what they represented and its importance in people's lives would diminish over time partly due to their exploitation by the NIF/NCP regime. When asked the same question in interview,

Hiba conveyed more certainty in her answer about the environment that has been created in the post-revolution period and stated.

> I, I think if we follow in the same direction now, I think Qur'anic education will become more of a novelty. so, I think there's definitely as we go through this phase of overcorrection… of not reaching the middle ground within incorporating religion into our politics, which is what a lot of modern states have done… my prediction is that we're going through an extreme of anti-religious sentiment within politics, and I think that would trickle down into anti-educational religion within society

The al-Hamoudi children also regarded their generation's push for Sudan to be seen as open and international as an influence over how Qur'anic schooling will be seen in years to come. As a result, Omar reasons that this has brought people further away from ideas of Qur'anic education as an alternative to primary or secondary education. He also imagines that in the current climate the proposal of Qur'anic education as an alternative to secular schooling would lead to an adverse reaction from many of his generation involved in the 2018 revolution including himself.

> I think it used to be more acceptable, but the revolution changed a lot of things, and the revolution wants to see Sudan in a more international manner and a more international standard, and I think a lot of people would be like, what do you mean just the Khalwa, from my generation… I'm like what do you mean? Just the Khalwa?!

In attempting to answer questions about who accesses Qur'an schools and what its future might be from their perspective, the al-Hamoudi family have illustrated their own detachment from this schooling model. For Hiba and Omar, their place within a generation that has fought against the Islamist NIF regime may go some way in explaining their position, in addition to their experiences of Qur'anic pedagogy as children. However, in the case of Khalil who is from a generation in which Qur'anic education was more socially acceptable, his position, whilst seemingly more difficult to explain, can also be attributed to his socialisation in school and that he has maintained a position within the middle-class since childhood.

In conclusion, I asked Omar where the 2018 revolution left Qur'anic education in Sudan. And he did not entirely rule out its future as a part of Sudan's education system. Instead, he viewed the future role of Qur'anic education as a specific type of substitute for more widely accepted forms of schooling in modern day Sudan but with caveats.

I personally don't think it's a substitute for secondary education considering the depth of what higher education is right now, but I think it is a substitute for primary… It can be a substitute for primary education if we cancel out the abuses and the the the need versus yearning thing. I'm talking about the ideal situation, right? I think it can be a substitute for primary education, I think times… generations, like my father's generation have proven that to be correct.

Socio-Political Allegiance and the Importance of Qur'anic Schooling - The Fareed Family

This section addresses how one family's political ties influenced periods of family members' schooling, and highlights the contrasting views held by them about the relevance of traditional Qur'anic education in modern day Sudan as well as who they believe access this type of schooling. The chapter also examines how the cultural and religious viewpoints aligned to the family's political persuasion has influenced both life and educational choices they have made.

The Fareed family are a representation of how Sudanese families connected to the Mahdiyyah have adjusted to education since the regime's defeat and the subsequent colonial and post-colonial periods. Using individual and joint interviews, I spoke with three generations of the Fareed family. Hasan who attended state school during the latter AEC period; his son Abdul-Wali, who briefly attended a branch of the Comboni missionary school, a Mahdi family school, and a school in the Gulf region. And Abdul-Wali's daughter Noora, whose primary education took place in private schools.

The family describes itself as an educated and middle-class family. They are originally from the north of Sudan and have lived in the central Khartoum state for generations and claim both Nubian and Ja'ali ethnic group heritage. Their religious and political self-description is as members of the Ansar movement, the religious and socio-political movement of adherents of the Mahdi of Sudan and his family. The Fareed family illustrate how families connected to the old politics of Sudan prior to the AEC merged into the evolving socio-political landscape of a modernising Sudan.

Over the last two generations, the family has embraced private education to provide its children with the best education possible, having lost faith in the state's abilities to do so. Whether educated in state, private, or religious school, each family respondent also had a Qur'anic education. As is demonstrated by the Fareeds each parent generation differed in how their children interacted with Qur'anic education but a commitment to this type of schooling remained, nonetheless. For Noora, the youngest respondent, this led to a complementary merger of both Qur'anic and secular education and her claim to have gained educational tools that her private school classmates did not, as a result of their singular education.
The Fareed family's interviews highlighted their connection to Qur'anic education but also their emphasis on investing in what they believe to be signifiers of Sudaneseness. This was not only demonstrated through their Qur'anic education or political affiliation but also, through their embrace of Sudanese arts, culture, and Arabic language.

Noora – Qur'anic Education, a Complement to Secular Learning

Noora is the youngest of the Fareed family participants, and it was her initial interview that opened the channel for me to speak to her father and grandfather. Noora describes herself as an activist for the betterment of women's lives in Sudan and was one of many young organisers during the Sudanese revolution of 2018. She grew up in Omdurman where she would first attend pre-school and Khalwa, before her nuclear family moved to a more central part of Khartoum for better school options.

Noora's parents sent her and her siblings to a private school that followed a curriculum towards IGCSEs. At this school, she was taught in English, with Arabic, history and religion being the exception and delivered in Arabic. As she entered the last two years of her IGCSEs schooling Noora gained a scholarship that allowed her to attend a more prestigious private school where students sat the for the International Baccalaureate (IB) exam, which was considered to be of more value internationally than IGCSEs.

Noora considers her family to be financially comfortable and used her parents' ability to educate five children in private school to evidence this. However, this did not mean that there were not cultural adjustments for her in this type of education. And she explains the experience of transitioning from an IGCSE to an IB school was a process of acculturation, due to the elite social status of the students she encountered there. Noora uses what she defined at the time to be these students' detachment from Sudaneseness to demonstrate her culture shock

> So, like Khartoum's absolute upper-upper-class and upper middle class a lot of them don't even speak Arabic. They grew up in Sudan their whole lives and they don't speak Arabic, and I think that was very that was a signifier for me, of the kind of bubble that they exist in, and their range of motion is very limited. They go to the school, their staff, is is English speaking, and most of them aren't Sudanese, that's the teaching staff, and they are studying a curriculum that is Western and they are engaging with topics that are Western and their research and the work that they do and their friends are the same way, so they kind of exist in we call it 'the ozone layer' because they mostly hang out in Ozone the café

The Ozone café sits on a roundabout in an area of Khartoum whose residents are wealthy Sudanese or expatriates from the international development sector. The café serves cakes and coffees in keeping with artisanal coffee culture at prices too expensive for the majority of Khartoum's tea drinking population. This ensures that they are ostracised from spaces like Ozone, as Noora also points during interview.

> … they exist in this ozone layer and there is often like a like a culture, a cultural gap between them and… like any random Sudanese person walking down the street

However, Noora also believes that as an adult her idea of what signifies Sudaneseness has broadened, and she no longer subscribes to a particular idea of what it means to be Sudanese. Instead, she observes that there is space for all types of Sudanese, a reflection that has come from her encounters with a variety of marginalised voices during the revolution of late 2018

> …So, I think what I'm trying to tell myself now is that there's no central Sudanese identity that I… like that we all orbit around, so it's not like you're you're this most Sudanese, this is the least Sudanese person and where do I fall in and and how do how does that measure and so on? I'm trying to to remind myself that like you can contain these multitudes and still be Sudanese

Unlike in her new school environment Noora had been used to interacting in Arabic with her local community. She struggled to transition into a setting in which the use of any Arabic (including at break) was frowned upon and spoke of the extent to which efforts were made to curb students use of it, “I actually found a paper the other day where I had to write. I will not speak Arabic in class like 500 times because I kept speaking Arabic in class.”

The curtailment of Noora’s Arabic language use in her IGCSE and IB schools, also contrasted the encouragement she received for its use in the Qur’anic education that accompanied her full-time primary and secondary schooling. She attributes the development of her Arabic language skills to her Qur’anic education. This was initially through attendance at a Khalwa, after which male Qur’an teachers from local Islamic universities (students who had memorised the Qur’an as a prerequisite for higher Islamic education) were brought into the family home, to home school Noora and her siblings.

The exposure to standard Arabic at with her Qur’an teachers and English in her private schools led to competence in both languages. However, Noora feels that

> “… I often struggle with that I feel like how I, I, I exist in like language helps (how) I think, keep it neat and separate. I definitely think I'm a different person in Arabic and English.”

During the interview Noora indicated that for her learning Arabic was the most valuable part of h her Qur’anic education, rather than the assumed moral education that is cited to be a primary outcome (Moore, 2011; Pruess, 1983):

> I think I speak Arabic and write in Arabic on the level of anyone who studied in Arabic throughout, and I think that's that's really where it where it helped. And I understand the Quran fully.

In conclusion of our interview, Noora conveyed that she had accepted the education and life in Sudan her parents had given her. She expressed her awareness of how life might had differed if her father Abdul-Wali had chosen to remain in the Gulf. She also articulated her understanding of his motivations for returning to Sudan and how he had navigated gender inequalities when raising Muslim daughters in relation to the social expectations placed on women during the Islamist regime of Omer Beshir

> I definitely think it was important for him that we were rooted in identity, which is part of the reason why we grew up in Sudan our whole lives. It was definitely not the smartest thing to do business wise or opportunity wise a lot of the time, but identity is definitely important to him, and I think it is definitely due to his having to grow up in the Gulf, like with Gulf Arabs who are incredibly anti-black and racist and just dealing with all of the identity crisis that you face when you don't grow up where you're from and or around people that look like you… I think it's interesting, because my dad he's he he's definitely committed to religion and religious education, but at the same time he's definitely taken a strong stance against the parts of it that would minimize me or try to silence me, which is definitely challenging for him.

<u>Abdul-Wali – Education, Identity and Belonging</u>

Abdul-Wali is the son of Hasan and father of Noora. His interview helped to create a bridge in understanding of the transition between the state education of his father in the latter Condominium and early independence period, and the private education of his daughter under the Islamist NIF regime. Born in Sudan in 1968, he first attended school in 1972 during the socialist period of General Nimeiri's regime. Abdul-Wali went to the fee-paying Catholic missionary school Comboni for pre-school and his first year of primary.

After his father left to work in the Gulf, Abdul-Wali left Omdurman to live with his grandparents in Rubak, where he transferred to an Ansar community school. He describes the school as makeshift and located on the site of a ginning factory. In the evening, the school was converted into a social club for factory workers. According to Abdul-Wali the difference between the two schools he attended in his early education was immediately apparent. Unlike Comboni, School in Rubak followed the national curriculum, class books were no longer individual and were instead shared

between two or more students and his art classes relied on fashioning models from mud and water gathered outside as resources were scarce.

His time is Rubak ended when his father Hasan sent for him towards the end of his primary schooling. He then completed the remainder of his formal education in the Gulf. The transition to life in the Gulf was not easy for him and he cited negative experiences of racism and othering in education and wider society. These encounters of othering left a profound effect on Abdul-Wali which he recalled

> OK living in the gulf at that time wasn't wasn't a… wasn't pleasant, actually, you will always keep in mind that you are a second-class citizen. You are not a national, you know there will be queues in the Airports and and everywhere that it says nationals, non-nationals and so so then I started to to to to realize that I'm not a national and the national had all the privileges and so on.

On another occasion during interview Abdul-Wali also referred to his status in the Gulf as third-class, with the British and European oil and gas workers also given preference over other immigrant communities. It was this feeling of not belonging that he says came to shape his desire to strengthen his ties with his Sudanese identity and the country itself, where he returned for good in the mid-1990s. He revealed part of the incentive behind this decision was his determination for his children not to endure the same experiences in education and society.

> In in my in the back of my mind, I vowed that I would never put my children in this in this position ever I know…, I was able to do that, but but they lived in Sudan.

The themes of Abdul-Wali recapturing his identity and no longer compromising it, returned several times during interview. And his investment in claiming his Sudanese identity has moulded his love of Qur'anic language, Sudanese poetry, and his interest in the unique Haqeeba music of Omdurman. Importantly, it also influenced the Qur'anic education of his children, which he used to help ingrain their own Sudanese identity. These elements represent signifiers of what it means to be Sudanese for Abdul-Wali and he is committed to them.

Returning to Sudan, he was able to financially justify decisions to send Noora and her siblings to private school although this was not the type of education that he or his wife had had. According to Abdul-Wali, his wife comes from a wealthy Sudanese family, but she attended state school and was not given the option of private education. He says this was due to the strength of state schooling in Khartoum at the time, and the pathway it offered into the prestigious Khartoum university. Nonetheless, upon arrival in Sudan they recognised that state schooling was not viable, in part due to the Arabisation of instruction but in addition because

> By that time national schooling had huge, underwent huge deterioration. It wasn't as glamorous as it as it used to be during my father's time. So, it was an obvious decision if if you could afford private education… you definitely go for private education because national education at that time was what was heavily impacted by the wrong decisions and the the lack of proper allocation of budgets to the education and so on.

Abdul-Wali's own education had been in Arabic, but he conceded that Arabic speakers with a good command of English as taught in private schools were able to go on and gain good jobs. He would later study English in England at a language institute to better his prospects. Moreover, he had witnessed first-hand from his father how a command of English language had opened doors for him to study abroad and to work across the Gulf. This was a theme he explored when interviewed

> At that time BP, for example, was dominant in the Gulf in extracting oil from the Gulf, so they couldn't leave themselves finding a guy who spoke perfect Arabic and speaks perfect English and at the same time qualified, who would compete certificate wise with the very British employees so very soon and you probably heard before this, he (Hasan) became the CFO of the one of the biggest oil companies in the Gulf and his career took off. In a way that was thanks to the English language that that helped him communicate with the with the with the new colonial methods of the you know, foreign Western companies …

Unlike Hasan and Noora, as his formal education was taught solely in Arabic aside from his English lessons, he believes that he is more comfortable using or thinking in Arabic than English.

Abdul-Wali also explained that attending school in the Gulf during the 1970s meant that he grew up during a time of pan-Arabism in the Gulf where the ideas and influences of Gamal El-Nasser of Egypt and King Faisal of Saudi were embraced. As a result, he says the emphasis at the time was on pride in Arabic language use. Similarly, in Sudan, pan-Arabism filtered into the education system firstly, through the education policies of 1969 which saw it step away from the British curriculum, under which the socialist influenced government Arabised the curriculum and culminated in Nimeiri's Education Ladder project in the late 1970s.

The Revolution and the Implications for Sudanese Islam

I spoke to the Fareed family about the revolution of late 2018 and what its implications were for Sudan and the population's relationship with Islam on the basis of overthrowing the Islamist NIF regime. Like the al-Hamoudi family, the Fareeds primarily viewed Islam in post-revolution Sudan to have suffered as a result of the

regime politicising religion. Although the Fareed family did not explicitly state that part of the fall out will be a decline in interest in Qur'anic education, there is an inference of this due to Qur'anic education's association with Islam and as a consequence the former regime.

Noora believes that much of the anti-Islam sentiment she has witnessed amongst her generation of Sudanese in the period since the revolution, has been the fall-out of what she labelled a 'knee jerk reaction' to Islam having become synonymous with the NIF regime. Accordingly, she explained that the resulting trauma of having lived under the regime was especially impactful upon specific groups of young Sudanese.

Noora identified these groups as, state school pupils subjected to corporeal punishment, university pupils whose demonstrations were repeatedly oppressed and tear gassed by state forces, the Queer community who had had to live in secret for fear of punishment from the state and young women who had grown up in an era of public policing of what their clothing and actions. Noora claims it is young people from amongst these groups in particular who have subsequently opted to distance themselves from Islam in the wake of the NIF regime's downfall.

Her reference to university students in particular is interesting in the context of young middle class university students' evolution and their connection to the legacy of the NIF/NCP regime. In the 1980s university student support was key to building the popularity of the NIF (Khalid 2013). This support changed after the 1990 declaration of education's Islamisation when university students began to resist the regime's policies.[150] The crater between the regime and university students continued to deepen during the 2011 Arab Spring and led to university students' complete disassociation from the regime (Khalid: 2014:267). This has seemingly culminated in their current stance as expressed by Noora.

Moreover, it alludes to Mangala and Omer's (2020) premise about the function of the middle class in preventing societies polarisation and upholding of democratic values. Therefore, Bakhit (2020:933) observation that it was young people from amongst the groups that Noora named, who were in middle class neighbourhoods who were at the forefront of the 2018 revolution and that it was their access to technologies and social media to spread the anti-government movement is tenable.

However, Noora explained that she did not believe rejection to be an absolute amongst the young people who make up her peer group. The basis of this opinion was conversations with friends, who insisted that the regime had skewered Islam and who now sought to distinguish it from the practices of the former government (similarly to Omer from the al-Hamoudi family). She viewed the two camps to be in polar opposition to each other and supposed that afforded time the sentiments of those who had rejected Islam might change. This she believed would happen once they were able to decipher what they felt was a result of a traumatic period in Sudan's modern history and what was Islam. She also thought that the chasm

[150] See Insaaf section later in this chapter

between these two groups was an indication of the need for healing, dialogue and empathy

> … instead of people just claiming the identity of like I'm an atheist, I'm an agnostic person and a lot of times these former Muslims spend so much of their time trashing Islam rather than exploring their own atheist or or agnostic identity; and that just is is to me is a symptom of the fact that like you're you're, you're clearly not a disbeliever and more that you are just angry, you're angry at Islam or what you thought Islam was for you. So, I think more conversations about that will definitely bring us closer together in terms of like these two camps.

Noora was adamant that she was referring to people within her generation and social circle mainly and does not believe that the wider population fit into either of these camps. In addition, Noora stated that there are still those amongst the population who she was certain to be sympathisers of the old regime and had chosen not to engage with them or extend her call for empathy towards them.

For Hasan, the undoing of the NIF's influence over Sudan is complex. He believes that the change of regime whilst signalling good would have needed to come before a revolution took place for that change to be meaningful. He painted a picture of the regime's skill in penetrating the country's institutions through exploitation of the 'Wasta' system. According to Mann (2012:564), the Wasta system has existed since the colonial period. Both Mann and Hasan cite the guile of the NIF in embedding the party and its allies into all facets of Sudanese society by utilising this system to gain a stronghold over the Sudanese, as Hasan elaborates

> That the party not leaving Sudan before this revolution now is really inculcated and sort of deeply rooted in the society; so, to uproot them from the society is very, very difficult. They are in the army, they are in the judiciary, they are in education. They are in medical practices. They are all over the place rooted there because at at one point that party meant wealth for you. If you go in that party, you got wealth.

Hasan explained that those who made up the ranks of the NIF made the regime unique. Unlike other military coups in Sudan's post-independence history, not only did the regime promote Islam, but it also importantly managed to garner support from amongst the country's professional classes. According to Hasan this made this military regime unique as it did not ostracise the professional classes unlike previous military governments.

> Most of them were educated, there were physicians, there were engineers, there were lawyers and and they had sort of got it made… and these scholars turned into monsters because of certain escalation of things…

Noora cited the complexity of identity in Sudan has been left for its primarily Muslim population to work through. She discussed the damage that promotion of Arabness by the Ja'ali and Sha'aagi ethnic group hierarchy of the regime had caused to other types of Sudanese. She believed that her generation and their parents on the back of the revolution wanted to reflect a different Sudan in which they identified as African first.
This view of African first, sits in stark contrast to the rhetoric of Arabisation and its local and regional ties to pan-Arabism (Abdelhay et al, 2011). The Africanism/Sudanism movement itself is not recent and can be traced back as far as the 1920s and the White Flag movement, with its later inception in Sinnar in the 1960s and as a call from marginalised Nuba intellectuals in the 1970s (Mamdani, 2020: 223-224). It speaks to a shift in the understanding of centralised Sudanese about what it means to be Sudani. Noora's reasons that she reached this conclusion after what she perceived as the Arab World's transparent dislike of the 2018 revolution. According to Noora the result of this has been the birth of a pan-Africanist approach to Islam and identity

> So, I personally have definitely made that separation between Arabs and Islam, and I think ideally and what I'm seeing more of is is Sudanese people interacting more with African Muslims so just neighbouring countries Eritreans, Somalis. And looking at that Muslim identity within Africa has definitely been helpful in that sense. I'm hoping that it will extend to West African Muslims because I know that they definitely have a rich heritage and a rich culture and we can we stand to learn a lot from each other, but I think it's absolutely necessary to divorce Islam from from Arab Arabness, Arab identity

Noora's tipping point for openly adhering to Pan-African Islam was the revolution. However, according to her father Abdul-Wali, within the Fareed home this sentiment had been inculcated in his children and in conclusion of this topic he explained that the family had always been Africa facing, a point that it can be inferred was shaped by his own life experience in the Gulf:

> It it never nourished that feeling in me, that they the concepts of of of the Arab leagues and the Arab nationalism, and so on. I I find it very insignificant in in my upbringing and in in the things that I've passed through my kids. The fact that I am in Africa, the fact that I'm among African tribes, the fact that it is very interesting and to look into the African culture, the African music; that it is somehow in in in our… It's embedded in our pigment, embedded in our genetic code and so on. It

made it made us very much inclined to enjoy the African culture African music, although we might not understand the language, but we feel it.

Paralleling Qur'anic and Other Types of Education

The value of Qur'anic education to the Fareed family was a theme that came through in the interviews. Each of the three-family members were able to detail why they felt it was of importance to them. However, for Hasan and Abdul-Wali their affinity with Qur'anic education did not translate into an endorsement for it to replace the other types of schooling that are available to Sudanese children, whereas Noora was receptive of to the idea in specific settings. However, the Fareeds unanimously valued Qur'anic education as a useful tool in embedding language, culture and from a religious perspective in honouring the correct recitation of the Qur'an.

Noora described her family as religious growing up and this raised her parent's consciousness about the effect of the British curriculum she and her older siblings received throughout their private education. To embed and ground his children in an Islamic tradition they attended a Khalwa prior to their formal education beginning and private Qur'an teachers would later home school them three times a week. During interview, Noora reflected on their engagement with Qur'an schooling

It wasn't just Quran lessons, it was also religion lessons, It was also an opportunity to engage with the immediate community, not just people who had like like access to private school. So, I eventually understood why we we did that because I think it gave me a type of rooting in my identity that I wouldn't have got otherwise because I would have only been interacting with the British school and the British curriculum and people who could afford it

Although Noora believes that Qur'anic education increased the communal aspects of her development, it also brought specific challenges to her as a child who was curious, female, and willing to ask questions. In the confines of the Khalawi intentionally designed for the memorisation of the Qur'an, additional aspects of Islamic education such as Qur'anic exegesis and religious jurisprudence are secondary. For Noora, not being granted the space to ask questions and enhance her understanding was exacerbated by her being asked to leave

I think it was a case of having a Shaykh who wasn't necessarily open to to questions. I think that was one of the major flaws of going to the Khalwa and one of the reasons why I ended up having a teacher come come over and be in a place where my my father could supervise what was happening because I would ask questions... I was a very curious kid and I wanted to know why, I would ask why a lot and I wanted to know a lot of things that make sense to me, and I really

> needed them to and I was constantly being told to just like accept that this is how it is

Noora recalls being told that the explanation for her questioning was blasphemy and a result of her weak Iman (faith). Understanding of questions can be conflated by interpretations of the ideal believer as one who hears and obeys. However, this is a loose interpretation of a verse which underlines how believers should be in front of God and his Messenger (s) as mentioned in Qur'anic verses from the 2nd and 24th chapters (2:285; 24:25). Noora also believes her experience in Khalwa was predicated on her being a girl who asked questions and points to her brothers being treated differently within the Khalwa as evidence. In his article on women's education in Islam, Abukari underscores women's rights in Islamic education are often misinterpreted, through misreading of the Qur'an and inculcation of culture within the religion (2014:5).

Noora's experience of Qur'anic education at home was an improvement and she continued to learn this way until completing her IB exams. However, she concludes that her negative experience at Khalwa is symptomatic of a cycle of learnt behaviours within the Sudanese Qur'anic learning system in which student's abilities to explore are hindered.

> … Just realize that most of these people never had these questions answered for themselves, a lot of the flaws of of the system kind of… is that people are taught things, and they just take them as they are, at some point the explanations were lost, so it was definitely an improvement, but is definitely, It was definitely relative, not absolute in terms of my questions being answered

Noora's opinion is in accordance with academics who argue Qur'anic education does not encourage discussion or questioning and so limits the child's ability to reflect and explore ideas (Hansen et al, 2016; Hoechner,2012). This position is not absolute and is contrasted by Ware (2014) and specifically by Boyle's argument (2006:485) that the scope of Islamic education widens after committing Qur'an to memory making Qur'anic schooling the first step in process of Islamic knowledge acquisition. Whilst secular education does the opposite with higher education signalling a point of specialisation.
However, Boyle's position also aligns to the pre-colonial period in African Islam, in which Islamic education took precedence in Muslim communities and as a result possibly diverges from modern schooling dynamics in which Qur'anic education is often secondary to secular schooling. Consequently, Islamic education for the vast majority of students does not reach the point where it widens.

In Noah Butler's study of Qur'anic schooling in Niger, he posits that students who attend both a Qur'anic and secular school have the ability to collapse this plurality, and separate the two types of schooling cognitively, which means they do not

disrupt or elide with each other (2016). However, Noora's experience sits in contrast to this position, and she explains that for her, Qur'anic schooling and the cognitive skills she learned through it had a definite impact on her education at private school

> I definitely think that learning I wouldn't be where I am today or I wouldn't have achieved anything that I achieved academically if I didn't go to put on classes because I could memorize faster than anyone in class because I was spending every day after school, memorizing my one page for Shaykh, so I definitely think that it it helps me a lot

The suggestion that the Qur'anic education may be a complement to secular schooling is not a popular position. However, there are elements of pedagogy across Sudanese schools that suggest the separation of the two schooling systems is overstated. The establishment of the Bakht er Ruda Teacher Training Institute in 1934 was meant to signal the severance of methods borrowed from Qur'an schools to establish Condominium education. As a result, resources were poured into the production of new education materials and modern pedagogical training for new and existing teachers in an attempt to encourage alternative pedagogy to memorisation.

However, amongst the former state and private school students interviewed memorisation remained a key element of their learning style. For example, Noora's schooling demonstrates that although there had been the addition of classroom technologies such as, blackboards, tables and chairs, the method of learning did not. And her experience helps to dismantle the notion of drastic change within education as a result of the introduction of secular schooling

> … I mean I learned the traditional way, even though my school was in in English school. The school I went to most of my life, we learned the same way we learned for Quran class. You copied everything from the board like you memorized, so there was never like I, I never did the whole like presenting and discussing and writing an essay. It was never ending what we did, like we learned the exact same way you copied it. It was not a Loh anymore, but it was just, you know, it was a board and a notebook, and I just copied everything that the teacher wrote, and I committed it to memory.

Noora's schooling corresponds with Launay's position that the introduction of devices into the classroom such as the blackboard as a replacement of the Loh (Qur'anic writing board) during the colonial period often leads to an assumption that technical advancement instantly ensured changes to pedagogy (2016:3-4).

For Noora the use of memorisation in her secular schooling only changed in the last two years of her education, following her transfer to a school that concentrated on

the International Baccalaureate (IB) exams. The vantage point Noora has gained from her education in experiencing both memorisation and other methods of learning and instruction in the classroom, has led her to believe that a merger of secular and Qur'anic pedagogies within the school system would be positive in a Sudan

> So, I definitely think we need more of a merging. I think right now it's very separate, like I like, I see… my my case is a very rare one and I'm grateful for that that I got to get sort of the best of both worlds. But I wish we did more of that. I wish we had more of a merging of all those ways.

Qur'anic memorisation classes at home were a permanent accompaniment to Noora's full-time education. She would also have lessons on Islam as part of her school curriculum. Unlike some private or missionary schools, Noora's used state education materials instead of UK based Cambridge publications for Islamic education classes (see the al-Hamoudi family section). However, despite this, she believed that these classes were not given the same gravitas as other subjects that would lead to eventual success in IGCSE or IB exams. As a result, the Fareeds' religious commitment emphasised the need for Qur'anic education to supplement her full-time education.

The afterschool Qur'an schooling Noora received throughout her full-time education was in addition to the lessons of Islam that were a part of her curriculum. In contrast to the al-Hamoudi family whose lessons were based around Cambridge publications on Islam, Noora's were based on state Islamic education materials. It is her opinion that her religious classes were not given the same importance by the school as other subjects towards IGCSE and IB exams. For the Fareeds this was the compromise of private schooling, and their religiosity meant that the use of Qur'anic education was important in embedding Noora and her siblings in an Islamic tradition.

Daun and Walford (2004), Reichmuth (2000) and Bawa Yamba (1990,) each discuss the use of Qur'anic education by parents in sub-Saharan African contexts as a form of immunisation against secular schooling. Each writer points to parents' decisions to embed children early on in Islamic education entirely or in complement to secular education, as in the case of the Fareed children. Noora's father Abdul-Wali further explained his own motivations for his children's engagement with Qur'anic schooling and what he hoped they would gain by engaging with it.

> … I sent my kids to the the the best School that I could afford at the time. But then there was another compromise, which is the Arabic language and the and the and the Quran and I was in pursuit of identity, but my identity wasn't only to to live in, to, to to…. But I realised identity it it took more than just living in Sudan. What about the Arabic aspect of their identity? What about their Muslim part of of the identity? So, I try to sort of… It's like being in the circus and trying to spin so

> many saucers at the same time, so I kept juggling between providing the best education, providing, making sure that they have the Arabic aspect, making sure that they they could read the Quran in the correct way, making sure they're not going to lose this.

Although the methods used by Abdul-Wali are apparent across sub-Saharan Muslim communities, Noora has drawn her own conclusions about the choices her parents made regarding her education and their use of Qur'anic education as a counterbalance to what she was exposed to through her private school curriculum.

> I think it was those two just just making sure that I had a holistic understanding of Islam and making sure that I knew how to engage with my with my community, most of these private school people live in Sudan, but they don't really live in Sudan, so I think my parents just wanted to make sure that I was living in Sudan.

Noora's use of the words 'live in Sudan' is metaphorical and she explained that her private school circle created a bubble that existed outside of Sudanese norms. For Noora 'live in Sudan' is about the idea of being present and immersed in Sudanese culture and community and not to be removed from it, as she perceived private schooling to do.

Abdul-Wali had decided to return his family to Sudan after decades in the Gulf region. He describes the climate he encountered upon arrival as a struggle, due to poor infrastructure including health and education. Of specific concern to him was the ideological change that had taken place in state education, which now carried a strong Islamist undertone, Arabic instruction and consequently the relegation of English language.

Abdul-Wali desired to protect his children from these 'struggles' and consequently sought an alternative to state school curriculum. The alternative types of schooling that were available were, missionary, British or American curriculum or Arabic private schools. Each of these school alternatives required the Fareeds to pay for their children's education (other options such as free full-time Qur'anic education or county schools had been immediately discounted). However, decisions around what type of school alternative available were not straightforward as his explanation highlights and he and his wife made several considerations

> At that time, that was the the the dynamic that the options were there, the missionary schools were there, they were equal to the private schools, but getting into them was probably more difficult… the classes were crammed with so many students. There was the private Arabic schools as well like al-Qubas, and so on and what is called the Islamic Centre, which which also taught that national curriculum, and they were the local schools like the county schools that would be

> within a radius of two kilometres from where wherever you live and those were the worst actually.

In addition, Abdul-Wali posits that there was not a difference between private and missionary schools in terms of the fees parents paid due to their popularity. He also believed that in the eyes of the Muslim Sudanese population who engaged children in these types of schools there were very little other differences. This was because the missionary schools did not attempt the conversion of Muslims to Christianity, a condition of their establishment in north Sudan during the Condominium period. So, missionary and private schools competed against each other on the basis of popularity and success, rather than doctrine.

In interview both Noora and Abdul-Wali returned to the subject of Arabic language's linguistic richness. For Noora, it was something she appreciated as a result of having attended Qur'an school. And for Abdul Wali it had formed a significant part of his reason for sending her there. He highlighted that a major concern was the preservation of his children's Arabic language skills, which he considered to be their mother tongue.
The compromise of language that he anticipated as a result of private education was coupled with other apprehensions about the impact British schooling might have on his children. These were born out of his observations of other families within the private school network for whom he believed Arabic had been side-lined in submission to language hierarchy in which English sat on top

> I could see that those who in Sudan have sent their kids to the American School for example, to the other schools there, Uhm, I would say that they had this feeling that it is satisfying you know that their kids would not speak Arabic. You know, it's it's. It's very difficult to explain, what it gave them, because they themselves could not speak good English because they went to National School… and eventually their kids do not, they don't know proper Arabic, they cannot speak proper Arabic, they can't speak proper Arabic and and they feel that this is a good thing and you know, going back to the identity issue and I feel that this is a textbook identity crisis… so I I've always wanted to avoid that and I needed to balance that, so balancing that by teaching them Quran and Quran would take care of Arabic

It is apparent that Abdul-Wali's own identity crisis as a result of moving to the Gulf as a boy has framed his ideas of Sudaneseness and of the benefits in embedding this through immersion in community. As a result, it can be inferred that anything removed from how he has framed being Sudanese and belonging challenges what he has created to feel at home physically and metaphysically.

Abdul- Wali considers the success of his decision making about Qur'an education to be evidenced by the way it continues to impact their lives. In the case of Noora,

aside from the transfer of Qur'anic learning skills into her full-time education, as an adult she has also seen its impact on her work as a translator due to her ability to memorise and understanding of the sophisticated classical Arabic that makes up the Qur'an

> I definitely benefited a lot from learning something as as linguistically complex as the Qur'an because nothing is hard now. I can, I can translate anything, so I I definitely benefited in that sense. And I think it helped me understand Arabic a lot better. It helped me understand the world a lot better, so it's moral, linguistic, and then obviously cognitive in the sense that I became better at memorizing in general.

Class and Perceptions of Qur'anic Education in Sudan

The Fareed family has actively engaged in Qur'anic education across multiple generations. They are aware of the role non-Qur'anic education has played in enabling each of them to forge successful careers and the lifestyles these afforded. This in turn means that they view Qur'anic education through a particular lens that places emphasis on its religious and linguistic benefits. Identifying as middle-class I asked what role they believed it played in wider perceptions of Qur'anic education.

Noora, asserted that part of the legacy of colonialism was emphasis on university education, the result of which was that Qur'anic education was looked down upon as insufficient to provide a pathway to higher education. She also added that classist connotations meant that it would not be accepted as a standalone provision and that engagement in full-time Qur'an school education was perceived to be for those who could not afford other options.

Hasan concurred and explained that he believed outside of religion there were not many career options available to Qur'an students who spent their entire education in Khalwa unless they perhaps trained to become teachers. However, for Qur'an students who later joined and completed state secondary schooling, he thought career outcomes would be broader. He also concluded that learning the Qur'an was not meant to lead to a career in religion and that its function was originally very different.

> Because learning Quran is something that really improves the abilities of the child, but to take it as the only thing in your life, I think even Saydinna Mohammed, even the Sunna and even the religious education itself is not telling you to do this. Umm so you don't lock yourself, It's not a career.
>
> … I mean, I think Islam recognized that learning Quran or teaching Quran… ah sorry learning and following Quran is not a career, it is something that is an

> enabler in real life. So, you carry on with his mathematics, and your rocket science and everything while you have the Koran as your enabler, and you're the sort of steering your life for you.

His conclusions are evidence of how the Fareed family have intentionally incorporated both Qur'anic and secular education into their lives. Qur'anic learning is seen as tool by the Fareed's that prepares its reader for a life as a Muslim in pursuit of the hereafter but also to complement life lived in the present in which secular education offers some financial security. Hasan's thinking harks back to the golden period of Muslim thought during the Abbasid khalifate in Islam flourished in relation to the sciences and innovation (England, 2017).

However, Noora observes that engagement with Qur'an and perceptions of how it is seen, change according to the gender of its student. She argues that whilst a middle-class family would typically reject a male Qur'anic student enquiring for marriage due the likelihood of him being poor. In contrast, a female would not be dismissed in the same way because piety and purity of women continue to hold value within traditional elements of Sudanese society.

> I think when women have only gone to Qur'anic school its seen that these are good women and they've, they've they've learned what is necessary only, which is messed up in some way, but but it's also seen as OK these people are, you know, they're committed to the deen (religion).

It is also Abdul-Wali and Noora's view, that understanding class in Sudan can be complex. Despite the connotations attached to Qur'anic schooling, it also remains a sign of piety and that a person has chosen a modest way of life that encompasses prayer, religious learning, and the minimum to sustain life in this world without excess. According to Abdul-Wali people who segregate based on income are penalised by society. This point was emphasised by Noora who claims being rich in Sudan suggests the opposite to a Qur'an schooled person's humility. Instead displays of wealth lead to suspicions of character corruption and money acquired through illegitimate means. Despite this social dichotomy and the benefits engagement with Qur'anic education might offer in altering perceptions of wealthier families, Noora maintains that these families continue to generally resist Qur'anic education and that it remains their last alternative.

Hasan concludes the reason why other groups of Sudanese have continued to engage with Qur'anic education when their wealthier counterparts have not; is because historically during the pre-colonial period, Qur'anic education played a role giving communities access to the Qur'an.

> ... Uh, where Mushaf (mus-haf/Qur'an) of the time, when they were not abundant. Not everybody can put his hand on a Mushaf, yes. So, the the publication was not abundant so. It's very, very seldom that you find the house that has got three Mushafs at that time. When, when you start this at the time of the prime of the Khalwas it was, it was solving this problem. Yeah, so if if you want to send your son to learn Qur'an, you don't have a Mushaf for him to look at, so you sent him to a teacher

Hasan's conclusion is in accordance with Luanay (2016:3), who asserts the introduction of specific technologies into classrooms that the advent of print in sub-Saharan African countries arrived at the onset of the colonial period. In addition, Hasan maintains that it is not only the advent of print that has led to reduction in Sudanese reliance on Qur'an schools. To make his point he claims the introduction of modern technologies have more or less rendered reliance upon Qur'an schools for access to the Qur'an obsolete, removing one of its advantages to Sudanese people.

> Instead of learning from Mushaf, these days I've got Mushaf, even I've got it in in in, in my IPhone, whatever I've got no problem. So, this is one of the advantages of the Khalwas, it was very dear, Mushaf is not commonplace you cannot find Mushaf wherever you go.

Nevertheless, Hasan conceded that the introduction of Qur'anic applications on mobile devices was likely to be in precise locations such as the urban settings of Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman. He also claimed that the usefulness and engagement with Qur'an schools and their teachers differed in rural environments, which he attached to the influence of Sufi sect in these sites

> In the villages of Sudan where again applications of the Quran, I mean copies of Quran are not abundant and teachers (secular school) are not available, and people have the time to do it. They will go and sit there, and they look for Baraka (blessing) for sitting there with the man (Qur'an teachers). Besides most of the people still send their children to the Khalwas there. They're all sect practicing

Consistent with Hasan, Noora believes Qur'anic education still has a role to play within elements of Sudanese society. She said it still held value for poor families without access to other types of education who viewed Khalwa as a "jumping point" into education. However, Noora did not dismiss its religious significance in dealing with issues life presents and said that it was an indication of people's reliance on piety as a coping mechanism during hardship, as well as providing comfort against said hardships with a guarantee of a fruitful afterlife.

However, Noora also explored the premise of Qur'anic education as a suitable medium to provide basic literacy for communities in which education certificates hold little value. She also questioned what she viewed to be the imposition of secular schooling on these kinds of communities that has resulted from Sudan's co-signing of Education for All and the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (United Nations,2015)

> I mean, imagine like farming towns and villages. It's like you already you can learn what you need to do for the rest of your life from watching your your you know your elders and the Quranic education becomes sort of the only education you really need. I will say though, actually, let me supplement what I said about the Western education. A lot of the time, nobody needs that like there's this, there's this idea that we need to build schools that teach this curriculum everywhere… Like you're not going to save everyone by giving them an IGCSEs prep school or like a state state exam prep school where they are.

The concept of basic literacy offered at Khalawi also saw Noora discuss families' recognition of its value as an entry point into education. She believes that its guarantee of reading and writing skills means that it was often viewed to be a 'jumping point' into some form of education, where other schooling options were not available. Beyond its educational merit, she also suggested that Qur'anic education offered poor religious families a means of salvation from life's hardships. Although anecdotal, she proposed that it represented a refuge for those who did not believe success was available to them in this world. And that it was used as part of a coping strategy against sufferings endured and step towards the guarantee of a good afterlife.

Noora also accounted for different motivation of her family members that have sent their children into full-time Qur'anic education. She explained that on occasion it had been as a means of discipline for badly behaved children in full-time secular education. The Qur'an school was then a punishment, and they would not subsequently return to secular school. This she implied was because the Qur'an school was seen to be a site in which Muslim character was perfected through its use of discipline and despite the educational implications for the child's social mobility.

In conclusion, it is apparent from the interviews that the Fareed family value the education and advantages that private schooling offers in Sudan. These include the mastery of English language, a route into quality higher education at home or abroad, leading to good employment. Alternatively, Qur'anic schooling is given value by the Fareeds for its rich Arabic linguistic merit and as a tool to embed a moral education that Abdul-Wali does not express confidence to be transferred through private education. Attached is also Qur'anic schooling's embedding of a Sudanese Muslim identity. However, it is also clear that the Fareed family's confidence in Qur'anic education does not extend to Qur'an schools as a form of institutional education. This was also deduced from the end of the interview with Hasan, who

gave a definition of what he believed to be the outcomes for Sudanese children in full-time schooling that was either Qur'anic, state or private

> you pay to the private school and your child will be learning English and learning things in English. So, by the time he graduates, he can present himself for employment and repay you the money that you spent on him. If you send somebody to the government school, it takes you nowhere, it has got no chance for it, chance of employment and now we seem to be, we have forgotten about our Khalwa. If your child has gone to Khalwa only, just forget it. He's got no chance for employment, except on his own manual labour.

This is Hasan's conclusion. Evidence from across the continent may limit the success outcomes for children in Khalawi, and whilst the expectations of state and private are vastly different, the success pipeline for children in these types of schools is not a given. For example, Hoechner (2012) and Mann (2014) suggest that successes of children in private or state education are not clear cut and depend on a series of factors such as, access to networks (wasta), the state of the labour market and prejudices prevalent in the society.

The Fundamental Difference in Educational Outlook: between generations - Insaaf

An Education Through Three Consecutive Regimes

Insaaf Ahmed is a high-ranking development worker for a European based INGO. She was born in the UK during the 1970s, whilst her Sudanese father completed his doctorate. Upon completion of his studies, Insaaf's family returned to Sudan when she was five years old and settled in the capital Khartoum. Her education in Sudan began at the age of seven when she attended a renowned state primary school in the Sudanese capital.

Insaaf's schooling straddled three consecutive government regimes, beginning primary and intermediate school during the Nimeiri administration, followed by high school during the brief reign of Sadiq al-Mahdi and university during the first year of the Beshir regime. For Insaaf the schooling system meant she followed a 6-3-3 education ladder, which had shifted from the 4-4-4 model followed by children of her mother's generation. Insaaf was part of the last generation to follow the 6-3-3 model which changed during her first year of university when the Beshir administration brought in its policies to change the Sudanese education system.

Insaaf's entry into the state school programme was based on her father's belief in state education, although her social circle was made up of the children of academics, all of whom attended private schools. Insaaf's family in contrast followed her father's premise that state education remained the best type of schooling available. This decision was based on his own experiences of state education that had led to his successful entrance and first degree at the coveted University of Khartoum.

A theme that emerged from our interview was that Insaaf believed Sudanese parents' choice of state or private schooling to be an ethical matter and summarised her father's choice of state school for her to have been based on his faith in Sudan's education institutions. However, the interview also demonstrated the differences between Insaaf and her father, perhaps reflecting a generational gap. The educational policies of the Bashir regime, politicised Insaaf and her colleagues' education in a way that her father and his contemporaries had not been. As a result, his faith in Sudanese state schooling and education policies did not transfer to his daughter, who has remained sceptical about state and Qur'anic education in Sudan, leading to her embrace of private schooling for her child.

In interview, Insaaf explained that the decision to send her to a state school was given much thought and as a result, she was entered into the highest ranked state schools at each level of her education. These select schools were known to produce high achieving students, many of whom she said went go on to become prominent

figures in Sudan. In addition, Insaaf revealed that she saw the idea of a homogenous state education system often written about by academics based on what has come into being under the Beshir regime to be misleading. The result she said is that this presents the idea of poor continuity in state education, a picture of state education that argues did not exist prior to the NIF/NCP era. She concluded that the existence of state schools at primary, intermediate and secondary level such as, Khartoum Ameeria, Khartoum Jadeedah, Khartoum Qadeemah and Hoor-Omar/Daggit, evidenced state education's propensity for excellence.

However, Insaaf concedes that the state education offered to young people presently is in decline and has resulted in the Sudan's professional classes looking towards other options for schooling such as missionary or private schools. She acknowledges that the option to make this decision is based on the privilege of her socio-economic status and implies that state education is no longer associated with Sudan's middle class, implying as a result that her father's decision to send her into state school would not take place today.

> Now it's considered like you know most people don't go for state education because the quality of education is really bad and there are no teachers and so on. And it's maybe linked to people who are not well off, who can't take their kids to other types of private schools, and even when you're talking about private schools, it's yeah it could be British education, but it could also be private in Arabic private schools. Yeah, so I think again. Yeah, maybe it's linked to social status at the moment…

Insaaf's father came from the early-independence generation, and she underscores her father's position on state education in Sudan, by making clear that his thinking was framed prior to the era of the NIF/NCP. She explained that he was from a period in modern Sudanese history in which state education represented good schooling and she considers him to have been pro-state education including regarding tertiary education on this basis. However, is it also worth noting that this view of higher education in particular is countered by Ille (2016:100) who argues that critiques of higher educational development have existed since the 1960s due to a host of issues including, Sudanisation and the changeability of government administrations financial investment in the sector. Nonetheless Insaaf's father's conviction about the quality of Sudanese education was reflected in his request for her to later study higher education in Sudan, despite the opportunity her British citizenship gave her to study in the UK.

> I didn't want to go to the University of Khartoum. Initially I wanted to just explore other kinds, especially because I was born in the UK. I had a British passport so I was kind of like thinking, thinking about, why can't I just go to the UK. But he he was like no; University of Khartoum is the best. And he thought that similarly not

> only of university education, but all the kind of state education in Sudan at that time, he thought it was a very good education, very well recognized.

Her father's position on state education needs to be contextualised to understand how his value of education in early post-independence Sudan. According to Hajjar (1983:182) at independence, the percentage of literate children recorded by the administration sat at less than 10 per cent; and of the primary schools in existence the ratio of enrolled children was one in eight to ten. Over the following decade, the rate of primary enrolment continued to rise as education expanded. However, this was not significant enough to suggest opportunities to complete the three tiers of the education system and remained the privilege of a few. Therefore, understandings of education from the vantage point of Insaaf's father, as well as that of participants in this study such as, Hasan, Khalil and Mohamed must be viewed through the lens of a certain privilege.

Insaaf did not attend Qur'an school and her learning of the tenets of Islam primarily took place in school classes. She upholds that compared to current school students, the requirement to learn Islamic education was not at all pressing. And she highlighted that it had no bearing on the Sudanese National Certificate which allows students to enter university unlike today. It is Insaaf's opinion that the development of Sudanese education's emphasis on Islam and Arabic language instruction and their impact on students' grades took place in 1990. This was during her first year at the University of Khartoum, following Omar Beshir's announcement of an Islamised education programme (Breidlid, 2005; 2010).

<u>University Education and The Beshir Regime's Proclamation of Reclaiming Arabic Language</u>

> Yeah, certainly. I think if I compare the Bashir era to the al-Sadiq era because that's like yeah, still fresh in my memory. And there has been, of course, a push to kind of more of the you know Quran and Arabic language and so…

For Insaaf, the implications of the regime change were experienced first-hand during her first year of university, which coincided with the early Beshir regime's 'thawrat al-ta'lim al'ali' – Revolution of Higher Education (Ille, 2016:101). In accordance with Bishai (2008), Insaaf explained that as a student of architecture, she and classmates were left confused by requests to study in Arabic, particularly when frustrated professors struggled to find resources and references for terminology in Arabic, which in turn left them feeling resistance to its introduction into the most reputable higher education institution.

> And also, the professors were very confused about how they can actually teach in Arabic. Things about you know, even the kind of terminologies like column, they

were like different. Yeah, like there is. I don't know the Syrian way of saying it in Arabic. There is also another Egyptian way of saying it. So, there was a lot of confusion in that first year and there was also that pushback from the professors.

Insaaf, believes her university batch were higher education guinea pigs for the Beshir regime for what was the implementation of its Arabisation strategy for education overall. Salomon (2016) maintains that the regime viewed the diffusion of Islamic knowledge in higher education as key to cementing the theological approach to Islam that they wanted to propagate amongst Sudanese and wanted to ensure that the minds of those in higher education were onboard.

Although in the first cohort affected by this change, Insaaf viewed subsequent student batches to be those that experienced the policy in full. Insaaf tied this view to the introduction of a pass mark in Arabic language and religious studies as a requirement of the 'Shahada Sudania' - Sudan National Certificate for school leavers who wanted to enter higher education. And although she endured the changes to education taking place in universities, she had avoided what was occurring in secondary schooling at the same time.

In addition, Insaaf cited there were changes to the once-respected requirement of specialist subject knowledge for disciplines such as, biology and life sciences. Students were once required to study specific courses in high school, however, this changed under the Revolution of Higher Education in what the regime framed as an attempt to make university more accessible to the masses (Ille, 2016:101). The result Insaaf concludes was a decline in the calibre of students entering into specialised university programmes, as entry was instead based on overall grade percentage rather than specialist course grades.

In the year in which the administration introduced its new higher education policies Insaaf was a part of resistance movement towards it. This she said was inspired by her tutors' refusal to teach in Arabic and return to English instruction. She also pointed out that the consequence for many of these academics was instant dismissal. Insaaf, also explained that for a time there was continued student resistance, but this eventually petered out when change did not occur. Abbas (1991) argued that the permutations of Arabic instruction in higher education were wide-reaching and not justified pedagogically. This policy and the disregard for alternative positions were part of an emphasis designed to promote the regimes ideological position of Islamic Sudaneseness.

Insaaf believes this period represented the beginning of Sudanese education's overall decline, a point she stated was evidenced by the academic quality of students it has since produced, primarily due to the lowering of entry requirements and a lack of financial investment. In keeping with Abbas (1991), Insaaf also cited that the decline of Islamism on campuses coincided with the NIF regimes suppression of student societies. In particular, she discussed the impact of this on students'

exploration of ideas and the disappearance of the 'Rukinikash,', where students traditionally held political or religious debates.

A Different Education for the Next Generation

To questions about her decisions for her child's education, Insaaf shared that private education at an international school had always been the goal. This was partly because of the nature of her work in international development, which meant the possibility of travel to different countries existed. She also believed private schools that followed a primarily British curriculum (outside of Arabic and religion), gave her child the ability to adjust to any potential environments she may encounter because of Insaaf's work, whilst obtaining IGCSEs on the pathway to international higher education.

For Insaaf this also meant that Quranic education was not deliberated as a possible school pathway for her child. She was clear in her reasons about why she had chosen not to incorporate Qur'anic education into her child's schooling and explained.

> I I've never considered that. I don't think I've even entertained the thought because yeah, I know what we also need… we just don't need just the Qur'an and Arabic to be able to kind of, you know, go out there and you know do other stuff and so on. So yeah, I think I definitely wouldn't want, I didn't want that to happen, and I didn't even think about it.

Insaaf continued to explain that she struggled to see the benefit of Qur'anic education for those with aspirations of higher education and a good industry job thereafter. However, she acknowledged that whilst she did not choose Qur'anic education, having some grounding as offered to her child through Arabic and religious education at private school, alleviated her concerns about their Sudanese identity. Something that had been heightened due to the possibility of living in a different country due to Insaaf's work.

Insaaf was on the opinion that the benefits of Arabic and religion taught in school were in mooring Sudaneseness. She used an example of one of her cousins, who had not had exposure to either subject at school. As a result, this cousin had to contend with what Insaaf interpreted to be embarrassment because of being unable to interact with family members. Additionally, Insaaf understood this to mean that her cousin had lost 'the whole kind of Sudanese element' and did not want this experience for her own child.

Awareness of how her choice of private school education for her child might be viewed by some Sudanese outside of her social class, led Insaaf to conclude that it

was likely she was viewed to be someone who liked foreigners and who was '… kind of disconnected from the real kind of Sudanese culture.' This was a form of opinion that she rejected, however, she remained adamant that it was the most suitable form of education for those with real aspirations and that she has never considered other types of schooling available suitable for her own child's education.

During interview, we continued to probe the subject of Qur'anic education further, and it was Insaaf's conclusion that comparatively the choice between it and private education always fell in favour of private education and were Sudanese parents in general given the choice private education would always be chosen. Moreover, she asserted that Sudanese people in rural settings were more likely to access Qur'an schools than people in urban centres because they thought it was good for kids to go to Khalwa and learn more about Islam and the Qur'an. She surmised that this was partly due to the religiosity or religious engagement in the Sufi brotherhoods of rural communities in comparison to those in urban settings. However, Insaaf also believed that limited access to other types of education in rural environments also framed and had more to do with people's decision to engage with Qur'anic education.

A Discourse about Why Parents Opt for Private Schooling in Sudan

Insaaf claims that most Sudanese parents who opt for private education, do so because of ideas of social mobility that have become associated with this type of education since the Beshir era began. English language is also a driver behind parents' decision making according to Insaaf. She claims that parents are also using their own experiences of the job market to guide their decision making. She used the example of her own job search experience and stated that her English language skills had proven invaluable in opening doors within the development sector. She also recalls a recent experience of being on an interview panel in which the candidates' English language skills led to questions about their suitability for the role.

> … I was involved in an Interview panel recently and one of the panellists was like when they when we assessed the tests she was saying, "yeah, I took these points because of the grammatical and English language errors," even though herself she wasn't British. But still she considered that as one of the things to kind of like take points out for.

It is an awareness of such encounters that Insaaf believes incline a lot of middle-class parents towards the private school sector over other existing forms of schooling. She argues that the point is heightened when it is other Sudanese in particular who are making the decisions about who can and cannot enter certain job sectors based on a poor acquisition of English. Insaaf also claims that the dynamic around English language acquisition coincided with the Arabisation policies of Sudanese education under the NIF/NCP, which proved counterproductive as it lowered the standard of

English language in schools, subsequently pushing families towards schools with English language instruction, private tuition, and English language institutes such as the British Council in Khartoum.

Insaaf went on to claim that the 'schizophrenia' of Sudanese identity which oscillates between African, and Arab was not lessened because of the NIF/NCP Arabisation policy and in her personal experience had no impact on how she framed her identity. She believes most Sudanese would be comfortable in identifying as Afro-Arab, although more inclined towards their Africaness due to cultural practices with the only inclusion in favour of Arabness being language and asserted 'it's not easy to generalize, but just in general kind of terms, it's not easy to kind of see where the link is beyond the beyond the Arabic language.' Moreover, she also believes her child's generation to be even more accepting of a sole identity in favour of being Africans due to their exposure to social media and the world outside of Sudan.

Conclusion

The dissimilarities between Insaaf and her father's positions regarding state schooling, underline how the two generations experienced education and Sudan's educational climate differently. Her father's outlook on state education was a reflection and attachment to a memory of schooling during the height of Sudanese education's quality, in which state education was valued above private schooling. As a result, his position was one of unwavering support for a system that he had experienced positively, and which had offered him a pathway to gain postgraduate qualifications.

This memory of education resulted in him sending Insaaf to state schools with a similar expectation of gaining a good education. However, it can also be inferred from his purposeful selection of the best state schools for Insaaf was strategic and demonstrated his awareness that all state education was not equal. Therefore, his school selection, was an insurance that Insaaf would receive the very best education that the state had to offer.

For Insaaf, the political climate of the 1980s and early 1990s meant that her education straddled three separate regimes. The last regime (NCP/NIF) negatively impacted her experience of higher education specifically. This along with the continued deterioration of state schooling under the NCP/NIF through its policies and minimal investment, offers some explanation for Insaaf's cynicism about state education. Her position on Qur'anic education and non-consideration of it as a schooling option, also indicates the extent of her disbelief in Sudanese schooling options. Whilst other participants have chosen to use Qur'anic education as a means to provide cultural socialisation, Insaaf did not consider it a necessary option for her daughter. Instead, it was Insaaf's perspective that her daughter's cultural education could be sufficiently gained through her education in Sudan and exposure to Arabic language and the surrounding environment.

Propping Up Sudan's Shrinking Middle-Class: Mohamed Jafar

This section is about the study participant Mohammed Jafar and details his education during early post-independence, including his connection to Qur'anic education. One of several discourses shared by Mohammed during interview, was the effect that Sudan's decimated economy under the NCP government had on Sudan's middle class. According to Mohammed, the consequences of a failing economy has led to a shrinking middle-class, whereby salaries no longer afford the education and lifestyle choices that were once their reserve (also see the al-Hamoudi family). Subsequently, some families are being forced to rethink and negotiate new strategies in order to maintain a lifestyle that is relatively familiar. As highlighted by Mohammed Jafar and his explanation about his daughter and husband, this can mean wider family support is needed for finances and offers of accommodation. It can also lead to children being withdrawn from fee-paying schools and entered into state schools, where overcrowding and stretched resources might already exist.

Mohammed Jafar also illustrates that the option to enter children into Qur'anic education as a means of embedding culture or religion is not a priority for each family interviewed and, in his case, he viewed home schooling his children in religious learning as sufficient to instil a good Islamic foundation.

Mohammed Jafar is a Sudanese development worker, whose career has spanned education, justice and agriculture and he lives with his family in the capital city of Khartoum. He was born in the 1950s, at a time in which nursery schools were not established. He attended a local Qur'an school from the age of five to seven and thereafter entered into a local state elementary school in 1960, four years after Sudan's official independence from the AEC.

Mohamed Jafar views the early Qur'anic schooling he received to have been the equivalent of nursery schooling, stating that parents engaged children in this form of schooling before full-time education began in the absence of nurseries. This practice continues today in Sudan and the education policy supporting it states, parents are given the choice of kindergarten or Qur'anic education as certified pre-school options (UNESCO, 2012). For two years, Mohammed Jafar's Qur'anic education took place in a small Qur'an school attached to the home of the local district's faqih (religious leader). When he began his full-time education, his attendance of Khalwa was reduced to the school holiday periods only.

When asked in interview, why his parents had chosen Qur'anic education before his full-time schooling commenced, Mohammed Jafar explained that it was a method used to ensure that children had the correct grounding morally. It was believed by parents that Qur'an education at an early stage in a child's life offered tools that would keep them away from and guard against immoral behaviours. Mohammed Jafar's overarching impression of Qur'an schools is of a provider of moral

socialisation and in conversation he did not reference its merits as a form of education similar to state or private schools.

In addition, he did not see any conflict between his secular and Qur'anic schooling. Instead, he views them to be in complement to each other. He based this on the flexibility of Qur'an schooling, which meant students were able to attend in the holiday periods, and therefore reasoned it did not interfere with full-time school. He also recognised Qur'an schooling's benefits in keeping children occupied during the extended summer holiday period, offering an alternative for a minimum of three days of the week to play and idleness.

When Mohammed Jafar entered elementary school at the age of seven, the language of instruction was Arabic until he entered intermediate school when it changed to English. A second change in his schooling was that the state education ladder changed from four years in elementary, intermediate, and secondary school. The coming to power of Jafar Nimeiri after the successful military coup of 1969 meant Mohammed Jafar was amongst the first batch of students to be schooled under Nimeiri's 6-3-3-year education ladder. He explained the impact and confusion this caused for his year group in secondary education

> … the Curriculum was changed, where they introduced the the 6-3-3. I am in the secondary, I studied first year twice like first year, when it was four and then when I went to second year it was again named first of secondary, high secondary. You got it?

Given that another participant in this study (Hasan), who was educated during the same period as Mohammed Jafar, labelled his fathers' attitude towards state schooling as pragmatic and suspicious, I asked Mohammed Jafar whether he had encountered a similar experience. Conversely, according to him, his father was keen to see his children succeed in education and did not at any point force them to stop their studies and he stated, 'we had to stop ourselves.'

His father was a labourer by trade and Mohammed Jafar described him as barely literate, having had no regular form of schooling growing up, he had the ability to write his name and apply simple mathematics. Mohammed explained that his family was not wealthy, however, with free education accessible to students who achieved well until the completion of university, education was not a financial burden. He clarified that at that time the wage of one person in a family could sufficiently take care of 10 family members, which allowed him and his siblings to remain in school.

To his father's pleasure like his older siblings, Mohammed Jafar successfully graduated from university. Following the completion his degree programme at the reputable University of Khartoum, he was immediately recruited by the Ministry of Agriculture without the requirement of an interview. After six months in his new role, he was granted a full scholarship and stipend to complete a master's degree by

the local state administration to which the ministry had assigned him and subsequently resigned from his position. Having a good education was important to the Jafar family and some of Mohammed Jafar's siblings also went on to complete research degrees.

Mohammed's education and the encouragement that he and his siblings received, suggests that his father understood social mobility could be achieved through state education. Recognition of the benefits of opting into state education had been seen and documented about Sudanese working classes as early as the 1907. In the education section of the Condominium's annual report, the Director of Education James Currie, noted Sudanese army privates (who were categorised as African and not Arab by the administration) entering their sons into schools. He concluded that their aspirations were for their sons to imitate the tarbush wearing Egyptians from Sudan's administration, who were viewed to have successful lifestyles (Sudan Report, 1907:570).

Sudan's Socio-Economic Status and Its Implications for Education

Similarly, to other research participants, schooled towards the end of the Condominium and early independence period, Mohamed Jafar has seen the reputations of state and private schooling alternate. He shared that during his childhood state schooling was the better of the two. In addition, similarly to another same-generation participant, Hasan, he viewed the private school sector (although not as developed as today) to have once been for students with low grades that were insufficient for entry into a good state school programme.

Mohammed Jafar reasoned that during the 1960s, a student's motivation to succeed was enough to allow those who were talented to thrive and access the best schooling resources. Given this point and the governments' consistent share of Sudan's gross national product investment in education at 7.7%, he suggests there was not a need for private schools to present an alternative source at the time (Lynch, Qarib Allah and Omer, 1992). However, it is his view that the current state of education sits in contrast to his own school era, and he has witnessed what he believes to be the dwindling of quality state education.

Mohammed Jafar's opinion, in accordance with Abbas (1991) and Breidlid (2005; 2013) that the decline in state schooling began in the second half of the 1980s during the last democratically elected government of Sadiq al-Mahdi. He also argues, this decline became most pronounced during what he referred to as the 'Muslim brotherhood' regime of the NIF. This he revealed was part of the motivation for opting to send his own children to private schools, where he believed they would experience a positive school environment with comparatively well-paid teachers who were motivated as a result. In addition, the manageable student numbers in classrooms meant better classroom management than in state schools.

As argued by Breidlid (2005, 2013), the NIF's coming to power complicated the education sector. Mohammed Jafar believes this to be the case and feels that it is what has resulted in its current state, whereby private non-state schooling is seen as the best option for families that are able to afford it. However, he does not believe this to have been born out of a regime push towards a hierarchy of educational quality, rather that it was a new avenue for entrepreneurialism under the regime

> … it was more during this Muslim brothers' regime because of mixing between education and having it as an investment. Particularly, it was looked at as an investment during this era. Not expanding the options for for quality education. This was a second, the second objective for it. But the first objective for it was an investment for those who were businessmen, particularly. If you look at the schools, even the teachers that seem to have started this (private schools) were funded by businessmen at the beginning. They look at it as a business, not that as Quality education.

Mohammed Jafar, views NIF/NCP aligned entrepreneurial investment into the private education sector as the factor that forced families that were able to afford private schooling to seek its outcomes for their children. The result in today's climate is that if a family can afford private education, they are almost guaranteed to enter their child into it. However, he explained that this is a phenomenon attached to city life and that it was not the same for middle class families in rural settings where private schools were not as prominent, thus forcing middleclass families to remain in state education. Yet, as shown by participants who were educated in rural Sudan, when the opportunity of private education presented itself, it was taken, as was the case with Hamid in Qadaref.

Mohammed Jafar is also of the opinion that the chance of better education for middleclass families at private schools is due to the precedence given to English in the private education sector. And he argues that these parents believe access to English language is what widens career opportunities for children when they graduate. Mohammed Jafar used his own experience with his children to explain the motivations behind parents' investment in English language.

> Because at some point if you notice it was like if you are, you have to to go for a good career, UN or NGO's or well-paying jobs English was like a… it it is the main factor that will give you a chance for that Uh-huh if you apply for any, any any job in NGO's which is the best paying nowadays, the UN and the NGOs, if you don't have good English nobody will get you.

Mohamed Jafar's point of view about Sudan's newly educated applying for jobs in the development sector is in accordance with a recent London School of Economics' blog article by Sudanese economist Dr Muez Ali (2021), in which he discusses how

the lack of investment in the country's public sector has led graduates to look for work in western funded NGOs.

Mohammed Jafar stated that when it came to his children the overriding factor about investment in private schooling was the desire for them to live a better life than he had had and viewed his motivations as no different to those of another parent. However, he believed that the difference between his experience in the mid-90s to early 2000s, and those of modern families in his social class (including his own children), has been the level of financial sacrifice and suffering that they have begun to experience because of high tuition and a shrinking economy.

Mohammed Jafar believes the situation that families now find themselves to be in are desperate. He cited recent events in one of his daughters' lives that had brought the seriousness of how middle-income families are being squeezed financially and its implications for the private school factor.

> They're renting an apartment. It used to be. Yeah, it wasn't taking a lot of their income at that time, and the school was affordable, but through time It became A burden to them to the point where they started squeezing and what they used to have in the house for the sake of their kids because they want to be the maximum for the kids. So nowadays we could help them, I'm trying to wish them to come to live with me in the house, they have an apartment constructed for them. So was that they they at least we'll save the the rent part, yes, but the husband is a little bit stubborn. He wanted to have their own. Like I say that this option will no longer be there for forever.

This squeezing of the Sudanese middle-class is not new. According to Sahal's (1999) survey of the Sudanese middle classes and where the poverty line begins, he recorded that 77% of Sudanese had begun to feel the effects of an income expenditure gap after 1989, when the NCP came to power. This also sits in keeping with Darbon (2018) whose examination of the financial mobility of the African Middle class, questions the strata's validity based its increasingly limited economic freedom.

Mohamed Jafar was also able to recall recent experiences in his work as an education consultant across Khartoum state. He concluded that these experiences were illustrations of how the financial situation of middle-class families had progressively worsened in Sudan's capital, and had subsequently forced them to reevaluate their financial investments in their children's education.

> …I was involved in a what do you call it, a baseline survey for an education project two months ago… And I heard it from headmaster schools that nowadays we are having a rush back from private schools to public (state) because of the financial

> situation of the families. A lot of them were obliged to bring them to bring their kids to public schools. To a level where they are congested now. They said we took the maximum and now above the maximum. We have a serious problem, a lot of them said. and nobody is helping us.

Two important factors that stem from this part of Mohammed Jafar's discourse are the idea of a shrinking Sudanese middle class and the overcrowding in school classrooms. Sahal (1999), addresses the shrinking middle-classes and signals that this issue has been on-going for some decades. He argues that the decline of the Sudanese labour market has impacted Sudanese middle classes and the quality of life they once enjoyed. As a result, his view is that the once clearly-defined line between Sudanese poor and middle class has been slowly erased. Written in reference to the socio-economics of Sudan in the 1980 and 90s, Sahal goes as far as to say that the middle-class stratum was 'on the verge of being eliminated' (1999: 34). As a result, this has left many amongst the middle class in the classification of 'new poor.'

According to Fincham (2018:372), overcrowding in state schools had already caused teachers in Red Sea state to revert to teaching approaches synonymous with teacher talk and had Impacted classroom management. Although this was prior to the trend of families returning from the private education sector to state schools mentioned by Mohammed Jafar, it can be inferred that the situation in the most populated region Khartoum state has been similarly exacerbated by such events.

In addition, he believed that amongst the consequences of the current state of education was heavily demotivated teachers, frustrated by poor pay, a lack of resources or support in the form of teaching assistants to help manage spiralling student numbers. Mohammed Jafar cited examples of dissatisfied teachers leaving the profession and the continual decline in education's quality as a result. He explained that these two factors were intrinsically linked, as teachers leaving education had only one obvious outcome, a knock-on effect on the quality of children and young people's schooling. He also summarised that the implications would be generational. According to Nour (2013) this is a two-way factor as teachers are demotivated by low quality education, and little training or opportunity to upskill themselves.

It is Mohammed Jafar view that the effects of Sudan's struggling economy will become worse for middle class families before improving. He used the personal experience of his son and spoke of the financial predicament that he had found himself in, despite his work as a well-ranked civil servant. He claimed that his son's salary in the current climate could not last for more than 3 days per month and that as a result he had been forced to return home with his family. Mohammed Jafar also helped financially support his son with the cost of education for his children, a process that he stated was not tenable for the foreseeable future.
Sahal (1999), supports the experiences of the Jafar family and argues that there has been a considerable drop in the wages of public sector middle class and the result

has been twofold, firstly a worsening in working conditions and secondly a decline in the standard of living, that has seen many using Salow's theory fall into the lower 20% floating above poverty (Omer and Maglad, 2020). Sahal also argued that amongst civil-servants in general just 6.2% lived above the poverty line, and that those who fall under that line may also include positions that would be considered to be managerial or senior leadership (1999: 28).

Mohammed Jafar observes that the knock-on effects of the worsening Sudanese economic climate has been its impact on education including at the tertiary level. He argued that the legacy of the NIF/NCP regime's opening of more university places during the 1990s, was a surplus of graduates and a consequent lack of jobs for them to fill. The outcome Mohammed Jafar explained was as follows.

> … because of the political situation, students are spending more time at the university than than they should. Instead of finishing within four years or five years and not taking seven years, eight years, some of them have are they still in first class, second class, after four years of admittance. This this is another burden families take it from the financially…, And if you look at the labour market also, the graduates are piling up. No no no jobs. And this has a bigger question also on why do I I go to study…

His opinion is consistent with Nour's evaluation of skill development in Sudan, in which she argues that youth unemployment is the result of a lack of correlation between the qualifications students gain and the needs of Sudan's labour market, in addition to poor planning and policies in both education and the labour market (2013:64)

Mohammed Jafar proposed that students' loss of faith in education and the poor outcomes they encountered, have become pulling factors that will lead to students' abandoning education entirely. He says this is especially true when students see that 'those who cannot, who can barely write their names, are on top of piles of money… why are we wasting our years in this?!', referring to those who are able to make a good living from selling in the marketplaces. This aligns with Sahal (1999) who argues that young people recognising that employment in the public sector was no longer a viable means of social mobility have turned to the free and informal markets to earn but also endure rising inflation. Their despondence is born out of the prospects of unemployment or at a minimum unsuitable employment for graduates. This is also conflated by the disappearance of middle-class families into the 'new poor' that has seen some young Sudanese forced to give up their university education as a result of economic hardship (Sahal, 1999; Nour, 2013).

In addition, he suggested that the alternative would be a brain drain, with graduates forced to go abroad to Europe, specifically those who have qualified as doctors and engineers and whose skillset is always in demand, a process he claims had already begun. This point is confirmed by Nour (2013, 2014) who claims that a specific detail

on the Sudanese labour market is its propensity to export its labour, especially to the Gulf region. This has been ongoing since the 1970s according to Khalil from the al-Hamoudi family, and is confirmed by Woodward (1985) who claims hundreds of thousands of educated and skilled workers left the country during the Nimeiri regimes first decade. In relation to the current period Nour's explanation for the continuation of brain drain in Sudan is

> From the country perspective, the main reasons are related to internal environment in Sudan due to lack of employment opportunities, political instability and economic instability; in host countries: rich employment opportunities and better living conditions. From the personal perspective the main reasons include family influences (overseas relatives, and personal preference: preference for an improved career, and better living conditions etc). The most important reason for the continuation of brain drain in Sudan is particularly because the low standard of economic development led to low GDP per capita… (Nour, 2014).

Mohammed Jafar's reference to brain drain is not new and early post-independence signs of Sudanese brain drain are illustrated by the lives of other participants in this study (Hasan and his young son Abdul-Wali left for the Gulf in the 1970s and Khalil left for Saudi Arabia in the 1980s), who were economic migrants to the Gulf, whilst the Sudanese economy declined under the Nimeiri regime. In addition, the situation is exacerbated by a high population of Sudanese under the age of 25 which in 2006 stood at 22.9%, for who high unemployment rates were as much as 41.25% in 2004 encouraging their dispersal to foreign countries for work (Nour, 2013, 2014).

Regarding Sudanese education's decline, Mohammed Jafar returned to the subject of Qur'anic education and insisted that the traditional Qur'an schools he had known as a child were disappearing from Sudan. He explained that nowadays in the capital city, and as also referenced by other participants Noora, Hiba and Omer, it was unlikely that you would find a student visiting the home of a faqih and that as a result the role of Qur'an schools as a community institution had been severely diminished. Instead, he concluded the model of Qur'an school he was once familiar with had been a complement to students' full-time education could only be found in rural regions and the famous large Qur'an schools Melephone and Omwomduban outside of Khartoum.

However, he also noted that there were Qur'an schools that followed a hybrid model of education in Khartoum with an emphasis on Qur'anic studies, in which students sat the national exams and were eligible to enter higher education. Yet, Mohammed Jafar claimed that the families who accessed these schools were likely to be surmised as fundamentalists a point he stated that was demonstrated by the small portion of society who opted for this type of hybrid schooling.

> But normally those who attend this are siblings of fundamentalists. The father is more. Yeah, I mean yeah. To dry in his life. Yeah, in my opinion yes. I'm sure you come across a lot of these, of course, yeah. It is, it's not a general option, It's only for a few who opt for this and have the notion in their heads that while they are young they can get more of of (Qur'an) into their heads and they can memorize it more easily. It will last longer, this sort of stuff.

In summary, Mohammed Jafar indicated that he did not adhere to the idea of memorisation for memorisations sake, a process that he found to be artificial. He explained that he was inclined to the premise of Islam as something to be practiced and abided by rather than memorised. This position resonates with Boyle's (2006) premise that memorisation and understanding are not synonymous. He stated that this was the approach he had taken with his children in their learning and hoped that he had encouraged them through his actions rather than through memorisation, although he had taught them the basic tenets of the religion and some of the short chapters towards the end of the Qur'an.

CHAPTER 9. Contributions to the study of Qur'anic education and its place in modern education

Introduction

This study was designed to examine the following questions, what role did Qur'anic education play in the development of Sudan's secular education provision? and What is the significance of Qur'anic education to the identities of Sudanese middle-class families now? To address these questions, I have analysed the development of education under the AEC, its key policies, and their subsequent impact of the education choices of the Sudanese.
Likewise, I have evaluated important aspects of post-independence education policies and have connected this to the experiences of this study's participants, who encountered the implementation of these policies first hand, through their schooling. In doing so, I have brought together two important periods in 20th century Sudanese education.

The use of qualitative interview data addressing the AEC and subsequent decades up until the 2010s complements the examination of archival data on schooling in Sudan during the Condominium colonial epoch. The discourses and experiences shared in this study by a group of Sudanese middle-class participants about their educational histories, offers perspectives of education that speak to similar experiences and considerations amongst this social bracket of the indigenous population that were omitted from much of the previous academic research. A consequence of which has been that research has primarily been concerned with the either the history of education or polices that have affected Sudanese education (the exceptions are Collins and Deng 1984; Yamba, 1990, Berridge, 2018).

Academic (and British civil servants) accounts of the development of modern Sudanese education have tended to either explain the growth of the modern education system under the AEC (Currie, 1939; Weischhoff, 1946; Griffiths, 1959; Sanderson, 1963; Beshir, 1969; Sharkey, 2003; Jeppie, 2012; Seri-Hersch, 2018) or detailed the recent state of education under the NCP-Beshir regime from 1989 to 2019 (Breidlid, 2005, 2010; Yamba, 1990; Khalifa et al, 1997; Fincham, 2018; Holmarsdottir, 2013). However, this study merges data from these two key periods. By doing so this study analyses the development of Sudanese education; and what the key drivers have been in the decision making of representatives of the Sudanese middle class about the education of their children alongside their own educational experiences.

An outcome of this examination of education under the AEC has been its demonstration of British attempts to utilise Qur'an schools for a purpose other than which they were designed, to impart scientific and technological education. This ultimately failed to succeed and led to the abandonment of Qur'anic schooling by

the administration. Importantly, this research presents a new position on the AEC's handling of Qur'anic education. It draws the conclusion that the failure of Qur'anic education under the regime was not because it was an unbending system of learning but rather because of the failure of the colonial administration to accept the schooling system as a religious and cultural education rather than scientific education. The administration's potential to mismanage Qur'anic education from the 1920s onwards was reflected in its earlier mismanagement of higher Islamic learning, which led to it being removed from Gordon Memorial College and returned to the Muslim community in 1913. Qur'anic education endured a significantly longer attachment to the colonial administration than higher Islamic education, causing significant detriment to its reputation.

As a result, the participant data provides discourses about the experiences, attitudes and motivations steering their decision-making regarding Sudan's most prominent forms of schooling, state, Qur'anic and Private. Examination of this data also brings to the fore the strategies participants have employed to navigate the schooling choices available to them and their families. Moreover, these life histories have revealed their disillusionment about the education policies of the most recent 30-year period under the NCP regime.

The discourses from different generations of participants demonstrate contrasting perspectives about the quality of state education as demonstrated by the participant Insaaf and her father's differing viewpoints. Similarly, the Fareed family detailed the decline of state education between the education of Hasan and his granddaughter Noora. Analysis of this data has revealed both participants' disappointment in state education and the weighted assessments they are forced to make about Sudanese education to ensure their children's schooling is beneficial in securing economic and social stability later.

Importantly the study has evaluated the socio-economic value of Qur'anic and other types of education by its Sudanese middle-class participants through explanations they have given about their experiences navigating the Sudanese education system. This has presented opportunities to gain further knowledge of the cultural and religious implications that the choice of education can present to Sudanese families.

The data collected from the archives has shown that the AEC had a pragmatic and practical relationship with Qur'anic education. The early period of the education department's control of Sudanese schooling demonstrated that Qur'anic education was accepted as an indigenous form of schooling by the administration but viewed to be out of step with the progressiveness of modern secular schooling system they sought to establish. This opinion did not alter during the 1920s period of Qur'anic schooling's height but returned as a strengthened position in the 1930s.

The Condominium's relationship with Qur'anic education was based on three factors. Two of these were interrelated, the need to develop the trust of the Sudanese Ulama and people; and the need to expediently boost Condominium vernacular school populations. These two factors combined would encourage the

development of the administration's much needed workforce. It was also useful in encouraging some young Sudanese men to remain in their rural home settings and not abandon the agricultural industry to which the workforce was mainly directed.

This study has examined the role of Qur'anic schooling in the modern history of Sudan, detailing its role in the development of modern Sudanese education under the AEC. It has argued that the failings of Qur'anic education during the Condominium period, were heavily impacted by the regime's pragmatism, exploitation and mishandling of Qur'anic education.

Middle-Class Strategies to Mitigate Concerns about Private and Qur'anic Schooling

Distrust of Qur'an schools and what takes place within them was a theme amongst participant in this research. Those who were in Sudan, had all chosen private education for their children with half supplementing this with a form of Qur'anic schooling. However, Qur'an schools' tainted reputation and negative portrayal in Sudanese and international media meant they were not comfortable sending their children to traditional Qur'an schools.
Nonetheless, a desire to supplement private schooling with Qur'anic learning led them to alternative strategies that would insure their oversight of their children's supplementary education. For example, this led to Mohammed Jafar opting to teach his children himself and in the examples of both the al-Hamoudi and Fareed families they decided to bring Qur'an teachers into their homes, to better monitor and safeguard their children's wellbeing. Subsequently, its impact has changed the nature of attendance associated with Qur'anic education in Sudan.

For example, at a traditional Qur'an school attendance is daily (including instances in which children attend solely during holidays). Aside from already-established itinerant Qur'an schools in nomadic environments, Qur'anic teachers in urban societies have been associated with fixed settings. Parents decision to bring Qur'an tutors into the home has been the removal of this requirement and potentially impacts the incomes of teachers at Qur'an schools through a reduction in footfall. The potential of this decision making to impact Qur'an teachers' incomes is further emphasised by families in this study seeking students from local Islamic universities to teach their children rather than traditional Qur'an school teacher. An implication is that traditional Qur'an teachers whilst well-versed in the text are not able to compete with the level of certification of an Islamic university graduate, potentially reducing their status further.
The strategy to bring Qur'anic education into the home, has separated Qur'anic learning that takes place in middle-class homes from that delivered in Qur'an schools. As explained by this study's participants, their perception of Qur'an schools is, as being an education provision for children from poorer class groups, whose parents are unable to negotiate the same level of oversight for their children or who exhibit naïve trust.

Moreover, the home tutoring set-up of Qur'anic education has changed the technologies that are used to aid its memorisation. Home schooling means that children have moved away from the traditional writing methods the use of the wooden board and writing whilst seated in circles on the floor. In its place, children now read and memorise directly from Qur'an applications on tablets or from copies of the Qur'an whilst sat at dining room tables. This change is a step away from the technologies of learning synonymous with traditional Qur'anic education and removes the element of ingesting the Qur'an mentioned in Ware (2014) from its framework. For the participant Hasan, this is reflective of the age in which mobile devices, applications and tablets are accessible. However, its challenge to technologies used in Qur'an schools is apparent.

Perhaps of more concern for Qur'anic education, were parents in this study who have chosen not to engage their children in the system of learning at all. Mohamed Jafar, who as a child attended Qur'an school in the evenings after school chose to teach his children the tenets of Islam himself in the home, rather than sending them to memorise portions of the Qur'an. This was not due to his own mastery of the Qur'an but because he did not view Qur'anic schooling to be conducive to better religious understanding and reflected his disassociation with this type of schooling from religious education.
Likewise, the participant Insaaf expressed Qur'anic education had not been a part of decision making regarding her child's education at all. She saw no correlation between it and the development of her child's Sudanese Muslim identity. This was unlike the Fareed and al-Hamoudi families who viewed Qur'anic schooling as a means for establishing Sudanese Muslim identity. Instead, Insaaf believed a well-rounded education in Sudan was sufficient in achieving this outcome. Insaaf's decision making followed her own educational pathway with Qur'anic education similarly omitted.

For the Fareed and al-Hamoudi families, Qur'anic education offered a counter form of learning that ensured Sudanese ideals children potentially lost because of private education remained. These families saw these two forms of education to be complementary to each other, offering future economic and social currency. However, they also acknowledged the priority of private education over that of the Qur'an.

For both families, Qur'anic schooling's function was primarily socio-cultural and designed to ensure that children remained in touch with a broad Sudanese Muslim identity. Whilst this can be argued to still be centred around Islam, my position based on the data is that this is not the case. The children of participants were not encouraged to adopt a religious identity enshrouded in piety through Qur'anic learning, but one that is recognisable to others as Muslim Sudanese, and within the parameters of what is expected of Sudanese communities such as an ability to convey ideas in Arabic. Therefore, the religious benefits of Qur'anic education were an additional incentive but not a primary concern. This was in partly because mandatory religious classes are available in all Sudanese state and private schools and address the basics tenets of religion.

The Fareed and al-Hamoudi families, expressed two important functions of Qur'anic schooling were the command of Arabic language (local and classical) and to create an avenue that encourages children's embrace of Sudanese culture. Their desire for children to have a command of Arabic language meant Qur'anic education was specifically used as a lingua-cultural tool. Its role was to provide balance stemming from concerns about children's exposure and inculcation of English Language at private school. What they witnessed in the acculturation of their children and others at private school led to conclusions they might abandon local and classical Arabic use entirely, key cultural marker in Sudaneseness.

The decision of participants who included Qur'anic schooling into children's learning emanated from apprehensions about private education. Private schooling whilst beneficial in exposing students to British or American curriculums and IGCSEs or Baccalaureate certification, represented a form of schooling these parents had not experienced first-hand. Private school curriculums, cultures and language of instructions did not mirror parents own experiences of education in state schools, a point that was underscored by the minimal use of and discouragement of Arabic-Sudani or classical Arabic on a day-to-day basis. This led to unease about children's socialisation and Qur'anic education offered a method to safeguard against the unfamiliarity of private education.

Although Arabic and English are both official languages of the Sudanese Constitution, their functions for Sudanese middle-class parents are very different and as a result, exposure to each language is met with a different expectation. Arabic language use is based on cultural capital and accessibility. Therefore, it is a cultural marker that's indicates children are secured in a practice that is an expectation of Sudanese society. However, English is valued for its role in economic mobility. The conflict that middle-class Sudanese parents encounter, is in the creation of a balance between the two languages. And according to the data in this study if this is not carefully managed, children for who English is given priority consequently dismiss Arabic or spend later life attempting to correct this balance as adults.

The role of Qur'anic education as affirmation of identity was not only expressed by participants located in Sudan but also by those who lived or had experienced life abroad. For Abdul-Wali, it represented grounding for his children in Sudanese culture. In addition, brothers Khary and Hamid also expressed the role they would like Qur'anic schooling to play in grounding their children in Sudanese Muslimness should they return to Sudan.

Demonstrating the Role of Qur'anic Schooling in Contemporary Education

Concerns about the future of Qur'anic education were voiced by most participants who viewed it as a full-time schooling method for families in lower class brackets, rural or ultra-religious communities. This image of Qur'anic education's suitability for schooling these specific groups infers its association to be with traditional

communities or those uninterested in modernity. Therefore, it also reemphasises Qur'anic schooling as an education suited to traditional stable societies in keeping with some academic analysis (Rahman, 1967; Khaleefa, Erdos, and Ashria, 1997:206; Saadah, 2018).

Part of participants perception of Qur'anic education was that it served as a convenient education system for poor families as it addressed the care of other needs such as, the guarantee of regular food and accommodation. Their reading of poor families' decision-making about Qur'anic schooling, was that it gave precedence to social and economic issues as motivating factors. They also concluded that religiosity was an afterthought although they acknowledged that poor religious families may use Khalawi as a method to get closer to God. However, the participant Khalil, saw this as an indication of poorer families' inability to discern what the best type of education available to their children is.

Participant' discourses about state schooling differed from Qur'anic. Although it is also not their preferred choice, unlike Qur'an schools it is seen and accepted as an established part of the urban school landscape and as a full-time education. Amongst the participants Mohammed Jafar's discourse alluded to the shrinking economic strength of the middle-class. In keeping with this, it had been expected in pre-2019 Sudan that the importance of state schooling as an educational choice would increase amongst the middle-classes, in lieu of growing economic hardship, unstable government, falling currency and an overly competitive job market (Nour, 2013).

The participants in this study who sent their children to private schools each cited the decline of state education as a reason. They expressed that the quality of government education meant success could only be achieved through private education, wherein children are taught in English, given IGCSEs or Baccalaureate examinations and well-rounded curriculums. These parents cited the 1990 proclamation of a new Islamist framework for education made by Omer al-Bashir as a catalyst for state schooling's subsequent decline, and the rise to prominence of private schools amongst the middle classes (Breidlid, 2005). However, one participant believed that the decline in the quality of state education had begun under the government of Sadiq al-Mahdi, the previous regime.

Significantly, participant parents based in Sudan, who opted for private education for their children did not do so as a reflection of their own schooling as they were educated in state schools prior to the start of the NIF/NCP regime. Each cited their outlook about private and state schooling was born out of distrust of state education and themes related to its decay such as, overcrowding, limited funding and increasingly poor-quality of English language teaching. These factors caused concern and were drivers for them to look towards private education as the educational provision that would offer alternatives to issues in state schools.

Parents highlighted the desire for children to maintain the financial and social status they had achieved, and private schooling acted as an insurance against any potential

decline. However, the data also illustrated that the generation educated privately after of Omer al-Beshir's 1990 proclamation as parents, have begun to feel the effect of being a part of Sudan's shrinking middle class. For example, Mohamed Jafar explained his son-in-law's loss of earnings due to the weakening of the Sudanese currency in global markets. As a result, he and others in his job bracket have faced financial restrictions that affect their abilities to maintain an accustomed lifestyle. One of the repercussions has been a struggle to continue to provide a private education for their children, as it leads to further financial trouble. This according to participant data led to constraints making home and schooling payments.

To counter these constraints, families have been left with pragmatic options. The first, is to rely on financial support from grandparents, as was the case with Mohammed Jafar's children, along with the offer to return to the family home. The second option is to opt for private education in less reputable and established schools; and the third option is to remove children from private schools and enter them into state education. The latter's impact is an increase in student numbers in classes in states schools that are already oversubscribed. It is therefore likely that there will also be an adverse impact on the teaching quality, if basing this premise on the weight of struggle that state schooling is already under (Fincham, 2019).

Two of the privately educated participants discourse, challenged the position that rote learning is a method solely employed in Qur'anic education. They revealed it was also a method used in some of the most prestigious private schools in Khartoum to memorise significant portions of text and sums across subjects.

The continued use of rote methods in Sudanese schools that was supposed to be phased out after the building of Bakht er Ruda in 1934 (Griffith, 1975), implies that in the decades since Sudan's colonial period and in post-independence, this goal remains unfulfilled. It was originally attributed to Sudanese teachers who had transitioned to Kuttabs from Qur'an schools during the first years of Sudanese employment (GGR, 1934; Griffiths, 1953). Yet, its current use infers that rote learning is a method of teaching that is endorsed by Sudanese educators and generally an accepted method of instruction.

Socio-Cultural Isolation as a Cost of Private Schooling

The data offered insight into the somewhat purgatory position graduates of private schooling can find themselves in. For some private education has left them feeling socially and culturally isolated. Participant discourse indicated private education had caused disruption to their sense of belonging in Sudanese society and created a creolist Sudanese community. This outcome is not new in Sudanese society and the literature highlights similar effects on students at Gordon Memorial College during the AEC period (Sharkey, 2003).

private schooling curriculum and the use of English language instruction help to isolate children from family and community. The result is that although based in Sudan as a physical space, they have a sense of otherness or not being Sudanese

enough. This struggle to feel a part of broad Sudanese culture in one instance meant that a participant's father outwardly stated that his sending his children to private school had led to them losing touch with their Sudanese roots.
For some who experience this feeling of separation from Sudaneseness, they themselves and exclusively interact with their school social circles only. By doing so, they create social circles in which they and their English-speaking friends can exist safely away from the judgement of the wider Sudanese community.
In contrast, the opposite effect can be an exaggerated Sudaneseness, to compensate for cultural markers that they or others had highlighted to be missing. For example, the participant Hiba, placed herself in peer group that she recognised as being more Sudanese during university. And although this meant being reminded of her lack of Sudanese and Islamic cultural understanding as a former private school kid, she viewed this to be a part of her journey to being accepted as authentic Sudanese.

That private schooling does not generally cater for the promotion of Sudaneseness in their curriculum or school culture, is also a contributing factor to students feeling of being caught between two worlds. The socialisation that takes place in their school environment encourages students to look outside of Sudan and towards Europe for language, culture, and history. As a result, participants can experience isolation from family, including their parents due to their lack or absence of Sudanese cultural skills. In their absence, children are left feeling embarrassed by their inability to display appropriate Sudaneseness. Both Omar and Abdul-Wali affirmed that their sense of Sudaneseness was the result of having lived abroad. In Abdul-Wali's case, this brought him to the conclusion that Qur'anic schooling should be a part of his children's lives, to ensure their Sudaneseness, even though they were born and raised in Sudan.

Qur'anic Education and How it is Approached by the Sudanese Middle Classes

The establishment of the modern education system in Sudan has seen Qur'anic education at times marginalised or competing outside of the context for which it was founded, similarly to other pre-colonial sub-Saharan African systems of learning (Abidogun and Falola, 2020). As Rodney (1972:263) explained in How Europe Underdeveloped Africa the effect of the establishment of imperial powers in Africa was that 'they introduced a new set of formal educational institutions which partly supplemented and partly replaced those which were there before.'

In a Sudanese context, the establishment of modern state schooling and attempts to fit Qur'anic education into it saw Qur'anic education divided from the longer process of Islamic education that it was intended to be a part of (Boyle, 2006). The introduction of modern secular schooling meant the loss of the status it had held under the Mahdiyyah as the sole schooling system, eventually altering the way in which some Sudanese families engaged in it. More recently, participants such as Noora, Hiba and Omar, who were educated in the last decade of the NCP regime stated the reputation of Qur'anic education has been further impaired in the

consciousness of young Sudanese due to it having been co-opted by the regime, as part of its Islamism agenda. Whilst others associated it

To the representatives of the Sudanese middle-class in this study, Qur'anic education is a Muslim cultural, socialisation and awareness programme. They do not consider it to be a full-time education and interpret its role in the Sudanese education framework to be supplementary This point was highlighted by Hasan's discourse that Islam does not view the Qur'an as a means through which a career is provided. However, this perspective changed in relation to lower social groups; as illustrated by Hiba, Omar and Noora, who differentiated between the educational expectations of their social group and lower social brackets. And implied that Qur'anic education was suitable to provide basic education for their life interests.

Due to their position on the role of Qur'anic learning in Sudanese education, participants who engaged in it saw no conflict with their children's formal education. This is because they have always understood the primacy of Qur'anic education to be the development of Muslim personhood. Therefore, it has not sat in opposition to or disrupted the pursuits for economic security or social mobility. As a result, the data in this study demonstrates that their engagement in Qur'anic education does not warrant the need for cognitive disassociation when children attend either type of schooling as suggested by Butler (2016).

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