

SUDAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

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Al-Tayeb Salih, 1929-2009

3rd Issue of Resumed Quarterly Publication

In this issue: Commemoration and Tribute to al-Tayeb Salih; SSA annual conference; International Conference in South Africa; Research News and Notes; Featured articles: E. Cooper "Sahel rainfall and Conflicts"; "Social Breakdown in Darfur, FMR; Reviews of A. Gallab The First Islamist Republic, A. Abdel Halim, Sudanese Women in the USA, Z. Naik, The Qur'an and Modern Science [

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our purpose

The Sudan Studies Association (SSA) is an independent professional society founded in the United States in 1981. Membership is open to scholars, teachers, students, and others with interest in the Sudan. The Association exists primarily to promote Sudanese studies and scholarship. It maintains a cooperative relationship with the Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum. SSA works to foster closer ties among scholars in the Sudan, North America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and other places. Normal activities of the SSA include the publication of this Newsletter, organizing meetings for the exchange of ideas, and recommending research candidates for affiliation with appropriate institutions of higher education in the Sudan. The Association also sponsors panels and programs during the meetings of other academic organizations. It occasionally publishes the proceedings of its annual meetings in book form.

join us

Membership: Membership is for each academic calendar year which entitles the subscriber to receive all the issues of the SSA Newsletter, and to discounted registration rates for attending the annual meetings of the Association.

Available categories of membership

Regular.....\$30.00
Life membership\$200.00
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Profit-making Org.'s.....\$150.00

For information about membership,

change of address, registration for meetings, or back issues of SSA publications, please contact the Executive Director. Financial and other Donations: The SSA is legally incorporated as a non-profit making organization. Thus all contributions and other donations are tax-exempt. Your gift is appreciated.

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1992-94 M I Shoush	1983-84 James Hudson
1991-92 Milton Coughenour	1982-83 Ahmed El-Bashir
1990-91 C. Fluehr-Lobban	1981-82 Richard Lobban

The SSA Commemorates and Offers Tribute in Memory of Al-Tayeb Salih

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban
SSA Bulletin editor



The SSA joins the Sudanese people and the literary world in mourning the passing of al-Tayeb Salih. Al-Tayeb was a friend and contributor to annual and international conferences of the Sudan Studies Association, especially the 2nd International Conference held in conjunction with the Sudan Studies Society of the UK (1991) and 11th annual conferences hosted by Constance Berkley at Vassar College (1992). Although he spent most of his adult life outside of Sudan, he was one of its greatest symbols of traditional Northern Sudanese culture, tolerant, compassionate, and at its core Sufi. These essential elements of Nile Valley, Nubian-Sudanese life pervaded his novels and short stories that brought the depth and simplicity of this life into contact—and conflict—with the civilization of the colonizer in dramatic and memorable works of fiction. He died at dawn in London on February 18, 2009.

Born on July 12, 1929 in Karmokol, near to al-Debba and Merowe in Northern Sudan, his arrival into this world was during the heyday of English colonial occupation of Sudan, a fact that marked his greatest work of fiction *Season of Migration to the North* published in 1966. Tayeb Salih studied at the former Gordon Memorial College—after independence University of Khartoum—and made his own ‘migration to the North’ in 1952 when he traveled to London where he was to spend most of the remainder of his life. He joined the BBC Arabic Service, eventually becoming the head of its Drama section; he later worked for the Qatari Ministry of Information before joining UNESCO in Paris. In 1965 he married a woman of Scottish extraction, Julia Maclean, and together they have three daughters—Zainab, Sara, and Samira.

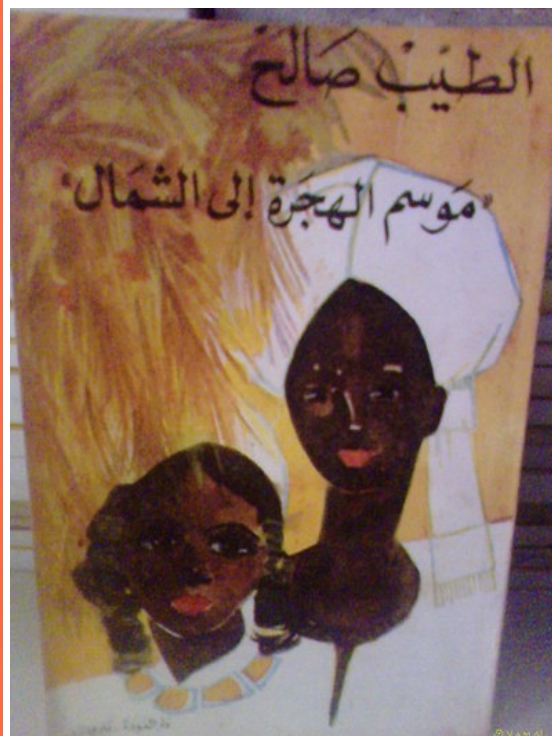
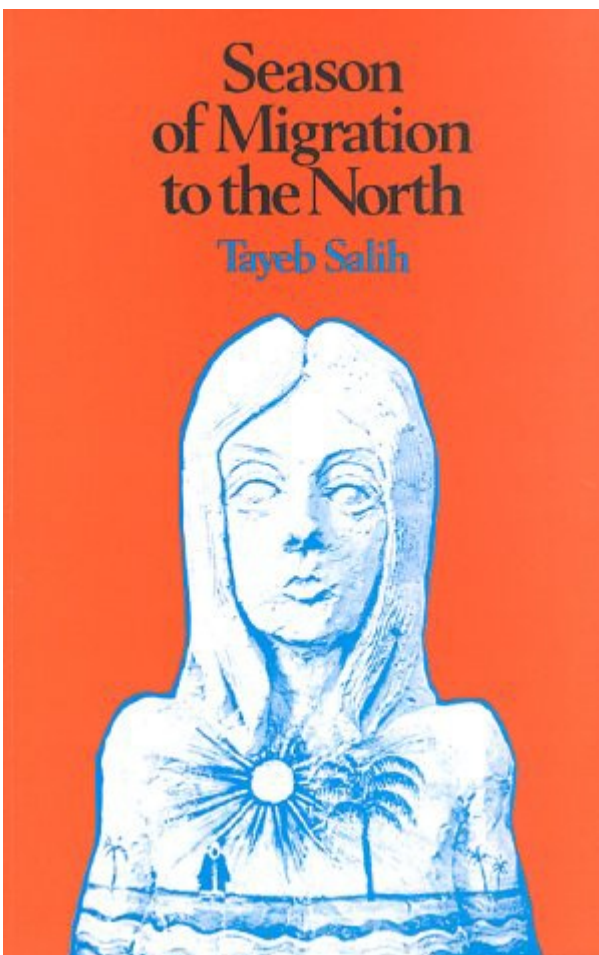
Al-Tayeb Salih best known and most translated work, *Season of Migration to the North*, *Mawsim al-Hijra ila Shimaal* in Arabic, has been acclaimed for decades as “the most important Arabic novel of the 20th century” in 2001 by the Damascus-based Arab Literary Academy and it was ranked as “among the world’s best 100 works of fiction” in 2002 by the Norwegian Books Clubs. Gamal al-Ghitani, editor in chief of *Akhbar el-Adab* described Tayeb Salih as “irreplaceable” an “one of the world’s top novelists who was modest, wise and brave, and carried the essence of Sudanese culture outside of its borders.”

For SSA Bulletin readers unfamiliar with *Season of Migration to the North*, the central character When Richard and I arrived in Khartoum in 1970 for our first field experience *Season* was recommended to us as “must reading” for understanding the experience of Sudanese life we were about to undertake. We both read it as graduate students in Sudan, and then could only dream of meeting and interacting with Sudan’s great novelist. Reflecting upon the meaning of ‘Season’ in the Arabic press, al-Tayeb Salih once remarked “I have redefined the so-called East-West relationship as essentially one of conflict, while it had previously been treated in romantic terms.” Noted journalist Khaled al-Mubarak, Press Attache for the Sudanese Embassy in London, said “Long before the term “clash of civilizations” became known Tayeb Salih has written about the [potential] co-existence of civilizations.”

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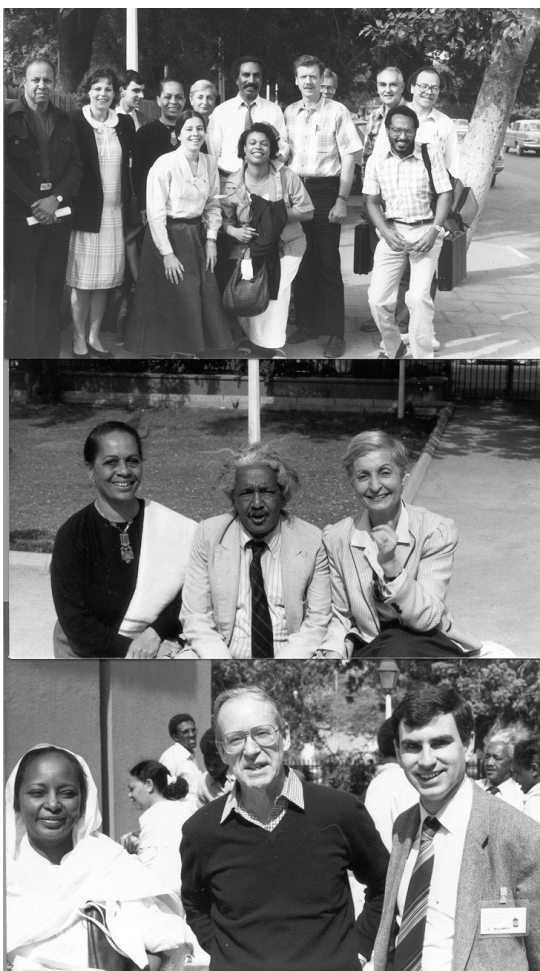
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Al-Tayeb Salih’s *Season* has been described by Egyptian novelist Ezzidine Shukri- Fischere contributing to the “foundation of the novel in the Arab world” and SSA presenters Constance Berkely and Mona Amyuni Takkiedine of American University in Beirut over the years have agreed with this conclusion in their presentations at SSA meetings. Dr. Mona continued her study and participation in the SSA annual meetings during the worst years of the Lebanese civil war, and we felt the power of her attachment both to the works of al-Tayeb Salih and her Lebanese homeland and the Arabic language through her analysis of *Season* and later *Bandersha* (*Mariud* in Arabic). Over the years our attachment to Dr. Mona grew as she came to love the Sudanese and Sudanists through her study of al-Tayeb Salih.



Lifelong scholar and friend of al-Tayeb Salih our own Constance Berkely offers this simple eulogy: Thank you for your genius. Thank you for your gift of friendship. Thank you for creating a beautiful memory in the minds of so many people throughout the world."

Al-Tayeb Salih also wrote short stories, such as *The Wedding of Zein* that was filmed by Kuwaiti film maker Khalid Siddiq and won an award at the Cannes Film Festival in 1976, *Handful of Dates*, *Doma wad Hamad*, *Dau al-Bayt* and *The Cypriot Man*, in addition to the above mentioned *Bandersha*. He was an active contributor to al-Majella published in London and continued to write for the Sudanese press, including an over-flattering fictional account of my experiences in Sudan in *al-Akhir Lahzia* in 200x. He remained a Sudanese democrat to the end of his life.



28TH ANNUAL SSA CONFERENCE REMINDER

May 21-24, 3009

Michigan State University
Kellogg Center, East Lansing, MI
"Sudanese Languages and Cultures"

Go to our website: www.sudanstudies.org
To find the details of the 28th annual SSA conference to be held from May 21-24, 2009 at Michigan State University, East Lansing. A record four days of papers are scheduled, beginning midday Thursday May 21st and ending midday Sunday May 24th. Panels and papers addressing the confer conference theme include: language and a) power b) the courts 3) linguistic and cultural survival 4) cultural perception 5) and war 6) oral traditions and stories 7) discourse on female circumcision 8) Islamist education in the South. Other panels address aspects of Sudanese history from early time to a novel panel on colonial criminals. A special commemorative session devoted to the life and work of al-Tayeb Salih will be held as a plenart session.

Conference organizers president-elect Stephanie Beswick and president Beniah Yongo-Bure have worked with local arrangements chair Malik Balla to ensure yet another excellent conference at the Michigan State University venue, the third annual conference to be held at MSU.

Confirmed banquet and luncheon speakers include: Owen A. Clarke, US State Department Office of the Presidential Envoy to Sudan and Dr. George Nyome, Minister of Investment, Government of National Unity, Khartoum.

We look forward to seeing old friends and welcoming new participants and future members of the oldest and largest association of Sudan Studies, the SSA.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
NUBIAN STUDIES



Warsaw, 20 August 2008

Memorandum
regarding

Between the Cataracts, Part Two: Session Papers, Proceedings of the 11th Conference of Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006, Warsaw University Press, Warsaw, in preparation

In the aftermath of the 11th Conference of Nubian Studies, held at the University of Warsaw in August 2006, the Polish Centre has brought out the first volume of the proceedings (publishing date March 2008). *Between the Cataracts, Part one, Main Papers* (constituting vol. 2 of the Centre's PAM Supplement Series), contains seventeen of the invited papers read at the Conference.

Part two of the proceedings is in preparation. The original plan was to have the volume out by the end of 2008. However, the sheer volume of the materials received – 73 session papers plus the two workshops on language and iconography, amounting to a total of some 800 book pages – has made it clear that there is a need to revise these plans. Not only will there have to be two fascicles of Part Two of the proceedings, but also, since we wish to maintain the publishing standards achieved for the first part, the publication process will have to be extended. By present estimates, the proofs should be ready in the spring and hopefully the books should be out by mid-year in 2009.

Our underestimation of the size of the second volume of the proceedings must necessarily impact the costs of its production. Nonetheless, we wish to assure all those who have subscribed to the second volume at the promotional price that they will receive the two fascicles of Part Two for the agreed price. Włodzimierz Godlewski, Adam Łajtar

**INTERNATIONAL SUDAN
STUDIES CONFERENCE**

On the Theme:

“The FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN BEYOND 2011 -MAJOR CHALLENGES & STAKES FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF GOSS AND THE AFRICAN UNION Future of Sudan To 2011 and Beyond : African Dimensions of Peace, Stability and Justice ”

**UNISA Senate Hall, Pretoria - City
of Tshwane**

(25th -26th-27th November 2009)

Prepared by:

**Dr. Samba Buri MBOUP
Associate Professor
Centre for African Renaissance Studies**

(Conference Coordinator)

**Pretoria - City of Tshwane, 09th January
2009**

“What divides us is what we don't talk about”
(Sudanese Scholar)

*The gates of academic institutions similarly to those of Hell
are ruled by the same principles and values:*

*“Let all suspicion be banned from here
and let all fear vanish from this place”*
Dante Alighieri (Divine Comedy)

News and Notes

New Khartoum Student Seminar Series

Laura Mann, PhD candidate at the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh has taken the lead in organizing a greater Khartoum student seminar series. The seminar is designed for graduate students who are actively researching in Sudan to make presentations once or twice a month either on their research or a research issue pertinent to their project. As this is a student seminar, it is designed to offer future professional the opportunity to develop their skills in academic presentation.

The first presentation was held on 24th of March at 8:30PM by Alden Young, a PhD student from Princeton University. He has been in Khartoum for the past six months, gathering material at the Sudanese national archive. His presentation was on the restructuring of Sudan's economy during the years 1954-1967. Future presentations are scheduled on the following topics:

Radio
and Peace initiatives, poverty and children in Khartoum, and language issues and survey methods.

A website offering information and updates on the seminar series is available at: www.sudanstudy.com/seminar. The SSA Bulletin is committed to publish news and summaries of presentations at the seminar series and brief articles on current research from the seminar series are most welcome. Good luck to all involved with the Khartoum Student Seminar series. Laura Mann can be reached at: l.e.mann@sms.ed.ac.uk.



Indigenous Efforts to Revitalize and Digitize the Nubian Languages

Corrections by Marcus Jaeger

Unfortunately some of the footnotes were missing in the original article. They are added here:

p. 13: The map taken from JAKOBI and KÜMMERLE, 1993 was revised by Monika Feinen, 2008.

p.17: The meaning of the written communication with the NLS secretary is: "... in order to take a step back into the cultural history of our forefathers."

p. 20: Concerning Unicode and Prof Ibrahim Suad: *The first attempt to define Nubian letters within Unicode was undertaken by Prof Ibrahim Suad around 2004. Because of illness this initial attempt came to nothing. - Unicode has its own Internet page: <http://unicode.org/>. It is explained there e.g. what Unicode is, who the members of the Unicode-Consortium are; and which written symbols already belong in Unicode.*

Also the list of the New Nubian Orthography (p. 20) is missing the first four, the last two characters and some explanations:

Old Nubian	New Nubian	IPA symbols (approximate)
		[a]
a	a	
		[b]
b	b	
		[g]
g	g	
		[d]
d	d	
...		
		[ɲ]
v	q	
		[w]
q	-	

The symbols b, , x and Ɔ occur only in Old Nubian loan words.

Old Nubian does not mark vowel length. In New Nubian long vowels are marked with a macron: A, E, I, O, U. This macron had a different meaning in Old Nubian. It

FEATURED ARTICLES

Sahel Rainfall and Conflicts

Eugene Cooper (gusty.cooper@gmail.com)

This paper explores the relationship between rainfall and conflicts in the African Sahel that is a narrow band of semi-arid land that abuts the Sahara desert, crosses eight countries, and is home to 58 million people, most of which subsist in a day-to-day agrarian economy. The Sahel is the “melting pot” between North and South Africa with many different lifestyles, customs, religions, and ethnic groups; and these differences serve as the basis for conflicts. These conflicts are stoked by other contributing factors that include rainfall. This paper discusses both the intuitive notion and the statistical correlation that the lack of rainfall reduces agrarian resources and increases conflicts. The Sahel is a poor region, whose unchecked conflicts could breed further humanitarian and security issues that the world needs to understand to intervene and help prevent.

Introduction

The African Sahel is a difficult place to live. The average U.S. citizen could not survive, yet over 58 million Africans call the Sahel home. The Sahel, shown on a map in Figure 1, is a band of land varying between 100 and 1000 kilometers wide, its northern border abuts the Sahara desert, and it stretches through the countries of Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. It is mostly dry and sandy, with some grasslands and scrubby trees, and just enough rain to eek out a living. Despite its obtuse conditions, the name Sahel originates from the Arabic word *sahil*, which means border or shore. The Africans consider the Sahel to be the welcoming shore to travelers journeying across the desert. Welcoming depends upon one’s perspective. The nomads of the region do not have permanent homes, and the majority of Sahelians that do have homes live simply without electricity. The primary energy source is burning wood for cooking food that is produced locally by the Sahelian farmers and herders. The Sahelian produced food is dependent upon unpredictable rainfall, which averages a meager 200mm to 600mm a year. With a large number of people trying to coexist on difficult land with minimal rainfall, there are many opportunities for conflict. This paper explores the relationship between rainfall and conflicts in the Sahel. Intuitively one can believe there is a correlation between rainfall and conflicts, which would be as the rainfall decreases the conflicts increase. Many

scholars have supported the intuitive idea. Examples are Professor Nyong has stated that the Sahelian conflicts can be attributed to droughts, and Professor Lobban has noted that the Darfur crisis has arisen during a decreased rainfall period. This paper presents both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the relationship between Sahelian rainfall and conflicts. The qualitative analysis presents data and examples that intuitively support the correlation. Of course in addition to rainfall, there are many factors that cause conflicts. The intuitive discussion considers these additional factors that are causing Sahelian conflicts such as differences between the Sahelian people, the Sahelian states governance, and population growth. The intuitive discussion focuses on how rainfall and the other factors have escalated the violence associated with the conflicts. The quantitative discussion performs a Chi-Squared analysis on rainfall and conflict data, where rainfall is the independent variable and conflict is the dependent variable. Both the qualitative and quantitative analyses demonstrate there is a relationship between rainfall and conflicts.

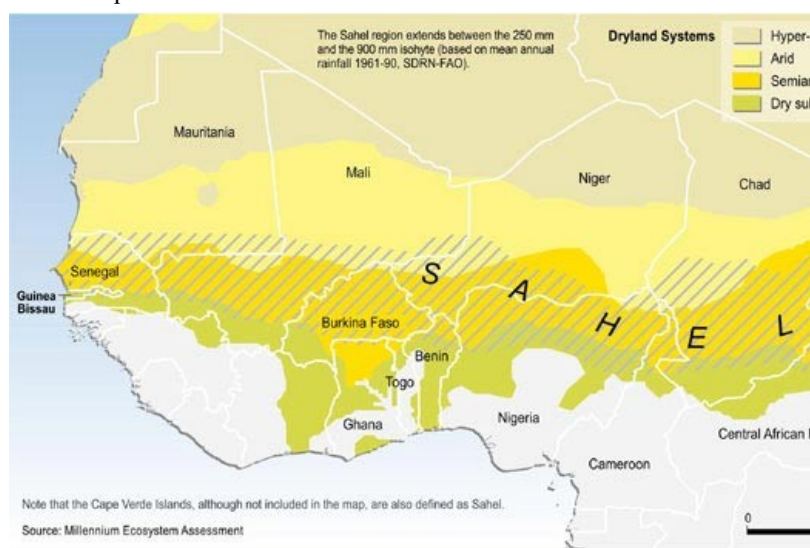


Figure 1. The African Sahel

Understanding the Sahelian conflicts is important in maintaining security in today’s world. For the most part the Sahel is an area that is in a state of persistent conflict. General James Jones, President-elect Obama’s National Security Advisor, has said that the reasons behind the establishment of AFRICOM are that areas of persistent conflict are areas of instability in which human tragedies such as Darfur can exist and which can be a breeding ground for extremists and terrorists.

This paper is organized into seven sections: Abstract; Introduction; Sahel Rainfall; Sahel Governance, Conflicts, and Rainfall – Intuitive Analysis; Sahel Conflicts and Rainfall – Statistical Analysis; Summary; and Reflective Analysis and Future Work. The Abstract

briefly describes the paper. This is the Introduction and it presents an overview of the paper. The Sahel Rainfall section presents the Sahelian rainfall data used in the paper and discusses various ways in which rainfall data can be interpreted. The next section presents an intuitive analysis of the Sahelian conflicts and rain. The intuitive analysis considers the factors that contribute to conflicts and integrates rainfall into these factors. The Sahel Conflicts and Rainfall – Statistical Analysis sections uses Chi-Squared statistics to correlate the rainfall data (described in the Sahel Rainfall section) with two conflict datasets: one for the entire Sahel and another that is for the Sudan Sahelian region. A summary of the paper is provided, followed by a section that examines the paper for areas that could have been better and suggests future work in this area.

Sahel Rainfall

Rainfall in the Sahel is critical for the survival of its people. The Sahelians live by subsistence farming and herding, which means most of them are involved in producing their daily food. They plant small parcels of native millet and sorghum and graze small herds of goats, sheep, camel, and cattle. Many of the herders live a nomadic life following the livestock as they search for edible pasture. Amazingly the farmers also can be short distance wanderers, moving their plots from year to year as their soil becomes desertified. Rainfall is necessary to ensure adequate food, and annual rainfall fluctuations can strain the Sahelian's survival. The Sahel is located on the northern edge of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which means that rainfall is highly unpredictable. The African ITCZ and its relationship to the Sahel is shown in Figure 2. The ITCZ is a band around the equator from approximately 18 degrees north latitude to approximately 18 degrees south latitude. The earth's axis declination and orbit around the sun creates a pattern of seasons. Within the ITCZ the pattern is that of rainy and dry seasons, which can be contrasted to the pattern of hot and cold seasons in North America. Since the Sahel is at the northern edge of the ITCZ, the seasonal pattern is mostly dry (200mm to 600mm of annual rainfall) with the rainy season occurring between June and September. The 58 million Sahelians are dependent upon this meager, unpredictable rain controlled by the ITCZ.

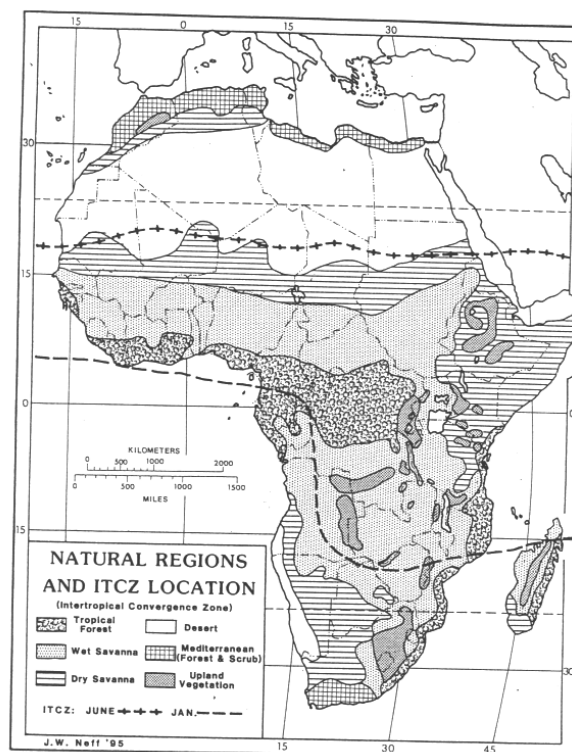


Figure 2. Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone and Sahel

The long-term pattern of the Sahel's rainfall and its affects on conflicts is the focus of this paper. Long-term rain can be studied from several perspectives. One of the most common is a rainfall index, which computes the difference between (1) the amount of rain measured during a time-period and (2) the average amount of rain for the same time-period over an extended time. A rainfall index example is described with the values used in this paper. The time-period is a year and the extended time is from 1950 to 1979. The average annual rainfall between 1950 and 1979 is computed first. The rainfall index used in this paper is the difference between (1) the measured annual rainfall and (2) the average annual rainfall between 1950 and 1979. Figure 3 plots the Sahel Rainfall Index between 1960 and 2008, and Figure 4 plots the Sahel Rainfall Index between 1900 and 2008.

Sahel Rainfall Index - 1960-2008

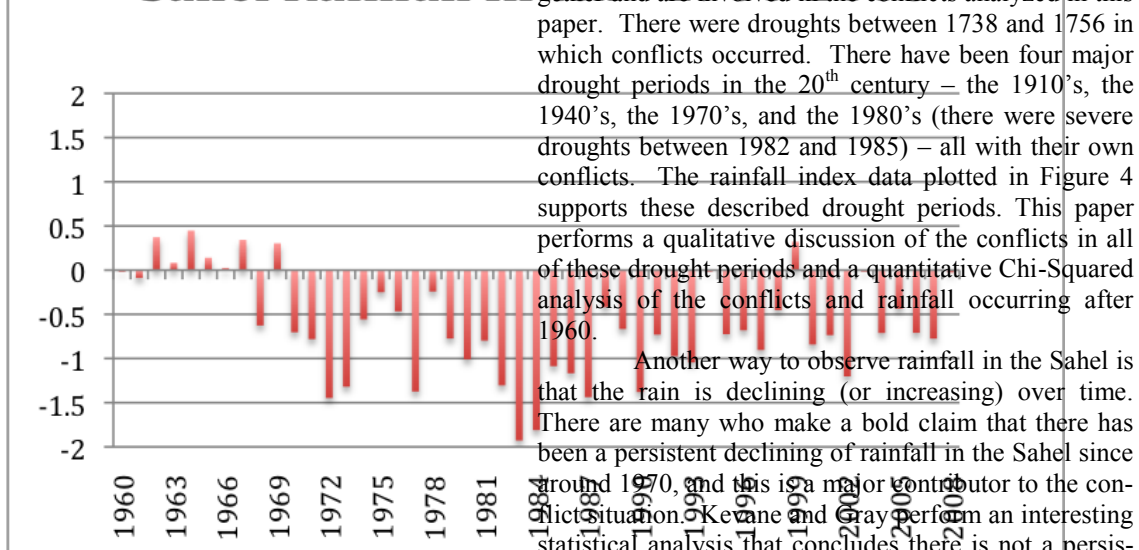


Figure 3. Sahel Rainfall Index – 1960-2008

Sahel Rainfall Index - 1900-2008

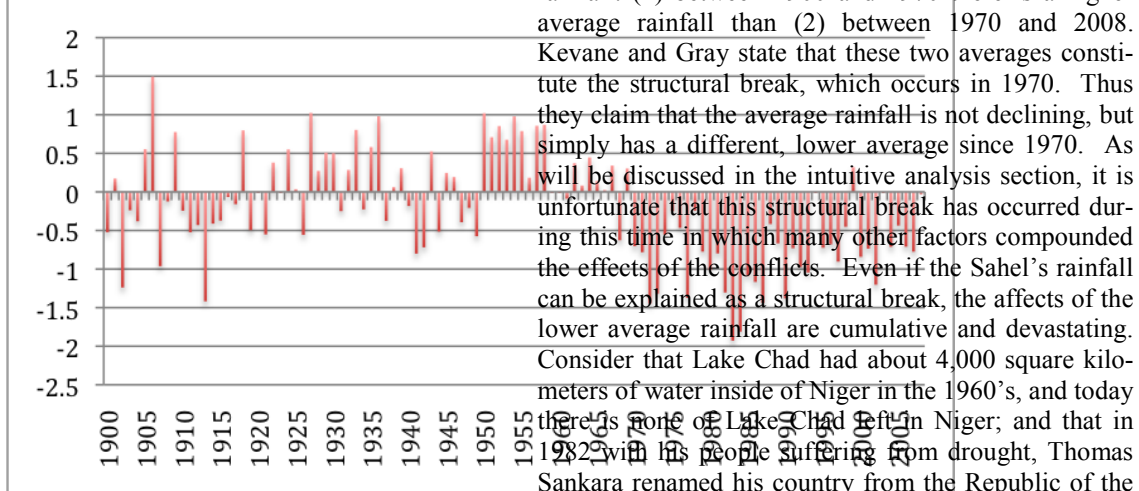


Figure 4. Sahel Rainfall Index – 1900-2008

In addition to the rainfall index, there are several other ways of observing the rainfall within the Sahel. The simplest is to delineate periods of known drought, which are then used in the intuitive observations section. The earliest drought was about 8000 years ago when the Sahara was transformed from habitable land into a desert. This drought is not analyzed, but it is important because it was the genesis of the Sahel and it dispersed the people living on the Sahara to become the northern Berber farmers, the southern "Negroid: Haratin farmers, and the nomadic hunter/herders. This ancient drought scattered these early

peoples, which allowed them to establish distinct identities / customs and now they have all come back together and are involved in the conflicts analyzed in this paper. There were droughts between 1738 and 1756 in which conflicts occurred. There have been four major drought periods in the 20th century – the 1910's, the 1940's, the 1970's, and the 1980's (there were severe droughts between 1982 and 1985) – all with their own conflicts. The rainfall index data plotted in Figure 4 supports these described drought periods. This paper performs a qualitative discussion of the conflicts in all of these drought periods and a quantitative Chi-Squared analysis of the conflicts and rainfall occurring after 1960.

Another way to observe rainfall in the Sahel is that the rain is declining (or increasing) over time. There are many who make a bold claim that there has been a persistent declining of rainfall in the Sahel since around 1970, and this is a major contributor to the conflict situation. Kevane and Gray perform an interesting statistical analysis that concludes there is not a persistent declining rainfall, but rather a structural break.

The plot in Figure 4 is used to describe their structural break concept. One can construct two averages for rainfall: (1) between 1900 and 1970 there is a higher average rainfall than (2) between 1970 and 2008. Kevane and Gray state that these two averages constitute the structural break, which occurs in 1970. Thus they claim that the average rainfall is not declining, but simply has a different, lower average since 1970. As will be discussed in the intuitive analysis section, it is unfortunate that this structural break has occurred during this time in which many other factors compounded the effects of the conflicts. Even if the Sahel's rainfall can be explained as a structural break, the affects of the lower average rainfall are cumulative and devastating. Consider that Lake Chad had about 4,000 square kilometers of water inside of Niger in the 1960's, and today there is none of Lake Chad left in Niger; and that in 1982, with his people suffering from drought, Thomas Sankara renamed his country from the Republic of the Upper Volta to Burkina Faso, which means the land of upright people. Average rainfall, rainfall index, declining rainfall, structural break, and droughts are all mechanisms for categorizing the Sahel's rainfall.

Sahel Governance, Conflicts, and Rainfall – Intuitive Analysis

This section performs an intuitive analysis on the conflicts in the Sahel beginning with a general definition of conflicts and a description of the types of conflicts considered in this paper. Then the primary opposing groups involved in the Sahel's conflicts are described, followed by a discussion of some factors that are contributing to the conflicts. Next the Sahelian governance is presented and how it contributes to the

conflicts. Finally, the drought periods described in the Sahel Rainfall section are examined from a conflict perspective – relating the droughts and conflicts to people, governance, and contributing factors. Conflicts between people exist throughout the world and the root cause is that people like people like themselves and not everyone is alike. A conflict exists when two groups of people have different ideas about such things as lifestyle, ownership of property, distribution of wealth, and inclusion within governance. If a conflict cannot be mediated using a process that is accepted by both sides, violence often erupts. This paper analyzes violent Sahel conflicts that could not be mediated using the accepted legal process of the Sahelian state, which is often some form of the Arabic *suhl* process. These unresolved conflicts have transpired into escalating “tit-for-tat” retributions in which the opposing sides (‘tribes,’ clans or groups such as a Sudanese Liberation Army) have taken up deadly arms in the conflict.

There are three primary pairs of opposing groups within the Sahel that are involved in conflicts: farmer-herder, Arab-African, and Muslim-non-Muslim. The farmer-herder conflict exists because of differences in lifestyles. A farmer wants to settle on the land and raise crops for living, and a herder needs vast areas of land for raising cattle. Conflicts arise when the farmer expands into the herder’s grazing area, or when the herder’s cattle destroys the farmer’s crops. The farmer-herder conflict is one of the oldest conflicts on earth with first recorded violent conflict occurring when the farmer Cain killed his brother Abel the herder. In the Sahel, competition between farmers and herders has been a main reason for conflicts for the last 70 years, and the rainfall and contributing factors have exacerbated these conflicts. The differences between the Arabs and the Africans can lead to an Arab-African conflict. The Sahel is the dividing line between the Arab dominated North African and the African dominated South Africa. As the Arabs began occupying Africa in the 8th century, they were better educated, assumed a dominant position within the government, and used Africans as slaves. This has evolved into a feeling of superiority by many Arabs despite the fact that throughout the years there have been many inter-marriages, and in some cases one cannot tell an Arab from an African. These first two conflict groups are often intertwined as the Arabs tend to be herders and the Africans tend to be farmers. The differences between Muslims and Christians / native African religions can lead to the Muslim-non-Muslim conflict. The Sahel is 76 percent Muslim, which can lead to Muslim ideas dominating. These conflict pairs are discussed further in the subsequent paragraphs of this section.

The farmer-herder, Arab-African, and Muslim-non-Muslim conflicts have existed within the Sahel for

centuries; and they have often been solved without violence. Recent trends in population growth, governance, and drought have all contributed in escalating the normal conflicts to include deadly violence. The population totals of the Sahelian nations were 31 million in 1960, 52 million in 1980, and 104 million in 2005. The increasing population needs more food and both the farmers and the herders have attempted to help. The farmers have expanded their presence into the less arable land of the Sahel, and the herders have increased their livestock. Three examples of this within Sudan are (1) between 1973 and 1999 the El Obeid region of Northern Kordofan increased its farmland by 57.6 percent and decreased its rangeland by 33.8 percent, (2) between 1973 and 2000 the Um Chelluta region of Southern Darfur increased its farmland by 138 percent and decreased its rangeland by 56 percent, and (3) between 1961 and 2000 the Sudan livestock increased 400 percent. Complicating this is the fact that almost 80% of the Sahelian population works in agriculture. This means that during the structural break period (1970 to today) where the Sahel has had a decreased average rainfall we have more people, more farmland, more livestock, and less pastureland – a confluence of factors that contributes to escalating the violence in the conflicts.

The governments of the Sahelian countries have all experienced a rocky road since their independence. There have been many changes in governments, and a lot of them involved violent coups. A couple of examples of this rocky road are the following: (1) Since independence Mauritania’s government has been dominated by the Arabic Maurs, the oppression of blacks has always caused tensions, there was a military coup in 1978, and attempted coups in 2004 and 2004; and (2) Since its independence Niger’s government has been a succession of military regimes that has led to one of the world’s poorest countries, and the government often cannot pay salaries that results in civilian strikes and military mutinies. In all of the Sahel governments, a consistent theme of those in government power is marginalization. Marginalization is when the group in power provides more government benefits to members of their own group and marginalize groups that are different than those in power. There will always be some people who are marginalized, but when the number of people marginalized becomes too large they will band together resulting in conflict. The governments of the Sahelian countries are all guilty of marginalization mainly because there is not enough prosperity to equitably distribute. Three examples of marginalization within the Sahelian countries are provided.

The first example is in Chad and it shows two aspects of marginalization: (1) how marginalization can bring about violent government transitions and at the

same time change the marginalized from one group to another and (2) how marginalization can be between African ethnic groups and does not have to be Arab versus African. The Chadian government has been overthrown several times since their independence, and this example describes the last two governments. Idriss Deby, who is from the African Zaghawa ethnic group, has been serving as the president of Chad since 1990. Hissene Habre, who is from the African Daza ethnic group, was the president of Chad from 1987 to 1990. Hissene Habre gained his presidency after he rallied a united military effort that pushed Libyan troops out of Chad. After gaining the presidency, Hissene Habre favored his Daza ethnic group and marginalized others. Idriss Deby performed a military coup and established himself as president, with the goal of establishing a more inclusive government that does not marginalize. Idriss Deby has won three elections since assuming power, but Chad is still listed as the world's most corrupt government, which means there are still elements of marginalization.

The second example discusses the marginalization of the Tuaregs in both Niger and Mali, and it demonstrates how marginalization of a small percentage can result in conflict. The Tuaregs are nomadic people who trace their roots back to the ancient Berbers and are famous for their blue headscarf, which covers the entire head except for a slit through which their eyes peek. The Tuaregs, about 10 percent of the population in both countries, live in the northern, desert portion of Niger and Mali, and both of these countries governments are run from the southern portion. The Tuaregs feel as if they have not received a fair share of their counties' resources. In the 1960's, the new governments of Mali and Niger backed with French help forcefully put down the initial Tuareg uprisings. The Tuaregs were never satisfied with their inclusion in the country, and resumed rebellions around 1990. Both Niger and Mali reached a tenuous peace agreement with the Tuaregs in the mid 1990's with concessions such as incorporating the Tuareg rebels into the national military. The Tuaregs in both Niger and Mali still have marginalization grievances with their governments as the rebellion has resumed in 2007 in order to get more community investment and a larger share of mining profits from the resource rich north. The rebellion continues today.

The third example is in Sudan, which is by far one of the more complex situations in the Sahel. Sudan has basically been in a civil war since its independence, and recently the Darfur crisis has brought worldwide attention to Sudan. There have been several western news media generalities concerning the conflicts in Sudan. The most popular generality is that the Arab *Janjaeed* are participating in genocide on the African

"tribes" in Darfur. Another popular general report is that the Muslims are performing atrocities against the Christian and native African religions. The Arab-African and Muslim-non-Muslim differences are the source of a lot of the conflict, but these generalities are an oversimplification of the problem. Within Sudan the Arab-African, Muslim-non-Muslim, and farmer-herder sources of conflict are tightly intertwined with marginalization, which can be considered the main ingredient of the conflict. The anonymously written Black Book was distributed throughout Sudan in 2000, which contained statistics that purportedly shows that Khartoum and North Sudan has marginalized the rest of Sudan. The statistics were accurate and they showed an imbalance of resources, but the Black Book did not consider distribution of wealth from an economist's point of view. For example, a city may get more resources than the countryside, but the city also generates more money so proportionally they are equal. Alex Cobham demonstrated the Black Book's proposition was true from an economist's perspective. Cobham's analysis demonstrated that North Sudan has a significantly higher proportion of resources in three economic areas: (1) local revenue and government expenditures – North Sudan is approximately 50 percent higher, (2) infant mortality (expressed per 1000 births) – North Sudan is 100.1 boys and 88.8 girls compared to 122.5 boys and 104.2 girls, and (3) education – North Sudan has a 76 percent literate rate and 66 percent enrollment rate compared to 38 percent literate rate and 40 percent enrollment rate.

Those in control of the Sahelian governments do not equally include the needs of all citizens, and they are guilty of marginalization. Typically, those in control marginalize those that are not a member of their group, which exacerbates the normal farmer-herder, Arab-African, and Muslim-non-Muslim conflicts. This paper has presented the Sahel's the basic conflict groups, how population growth is contributing to the conflicts, and how government marginalization is contributing to the conflicts. We are almost ready to intuitively examine the relationship between rainfall and conflicts; however, secondary contributors to conflicts are another aspect to consider. The first secondary contributor is when a drought causes actions that do not immediately result in a conflict. In this example a drought causes herders to abandon their normal nomadic lifestyle and settle into a village / city. The herders feel as if they are losing their long established identity and they do not easily adjust to manual jobs with hourly wages. This malcontent festers until a conflict opportunity arises. Another secondary contributor is the relationship between Sahelian nations, which allows for easy movement of people between countries. This secondary contributor can be exhibited in several

ways. The first example is a drought that causes the Chadian Arabic-herders to settle into the Sudan's Darfur region, which changes the population balance between the Arabs and Africans. This example is further complicated when the displaced Chadian Arabs (1) arrive with more potent weapons than the Darfur Africans and (2) describe their former country's leader, Idriss Deby, as having marginalized them because he is an African Zaghawa. A second example is the movement of Arabs from the Darfur area to fight with Gaddafi's Libya movement to establish an Arab belt in North Africa. Even when these types of movements fail (as Gaddafi's did), the Arab soldiers return home with more radical ideas and better trained in armed conflict. The last secondary contributor is the easy access to powerful weapons. Instead of stick, stones, and old single-shot rifles; automatic weapons such as the Kalashnikov (AK-47) flow freely. In 1990 a Kalashnikov could be bought for \$40.00, and a popular jingle dramatizes the rise of potent automatic weapons: "The Kalash brings cash, without the Kalash you are trash."

We now intuitively discuss rainfall and conflicts by examining the drought periods described in the Sahel Rainfall section. The cyclical nature of weather means there have been drought periods in the Sahel since the beginning of time. For example a drought in the 1680's was severe enough that the Sahelians sold themselves into slavery for food. The drought period from 1738 to 1756 is the first one discussed from a drought-conflict perspective. The Sahelian drought between 1738 and 1756 was severe as is demonstrated by the fact that over half of Timbuktu's population died of starvation. This timeframe was a transitional period between the large African kingdoms in Western and Central Sudan and the 19th century Jihads. This drought had the predictable results of herders invading the farmlands causing conflicts. In addition, a case can be made that this drought, the movement and crowding of people in the Savanna states, and the resulting conflicts provided the unrest that enabled the 19th century Jihads. The 1974 drought contributed to the coup d'état of Hamani Diori in Niger. The 1970's drought and the 1980's drought caused many Arab nomads from eastern Chad and western Sudan to settle in various Darfurian village areas (e.g. Wadi Barie, Kebkablya, and Kutum). These migrations caused little unrest at the time, but they established an Arab population within Darfur that did not have adequate or the best land, and they later became the Janjiweed agents in the 2000 Darfur conflicts. Similarly, the 1970's and 1980's drought caused the Tuaregs to abandon their nomadic lifestyle and settle in the refugee camps or urban areas. The Tuaregs liked their old lifestyle and many did not adapt well to social changes (e.g. hourly labor) required

for urban living. Thus the Tuaregs uprisings in 1970 and 1980 were directly fueled by drought conditions. This was further complicated by the fact that many of the Tuaregs had trained and fought with the Libyan army during this time period, and when they returned home they were better organized than in their 1962 uprising. The 1980's drought caused large numbers of Fulani herders to migrate from the eastern Niger Sahel into northern Nigeria that led to a 15 year armed conflict. And finally, the only period of relative peace in Sudan occurred between 1973 and 1982, which is between the 1970's and 1980's droughts.

This section has demonstrated that rainfall is one of many factors causing the Sahel's conflicts. The conflicts begin with differences among the Sahelian people, who are (1) living on meager resources, (2) often marginalized by the governments, (2) have easy access to potent weapons, and (4) fluidly flow across country boundaries disrupting the population balance. The lack of rainfall lowers the meager resources, which escalates the conflict cycle.

Sahel Conflicts and Rainfall – Statistical Analysis

This section performs a standard Chi-Square statistical analysis using the rainfall data described in the Rainfall section of this paper, and conflict data that has been collected from several sources. First the approach is described, followed by applications of the approach to specific data. The approach involves three components: (1) a specific time period in which to observe conflicts and rainfall – example time periods are one year and one month; (2) the number of conflicts in the time period along with a threshold that allows you to characterize the number of conflicts – an example threshold is five where greater than five conflicts in one time period is high and less than or equal is low; and (3) the rainfall index in the time period along with a threshold that allows you to characterize the rainfall index – an example threshold is -.7 where a rainfall index greater than -.7 is high and less than or equal is low. The conflict and rainfall index data are enumerated over time, and the threshold values are used to determine high-rain / low-rain and high-conflict / low-conflict for each time period. This results in a pair of values for each year: [high / low conflict, high / low rainfall], which are used to construct a Chi-Squared table. Table 1 provides a 15-year example with a one-year time period, the number of conflicts threshold is 7, and the rainfall index threshold is -0.7. The pairs of [high / low conflict, high / low rainfall] values that result from Table 1 are enumerated in the Chi-Squared Table 2.

Table 1. Computing the high / low conflict and high / low rainfall values.

Year	Conflicts Threshold = 7	Rainfall Threshold = - 0.7	standard expression: which for Table 2 is as follows:	$\sum \frac{(observed - expected)^2}{expected}$
	# Conflicts	High-Low	Index	$\frac{(2-2.4)^2}{2.4} + \frac{(4-3.6)^2}{3.6} + \frac{(4-3.6)^2}{3.6} + \frac{(5-5.4)^2}{5.4} = 0.185$
1960	10	H	-0.9	L
1961	11	H	0.8	H
1962	12	H	0.2	H
1963	2	L	-0.2	L
1964	3	L	-0.3	H
1965	3	L	-0.8	L
1966	4	L	0.1	H
1967	1	L	-1.2	L
1968	12	H	1.1	L
1969	13	H	-0.9	H
1970	12	H	0.2	H
1971	1	L	-1.9	L
1972	3	L	-1.1	L
1973	4	L	-1.0	L
1974	2	L	0.1	H

Table 2. Chi-Squared Values the Correspond to Table 1.

	High Rainfall	Low Rainfall	Total
High Conflict	2 (expected 2.4)	4 (expected 3.6)	6
Low Conflict	4 (expected 3.6)	5 (expected 5.4)	9
Total	6	9	15

Table 2 also shows the observed and expected frequencies. One computes the Chi-Square constant using the

Table 3. Defining PRIO Conflicts

	External Non State	Two States	Internal Non State Year # Cfl T=3	H / L	Internal Non State - Help Rain State - Help Thresh=-0.7	H / L	Year	# Cfl T=3	H / L
25 to 999 deaths	1 conflict	1 conflict	1 conflict		2 conflicts				
Greater than 999 deaths	2 conflicts	3 conflicts	2 conflicts	L	0.983333333	H	1986	5	H

Table 4 maps the PRIO conflict data and the rainfall index data (see Figures 3 and 4) into the collection of highs and lows, and Table 5 shows the PRIO Chi-Squared values.

Table 4. PRIO high / low Conflict and high / low Rainfall

1964	3	L	0.4475	H	1987	9	H
1965	3	L	0.140833333	H	1988	4	H
1966	4	H	0.025833333	H	1989	6	H
1967	4	H	0.341666667	H	1990	9	H
1968	4	H	-0.626666667	H	1991	5	H
1969	5	H	0.303333333	H	1992	5	H
1970	5	H	-0.703333333	L	1993	3	L
2071	6	H	-0.781666667	L	1994	4	H
1972	5	H	-1.4475	L	1995	3	L
1973	1	L	-1.319166667	L	1996	4	H
1974	1	L	-0.5575	H	1997	7	H
1975	4	H	-0.25	H	1998	9	H
1976	6	H	-0.465833333	H	1999	9	H
1977	5	H	1.374166667	L	2000	6	H

Table 6. Sudan high / low Conflict and high / low Rainfall

Table 5. PRIO Chi-Squared Values							
	High Rainfall	Low Rainfall	Total				
High Conflict	14 (expected 13.933)	19 (expected 19.066)	33	H / L	Year	# Cfl	H / L
Low Conflict	5 (expected 5.066)	7 (expected 6.933)	12			T=33	
Total	19	26	45				

1985	28	L	-1.086666667	L	1994	35	H
1986	29	L	-1.1675	L	1995	31	L
1987	33	H	-1.4375	L	1996	36	H
1988	30	L	-0.416666667	H	1997	39	H
1989	32	L	-0.666666667	H	1998	37	H
1990	48	H	-1.380833333	L	1999	35	H
1991	46	H	-0.73	L	2000	36	H
1992	33	L	-0.973333333	L	2001	34	H
1993	32	L	-1.045	L			

The Chi-Squared constant for the PRIO data is computed by the following expression.

$$\frac{(14 - 13.933)^2}{13.933} + \frac{(5 - 5.066)^2}{5.066} + \frac{(19 - 19.066)^2}{19.066} + \frac{(7 - 6.933)^2}{6.933} = 0.002$$

Since the PRIO Chi-Squared value is less than 3.841 (the 0.05 level of significance), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that rainfall and conflicts are dependent.

The PRIO data is good data, but since one of the actors is a state, it ignores many Sahelian conflicts that occur between tribes and/or ethnic groups within a state. The Conflict and Survey Mapping Analysis data and the Sudan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment data are used to examine rainfall and all types of conflicts. The Conflict and Survey Mapping Analysis data is excellent data describing conflicts in the Sudan regions, providing geographic area, dates, lengths, tribes involved, groups within a tribe, and causes of the conflict. For this analysis, the Sahelian Sudan regions of West Kordofan, South Kordofan, North Darfur, West Darfur, and South Darfur have been selected from the data. The data often describes the length of the conflict with phrases such as "since 1985." The Conflict and Survey Mapping Analysis paper was written in 2002 so the entries with "since 1985" were converted to a "17-year conflicts" (1985 to 2001). The Sudan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment data is similar to the Conflict and Survey Mapping Analysis data, and the two were merged into one dataset. Tables 6 and 7 show the Sudan conflict data, and the Sudan data Chi-Squared constant is computed by the following expression, which is less than 3.841 (the 0.05 level of significance) so the null hypothesis is rejected and we conclude the rainfall and conflicts are dependent.

$$\frac{(4 - 3.176)^2}{3.176} + \frac{(2 - 2.823)^2}{2.823} + \frac{(5 - 5.823)^2}{5.823} + \frac{(6 - 5.176)^2}{5.176} = 0.001$$

Table 7. Sudan Chi-Squared Values

	High Rainfall	Low Rainfall
High Conflict	4 (expected 3.176)	5 (expected 5.823)
Low Conflict	2 (expected 2.823)	6 (expected 5.176)
Total	6	11

This section has used Chi-Squared statistics to examine two data sets of conflicts and rainfall. The PRIO data set considered all of the Sahelian countries' conflicts between 1962 and 2007, and the PRIO data set defines conflicts to involve at least one state entity. The Sudan data set examined inter tribal / ethnic group conflicts in Sudan between 1985 and 2001. In both cases the Chi-Squared analysis confirmed the intuitive notion that conflicts and rainfall are dependent.

Summary

This paper has explored the relationship between rainfall and conflicts in the Sahel. The Sahel is a narrow band of semi-arid land that abuts the Sahara desert, crosses eight countries, and is the home of 58 million people. The Sahel is the melting pot between North and South Africa with Arabs (e.g. Baggara Rizeigat, Mahamid, and Beni Halba), Africans (e.g. Zaghawa and Masalit), farmers, herders, Muslims, Christians, and more all calling the Sahel home. Conflicts are occurring among the Sahelian people and there are many reasons contributing to them. Different lifestyles, different customs, different religions, and different ethnic groups provide the initial opportunities for conflicts. Over 80 percent of these people depend on a subsistence agrarian economy. The day-to-day resources provided by this subsistence living means that the Sahel population is living on the razor's edge for competition and conflicts over resources. The governance of marginalization provides some groups' access to better living conditions at the expense of others, and this creates jealousy needed for conflicts. The easy access to powerful automatic weapons allows the conflicts to escalate into dangerous violence. The fluid transit across the Sahelian state borders allows the natural population to become unbalanced and allows radicals to infiltrate extremist ideas. These conditions exist and conflicts are occurring. Declining rainfall and droughts can serve as a conflict catalyst that exacerbates these conflict conditions. The declining rainfall and droughts begin by creating more competition for the less resources, but it also reorients the population (e.g. herders settle down) to further the conflict conditions. This relationship between conflicts and rain is supported by intuitions. This paper has discussed the intuitive relation, and it has used a Chi-Square technique to statistically correlate the relations using the Sahel rainfall index data and two conflict datasets. The Sahel and its conflicts are important in the world's security environment of today. The conflict-stricken and poverty-ridden Sahel can become the next large breeding ground for radical extremists such as *al-Qa'eda*. The world should help the Sahelian nations address the underlying causes of its conflicts, and realize that

droughts are a catalyst that cause the conflicts to worsen. The world's help should be persistent with increased activity during decreased rainfall and drought periods.

Reflective Analysis and Future Work

I wrote this paper as an assignment for an 11-week online Naval War College graduate class – Introduction to African History and Cultures. In performing research for this paper, I was surprised with the amount of material available – African researchers are plentiful. This was challenging from two perspectives: (1) reading, comprehending, and sifting through all of the material and (2) synthesizing the material into an organized paper. The resulting paper is fine, but I expect that I explained some of the concepts too beginner-like for more experienced African researchers. I purposely kept the explanations simple so that I could read the paper in the future and still understand it. With more time I think I could have organized it better and also made it more focused. Another area that can be improved is the statistical analysis. I had forgotten the statistics that I studied in the mid-1970's, and I had to consult with two friends at work in order to understand enough to include Chi-Square in the paper. I am still not convinced that I did it absolutely correctly, but I was determined to include that section.

Future work in this area can be pursued in several directions. The same thesis can be explored with larger and more complete conflict datasets. This would be beneficial for those interested in a better statistical analysis. A similar theme could be explored relating future weather trends to the Sahel. Of course, future weather of the world in general and the Sahel in particular is as unpredictable as the ITCZ rainfall, and there are those who claim that global warming will have drastic affects on the Sahel's rainfall. They site examples like the rainfall in Burkina Faso in 2007. During that year, Burkina Faso received eight downpours during its rainy season of over 150mm, which is the equivalent of 8 floods in a four-month period. Another claim is that the future climate change will reduce the rainfall even more, with perhaps even a drop of up to 70 percent for the most vulnerable areas. Yet another theme related to weather is the global warming, carbon emissions, and its relationship to the Sahel. The Sahel should have an extremely low carbon emission footprint, and their suffering could be out of proportion with respect to the world's carbon emissions as demonstrated by the following claim: "A 2 degree Celsius rise in temperature would endanger the water supply of up to 600 million Africans." The last area of future work is to investigate data that is counter to the drying of the Sahel. For example, better constructed wells have been able to supply more water to the Sahelians, and map-

ping of vegetation shows there has been an increase in Sahelian greenery. I wanted to include something about wells providing continuity during lack of rain, but I ran out of time and energy. There are many opportunities for future work in this area.

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Reviews

Gallab, Abdullahi A., *The First Islamist Republic: Development and Disintegration of Islamism in the Sudan*. Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, US, 2008, pp. 194, appendix, index. Hardback. Price: 55 British pounds.

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If Abdelwahab el-Afendi wrote in 1991 about Hasan Abdalla al-Turabi's, "revolution" rather fondly, Dr. Gallab's book under review here, *the First Islamist Republic*...is this revolution's obituary. Approaching his topic from the perspective of the sociology of violence and placing the subject within local, regional and international context (p.18), Dr Gallab examines in detail the recent extraordinary rise to power of the Islamists in the Sudan. He argues convincingly that, in their persistent struggle to control the destiny of the Sudanese people, the Islamists have leaned toward Abu Alaa al-Mawdudi's emphasis of state power to effect Islamization from the top (p.95). The author stresses the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood exclusionary top down interpretation of Islam, their calculated use of state power after the 1989 military coup to violently and efficiently silence their opponents, the factious and bitter quarrels within the Muslim Brotherhood, and, accordingly to the author, the final demise of the Islamists' project in 1999. *The First Islamist Republic* is an expensive short work. However, thanks to the author's extensive research and countless interviews with key elements in the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood and oth-

ers, the book is also a mine of valuable information about al-Turabi and his movement, information unavailable elsewhere. It often provides fresh insights into and intrepid sociological interpretations of the ideas and maneuvers of al-Turabi and his committed but scarcely thoughtful disciples (p. 165) in recent decades. The author argues persuasively that the very success, politically and economically, of the Muslim Brotherhood after 1989, a success which the architects of the 1989 military coup consciously and unfailingly have attributed to the application of their version of Islam (p. 10), is the cause of the demise of the first Islamic Republic in the country (p.138). By establishing what was in effect an exclusionary form of Islam that was made the reference point for state worldview, policies, behavior and actions after 1989, the Islamists have dug their own grave. Sudanese citizens who held fast to interpretations of Islam not conforming to the official state ideology and policy began using the same religion to mobilize against the Muslim Brotherhood and their '*civilization project*'. These include not only the traditional Sufi orders, the Ansar al-Sunna, the Muslim Republicans, but also many members of the Muslim Brotherhood itself who became increasingly disenchanted with al-Turabi's dogma, intrigue and authoritarianism (p. 139).

In addition to their complete control of the state coercive power in the army, the police and the security apparatus through merciless purges and the promotion of their own cadre, the *lkhwan* or Muslim Brothers astutely exploited the Sudanese financial institutions in ways and to a degree unprecedented. They thus created what the author calls the "Corporation" (p. 91), that behind-the-scene financial powerful super structure where all important and, from the stand

point of the *Ikhwan*, ideologically effective decisions regarding state policies and their implementation were taken by al-Turabi and his closest followers. The author has correctly and ably identified the immoral and indefensible situation that developed as a result of the involvement of the Corporation in the daily affairs of the Sudanese citizens. Personal greed and voracity replaced charity and justice; principle ideals in any self-proclaimed Islamic republic. The disconnect between the *Ikhwan*'s ideology and the reality on the ground (p. 95) became apparent for all to see. The end was in sight by this time. The bitter rivalry between al-Turabi and the military dictator General al-Bashir practically sealed the fate of the only Sunni Islamic republic in the Muslim world.

The First Islamic Republic is an intriguing book in more than one respect. It stresses violence as a constant medium of Sudanese politics that has reached unsurpassed levels of viciousness, brutality and frequency under the regime of the Muslim Brothers. While this fact is indisputable, the author has not successfully explained the underlying causes of such violence, which he, interestingly, divides into "hard" and "soft" violence, the latter being the control of media, educational curricula and the like. Is this violence squarely grounded in the mentality, teachings and behavior of the Brotherhood, as the author seems to indicate, or an unavoidable but bloody necessity as William Langewiesche has believably argued in the *Atlantic onLine* in 1999? (See "Turabi's Law", in the *Atlantic online*, August 1999). There are other thematic and stylistic problems, though minor and would not take away much from the quality of this work. The first is the lack of sufficient information on the social changes that have taken place in the Sudan during

the last 4 to 6 decades, even if the reader has been told that the premise of the book is informed by sociology. True, there are a few but scattered references to demographic shifts; a substantial rural population has resettled in towns. But their contribution or lack of it to the politics of violence remains unclear. Again, the civil war in the South where for decades violence and counter violence have been the norm rather than the exception is not included in any meaningful way to further articulate the prevalence of violence in politics.

Stylistically there are some shortcomings as well. The author seems to fancy the figure "3". There are three "3" of every observation, development, phenomenon, or explication he provides. This is the case with the categories of the Islamists (p. 150), transition to the second republic (p. 151), communicative system (p.144), the control of the Muslim Brothers over the Bureaucracy (p. 142), the exclusion of the majority of the Sudanese by the military regime (p. 139) cultural autonomous spheres in the Sudan (p. 133), the regime's strategy of coordinating with global Islamist allies (p. 126) or their own (p. 60), points of reference to al-Turabi and his Islamic state, (p.103), the development related to wealth, violence and power of the Islamists (p. 81), the characteristics of the period of the Islamists ascendancy (p. 67), developments that merit further attention (p. 56) or development in the life of the Brotherhood (p. 40). Even the quote from sociologist T. Abdou Maliqalim comes in THREE parts (p. 139).

The second difficulty is the inordinate number of lengthily sentences. Long and convoluted sentences obscure meaning. I know composing sentences in an essay is a matter of preference. Some writers favor short and succinct rendering.

Others prefer elaborate and sometimes tortuous sentence structure. But no matter what choice a writer makes; it should under no circumstance be at the expense of meaning and clarity. The work under review here includes many long sentences, usually between 50 - 80 words. Thus the meaning of the sentence becomes tentative at best, and the reader, accordingly, is forced to read the text more than once. Again, the author has a tendency to fall in love with big words, scarifying as a consequence the meaning of the text. Here a few examples. "The dialectic force of these engagements (for or against the Islamists regime. Explanation added) within their forms of rejection, ambivalence, and acceptance to the phenomenon and its transformative potentials are what this study intends to address....." (p. 79). Or this one "...the Islamist movement's actions and reactions were informed by these developments and simultaneously transformed and situated within ~~conditions and contradictions of~~ possibility, or the set of relations within which other factors gain their sense as Foucault reasons, is key to what would follow (p. 81).

Despite these few reservations on the part of this reviewer, *the First Islamic Republic...* is a courageous and instructive publication, and is certainly a welcome addition to the growing library on Islamism in contemporary Sudan.



Sudanese Women in the United States, the Double Problem of Gender and Culture, by Asma M. Abdel Halim, Lewsiton, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006.pp. 209, Index.
Reviewed by: Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban



New Sudan license plate, Juba, South Sudan 2008



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This is a pioneering study of Sudanese women in the Diaspora, and especially addresses their attitudes and experiences as circumcised women in the United States. The method is based on interviews that are quoted extensively in the book, and the perspective adopted throughout is one of a committed feminism. The book is thus designed to be both a compendium of research, as well as a work that can be used by women, for women in communities isolated from one another in the vast reaches of North America where Sudanese Diaspora peoples are scattered.

The participants in Abdel Halim's study are mainly educated women who left the Sudan after 1989 as young women and were then forced as married women in exile to explain their condition as circumcised women to doctors, nurses, and midwives as they gave birth in a culture not their own. Thus, Abdel Halim goes to considerable lengths to explain the contrasting views of Western and feminist views of circumcision with indigenous Northern Sudanese circumcised women. The differences are dramatic and have led to misunderstanding and misplaced policy initiatives as a result of the attention given to Female Circumcision (FC) in the international women's movement where proclaiming universal human rights has clashed with a relativist viewpoint that explains and contextualizes FC without condoning it. Indeed, Sudanese anti-colonial history was affected by the differences between British views of FC and those of Sudanese nationalists, such as Mahmoud Mohamed Taha who protested the English criminalizing of FC in 1945 in Rufa'a and forced the release of a woman imprisoned under the new law. Abdel Halim defends this nationalist act while acknowledging that critics, such as Mohamed Mahmoud view this incident as a setback for Sudanese women in that a harmful practice was defended while asserting the right to cultural self-determination. As Mahmoud argued, this was not a national issue, but Abdel Halim counters that Taha was, at that time and until his execution by the Numieri government, a staunch defender of women's rights. He was acting in opposition to the British colonizer shaping Sudanese culture. Taha and the Republican movement have argued that it is education and not laws that will change this and other cultural practices that are harmful to women.

Three chapters are devoted to case studies of different women's experiences in the Diaspora environment. The first is of an older woman, the second an immigrant artist, and the third is of the daughters raised in the western ways and conflicted between being "honorable" daughters and independent American women. These young women often remain single for extended periods trying to negotiate this difficult terrain between the old and new cultures. This 'terrain' includes proper dress, the wearing of partial hijab, jeans, and outfit changes depending upon whether the occasion is with family or friends. "Remote control" is often exercised for young women by their parents' insistence on knowing the young woman's movements even though they live at a far distance. Match-making is often offered as a solution, but may create a backlash on the part of the young woman eager to make her own life choices. Most agreed that putting off marriage for as long as is socially possible is the best strategy. All in her sample vow that their daughters will never be circumcised and they will oppose their husbands and families on the issue at all costs.

One of the loveliest parts of the books that readers familiar with Northern Sudanese feminine culture will appreciate is Abdel Halim's use of and analysis of *wanasa*, a form of female bonding carried out through frequent sisterly conversations and consultations over everyday matters, big and small. These conversations, rooted in the Arabic language and Sudanese culture are both sustaining and educational. Intimate questions about male-female relations, preparation of a young bride for marital life, female circumcision and Western culture, and a host of other issues involving assimilation to a new culture can all be addressed in the easy context of feminine companionship. Abdel Halim recommends such *wanasa* as an effective tool for educating women about a host of other matters in addition to FC. Such a woman-centered method places women in charge of their own futures, and in the process can influence the development of an indigenous feminism appropriate to their culture.

Asma Abdel Halim's book is an essential addition to the existing literature about Sudanese women and FC, including Janice Boddy's 1989 work *Wombs and Alien Spirits*, women, men and the Zar cult in northern Sudan and Ellen Gruenbaum's 2001 book *The Female Circumcision Controversy*, an anthropological perspective. By adding the voices and experiences of women in the Diaspora to the discussions of FC as cultural tradition, or FC as a violation of human rights, she has made the contemporary debates more nuanced and as complex as they should be.

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