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Under the Shadow of the Regime: The Contradictions of Policing in Sudan, c.1924-1989

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William Berridge: Thesis Abstract

Under the Shadow of the Regime: the Contradictions of Policing in Sudan, c.1924-1989

This thesis analyzes the institutional development of the Sudanese police between 1924 and 1989, focusing in particular on its role in governing Sudanese society and its relationship with the state at large. It seeks to challenge the static picture which represents the police as servile tools of ruling colonial and post-colonial regimes in Africa and a simple extension of the political executive. It contends that the police cannot be understood as the passive tools of the state, since both colonial and post-colonial states have been highly divided. The competing factions included legal and professional groups that wanted to develop a strong, united and institutionalized police force so as to exercise a systematic governance of Sudanese society, and political and administrative factions that sought to make the police serve the narrower political agendas of the regime. Central ruling factions, such as the Sudan Political Service in the colonial era and the military in the post-colonial era, have often seen a strong and institutionalized police force as a potential threat to their status, and have thus sought to weaken the police by conferring police authority to a number of parallel bodies. It will be seen that this conflict at the centre of the state helped to exacerbate the rift between the urban core and rural peripheries, as the various colonial and post-colonial governments sought to prevent the development of a united police force by dividing it along regional lines – and that the police came to serve, in some respects, as the state's tools for enforcing this divide. Yet at the same time the thesis will seek to rehabilitate the police as actors within their own right, demonstrating the agency they exercised both as an institution and on behalf of various religious, ethnic and political groups to which they were affiliated.

CONTENTS

Note on Transliteration

All the translations in the thesis are the author's own. The system used for translating words taken from Arabic texts is roughly based on that used by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (*IJMES*), without the use of diacritical marks or the marking of long consonants. Proper names follow established usage where they are derived from or commonly used in English language sources. Notably, in these sources 'g' tends to substitute for the standard Arabic transliteration of 'qaf' as 'q' (an aspect of Sudanese colloquial), and 'jim' as 'j' (an aspect of Egyptian colloquial). However where proper names have been transliterated purely on the basis of Arabic language sources the *IJMES* system has been used. Where popular usage is unclear, the author has tried to be consistent.

Abbreviations

ACS	Acting Civil Secretary
APD	Arabic Press Digest
CS	Civil Secretary
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
FO	Foreign Office
ICF	Islamic Charter Front
LS	Legal Secretary
NCP	National Congress Party
NIF	National Islamic Front
NRO	National Record Office
NSO	National Security Organization
NUP	National Unionist Party
PDF	Popular Defense Force
PDP	Popular Democratic Party
PIS	Political Intelligence Summary
PMD	Province Monthly Diary
PSO	Public Security Organization
SAD	Sudan Archives Durham
SANU	Sudan African National Union
SCP	Sudanese Communist Party
SDF	Sudan Defence Force
SJLR	Sudan Journal of Law Reports
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SSO	Sudanese State Organization
SSU	Sudanese Socialist Union
TNA	The National Archives [Kew, London]
TMC	Transitional Military Council

Glossary

Abid	slave (Ar.)
ahl al-qura	Ali Dinar's Personal Bodyguard (Ar.)
amir	prince (Ar.)
'amid	Brigadier-General (Ar.)
'aqid	Colonel (Ar.)
Ansar	followers of the nineteenth century Mahdi and associated Mahdist sectarian movement/*Umma* political party (Ar.)
Anya-Nya	a general name for the Southern Sudanese guerrilla movement in the 1960s
Araki	a type of Sudanese distilled liquor (Ar.)
Ashiqqa'	pro-Egyptian wing of the National Unionist Party in the 1940s and 1950s (Ar.)
Ashlaq	Barracks (Standard Arabic: *qushluqat*)
Bashi-Bazouks	irregular unit of the nineteenth century Egyptian Army (Tur.)
Biyada	infantry (Ar.)
Buluk	reserve company (Tur.)
Deim	neighbourhood or quarter (Ar.)
Dia	blood money (Ar.)
Effendi	'Mister'; term applied to members of the urban educated elite (Tur.)
Eid al-Adha	feast of the sacrifice, celebrates on the last day of the Muslim Pilgrimage (Ar.)
Fallata	derogatory term applied to West African migrants settled in Sudan aspiring to make pilgrimage to Mecca (Ar.)
Fard Kifaya	communal obligation under Islamic Law (Ar.)
Felagna	term applied to retainers of a Darfurian *shartai*
Fez'a	a community response to animal theft (Ar.)
Ghaffir	guard or watchman (Ar.)
Hadd (pl. Huduud)	religiously prescribed Islamic punishments (Ar.)
Hakimdar	chief of police (Tur.)

Hajj	the annual pilgrimage to Mecca (Ar.)
Hajjana	a term for the camel corps within the Army and Police (Tur.)
Haram	lit. 'forbidden' or as a noun, 'sanctuary'; prohibited under Islamic law (Ar.)
Imam	Muslim prayer leader; divinely ordained leader of an Islamic State (Ar.)
Intifada	uprising (Ar.)
Jahiliyya	the 'age of ignorance' in pre-Islamic Mecca (Ar.)
Jallaba	Sudanese term for a merchant from the riverain north (Ar.)
Jallabiyya	a long, white, flowing garment worn by Sudanese men (Ar.)
Jihadiyya	military corps in the Turco-Egyptian and Mahdist army (Ar.)
Kasha	lit. 'sweep'; police operation against 'vagrants'
Khafir (pl. Khufara')	watchmen or guard (Ar.)
Khalwa	a Qur'anic school (Ar.)
Khatmiyya	the largest single sufi movement in Sudan
Khayyala	cavalry unit of the police (Ar.)
Kuttab	another name for a Qu'ran school, lowest grade of elementary Education (Ar.)
Mahdi	Messiah figure who will redeem Islam in Sunni and Shia Eschatology (Ar.)
Mahdiyya	the period of rule of the Sudanese Mahdi and the Khalifa Abdullahi, 1885-1898
Malik	king (Ar.)
Ma'mur	a district official (Ar.)
Mek	Sudanese term for 'King'
Merissa	a local fermented beer
Merkaz	government centre; district Headquarters (Ar.)
Mudir	Anglo Egyptian Provincial Governor; Provincial Commissioner during the May Regime (Ar.)
Mufattish	British Inspector, 1898-1924; re-titled District Commissioner in 1924, but Arabic name remained the same (Ar.)
Mulazim	lieutenant (Ar.)
Muhafiz	regional governor (after 1980 Local Government Act) (Ar.)

Muhtasib	'inspector of the market' adopted in Islamic society in the early Abbasid period to 'propagate virtuous acts and forbid evil' (Ar.)
Nafar	rank and file policeman; private (Ar.)
Nazir	a northern Sudanese notable (Ar.)
Nas	'The people' (Ar.)
Onbashi	corporal (Tur.)
Ra'id	major (Ar.)
Sawari	cavalry (Ar.)
Sayyid	term applied to religious notables such as the 'two Sayyids', Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and 'Ali al-Mirghani (Ar.)
Shakla	local quarrel or fight (Ar.)
Shartai	Western Sudanese notable (Fur)
Shawish	sergeant (Tur.)
Shaykh	a Sudanese notable (Ar.)
Shari'a	the revealed law of Islam (Ar.)
Sol	warrant officer (Tur.)
Sulh	a form of peace agreement (Ar.)
Turkiyya	Sudanese term to refer to the period of Turco-Egyptian rule after the conquest of Sudan by Muhammad 'Ali, 1820-1885
'Umda	a Sudanese headman (Ar.)
Zariba	a thorned enclosure used for defensive purposes; used to hold captured slaves in the nineteenth century (Ar.)

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

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Figure 1: Map of Condominium Sudan in 1932. Courtesy of the Probert Encyclopedia Internet Map Archive.

Introduction

After a public celebration in the late 1970s of one of the anniversaries of Jafa'ar Numayri's 'May Regime', Sudanese police officer Abu Humayd Ibrahim returned to his house in Hassaheissa to discover that a young demonstrator had daubed an anti-government slogan on the walls of his house. Ibrahim's recollection of how he dealt with the situation reflected to a great extent the ambivalent position of Sudanese policemen between state and society. He did not arrest him, which Ibrahim believed would probably have resulted in his torture by the state security services. Instead, Ibrahim simply instructed him to wash the paint off his wall; then he invited him into his house to try and get to know him better over a cup of tea and explain his position to the young man. Ibrahim recalls that

> I said to him "You know me personally: I am a police officer; I serve the country and the citizen, and it is not wise for you and others like you to think that all who wear khaki are part of the ruling regime. This thinking contains a great deal of stupidity...I hate [the] May [Regime] more than you do… Many ruling regimes do not respect man (*al-insan*) and treat him with barbarous savagery and violate his rights but we in the police force are entrusted with fighting crime in every time and place and on all levels...thus police work involves respecting man and not humiliating him and thus the police lose value under the shadow of many ruling regimes".[1]

As this thesis will show, the Sudan Police Force has a long history as an institution and its highest officers have repeatedly sought to assert its professional identity and independence from governments, as Ibrahim's attempt to distance himself from the May Regime suggests. But over thirty years on from this encounter, the Sudanese police continue to appear in media and investigative reports and much academic literature to operate 'under the shadow' of the ruling regime. The police gain prominence in this literature primarily through their enforcement of state security and of legislation considered repressive by international standards, and they very

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[1] Abu Humayd Ahmad Ibrahim, *Qissat Kifah wa Najah: Mudhakkirat al-Shurti* [Stories of Struggle and Success: Memoirs of a Policeman] (Khartoum, 2007), p. 224.

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often appear indistinguishable from the state itself or from a range of other security forces.[2]

Despite the general prominence of the police in reports of state repression in Sudan, they are virtually invisible in historical scholarship. No history of the Sudanese police exists in the English language and there are only occasional mentions of the police in the standard general histories of Sudan.[3] The three published histories of the police in Arabic are all authored by Sudanese police officers and thus together represent something of an 'official history'.[4] At the same time, wider studies of policing in Africa and the Middle East have tended to identify policemen entirely as predators on society and as the servile tools of ruling colonial and post-colonial regimes.[5] Yet the significance of police forces to the history of the state itself has been emphasized in the principal study of policing in Africa, by Alice Hills. Whilst a study of the police's role as agents of the state has obvious potential to improve our understanding of state-society relations, 'the relationship, both in Africa and elsewhere,' she says, 'has received astonishingly little academic attention'.[6]

This thesis will therefore provide the first scholarly examination of the police in Sudan and in doing so will make a new contribution to the study of African policing more generally. It will argue that whilst the police may have operated under the shadow of the state, they have in turn also reflected the tensions and divisions at its very heart and the unequal and problematic relationship between Sudan's centre and periphery. The thesis will provide a history of the recurrent attempts by some members of the police force, together with allies in the judiciary, to develop

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[2] Eg. 'Sudanese police arrest women protesting over flogging video', *The Guardian*, 14 Dec. 2010. Khalid 'Abd al-Aziz, 'Sudan police clash with opposition protesters', *Reuters*, 19 Jan. 2011. The African Centre for Peace and Justice Studies, *Sudan Human Right Monitor December 2009-May 2010*, p. 15.

[3] Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989: The Unstable State* (Boulder, 1990). Douglas Johnson, *Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (Oxford, 2003).

[4] Umar Salih Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta fi Sudan* (Riyadh, 1990). 'Abdallah Hasan Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta* (Khartoum, 2008). Abu Haraz Mu'tader, *Kitab Muqtasir fi Tarikh al-Shurta.*(Khartoum 2008).

[5] 'African Nation Divided over Police Brutality' May 5 1999 BBC News Website. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/336149.stm (Visited 11 Sep. 2010), Patrick Chabal & Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 77-8. Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa: the Politics of the Belly* (London 1993), pp. 77, 264.

[6] Hills, *Policing Africa*, preface p. ix.

institutional identity, independence and strength, and of the resistance and mistrust with which these efforts were met from the state administrative organs. It will therefore challenge the prevailing views of the police in Sudan – and in Africa and the Middle East more widely – which dismiss them as entirely subservient to state political and security agendas. It will also revise previous scholarship on policing in Africa to show that the drive for a more civil form of policing in the late colonial era did not come entirely from colonial reformers within the state but also from subaltern police officers who appropriated British ideals of professionalism and institutional ethics in order to wage their own lasting struggle *against* the state administration. Ultimately, the thesis will argue, both colonial and post-colonial governments would perceive this institutional development of the police to be threatening to their own dominance of the central state. Yet at the same time the security priorities of successive governments also required that the limited police resources be concentrated at the central nodes of state power and wealth, creating a simultaneous dependency and mistrust at the very heart of the state. This conflict at the centre of the state helped to exacerbate the gulf between the urban core and marginalized rural areas, as the various colonial and post-colonial governments sought to prevent the development of a united and centralized police force by dividing it along regional lines. By examining the history of the police in Sudan, the thesis will thus explore the nature of the Sudanese state itself, and in turn challenge the wider literature on the nature of the colonial and post-colonial state in Africa.

State Power and State Weakness in Africa

A key question for the thesis is how capable the colonial and post-colonial states in Sudan were of policing their subject populations. The extent to which the twentieth-century governments were capable of exercising control over those they ruled is a much debated question in the wider scholarship on Africa. Berman argues that there are two contending models of the colonial state in Africa. One depicts the state as a 'paternalistic mediator' with few resources and limited coercive capacity, whereas the second represents a state with an expansive bureaucratic apparatus intervening in

ever-widening areas of the political economy.[7] Naomi Chazan remarks of the post-colonial state in Africa that it 'has been depicted, alternately, as weak and powerful, as repressive and feeble, as fragile and absolutist, as dependent and autonomous, as expanding and collapsing'.[8] However, Crawford Young asserts more decisively that twentieth century colonial states in Africa were capable of exercising power in a far more total manner than their predecessors. He states that

> African societies were to encounter a colonial master equipped with doctrines of domination and capacities for the exercise of rule that went far beyond those available in earlier times and other places. The African, for the colonial state, was in a far more systematic sense a subjugated other.[9]

Young further observes that after World War I 'the superstructure of colonial domination was institutionalized, rationalized, and routinized'.[10] His emphasis on the pervasive nature of colonial power is comparable to Marxist approaches towards policing in Africa, which emphasize 'the conception of policing as social control, social regulation and surveillance over subordinate classes by an emerging ruling class'.[11]

Such an emphasis on the totalizing nature of colonial power reflects the broader theoretical concerns of interpreters of colonialism such as David Scott, whose article 'Colonial Governmentality', developing the Foucauldian notion of 'governmentality', emphasizes the transformative nature of colonial power. For Scott, the development of the colonial state in Asia, Africa and the Middle East represented an extension of the modern state and modern power. Colonialism, for him, was 'a form of power... which was concerned above all with disabling old forms of life by systematically breaking down their conditions'.[12] For the purpose of this thesis it is particularly important to explore some of Scott's statements about the

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[7] Bruce Berman, *Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya: the Dialectic of Domination* (London, 1990), pp. 424-5.
[8] Naomi Chazan et al., *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp. 38-9.
[9] Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (London, 1994), p. 75.
[10] Ibid, p. 10.
[11] Philip Ahire, *Imperial Policing: the Emergence and Role of the Police in Colonial Nigeria, 1860-1960* (Milton Keynes, 1991), p. 28.
[12] David Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality' *Social Text*, 43 (1995), pp. 191-220 at p. 193.

nature of colonial legal power. For him, colonial governmentality represented a shift away from a previous style of colonialism, whereby the colonial state was characterized by 'extractive domination', towards an attempt to regulate wider colonial society through the introduction of European law codes in order to regulate individual behaviour. Scott emphasizes 'the introduction of a new game of politics' which depended on 'the constitution of a legally instituted space where legally defined subjects could exercise rights, however limited those might have been'.[13] Thus, he argued, 'what the rationality of colonial power is doing is inscribing a new, authoritative, game of justice into the colonized space, one which the colonized would resist, but to whose rules they would have to respond'.[14]

Scott's notion of 'colonial governmentality', although put forward as universal, was developed mainly with reference to South Asia and in particular Sri Lanka, where British domination lasted roughly two centuries. In contrast, British hegemony in Sudan only continued for 58 years and never witnessed the development of infrastructures quite as extensive as those that emerged in South Asia. The European colonies in Africa that tended to develop extensive state security structures were those of white settlement[15] and there was no such settlement in Sudan. Certainly, the Sudan government did establish a new game of justice by creating the Sudan Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code and various other law codes in 1899 and by establishing police forces separate from the Egyptian army to enforce them. These codes were not derived directly from English law but were in fact 'simplified versions' of codes adopted in Colonial India.[16] However, the Indian codes themselves tended to be based on English law and the colonial judiciary acknowledged that it was 'guided but not governed by English common and statute law'.[17] The colonized would later respond to this by replacing the colonial codes with Islamized codes in 1983. However, their success in achieving this demonstrates the limitations on the 'colonial graft'[18] as much as its strength. Woodward argues

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[13] Ibid. p. 208.
[14] Ibid. p. 212.
[15] Jeffrey Ira Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, 2000), p. 17.
[16] Zaki Mustafa, *The Common Law in Sudan: An Account of the 'Justice, Equity and Good Conscience' Provision* (Oxford 1971), p. 46.
[17] Vasdev, Krishna, *The Law of Evidence in the Sudan* (London, 1981), p. 3.
[18] For this phrase see Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality', p. 212.

that the colonial state structure in Sudan rarely focused on anything other than 'the basic tasks of law, order, and tax collection'.[19] Daly similarly states that the greatest achievement of the Condominium regime was 'order',[20] but one would assume that by this he means the elimination of challenges to the state, rather than any pervasive policing of society. The overwhelming military power of the colonial state ensured that there were no major rebellions against it after the 1920s but did not guarantee the more widespread regulation of Sudanese society.

Why then did the colonial government in Sudan appear to have such limited ambitions in comparison with the regulatory goals of the kind of colonial states depicted by Young and Scott? For Daly, weak statehood in Sudan can be related to the ambiguous position of the British in the country. Britain technically 're-conquered' Sudan in 1899 on behalf of Egypt, where it effectively possessed a 'veiled protectorate'. Thus Sudan was not ruled via the Colonial Office, like other British sub-Saharan colonies, but via the Foreign Office as the 'Anglo-Egyptian Condominium'. Although *de facto* sovereignty over Sudan was in practice exercised by the British, the result of this unusual arrangement was, as Daly observes, that 'while the British and Egyptians were factors in the political and economic development of the Sudan, neither fully controlled it'.[21] Thus whilst British colonial policy could be transformative, the colonizers only had limited capacity to direct the nature of these transformations.

Woodward adds that one of the reasons why the colonial state in Sudan was weak was that 'there were limited resources for governing such a vast and poor country', resulting in only 'a light structure for the administration of peoples'.[22] Resource limitations underlie the history of the police in Sudan and help to some extent to explain the weaknesses and limited ambitions of the state itself. The model of the 'gatekeeper' state put forward by Frederick Cooper for colonial sub-Saharan Africa may therefore be more appropriate than the powerful, governmentalist state models for understanding the nature of the Sudanese state and its police. In Cooper's words, gatekeeper states 'had weak instruments for entering into the social and

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[19] Woodward, *The Unstable State*, p. 231.
[20] Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934* (Cambridge 1986), p. 451.
[21] Ibid, p. 451.
[22] Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989: The Unstable State* (Boulder 1990), pp. 1, 231.

cultural realm over which they presided, but they stood astride the intersection of the colonial territory and the outside world'.[23] He observes that the main source of state revenue was duties on goods coming through colonial ports.[24] In other words, the 'extractive domination' that Scott argues 'colonial governmentality' had phased out remained the principle system of governance in sub-Saharan Africa. This pattern was in turn reflected in policing policy, according to Fourchard. The police forces established by colonial governments remained focused on the principal commercial and residential quarters of major cities where European interests were located, whilst 'indigenous' areas were policed by under-resourced, under-educated bodies attached to 'local political interests'.[25]

Cooper also applies his gatekeeper state model to post-colonial Africa, arguing that security has become even more focused on the capital as the post-colonial state, unlike its colonial predecessor, does not have the option of calling in troops to protect itself.[26] Political scientists of Africa interpret the structural weakness of certain post-colonial states by reference to their excessive size. Herbst ascribes civil wars and lack of state control directly to this, arguing that the European notion that large states were strong states – reflecting the fact that in European societies state boundaries were drawn up when the process of state-building had already occurred – does not apply in Africa.[27] Numerous studies of the state in Africa have pointed to the fact that state authority does not extend beyond the capital and major ports. Hence Bierschenk and de Sardan's citation of the saying in the Central African Republic that 'The state stops at PK 12', or 12 kilometres from the capital, Bangui.[28] The battle to secure the capital has therefore become a zero-sum game in which various factions struggle for the gateway to the global economy and sources of aid and military support – what Bayart terms the 'resources of extraversion'.[29] The notion of 'gateway' security can also be developed further to involve not just protecting the capital but also the main transport 'nodes' and routes of

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[23] Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: the Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 5.
[24] Ibid, p. 5.
[25] Laurent Fourchard, 'A new name for an old practice: vigilantes in South West Nigeria', *Africa* 78 (2008) pp. 535-558.
[26] Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, pp. 158-9.
[27] Herbst, *States and Power*, p. 147.
[28] Thomas Bierschenk and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, 'Local powers and a distant state in rural Central African Republic', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 35, 3 (1997), pp. 441-469 at p. 441.
[29] Bayart, *Politics of the Belly*, p. 75.

communication. For instance, Roussillon argues that the post-colonial Egyptian state, in spite of its 'heavy, all powerful' apparatus, has limited its ambitions to controlling the 'main axes' of the country, including rivers, checkpoints between governorates and town centres.[30]

However, as the example of Egypt suggests, the decision to restrict state security ambitions to protecting strategic gateways, centres and axes may not merely be the result of state weakness or limited resources. It is important to recognize that the inability of states to govern their peripheries could have been as much due to political motives for focusing security on the capital and principal urban areas as to weak resources and the challenge posed by territorial size. In Sudan too, the state would use the police and parallel security organizations to protect the capital, port and major development scheme, and on a secondary level to control the various nodes of commerce and communication throughout the country, particularly in the northern riverain heartlands. A key question for the thesis is to what extent this was the result simply of limited resources and state weakness, or how far it reflected the political agendas and cultural attitudes of successive ruling administrative elites.

The divided colonial state

One of the key factors that the thesis seeks to emphasize is the role that ambivalence about the merits of 'civilization' and internal divisions played in limiting the expansion of the colonial state. Discourses that emphasize the role of country size and limited resources in restricting the extension of the state often neglect the extent to which the attitudes of Sudan's rulers have led them to limit the extension of its state apparatus. We will see here that colonial uncertainty about the merits of the 'civilizing mission' and administrative distrust of the centralized legal institutions, would limit the growth of the Sudanese state even in the central riverain area, but particularly in the vast rural areas of the south, east and west. Although Young emphasizes that the twentieth-century colonial state possessed previously unknown

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[30] Alain Roussillon, 'Republican Egypt: revolution and beyond' in M.W. Daly (ed.), *Cambridge History of Modern Egypt II: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 334-393 at p. 390.

technologies of social control, this century was also a time in which the fall-out of the two World Wars led to a great deal of ambivalence about modern European values. The various agents of empire, both in the colony and the metropole, debated intensely the question of which methods would be most appropriate in establishing European colonial governance.[31] In particular, colonial powers were divided over the question of whether to transform local society on the Western model or simply to conserve existing structures of government.[32] In the colonial context, these clashes usually occurred between figures with an administrative and political outlook and those with a professional, specialized and modernizing one. It was this dichotomy that Homi Bhabha was trying to understand when he talked about the 'ambivalence', and 'lack at the heart of the coloniser's identity'.[33] As one reader of Bhabha has observed

> One element of colonial discourse, then, envisions the colonized subject's potential for reformation and gradual approximation to the elevated position of the colonizer, through the redeeming experience of benevolent imperial guidance, while another contradicts this with a conception of the ontological difference (and inferiority) of the colonized subject.[34]

Members of the colonial administration in Sudan, while often paying lip-service to the 'potential for reformation' discourse, usually fell within the latter category. They used crude kinds of cultural essentialism to argue that the Sudanese were not yet ready for modern systems of policing and government, to the frustration of professional judges and policemen (see Chapters 1 and 3).

However, administrative dominance did not remain unchallenged and members of the Legal Department frequently pressured the administrative elite, or Sudan Political Service, which was headed by a 'civil secretary', to facilitate the introduction of modern systems of law and policing to the provinces. Thus the implementation of the law became related to wider political tensions within the

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[31] John Comaroff, 'Governmentality, materiality, legality, modernity: on the colonial state in Africa', in J.G. Deutsch, P. Probst, and H. Schmidt, *African Modernities, Entangled Meanings in the Current Debate* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 107-134.
[32] Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq* (New York, 2003), preface p. x.
[33] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994), p. 113.
[34] Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Post-Colonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London, 1997), p. 120.

colonial state. Just as Zubaida describes the state in the Middle East as a 'political field' in which a number of actors compete for influence without trying to overthrow the system,[35] the realm of law enforcement in Sudan was a 'legal field' in which judges, district commissioners, police officers, and collaborating Sudanese chiefs and *Nazirs* all pursued their separate agendas.

Political Service officers often aspired to the ideals of British officers serving in countries like Iraq, Transjordan and the Gulf Emirates, where rule was 'indirect' and the British officer would rely on his supposed 'affinity' with Arab culture rather than on an attempt to introduce any transformative system of government. As Priya Satia has demonstrated, such figures justified themselves by employing an 'otherisation' of Arab culture that reified and indeed glorified its supposed traditionalism and resistance to change.[36] Since Arab culture was seen as impervious to European empirical systems of law and governance, British officers with specialist 'knowledge' of Arab culture would serve as interpreters in perpetuity.[37] These attitudes towards Arab culture were fundamentally wrapped up in the 'noble savage' complex through which colonial officers found a channel for their anti-modernist attitudes.[38] However, as Yoav Alon has demonstrated, the myth of Anglo-Arab cultural affinity entirely neglected the reality on the ground and led the British to be complacent about their forms of administration. This was the case in Britain's mandate of Transjordan, where the imperial power's belief that it could rule the territory with six British officers severely weakened the impact of its presence.[39]

Although British colonies in sub-Saharan Africa (like Sudan) did have far more extensive legal departments than was the case in Iraq and Transjordan, similar techniques of administrative monopolization of power structures obtained. Berman observes that administration in Kenya was 'prefectural' in that it offered particular license to the 'men on the spot' to administer the law as they saw fit, with relatively

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[35] Yoav Alon, 'Tribes and state formation in Mandatory Transjordan', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37 (2005), pp. 216-240 at p. 216.
[36] Priya Satia, *Spies of Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford, 2008), p. 5.
[37] Ibid p. 5.
[38] Dodge, *Inventing Iraq*, p. 69.
[39] Yoav Alon, ' 'Heart-Beguiling Araby' on the frontier of empire: Early Anglo-Arab relations in Transjordan', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 36 (2009), pp. 55-72.

little judicial regulation.[40] Anderson characterizes the debate between judges and administrators over legal matters as a 'dialogue of the deaf' between 'judges on the one hand who could not sacrifice the accepted principles of English law to the peculiarities of Africa and district administrators on the other who were less concerned with justice *per se* than with the wider issue of law and order'.[41]

The belief that administrative officers' 'understanding' of Sudanese culture should be prioritized over more sophisticated forms of European knowledge led the Political Service to limit the expansion of more specialized and technical institutions of government. Naturally this was not simply ideological as much as power-mongering for its own sake. The Political Service was unique in that most of its members spent their entire career in Sudan, in contrast to the more itinerant administrators who served elsewhere in the empire working under the Colonial Office.[42] As a result, these administrators developed an intense attachment both to their position in Sudan and to each other,[43] which was threatened both by specialist institutions such as the police and judiciary as well as by educated Sudanese who could potentially replace them in a number of their roles. As Willis has demonstrated, the office of the civil secretary, which accumulated increasing influence from the 1920s, was wary of challenges to its authority from the office of the legal secretary, the head of the judiciary.[44] Some studies of the post-colonial Middle East have focused heavily on the manner in which independent governments have sought deliberately to marginalize rival institutions and thus employ a 'politics of neglect' (see below). However, their colonial predecessors were past masters at this art. Although commentators on the development of the Sudanese state tend to emphasize its sheer size as a factor in limiting the growth of centralized institutions,[45] this politicized neglect was also crucial.

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[40] Berman, *Control and Crisis*.
[41] David Anderson, 'Policing, prosecution and the law in colonial Kenya, c. 1905-1939', in Anderson and Killingray (ed.), *Policing the Empire*, p. 191.
[42] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 399.
[43] Ibid, p. 399.
[44] Justin Willis, '*Hukm*: The creolization of authority in Condominium Sudan', *Journal of African History*, 6 (2005), pp. 29-50 at p. 34. Also see Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 274, 349-50.
[45] Woodward, *Unstable State*, p. 230.

Colonial ambivalence over 'civil policing'

Having come to the understanding that certain colonial states were ambivalent about the introduction of modern systems of government to the colonies, this thesis will seek to challenge the notion that they were keen to introduce a system of civil policing on the British model as a natural part of the extension of European values. It will be shown that the administrative tendency to 'otherise' Sudan and develop personally-controlled and politicized police forces led the colonial government in the country to obstruct civil policing, a process associated with ideals about English liberty.

The extent to which colonial governments did this is debatable, in the sense that precisely what civil policing means is contested. A number of English police historians understand English police values as a part of a proud heritage that has been exported to the Commonwealth.[46] Critchley argues that it is the triumph of the English police system that it relies on 'popular support' rather than power.[47] For Tollefson, the ideals associated with a 'civil constabulary' include 'adherence to the rule of law, respect for civil liberties, fair treatment of individuals, honesty, and non-interference in political affairs'.[48] Robb has argued that the shift towards a more civil system of policing in nineteenth-century India involved 'a shift of emphasis from the need mainly to defend the person and property of the rulers towards the attempt to manage conduct in society as a whole', as well as an emphasis on a more professional, apolitical and independent force which would act as a separate department of government.[49] However, Ahire describes the introduction of 'civil policing' in Nigeria as 'neither progressive nor democratic', arguing that it simply amounted to 'legalized coercion'.[50] For Ahire, civil policing remained focused on controlling potential threats to the colonial economic order, while conventional crime would be left as a problem to be dealt with by 'Native Administration' police bodies.[51] This variety of historical perspectives on the meaning of civil policing in

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[46] T. A. Critchley, *A History of the Police in England and Wales* (London 1978), preface p.xviii. Sudan, of course, was never strictly a part of the Commonwealth.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Harold Tollefson, *Policing Islam: The British Occupation of Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Struggle over Control of the Police, 1882-1914* (Westport, 1999), p. 100.
[49] Peter Robb, 'The ordering of rural India: the policing of nineteenth century Bengal and Bihar, in Anderson and Killingray, *Policing the Empire*, pp. 126-150.
[50] Ahire, *Imperial Policing*, p. 52.
[51] Ibid., p. 45.

colonial Africa and Asia perhaps reflects the ambiguity of the position of the colonial state in regard to the purpose that modern forms of policing were meant to serve. Perhaps Ahire should be arguing not that civil policing had a limited scope, but rather that the colonizers never really introduced a civil form of policing despite their claims.

Even in Britain, true civil policing remained something of an ideal. Tollefson acknowledges that Western countries like Britain and America 'often violate' the standards of 'civil policing' although 'adherence to them is relatively greater' than in a number of non-democratic regimes.[52] The notion of English civil policing as apolitical, non-military and purely consent-based is the product of a Whig history of policing that neglects the extent to which British police practice has been politicized and made quasi-military.[53] Police forces in nineteenth and twentieth-century Britain were required to perform parade-ground drill and were often officered by former soldiers and used to police political demonstrations and industrial disputes.[54]

In Sudan, the ambiguous position of the state was a product of the unwillingness of colonial administrators to divert resources to establish a genuinely public-orientated police service. In keeping with wider colonial policy throughout the empire,[55] the colonial administration in Sudan preferred to use the police force to guard against direct threats to the regime, rather than to exercise pervasive control over colonized society. In spite of this, colonial police historians tend to attribute the initiative for a 'civil' police force in the non-settler colonies to the emergence of William Johnson as the first colonial police advisor in 1948.[56] However, they do acknowledge that colonial officials and policemen on the ground wrangled over the merits of introducing a system of 'civil policing' versus continuing with a quasi-military model closely linked to the administration that would be capable of dealing with the forces of anti-colonial nationalism.[57] In particular, a number of district

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[52] Tollefson, *Policing Islam*, p. 100.
[53] Emlsey, *The English Police*, p. 2-5, 235.
[54] Ibid, pp. 2-5, 235.
[55] Michael Silvestri, 'The thrill of "simply dressing up": the Indian Police, disguise and intelligence work in colonial India', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 2.2. (2001).
[56] Georgina Sinclair, *At the End of the Line: Colonial Policing and the Imperial Endgame, 1948-1980* (Manchester, 2006), p. 60; Killingray and Anderson, 'Policing the end of Empire' p. 5. Clayton and Killingray *Khaki and Blue*.
[57] Anderson and Killingray, 'Policing the end of Empire', p. 11.

administrators in Africa cherished their 'informed and politically sensitive role' in the field of policing.[58] This further reflected the internal tensions that characterized certain colonial states. Robb's notion of civil policing as an attempt to 'manage conduct in society as a whole' reflected the type of 'governmentalist' outlook possessed by the rulers of twentieth-century India that, as demonstrated above, the Political Service was wary of establishing in Sudan. However, the struggle to professionalize the police and assert civil policing ideas against the administrative priorities of the Political Service would be driven not simply by British police professionals like Johnson, but also by Sudanese officers.

Colonial collaborators or subaltern agents? Sudanese policemen and the mimicry of civil policing

This thesis argues that Sudanese policemen were not merely acquiescent 'collaborators' with the colonial state and oppressors of colonized society. Previous literature on colonial policing has tended to look at imperial constabularies simply as a means by which colonial states controlled and regulated colonized society.[59] Thus the police are implicitly understood largely as 'collaborators'. This word has acquired a highly negative meaning in the post-colonial lexicon and is often contrasted with resistance to European imperialism.[60] However, this work will show that rather than being passive tools of European rule, the Sudanese police were just as capable of exercising agency as other sectors of colonized society.

Once we accept the notion of the divided state then any simple notion of collaboration becomes problematic. The thesis, having examined the divisions within the colonial state in Sudan, will demonstrate that Sudanese policemen exploited these schisms for their own purposes, as much as being used by the state themselves. Thus to understand the role of the police we must accept Cooper's point that

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[58] Ibid., p. 7.
[59] Sinclair, *At the End of the Line*. Ahire, *Imperial Policing*.
[60] Benjamin N. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Roberts, 'Introduction: African Intermediaries and the "Bargain" of Collaboration' in Benjamin Lawrence, Emily Osborne and Richard Roberts (eds.), *Intermediaries, Interpreters and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa* (Madison, 2006), pp. 3-35.

subalterns played on colonial weakness and internal tension and that 'the institutions of colonial states, from crop marketing to law courts, did not operate as their designers intended, but were appropriated, contested, and transformed even while European flags flew over colonial capitals'.[61] The problem with the literature on 'colonial governmentality' is that it tends to assume that the appearance of modern systems of government in Africa and Asia were simply the result of European cultural imperialism. Rather, both subaltern elites educated in colonial schools and 'defensive developmentalists' expanding and modernizing their own states to keep them outside the colonial grasp saw the development of modern systems of government and law as a means for the removal of the colonial *raison d'être*.[62] This is what Heather Sharkey is referring to when she describes the educated Sudanese, or *effendiyya*, as 'colonialism's intimate enemies, making colonial rule a reality while hoping to see it undone'.[63] This was possible because, as Bhabha observes, colonized subjects have through education come to understand for themselves the fractures within colonial ideology, which sought simultaneously to reform and otherise the colonized subject. 'The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority'.[64] In other words, by learning the English language and studying the English police system Sudanese officers could expose the hypocrisy of the colonizers' argument that they were introducing a truly modern police system to Sudan.

Understanding this point helps us counter notions of collaboration which represent the police and other members of the *effendiyya* employed by the colonial state merely as deculturated traitors to the colonized and a *tabula rasa* upon which European ideals were inscribed. This appears to have been the approach taken in 'Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim's *Manichean Delirium*. A recent study of the Sudanese judiciary, an institution with parallels to the police, this book offers a useful point of comparison for this thesis. Ibrahim argues that members of the Sudan judiciary were at the same time products of European, colonial schools and agents of a penal code,

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[61] Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 4.
[62] Paul Nugent, *Africa since Independence: a Comparative History* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 11; Nikkie R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography* (Berkely 1972), p. 79; James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 73-74, 232-233.
[63] Heather Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley, 2003), p. 30.
[64] Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, p. 88.

the Sudan Penal Code, that was European in origin. He argues that this code inflicted a 'moral injury' on the Sudanese nation through its permissive attitudes towards alcohol, gambling, homosexuality and apostasy against Islam.[65] Ibrahim's views reflect to some extent those of the wider Islamist movement, which sought to remove the police officers who as *effendis* had supposedly become divorced from their society (see Chapter 5). Thus, the prejudices of the Islamist movement ironically reflected earlier colonial attitudes towards *effendis*.

However, it is possible to challenge Ibrahim's perspective on a number of grounds. Discourses that emphasize the deculturation of collaborating elites deny the capacity of colonized Africans to develop 'a multiplicity of identities'.[66] As is typical of cultural and religious 'revivalists' who suppose a 'Manichean' split within the moral fabric of an idealized past, Ibrahim enters into little discussion of Sudan's pre-colonial history. He thus leaves it to be assumed that the British and their Sudanese 'collaborators' imposed 'moral injury' on a population that was previously rigidly moralistic, whereas in reality alcohol and prostitution have been just as constant a factor in Sudan's long history as the application of *shari'a* law.[67] More significantly, although he acknowledges tangentially the contempt that European administrators had for the *effendi* class, he does not investigate what this reveals about the divided nature of the colonial state and the role that the *effendi* elite played in removing colonialism. Looking back into the nineteenth century enables us to break down the notion of a 'collaborating' elite manufactured by the British. The police officer corps

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[65] Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim, *Manichean Delirium: Decolonizing the Judiciary and Islamic renewal in Sudan, 1898-1985* (Leiden, 2008).

[66] T. Abdou Maqilam Simone, *In Whose Image?: Political Islam and Urban Practises in Sudan* (Chicago, 1994). Achille Mbembe makes a similar point to Simone, although he interprets it more negatively, talking of the 'tragic duality' and 'inner two-ness' of the post-colonial self. See Achille Mbembe, *On the Post-Colony* (Berkeley, 2009).

[67] As Fluehr Lobban states, however, by the nineteenth century widespread knowledge of Islamic law had been spread on a popular level by localized sufi brotherhoods and West African pilgrims passing through Sudan on the way to Mecca. As she puts it, 'the *Shari'a* was undoubtedly interpreted as the correct Muslim way and practice would have been monitored by the larger community of worshippers of which an individual was a part'. See Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn, *Islamic Law and Society in Sudan* (London, 1987). However, it seems unlikely that *shari'a* was highly influential in every part of the Northern Region. Layish and Warburg even argue that in the nineteenth century *shari'a* had extended only to the cities whereas in the countryside 'custom enjoyed unassailable sovereignty'. See Layish, Aharon and Warburg, Gabriel, *The Re-instatement of Islamic Law in Sudan under Numayri: an Evaluation of a Legal Experiment in the Light of its Historical Context, Methodology, and Repercussions* (Leiden, 2002), p. 70. For the widespread practice of prostitution in Sudan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Jay Spaulding and Stephanie Beswick, "Sex, bondage and the market: the emergence of prostitution in Northern Sudan, 1750-1950", *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 5 (1995), pp. 512-534 at p. 531.

in the twentieth century was dominated by the same ethnic group that had dominated the Egyptian Army in the nineteenth century, the Shayqiyya of the riverain area to the north of Khartoum, whose influence in the police (and army) challenged the colonial state's claim that it had genuine monopoly over the means of physical violence (see Chapters 1 and 2).

Thus the weakness of the Sudanese colonial state was not, as Ibrahim charges, that its institutions were fundamentally separate from Sudanese society. Rather, we should observe Chabal's and Daloz's point that the weakness of the state in twentieth-century Africa is that it has not been sufficiently institutionalized and thus emancipated from society.[68] This is particularly true of Sudan, where Woodward observes that the army has been 'not so much a detached institution (as Latin American armies are often alleged to be and perhaps, nearer at hand, the Egyptian Army) as something of a mirror of Sudanese society, if a somewhat uneven one'.[69] This point is crucial and is just as applicable, probably more so, to the Sudanese police. Unlike other colonies, where policemen were brought in from the peripheries of the colony to police the centre,[70] the fact that the Sudanese police officers were recruited from amongst the same northern riverain ethnic groups that comprised the nationalist movement and urban labour movements ensured a much closer relationship with the public at the riverain core. The proximity of colonial police forces to colonial society has not been sufficiently explored in the police literature to date. Anderson and Killingray observe that police morale and efficiency could plummet when they were caught in the dilemma of policing an anti-colonial society on behalf of the colonial state.[71] This was true, but in colonial Sudan, policemen also developed far more positive identification with sections of Sudanese society and the nationalist movement and identified with the nationalist call for a civil style of policing (see Chapter 3).

This thesis will demonstrate that in Sudan both Sudanese policemen and nationalists exploited the tensions within the colonial and post-colonial states to push

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[68] Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 25. For a similar model see Chazan et al, *State and Society*, p. 39.
[69] Woodward, *Unstable State*, p. 232.
[70] See Killingray and Anderson, 'Policing the end of Empire', pp. 8, 13.
[71] Ibid, p. 9.

for a system of civil policing akin to that in Britain, a style of policing that the British colonizers had frequently preached but rarely practiced. The eagerness of certain policemen to introduce a civil system of policing to Sudan was clearly demonstrated by the 1951 Police Strike, which indicated the desire of Sudanese police officers for a modern, independent and professionalized force. The actions of the policemen who participated in the strike certainly demonstrated the social porosity of the police, since they were clearly influenced by the tactics of the emergent trade union movements as well as by members of the Sudanese intelligentsia calling for a civil police that would not be used to suppress the nationalist movement (see Chapter 3). It is important to understand that colonized societies in Africa have not simply rejected foreign policing systems as colonial impositions, but rather have demanded that they be used to benefit society rather than the government, by protecting it from theft, violence and other forms of anti-social behaviour.[72] Non-Western societies have at times been willing to use police techniques developed in the West if they produce an obvious benefit in dealing with crime. For instance, Fahmy has observed that in nineteenth-century Egypt, even before the British occupation, communities would not raise religious objections to modern forensic techniques such as autopsies if they felt that it was their best chance to establish justice.[73]

However, the eagerness of a number of Sudanese nationalists and policemen to apply the supposedly British model of civil policing did not necessarily reflect blind imitation of the colonizer. These colonial policemen did not, as some have argued, come to resemble the colonizer 'to the point of disappearing in him'.[74] As Willis has observed, Bhabha's notion of 'hybridity' is somewhat inappropriate to describe cultural processes given that it implies 'the genetic mixing of two clearly distinct strains'.[75] Indeed, civil policing was never really a distinct strain. As demonstrated above, the values and practices that British police officers claimed

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[72] Laurent Fourchard, 'Lagos and the invention of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria, 1920-1960', *Journal of African History*, 47 (2006), pp. 115-137 at p. 130.

[73] Khaled Fahmy, "The anatomy of justice: forensic medicine and criminal law in nineteenth century Egypt", *Islamic Law and Society*, 6 (1999), pp. 224-271 at p. 268.

[74] J. B. Wolff, 'Asian and African recruitment in the Kenya Police, 1920-1950', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 6 (1973), pp. 401-412 at p. 403.

[75] Justin Willis, '*Hukm*: The creolization of authority in Condominium Sudan', *Journal of African History*, 6 (2005), pp. 29-50 at p. 30.

were associated with their civil police system – non-military organization, independence from politics and service of public interests – were neither specifically British nor fully practiced in Britain.[76] Thus it was not the British system of policing that professional Sudanese policemen attempted to mimic, but rather the ideals that the British claimed were associated with it.

Discourses about what 'modern' policing represented would frequently be reworked and understood in an Islamic context. Thus the Sudanese police mimics were, as Bhabha would have it, 'almost the same, *but not quite*'.[77] It is also important to understand that this form of mimicry was practiced by a particular group within colonial society. Since the vast majority of educated Sudanese police officers hailed from the riverain elite, such discourses were also shaped to fit 'civil' policing into a context that emphasized the importance of urban riverain culture (see Chapters 3 and 4). Nevertheless, the strategy of these modernizing police officials was still 'governmentalist' in a manner in which colonial strategies had not been and aimed at expanding what Scott calls 'legally instituted space'.[78] While this in some respects enabled the police to offer beneficial services to Sudanese society, a more modern and interventionist policing also facilitated the greater intrusion of the police into society and thus offered capacity for the abuse of police power. This has particularly been the case when the institutional independence of the police has offered them the ability to evade judicial regulation and protect their members from criminal investigations (see Chapter 5).

The Sudanese police and divisions within the post-colonial state

This study will develop its analysis of the divisions within the colonial state by showing that the post-colonial state in Sudan was just as ambivalent towards the development of the central legal institutions as its Condominium predecessor had been. Thus, since the state remained divided, we will see that the police were no

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[76] Clive Emlsey, *The English Police: A Political and Social History* (Hemel Hempstead, 1991), pp. 2-5, 235.
[77] Bhahba, *Location of Culture*, p. 88.
[78] Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality', p. 208.

more malleable collaborators with it than they had been under the British. They pursued their own separate agenda as a faction within the state, and although they sought to strengthen themselves as an institution, this institution remained subject to pressures from a variety of legal, political and social forces.

Post-colonial regimes in Africa and the Middle East, whether military or party-based, faced a typical series of dilemmas when it came to their relationship with their police force. Strengthening central government institutions offers the state the opportunity to expand its 'mobilizational' capacity and enhance its wider security, but if such institutions become too strong they can threaten to become alternative power centres. Numerous leaders have chosen to deal with this challenge by abandoning the prospect of developing significant 'mobilizational' strength and simply choosing to focus on their own political survival.[79] Dorman terms this a 'politics of neglect'.[80]

A number of post-colonial regimes have thus proved particularly keen to undermine the police as an institution, as Hills shrewdly observes:

> If the police do their job well, they could threaten their regime. They might launch their own coup or, if they were truly independent, they would investigate regime officials suspected of violating the law. It is thus not in regime interests that the police should become efficient, effective, or provide citizen protection.[81]

A growing rift has also emerged between the legal and executive arms of some post-colonial states over the use of the police, continuing the classical colonial schism. The politicians and administrative officers at the centre of the state have sought to use either personalized security forces[82] in the context of political policing, or

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[79] Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States:State-Society Relations and State Capacity in the Third World* (Princeton, 1988), p. 207, 213.
[80] W. Judson Dorman, 'The Politics of Neglect: The Egyptian State in Cairo, 1974-98' (PhD Dissertation, SOAS, 2007).
[81] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 41.
[82] Idi Amin's General Service Department is a classic example;- see Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years Since Independence* (London, 2005), p. 233. Mobutu's Hiboux death squads were another;- Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 37.

vigilante groups in the context of criminal policing,[83] to bypass judicial supervision of the police. The result is that the police become de-institutionalized and the state has little control over the manner in which it regulates society at large, to the extent that everyday policing becomes, in Marenin's words, 'unsystematic, sporadic and personalistic'.[84]

There were a number of factions within Sudanese political and social life that attempted to manipulate the police in the post-independence era. The post-colonial Sudanese state was even more porous than its colonial predecessor, as it was alternately captured by a number of competing social and political organizations. Woodward has categorized five separate groups. The first of these was the Mahdist *Ansar* religious order and its affiliated political movement, the Umma party, the traditional support base of which was in western Sudan and the area along the Blue and White Niles to the south of Khartoum. The second was the Khatmiyya sect, which had commercial and patrimonial links to the north and east of Sudan, and sponsored the National Unionist Party, Popular Democratic Party and Democratic Unionist Party (a later amalgamation of the earlier two). The Sudanese military, which dominated the governments of Abboud and Numayri and remained influential behind the scenes during the parliamentary eras, was a third. Fourth were the 'modern forces', represented by the trade unions and professional associations that were historically liberal and progressive and in varying degrees linked to the Communist Party. Finally, there was the Islamist movement, which sponsored the Islamic Charter Front and then the National Islamic Front, and grew in strength in Sudan in the late 1970s on account of the growing importance of Islamic banks affiliated to the movement and its alliance with Numayri at that time.[85]

It is difficult to place the police squarely within any of these groupings, since the force as an institution was not wholly politicized. In a number of respects, the police in some African states represented a set of independent actors in their own right, given they had the power to abandon regimes and arrest and monitor political

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[83] Suzette Heald, 'State, law and vigilantiism in Northern Tanzania', *African Affairs*, 105 (2006), pp. 265-283; Cristof Titeca 'The 'Masai' and miraa: public authority, vigilance and criminality in a Ugandan border town', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47 (2009) pp. 291-317.
[84] Marenin, 'Policing Nigeria', p. 87.
[85] Woodward, *Unstable State*

activists.[86] Like the military, they have been able to an extent to live in an 'autonomous world'[87] with its own economy, housing and service provision.[88] Marenin even goes so far as to say that the Nigerian police are 'quite willing, and they have the autonomy, to shift sides when their own interests dictate'.[89] However, this statement seems a little too strong to apply in Sudan, where regimes controlled at different times by the various power groupings listed above have been able to exert influence over the police either by purging their ranks, making political appointments, changing their organization, or transferring resources to parallel organizations (see Chapters 4 and particularly 5).

The thesis will demonstrate that the police related to each particular set of power groupings in different ways. Relations between police forces and militaries in a number of states in the Middle East and Africa have been highly competitive and at times violent.[90] Although Hills argues that 'regime concerns ensure that African police forces remain urban, under-resourced, brutal, and stagnant', this thesis will demonstrate that a number of policemen in Sudan strove hard to avoid this state of affairs. The most liberal and progressive of policemen identified with the professional associations, in that they strove for greater professionalization, independence, and labour rights for the police. As Hills observes, the police could often act as a trade union in their own right.[91] However, their use by both colonial and post-colonial regimes to suppress these same groups created an obvious rift with them. Nevertheless, police officers, professionals and unionists all came from the same homogenous riverain elite and there were times when this social linkage prevented the police from taking action against movements dominated by fellow professional groups, in particular during the uprisings of 1964 and 1985. Another such professional group was the judiciary, which as in the colonial era contested the regime when it tried to politicize the police.

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[86] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 5.
[87] Robert Springborg has argued this with reference to the Egyptian military;- See Robert Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt: Fragmentation of the Political Order* (Boulder, 1989), p. 105.
[88] See Mbembe, *On the Post-Colony*, p. 50 on the increasing autonomy of the various 'security forces' in post-colonial African states.
[89] Otwin Marenin, 'Policing Nigeria: control and autonomy in the exercise of coercion' *African Studies Review*, 28 (1985) pp. 87.
[90] The clash between the army and the Central Security Force in Egypt in 1986 is a good example of this;- see Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 101.
[91] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 31.

The thesis will also compare the extent to which relations with state and society impacted on police practice during parliamentary and military regimes. Both parliamentary and military regimes in Sudan would reveal the manner in which the various factions within the divided post-colonial state manipulated police practice. It is an oft-made generalization that parliamentary regimes in post-colonial Africa were no less corrupt, violent or detested by the people than the military dictatorships that followed them.[92] Although Reid admits that 'legislatures were carefully controlled' and 'judicial independence was undermined', he also argues that 'more commonly, military regimes were no more incompetent or corrupt or brutal than the civilians they had replaced'.[93] Some writers closely equate military and civilian regimes. Anderson takes this approach, arguing that the Sudanese maxim that 'the present regime is the worst possible…until the next one' has 'repeatedly proven its timeless wisdom'.[94]

However, the thesis will demonstrate that the capacity of the judiciary and the media to exercise moral and legal influence over government use of the police during the parliamentary regimes ensured that these regimes had less capacity to abuse the police than their military counterparts, which used numerous strategies to distance the judiciary from the police (see Chapters 4 and 5). Nevertheless, such restraints could only be exercised at the riverain centre, due to the greater social porosity between these legal and journalistic bodies and the ruling groups there, and brutal and collective forms of policing would be practiced in both the urban and rural peripheries during both military and parliamentary regimes (see Chapter 6). As Sudanese political scientists have argued, the truly crucial periods would be the transitional ones between military and parliamentary regimes, when the educated professional groups that led the popular urban uprisings would try and bring in more progressive forms of governance before being replaced after elections by the

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[92] Ahmed I. Samatar, 'The curse of Allah: civic disembowelment and the collapse of the state in Somalia', in Ahmed I. Samatar (ed.), *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?* (Boulder, 1994), pp. 95-146 at pp. 112-3; Richard Reid, *A History of Modern Africa* (London, 2009), p. 320.

[93] Reid, *History*, p. 320.

[94] G. Norman Anderson, *Sudan in Crisis: The Failure of Democracy* (Gainesville, 1999), pp. 11-14, 255.

traditional sectarian parties which possessed mass rural support.[95] It will be seen that it was during these periods that the media, the judiciary and the educated professional groups showed the greatest potential to hold the government and police officers to account for abuse of police power. However, even during these periods efforts to strengthen the notion of 'civil' policing were usually restricted to the riverain centre.

The impact of the divided state upon Sudan's centre-periphery divide

The thesis will further explore the extent to which the police in Sudan were influenced by regional, social and ethnic divides within Sudanese society and in particular the schism between the affluent urban centre and the marginalized rural periphery. As the principal study of policing in Africa emphasizes, police forces may be key indicators of state-society relations more generally.[96] It might then be expected that the Sudanese police would embody what has commonly been seen as a fraught and dysfunctional state-society relationship in Sudan.

To understand the influence of these social divides upon the development of the police force, we must understand the complex historiographical debate about the relationship between the growth of the modern state in Sudan and the centre-periphery dichotomy. Some argue that Sudan's ethnic and regional diversity is the original cause of the instability of the state apparatus in the country. For Francis Deng, the current instability of Sudan is the result of 'a long historical process in which Northerners and Southerners were the principal antagonists in the war of racial, cultural and religious identities'.[97] Similarly, for Lesch it is the struggle over 'the identity of the Sudanese nation and the cultural boundaries of that nation-state' that has 'nearly destroyed the country'.[98]

[95] Salah M. Hassan, 'Naming the Conflict: Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan', in Salah M. Hassan and Carina E. Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance* (Ithaca, 2009), pp. 154-169.

[96] Hills, *Policing Africa*.

[97] Francis Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington, 1995), p. 4.

[98] Ann Mosley Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities* (Oxford, 1998), p. 210.

Nevertheless, others blame the state itself for creating and perpetuating social, ethnic and regional divisions within the country, rather than seeing these divisions as primordial. A less essentialist school of thought than that put forward by Lesch and Deng blames the divisive policies enacted by the British colonial state in Sudan for the post-colonial conflicts in the country. For instance, Mahmoud Mamdani, who has called upon analysts to investigate not only ethnic divisions but structures of power in understanding post-colonial African conflicts, has argued that the British laid the seeds for conflict in Darfur by deliberately 'retribalizing' the region and separating it from the riverain centre of Sudan.[99] Much earlier, nationalist historians from the riverain centre blamed the British for creating an artificial divide between the north and south of Sudan that made civil war in the south a post-colonial inevitability.[100] Historians who support independence or regionalism in peripheral regions such as Darfur or the south also blame the British not for keeping the regions separate but for favouring the riverain region in terms of economic and educational development.[101]

Other historians have sought to move beyond debates over colonial culpability by emphasizing the broader continuities between the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial regimes. Johnson notes the fact that 'inequalities in economic, educational and political development' often 'built on earlier patterns'.[102] This lopsided development focused on the 'riverain triangle' at the centre of Sudan and to some extent the bordering regions of Kordofan and Kassala.[103] Daly argues that the Condominium regime built itself upon the foundations of the old Turco-

[99] Mahmoud Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on terror* (New York, 2009), p. 4.
[100] Mudathir 'Abd al-RahimTayyib, 'Arabism, Africanism and Self-Identification in the Sudan', *Journal of Modern African Studies* (1970), pp. 233-249 at p. 247. H. M. Ahmad, *Sudan: The Christian Design* (Leicester, 1989), p. 68.
[101] Dunston Wai, "Pax Britannica and the Southern Sudan", *African Affairs*, 79 (1980), pp. 375-395 at p. 394. Abel Alier, *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured* (Oxford, 1990), p. 18. Ali B. Dinar, 'The Darfur Conflict: A Natural Process or War by Design?' in Salah M. Hassan and Carina E. Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance* (Ithaca, 2009), pp. 103-124 at p. 104. M. W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow: A History of Destruction and Genocide* (Cambridge, 2007).
[102] Johnson, *Root Causes*, preface p. xvii.
[103] Ibrahim Elnur, *Contested Sudan: The Political Economy of War and Reconstruction* (New York, 2008), p. 10.

Egyptian regime (1820-1885) during which these uneven patterns of development began.[104]

Nevertheless, this thesis will demonstrate that rather than the police passively incorporating pre-existing Sudanese social divisions, the policy of both the colonial and post-colonial states actively ensured that the police system was both defined by the schism between the centre and the margins of Sudanese society and used to reinforce it. This was partially because of the political and economic benefits of perpetuating this rift. However, it was also due to the desire of the dominant factions, as demonstrated above, to prevent the emergence of a powerful, united and centralized police institution that could challenge central authority.

Thus the centre-periphery dichotomy that the nineteenth and twentieth century states established within Sudanese society and politics ensured that the police acted as 'protectors' of a very specific version of Sudanese society. The division within that society created by the uneven levels of integration within the state is similar to that depicted by Mamdani in his work *Citizen and Subject*, which focuses on the impact of colonialism in sub-Saharan Africa. Mamdani characterizes the judicial system in colonial Africa as a 'bipolar affair', in which only 'non-native' citizens were dealt with by European law codes, whereas 'native' subjects faced a system of administrative justice handed down largely by the courts of 'chiefs' collaborating with the colonial system.[105] Mamdani's model needs qualification before application to Sudan, although it is still highly relevant. Firstly, it was mainly the urban, 'Arab'-identified elite that replaced European settlers in the role of 'citizens' in Mamdani's sense, in that these were regulated by the central police force applying the government legal codes in central courts. Elsewhere, in Sudan's sizeable rural peripheries, administrators either used their own personalized police forces to apply methods of administrative justice that flagrantly violated the Code of Criminal Procedure or they delegated policing to local authorities such as chiefs and *Nazirs*. As argued by Amir Idris, who has applied Mamdani's model of 'citizen and subject' to Sudan, colonialism in Sudan 'de-individualized' citizenship by treating

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[104] M. W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile: the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 451.
[105] Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, 1996), p. 109.

Sudanese as groups and communities, thus making ethnic and racial differences institutional.[106] As will be seen, this was reflected in the 'administrative policing'[107] of the Political Service, which often understood criminality as a communal activity and meted out collective punishment accordingly (see Chapter 1).

Scott argues that the colonial introduction of a new game of politics and law was more crucial than the question of 'whether natives were included or excluded'.[108] However, this study will show that exclusion was a fundamental aspect of the system the British established in Sudan, since their policing of the country made citizens of those present at the riverain core, and de-individuated subjects of those on the peripheries. Cooper has argued that it was in the post-World War II era that the colonial state shifted from its policy of leaving African subjects as 'non-individualized collectives' to approaching them as 'individuals defined in relation to the social body'.[109] Nevertheless, in Sudan this process, at least in the context of policing, was heavily contested and still focused largely on the riverain centre.

The centre-periphery dichotomy would remain highly relevant to the post-colonial era and also began to play itself out in the major cities as migration from the rural to the urban areas increased. Thus Bierschenk and de Sardan's paradigm of the state that can only control its capital is somewhat problematic for Sudan in that here the state has historically neglected large peri-urban areas of its own capital, whose populations are drawn from outside the riverain centre. T. Abdou Maqilam Simone's *In Whose Image?* provides an excellent study of the post-colonial Sudanese state's inability to exercise control over such 'hybrid' settlements on the outskirts of Khartoum.[110] A number of Middle Eastern and African commentators have interpreted the emergence of such settlements in terms of an increasing 'ruralization' of the cities, a reversal of the traditional Western pattern in which the countryside becomes increasingly influenced by urban modes of life.[111] This is particularly

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[106] Amir Idris, *Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan* (New York, 2005), p. 10.
[107] For this term see Anderson, 'Policing, prosecution and the law', p. 191.
[108] Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality', p. 208.
[109] Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labour question in British and French Africa* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 15.
[110] Simone, *In Whose Image?*.
[111] Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 30. Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (Yale, 2007), p. 13.

important since colonial states and their police forces were initially purely urban phenomena. Thus the post-colonial police force acted as defenders of urban society against supposedly threatening rural and 'tribal' migrants from the countryside. As critics of the post-colonial dispensation of power in Sudan have observed, the riverain elite inherited colonial discourses that presumed to exercise a 'monopoly of modernity' and otherised peripheral Sudanese as 'superstitious, chaotic, unruly, tribalistic, irrational, and barbaric'.[112]

This reveals a wider theme in Sudanese centre-periphery relations. As in British society,[113] wider social stratifications have undermined the capacity of the force to offer a neutral form of policing to all members of society. This study will observe that the Sudanese police have been used historically not just to secure the capital, although this undoubtedly attracted more resources than elsewhere, but in general terms as a means of defending the central urban core of Sudan (Khartoum, Wad Medani, Atbara, Shendi, al-Ubayyid and Port Sudan in the east) against perceived threats from the peripheries. The state has thus become divided into Arab-identified riverain Sudanese 'citizens', and de-individuated 'subjects'.[114] Islam and Arabic culture were held by the ruling elite to be the only potential unifying factors in a nation otherwise perceived as 'tribal'.[115] Thus the key government institutions since independence have been dominated by what el-Battahani terms the 'Riverain Arab-Muslim Power Bloc'.[116] In particular, this power bloc focuses on acquiring jobs and developmental resources for three particular ethnic groups from the northern riverain region: the Shayqiyya, Ja'aliin and Danagla.[117] Analysts of the country's post-colonial wars have held this riverain 'Arab' bias within the state to be one of the key causes of conflict in Sudan, as rebel movements on the peripheries

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[112] Abdullahi Osman el-Tom, 'Darfur People: "Too Black for the Arab-Islamic Project of Sudan" ' in Hassan and Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance*, pp. 88-9.
[113] Simon Holdaway (ed.), *The British Police* (London, 1979), p. 5.
[114] Amir Idris, *Conflict and Politics*, pp. 14-19.
[115] Heather Sharkey, 'Arab identity and ideology in Sudan: The politics of language, ethnicity, race' *African Affairs*, 107 (2008) pp. 21-36 at p. 36.
[116] Atta el-Battahani, 'Ideological expansionist movements versus historical indigenous rights in the Darfur region of Sudan: from actual homicide to potential Genocide', in Hassan and. Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance*, p. 57.
[117] el-Tom, 'Darfur People'.

have developed 'Africanist' ideologies to counteract the central Arabizing and Islamizing discourse.[118]

The thesis will demonstrate that this riverain bias has also contributed, in a more general sense, to the manner in which the state was policed. As Amir Idris has argued, 'as the state grew economically and ideologically, both its internal and external boundaries became the cultural and political divide between "civilization" and "savagery"'.[119] Thus it will be seen that the state tends to police the boundaries of major cities almost like international boundaries, although such security usually remains fundamentally porous (see Chapter 6).

The thesis will also demonstrate the manner in which state (in)action in the periphery fed back into the central state. On account of the increasing migration of refugees from war and famine to the principal riverain cities, the state has now found that the war on the margins is coming back to haunt it.[120] Thus police campaigns against the peri-urban populations of Khartoum have increasingly begun to mirror the militaristic styles of policing used by the state in the peripheries. Paradoxically, the rank and file police have, on account of the state's deliberate neglect of the force, become dominated by men from the shanty-towns, posing further challenges to the government (see Chapter 6).

While the state and its police were porous in that they were captured by specific northern riverain groups within Sudanese society, it is important to remember that vast sections of peripheral Sudanese society did not penetrate the state on the same level. Thus both models that depict the state as being penetrated by society, and as being fundamentally outside society, are on some level applicable in Sudan. However, this is not to say that, as Cooper demonstrates, the lower echelons of state institutions were not subverted at a local level.[121] The use of Native Administration police forces to pursue local agendas and the phenomenon of the impersonation of police officers for criminal purposes continued to demonstrate the

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[118] Mamdani, *Saviors*, p. 204. Johnson, *Root Causes*, preface p. xvii.
[119] Amir Idris, *Conflict and Politics*, p. 1.
[120] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, p. 116.
[121] Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 4.

weak integrity of the state, that is, its inability to control the violence of its own agents (see Chapter 2, 5).

Sources

This thesis is the first scholarly English-language history of the police in Sudan to integrate English and Arabic-language sources. The sources used for the Condominium period up to the late nationalist era are largely colonial ones: court records, the memoirs of British policemen and administrators, official correspondence, intelligence reports and the amateur ethnographic *Sudan Notes and Records*, as well as government reports. These sources are most useful for representing how the colonial government regarded the role of its police force. Memoirs are a particularly useful source for analyzing some of the vagaries of policing in Sudan, as colonial officials were often candid about their lack of respect for the colonial state's legal norms when writing in retrospect. The same can be said for low-level correspondence not intended for widespread circulation. These sources are the more useful because of the relatively sparse information on policing found in official colonial reports, a problem that has been acknowledged by other scholars working on imperial policing.[122] Frustratingly, reports on 'policing' or 'public security' often provide nothing more than a banal description of recent infringements of colonial law or reports that local police forces were 'well turned out' or 'excellent at shooting practice'. Another problem was that I was denied access to the majority of the provincial records in the National Record Office in Khartoum, with the exception of the Khartoum, Kordofan and Darfur files, on the grounds that the records were in poor condition. I was thus unable to consult the files for Northern province (where the headquarters of the Sudan railways are located), Blue Nile Province (the location of the major cotton-growing schemes), and Red Sea/Kassala Province (the location of the country's major port). Thus I have not been able to study the policing of Sudan's economy in any great depth.

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[122] David M. Anderson & David Killingray, 'Consent, coercion and colonial control: policing the empire, 1830-1940', in Anderson & Killingray, *Policing the Empire*, p. 1.

Although the factual value of colonial sources is often limited by the cultural and political biases of the authors, they remain valuable because the manner of their racialism often reveals the languages of power that were constructed in colonial Sudan. For instance, sources that emphasize the 'tribal' nature of Sudanese society reflect administrative attempts to exclude legal bodies from areas of the country where the administration argued that a modern system of criminal policing was inappropriate.

The attitudes of the elite, educated northern Sudanese inside and outside the police become more accessible from the 1940s through a variety of writings published in Arabic. The earliest nationalist Sudanese newspaper available for the purposes of this project was published in 1946 and although the collection for the immediate post-war period in the National Record Office in Khartoum is patchy, others were consulted by means of translations in British Intelligence Reports. After around 1950 the holdings of the Record Office are in better condition, so it has been possible to read Sudanese press commentaries on such important events as the Police Strike of 1951, the Neguib Riots of 1954 and the Southern Mutiny of 1955. Information on the colonial period as a whole has also been garnered from historical research done by Sudanese policemen themselves, such as Salim and Abu Bakr and also police authors writing in the *Police Magazine*. Sudanese police sources have been vital in demonstrating the agency that Sudanese policemen sought to achieve in striving for a more professional and independent police force.

As Sudan Ministry of Interior records for the post-colonial era are inaccessible it has been necessary to make substantial use of the Sudanese media. This includes the press, as well as the national radio, transcripts of which are available in the BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts. Using the media has proved most problematic for the periods of military dictatorship, when the press was heavily controlled. Nevertheless, whilst Sudanese newspapers and radio broadcasts during these periods inevitably presented a one-sided view of the state's police and prison system, alternative perspectives are available: underground newspapers such as the Communist organ *al-Midan*, SPLA radio broadcasts, memoirs, oral recollections and scathing criticisms of the military regimes in the press in the years following their overthrow. However, it is important to remember that a number of these sources

were as tendentious as the regime's own organs, and could potentially have exploited the government's shrouding of the facts to add a fictitious element to their accounts. Particularly venomous depictions of the Numayri regime come from *al-Midan*, which frequently refers to the dictator as '*al-Saffah*', or 'the murderer'. I have acknowledged where sources may be questionable, and have where possible used them only when corroborated by other information.

The Arabic language writings of Sudanese policemen have also been heavily used in this thesis, among them the memoirs of 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim, Abu Humayd Ibrahim and Muhammad Zubeir Muhammad.[123] 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim was a policeman who went on to be the Minister of Interior and his memoirs have been very useful for observing the tensions between the police and the military during the Numayri regime. Muhammad Zubeir Muhammad was a member of the Strike Committee of 1951 and his memoirs have been extremely useful in identifying the desire for a modern and professional system of policing that characterized the agenda of the strikers. Abu Humayd Ibrahim was the first of the Hamr, a group of cattle-herding nomads from West Kordofan, to enter the senior echelons of the police in Sudan. As something of an 'outsider' to the central riverain region, he offers a more critical view of the national police system. The *Police Magazine* has also been a vital source for analyzing the views of Sudanese police officers and, although access to it has been patchy, I have been able to view a number of copies from the 1964-81 period in the National Record Office in Khartoum and the American Library of Congress. In spite of the restrictions on freedom of expression under Numayri's regime, the 1981 independence jubilee edition of the *Police Magazine* was relatively outspoken about the poor condition of the police and thus remains an invaluable source. Independent publications by Sudanese legal experts, such as Sa'id al-Mahdi's *al-Jarima wa'l Uqubat* (Crime and Punishment),[124] have also proved valuable in assessing the cultural attitudes of the Sudanese police and the approach they took towards the 'crime problem'. Crime statistics published by the Sudan Police Headquarters have been used, although they

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[123] Ibrahim, *Qissat*. Muhammad, Zubeir Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu at-Tarikh, Idrab as-Shurta Shahir 'Aam 1951* [A History of what History neglected, the Famous Police Strike of 1951] (Khartoum, 1998), 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim, *'Awraq min Dhakira* [Memoirs] (Khartoum, 2007).
[124] al-Mahdi, Sa'id Muhammad Ahmad, *al-Jarima wa'l Uqubat* [Crime and Punishment] (Khartoum, 1971).

have proved more useful for indicating the level of police presence at different times and in different regions than for measuring actual levels of crime.

On a second visit to Khartoum in December 2009, a number of interviews were conducted with police officers, journalists, politicians, members of the Native Administration, and other Khartoum inhabitants. These interviews often helped clarify and supplement material obtained from the written literature. They also proved valuable for tackling issues that were not discussed in the written material, such as the social and ethnic composition of the police, police family lives and the relationship between the police and the Native Administration in the post-colonial era. Interviews were conducted mainly in English (though occasionally in Arabic), interpreted with the help of a research assistant, Kamal Ahmad Yousif. While interview material varies in terms of factual value, like the records of colonial administrators it is useful for reflecting the languages of power that were constructed in the struggle over the administration of criminal law. For instance, Native Administration figures referred to the 'primitive' nature of the Sudanese people as a justification for their continuing role in lieu of the police, while police figures talked of the gradual expansion of the central police system in terms of the slow spread of 'civilization'.

One problem with relying on oral and media sources rather than departmental records is that the information on pay and service conditions is not very systematic, being based as it is on the impressions of former officers and journalists. However, information of this sort is not entirely subjective. For instance, such a wide variety of sources seem to agree that the police force was run down by Numayri between 1978 and 1985 that it seems difficult to dispute the fact.

Although use of Sudanese source materials offers an antidote to the somewhat Eurocentric source literature on policing to date, even this yields its own problems. Most of the sources, both written and oral, represent the views of the urban literate elite that inhabited the central area of Sudan around Khartoum and dominated the higher echelons of the police as well as other branches of government. National newspapers such as *al-Ra'i al-'Aam* and *al-Ayyam* tend to discuss policing mainly in the context of the national capital, Khartoum, with only occasional forays

into the regions. However, the fact that many of these sources repeat a number of the well-established colonial tropes concerning the peripheral areas of Sudan has been useful in terms of identifying the similarities between colonial and post-colonial styles of policing.

Conducting further investigations on the relationship between the police and local communities in Sudan's regions remained outside the scope of this research: it would have posed obvious practical and political difficulties. As a result, the material on policing in the south tends to be reliant on northern sources, with the exception of newspapers such as *The Vigilant, Nile Mirror* and *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, all of which the prominent southern journalist and politician, Bona Malwal, had a role in producing. It remains true that interviews with southern police officers and in the south more widely would have provided a wider perspective on policing in the South and this remains an important area for future research.

Chapter plans

Chapter 1 will explore the ambivalent policy of the colonial state towards the development of its police force. It will be argued that the colonial state had limited transformative capacity and was over-reliant on the power-structures inherited from the regimes that had colonized the Nile basin in the nineteenth century. It will also demonstrate that the British administration was afraid to expand the modern police system outside the principal urban centres because of its over-reliance on urban riverain groups such as the Shayqiyya in the force, and because of its desire to preserve its own role in law enforcement in the provinces. Thus it will be argued that the divides within the colonial state led to a bifurcation of the police system in Sudan between the urban centres, where a modern and professional system of policing gradually developed, and the rural periphery where the Political Service applied a system of 'administrative' policing that neglected the modern legal codes. It will therefore show that the administration's desire to cling on to its own privileges in the field of law enforcement both exacerbated the centre-periphery divide in Sudanese society and reduced the overall capacity of the state to govern its people.

Chapter 2 will develop the analysis of Chapter 1 by demonstrating that the administration had limited the overall governmental capacity of the state to the extent that it was unable even to govern its own tool of governance, the police force. The chapter will argue that the unwillingness of the Condominium to institutionalize and professionalize the Sudanese police force led it to be captured by specific social and political groups within Sudanese society, both on a national and a local level. The state's refusal to develop a well-equipped police force left policemen trapped in a cyclical relationship between vulnerability and violence, which often displayed itself during police action against popular demonstrations. Thus it will be seen that police violence was as much a result of the state's limited development of the police infrastructure as it was of sheer state power.

Chapter 3 will continue the analysis of the divisions within the colonial state over the development of the police force through an analysis of events before, during and after the famous Khartoum Police Strike of 1951. It will argue that the strike, although represented by the administration as a result of 'character' failings among senior British policemen, revealed a wider series of tensions between administrators, judges, and both British and Sudanese police professionals over the status of the police within the state. It will explore the manner in which the British administration continued to use cultural relativism and in particular Sudan's regional diversity as a justification to stall the development of a modern and united police force in the country. Meanwhile, the chapter will demonstrate the agency that the Sudanese police strikers exercised in demanding an improved position for themselves within the colonial state. It will show the extent to which Sudanese policemen were capable of escaping their stereotypical role as deculturated 'collaborators' and of identifying with broader trends within Sudanese nationalism, in particular the calls for civil policing in the nationalist press.

Chapter 4 will demonstrate that Sudanese policemen continued to assert institutional agency and understand their force as 'civil' well into the early nationalist period. It will be seen that these professionals used the opportunity granted to them by independence to expand the capacity of the police to act as a tool of governance, seeking as much as possible to use new technologies and sciences of

social control to do so. The chapter will focus on the period between 1956 and 1969 and in particular events following the October Revolution of 1964, when police activity came under intense public scrutiny following the police shooting of the student Ahmad Qurayshi. These events will be used to demonstrate the fact that the police in this period remained, as in the colonial period, socially porous. It will be demonstrated that they could be influenced by public and legal institutions such as lawyers' unions, the judiciary, the national press and other professional unions – thus demonstrating that they were not purely a tool of the regime. However, the chapter will acknowledge that even during this period the Sudanese police were not a comprehensively civil force – both because the notion of civil policing in Sudan was predicated to an extent upon exclusive interpretations of national identity, and also because various political and administrative factions continued to interfere in police business.

Chapter 5 will explore the initial expansion and then slow disintegration of the Sudanese police as an institution during the 1970s and 1980s, in particular during the military regime of Ja'afar Numayri (1969-1985). The chapter will argue that, contrary to the logic espoused by Numayri's allies in the Islamist movement that the 'Islamization' of the law in 1983 represented a rejection of colonial legal values, Numayri's policies towards his agencies of law enforcement during the later years his of regime not only reproduced the tactics of the colonial administration but carried them even further. Specifically, it will be seen that Numayri applied a policy of regional decentralization on the police force as a means of keeping power over the central legal organs within the hands of the executive, and delegated police authority to a number of non-police actors. The chapter will show that, just as in the colonial era if not more so, this led to the fragmentation and subversion of police authority, which began to be exploited by both police and non-police actors. However, the chapter will also analyze the events that lead to the popular uprising of 1985 which overthrew Numayri and the subsequent debates over police practice during the third democratic period (1986-1989) as a means of demonstrating that the idea of civil policing was still an important tool in public discourse, and that the divides within the state between the judiciary and the political executive remained just as important as in the colonial period.

Chapter 6 will focus on the policing of the divide between the central and peripheral regions of Sudan in the post-colonial era, arguing that policemen in the independent era remained crippled by the legacy of the Condominium's unwillingness to bridge the gap between the affluent urban areas and marginalized rural areas. It will be seen that the governors of post-colonial states reproduced colonial attitudes with regard to the merits of localized and collective forms of policing, even after Numayri's official abolition of the 'Native Administration' in 1970. However the chapter will demonstrate that what was new about the post-colonial era was that the police force began to apply these collective methods with particular vigour in the peri-urban settlements on the edges of Khartoum and other major cities. It will argue that the police, having been institutionally bifurcated on a centre-periphery basis by the British, became the state's principal tool for enforcing the divide between the rural and urban areas – demonstrating the limitations on the notion of civil policing developed by police officers of the nationalist generation. However, the chapter will at the same time suggest the limitations on a simplistic centre-periphery analysis – both because security at the borders of major riverain cities remained relatively porous, and because the police themselves began to absorb a vast number of recruits from rural regions in a manner that was both feared and exploited by the state.

1 'Thank goodness Habeus Corpus did not run in Nahud': The police system and the centre-periphery divide in colonial policy, 1898-c.1956

In 1930 the governor of Kassala wrote to the civil secretary in Khartoum observing that police officers in his province should focus mainly on the supervision of well-digging and road-building, and asking 'does not the growth of Native Administration bring the conclusion that the [Police] School is turning out perhaps too many police officers, and that numbers should be decreased?'.[1] This memorandum epitomized the policy of the Political Service towards the police in Sudan. In their view, the vast majority of local offences should be dealt with by Sudanese *Shaikhs*, *Nazirs* and chiefs associated with the colonial state via the mechanism of Native Administration, with the government police serving either to protect the security of the colonial state itself or act as administrative factotums for the Sudan Political Service. Later chapters will examine the agency of Sudanese police officers to show that they did not simply accept this envisioned role, but firstly this chapter explores the colonial policies that would restrict such agency and that revealed the divisions within the state itself.

This chapter will examine questions concerning the transformative capacity of colonial rule and demonstrate the reliance of colonial governments on pre-existing state structure.[2] Although it does not deny the transformative capacity of colonial rule, it will argue that the colonial state, which relied heavily on the power structures it had inherited from the various regimes that had attempted to colonize the region in the nineteenth century, had only a limited capacity and limited ambition to control and direct the transformations for which it was responsible. Scholars working on other parts of the British Empire have identified a tendency for colonial powers to play 'divide and rule' with their police forces, using illiterates from the rural

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[1] Governor Kassala to Civil Secretary, 13 April 1930, National Record Office (NRO), Civ Sec (1) 50/3/12.
[2] See, for example, Cell, John, "Colonial Rule", in W. M. Roger Louis (ed.) *The Oxford History of the British Empire vol. 4: the Twentieth Century* (Oxford 1999), pp. 232-254, at pp. 234, 237-240. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 451. Woodward, *Unstable State*, p. 231.

peripheries to police educated, urban nationalists.[3] However, during the period in which they ruled Sudan the British had less success at playing this game. The Condominium police retained a great deal of the character of the Egyptian Army that had been the principal agent of the conquest of the Sudan both during the period of Turco-Egyptian rule between 1820 and 1885 (known as the *Turkiyya*) and the Anglo-Egyptian Reconquest of 1898. This was important since the police continued to be dominated by the same ethnic group, the Shayqiyya, which had dominated the Egyptian Army. Although the colonizers identified the Shayqiyya as a 'martial race', they also feared them because of their literacy and ethnic and social affiliation to the subsequently pro-nationalist and often pro-Egyptian '*effendi*' class within the central government administration, which was seen to pose a key threat to the colonial state.

This raises another key question, that is, the extent to which the British colonizers had a single unified policy towards the development of their police force. This chapter will argue that the system of policing established by the British in Sudan reflected the fundamental tensions within the colonial state itself. The Political Service feared that the emergence of a professional cadre of policemen applying the civil policing models developed in Britain, together with the modern legal codes favoured by the Sudan judiciary, would not only bolster the nationalist movement but cause a clash with their own, more conservative understanding of the methods of policing that Sudan required.

The administration thus made strenuous efforts to isolate these educated and professional men, both British and Sudanese, from the provincial police forces. The provincial governors and 'inspectors' of the Political Service had possessed direct control over provincial police units ever since the government transferred authority over the police to them from the Egyptian Army in 1905. At this stage most administrative personnel were soldiers seconded from the Egyptian Army, and the methods of policing their forces adopted reflected this.[4] However, even after the Political Service developed a more civilian character in the aftermath of World War

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[3] India is the principal example. See Heather Streets, *Martial Races: the Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 162-168. For the relevance of 'martial race' ideology to police recruitment, see Robb, 'The ordering of rural India', p. 128.
[4] Johnson, 'From military to tribal police', p. 152. Holt & Daly, *A History*, p. 106.

I[5] they were far from keen to foster civil forms of policing. These administrators often emphasized their own peculiar 'understanding' of the Sudanese as a justification for maintaining a position of authority over the colonial constabulary, and consequently marginalized British police professionals whose desires to modernize the Sudanese police system were deemed inappropriate. It will be seen that administrators expounded ideals about 'the Sudanese' which fitted in with their own crude notions of cultural relativism, and the supposed peculiarity of the Sudanese environment and its resistance to modern and rational techniques of policing. In contrast, police and judicial professionals increasingly tried to forge a modern, disciplined, literate and legally-knowledgeable institution out of the Sudan's police.

This conflict corresponded to the tensions between the department of the legal secretary, which oversaw the judiciary and that of the civil secretary, who oversaw the Political Service. Daly argues that, with the brief exception of Wasey Sterry in the post-World War I period, the legal secretaries came to be increasingly subordinate to the civil secretary.[6] In particular, the civil secretary diminished the role of the Legal Department from the early 1920s onwards by establishing a system of local Native Administration courts which his department oversaw directly.[7] However, Daly also argues that after 1938 the judiciary obtained an increasing role in criminal work in Sudan's provinces and that this 'halted the trend towards subordination of the law to administrative goals'.[8] This argument fits in with the literature that depicts the latter period of colonial rule in Africa as one in which the technical departments, including the police, gained increasing prominence.[9] However, this chapter and the next one will demonstrate that whilst the legal department, the judiciary and the police attempted to exert more control over criminal work in the provinces in the later period of colonial rule, the administrators struggled to maintain their own authority over the police force and disregard the styles of policing being advocated by the legal department. The tensions this caused

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[5] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 271.
[6] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 60-2, 153, 273-4, 347-50, 368-9. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 10.
[7] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 347-8.
[8] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 109.
[9] Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya 1925-52* (Oxford 2000), p. 358. Anderson & Killingray, 'Policing the End of Empire', pp. 7-8. Leonardi, 'Knowing Authority', p. 48.

would eventually reach its climax during the Khartoum Police Strike of 1951, which will be discussed in the Chapter 3.[10]

Understanding these conflicts, in which the administration usually retained the upper hand, enables us to explain precisely why colonial governance of Sudanese society, in terms of the state's ability to systematically regulate the behaviour of its subjects, was so restricted. The British had limited resources to govern Sudanese society, but also limited intent. It has been argued that while the police in the south remained a quasi-military body subject to the administration, nevertheless 'in the North they became more of a modern crime-fighting force' after the introduction of professional commandants in 1925.[11] The phrase 'in the North' could probably be restricted in definition to the main urban centres in the central riverain area. The only places where the administration seriously allowed a professional force to develop were Khartoum, Port Sudan and to some extent in Blue Nile Province, where the colonial state's major cash-crop project, the cotton-farming Gezira Scheme, was located. Thus this chapter will argue that the colonizers focused primarily on policing the 'gateways' of the colonial economy[12] and not on developing a 'governmentalist'[13] approach based on regulating Sudanese society as a whole.

Focusing on colonial policy towards the police will also allow us to study the extent to which the Condominium had a role in perpetuating the centre-periphery divide. This chapter will argue that it actively exacerbated this divide, as its disjointed policy towards the Sudanese constabulary effectively ensured that the colonial state subjected Sudanese outside the main urban riverain centres to an 'administrative' form of police control. This administrative policing often either neglected the Sudan Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, or bypassed them by outsourcing law enforcement to the Native Administration – creating what Hills has termed an 'institutional bifurcation'.[14] Governors, District Commissioners (DCs,

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[10] This chapter will mainly analyze the growth of the police in Sudan up until 1945, as the later nationalist period will be covered in Chapter 3. However, empirical material from the 1945-1956 period has been included where it is of relevance to the themes of the chapter.

[11] Douglas Johnson, 'From military to tribal police: policing in Upper Nile province of the Sudan', in Anderson and Killingray, *Policing the Empire*, pp. 149-167 at p. 152. For a similar argument see Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 323.

[12] Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 5.

[13] Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality'.

[14] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 27.

who replaced 'inspectors' after 1924) and their Native Administration allies would apply forms of justice that treated Sudanese societies on the periphery as 'tribal' and thus unsuitable for modern systems of justice that dealt with crime on an individual basis. Therefore it will be demonstrated that in the context of policing the colonial state treated the inhabitants of the rural peripheries as Mamdani's de-individuated 'subjects',[15] whereas in the urban and riverain north the idea of civil policing slowly began to grow. Another upshot of this was that technical and professional methods did not spread far into the provincial police system, which did not focus itself heavily on the growth of intra-regional crime, particularly with regard to the movement of drugs and stolen goods.

Colonial security and the birth of the Sudanese Police

Police forces in early colonial Africa usually took on a military character, and Sudan was no exception.[16] The police force emerged gradually out of the Egyptian Army, ensuring that from its very inception it served the political aims of the colonial state. In 1897-9, the British had used this army, in conjunction with their own imperial forces, to defeat the Mahdist regime that had itself overthrown the Turco-Egyptian government of Sudan in 1885. The British and their Egyptian subordinates faced several immediate challenges to their hegemony, in particular from a variety of self-proclaimed *Mahdis* who exploited lingering sympathy with Mahdist beliefs to lead a number of local uprisings against the Condominium in 1903, 1908, 1910 and 1912.[17] The colonial state was also engaged for the first three decades of its existence in a series of 'pacification' campaigns in the south and the Nuba Mountains against independent rulers as well as communities who refused subjection to taxation.[18] The responsibility for crushing these risings fell jointly on the police and the Egyptian

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[15] Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 109.
[16] Anderson and Killingray, 'Consent, co-ercion and colonial control', p. 6.
[17] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 121-129; Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, 'Mahdist risings against the Condominium government in the Sudan, 1900-1927', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 12 (1979), pp. 440-471.
[18] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 129-151, 396-404. For the pacification campaigns in the Nuba Mountains, see Justin Willis, 'Violence, authority and the state in the Nuba Mountains area of Condominium Sudan', *Historical Journal*, 46 (2003), pp. 89-114.

Army.[19] Although there was a British army garrison, it stood at only 785 officers and men in 1913 and remained focused on guarding Khartoum.[20]

This participation in the 'pacification' campaigns shaped the character of the early Sudanese police forces. Between 1896 and 1905 policing was carried out entirely under the aegis of the Egyptian Army, controlled by Egyptian administrative officers known as *mamurs* at district level using soldiers of the Egyptian Army as police.[21] However, the British occupiers recognized that the various nineteenth century conflicts in Sudan had isolated the army from the general population and that it was necessary to establish a separate police force. Thus in 1899, Governor-General Wingate appointed a number of Egyptian Army officers to the rank of *Yuzbashi* to lead these forces[22] and gave them a separate budget of 20,000 Egyptian pounds.[23] This force was given very basic police training but was rapidly able to take over police duties from the army, albeit with the assistance of local *Shaikhs* and southern chiefs, as had been the case during the *Turkiyya*.[24] Then in 1905 the police were placed under the command of the provincial governors, who became responsible for overseeing their recruitment, training and financing on a provincial basis. They were led more directly by the British 'inspector', who was theoretically responsible for the training and supervision of crime fighting, and by the Egyptian military *mamur* in the field.[25]

The emergence of specialized police units was also defined by the security prerogatives of the colonial state. A Criminal Investigation Department, referred to by police historian Abu Haraz Mu'tader as the 'secret police' (*bulis sirri*),[26] was first established in 1908, but rapidly came under the aegis of the Intelligence Department. This was established in 1910 and then put under the civil secretary and in 1915 renamed the 'Public Security Department'; its broad functions were later described by the Sudan government's police adviser J. S. Ewart as 'the watching and control of

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[19] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 119.
[20] Ibid., pp. 112, 119.
[21] Johnson, 'Military to tribal', p. 152.
[22] Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 18.
[23] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 23-4.
[24] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 31.
[25] Johnson, 'Military to tribal', p. 152.
[26] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 37.

all influences, political, criminal, religious, or other'.[27] The immediate pretext for the establishment of the 'secret police' appears to have been Wad Habouba's Mahdist uprising of 1908, which led to a government obsession with monitoring Mahdist activity that had been characterized as somewhat paranoid.[28] In this respect, Sudan was quite different from other British sub-Saharan African colonies, where centralized intelligence departments were not established until after World War II.[29] Thus colonial police officers in Sudan exercised overlapping criminal and political functions for most of the colonial era.

The politicization of the police by the administration was also evident in the fact that it hired British 'intelligence' experts from India to assist with police organization. The first of these was J. H. Plumbridge, an officer in the Indian Police hired in 1910 who was regarded as an expert on anti-government societies and was appointed the *Hakimdar* of the Omdurman Police on the grounds that Omdurman was the centre of Mahdist activity.[30] In 1924, the then governor-general, Lee Stack, hired J. S. Ewart, another British Indian police expert, to assist with re-organizing the intelligence functions of the police amidst increasing pro-Egyptian agitation in the lead-up to the White Flag Revolt of the same year.[31]

The militarization of policing

The limited institutional identity of the police was underlined by its continuing similarity to the Egyptian Army, or Sudan Defence Force (SDF) as it became after 1925. When the first police unit was established in Bahr al-Ghazal in 1903, local officials referred to its recruits as *Jihadiyya*, which was a term used for slave soldiers in both the Egyptian Army of occupation and the Mahdi's army.[32] The internal organization of the police also retained a military character. They were divided into the infantry (*biyada*), whose job was guarding markets and ensuring security in the individual *merkaz* (government headquarters), and the cavalry (*al-quwwa al-rakiba*), who were divided into horse riders (*khayyala*) and camel riders (*hajjana*) and

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[27] J. Ewart report, 21 April 1925, NRO Civ Sec (1) 36/1/2.
[28] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 37.
[29] Sinclair, 'From criminal investigation to political security'.
[30] Mu'tader, *Tarikh*, p. 37.
[31] Ibid., *Tarikh*, p. 45.
[32] GGAR 1903 p. 322. Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 10. For the role of the *Jihadiyya* during the *Turkiyya* and *Mahdiyya,* see Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 26.

functioned in the countryside.[33] Furthermore, the police had military ranks, such as *askari*, *nafar*, *shawish*, *bash-shawish*, based on the Ottoman titles that were used by the Egyptian Army. Not surprisingly, as late as the 1950s, the Arabic language newspapers referred to the police as *junud*, meaning 'soldiers'.[34] To clinch the parallels, in the 1920s and early 1930s provincial police forces throughout Sudan were re-armed with the rifle that was also standard issue for the SDF. The justification for this re-armament was to make the provincial police more effective as a 'fighting force', particularly at outposts, and to enable them to 'act in closer and more effective co-operation with the Sudan Defence Force on military patrols'.[35] In Khartoum, these rifles were issued to the Omdurman police since there were no army units stationed there to intervene in the event of serious disturbances, as was the case in the other two of the 'Three Towns', Khartoum Central and Bahri.[36]

The militarization of the police was also apparent in the establishment of paramilitary (*shibh-qitali*) units known as *buluk* (companies). These were initially formed as a response to the Nuba uprising in Dilling in 1915 and 'Ali Dinar's declaration of the independence of Darfur in 1916, and continued to be used to control various inter-ethnic conflicts in Darfur and the south. In the aftermath of World War II, the system was expanded to meet the needs of policing urban nationalism, and four regular reserve companies were established at Atbara, Port Sudan, Khartoum and Wad Medani. These were trained on military lines and given additional training in handling crowds, in baton and riot drill.[37] Meanwhile, in Upper Nile Province, the government established a Mounted Police force which served both military and police functions throughout the colonial period. In 1926 K. C. P. Struvé, Governor of Upper Nile, observed that 'a really efficient force of M. P. reduces reliance on the Army on such an occasion as a general tribal rising'[38] and indeed by 1932 there was no army unit stationed in Upper Nile, the Mounted Police performing its role exactly.[39]

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[33] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 36.
[34] See Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (Arabic-English)*, ed. J.M. Cowan, (Wiesbaden, 1979) p. 166.
[35] MacMichael, Acting Civil Secretary to all Governors, 10 March 1926, NRO 2.Kh. Pro. A. 31/1/5.
[36] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 36.
[37] GGAR 1946, p. 16.
[38] K. C. P. Struvé, Handing-over notes for Upper Nile, 11 Aug. 1926, SAD 212/9/3.
[39] GGAR 1932, p. 147.

This process of allowing police and military roles to overlap worked both ways. The army was regularly used in conjunction with the police to mount euphemistically-termed 'patrols' in the Nuba Mountains[40] and the even more euphemistic 'Nuer Settlement' of 1928. The Nuba 'patrols' most commonly involved the torching of crops and villages and confiscation of cattle.[41] Similarly, the Eastern Arab Corps assisted in the police campaign against armed poachers on the River Dinder.[42] This use of the army to perform police functions effectively continued even into the 1940s. For instance, in 1941 the numbers of police in Darfur were 'drastically reduced', which led to the SDF offering to participate in training recruits and taking over a number of police functions, including acting as guards and manning police stations. These troops were also to perform 'special manoeuvres' in 'special cases' where 'it is advisable for some reason or other that the people should see the might of the Government, but where no disturbance involving the use of troops is either anticipated or at all likely to occur'.[43] Again, the cross-over of roles between police and military reflected the reluctance of the colonial state to develop a civil police force that would work according to the British ideal and operate within, rather than outside, Sudanese society.

A 'martial race'? The role of the Shayqiyya

The colonial state's weak presence and reliance on the set of power structures inherited from the Egyptian Army was also evidenced by its inability to adjust ethnic imbalances in Sudanese state structures to suit its own purpose. In other British African territories, such as Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya, the British bound the police more closely to the state by recruiting marginal ethnic groups into the central police forces.[44] In spite of the British government's politicization of the police force, this was not the case in Sudan, where the central police were dominated by the

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[40] Willis, 'Violence, authority and the state', pp. 92-94.
[41] Ibid.
[42] GGAR 1934, p. 106.
[43] Ingleson to Orlebar, 1 April 1941, SAD 740/3/22.
[44] Ahire, *Imperial Policing*, p. 56; David Killingray, 'Guarding the extending frontier: policing the Gold Coast, 1865-1913' in *Policing and Empire*, p. 107; David Throup, 'Crime, politics and the police in colonial Kenya' in *Policing and Empire*, p. 133.

Shayqiyya, an 'Arab'-identified ethnic group from the riverain region to the north of Khartoum. This group posed a particular threat to the colonial state because of its close identification with other branches of the riverain elite.

The Shayqiyya were first incorporated into the Egyptian Army after the invading Egyptians had defeated the *malik* of the Shayqiyya in 1821 at the battle of Korti.[45] After this, a number of Shayqiyya were formed into an irregular cavalry corps known as the 'Bashibazouks' which assisted Muhammad Ali in the conquests of Taka and Sennar and became responsible for preserving security and collecting taxes, as well as slave-hunting in the south.[46] Nicoll states that 'each province maintained its own force of these irregulars, who were widely loathed and described in one British report as "swaggering bullies, robbing, plundering, and ill-treating the people with impunity…a constant menace to public tranquility"'.[47] Mu'tader describes them as 'the worst police in the world'.[48]

Together with other 'Arab'-identified groups from the northern riverain region that possessed literacy in Arabic, such as the Ja'aliin and the Danagla, the Shayqiyya came to dominate the main branches of government in colonial and post-colonial Sudan. The Shayqiyya largely dominated the officer corps of the police (and the army) throughout the country, as well as the rank and file in the riverain areas of the north. Alleyne Nicholson recalled that when he recruited police in Shendi and Merowe, he would only accept recruits if they could read and write Arabic, giving the Shayqiyya 'a great sense of responsibility'.[49] L. M. Buchanan remembered that the migration of the inhabitants of the northern Nile to the rest of Sudan seeking their fortune was common during the colonial era. This was especially true of 'the Shaigia, who enjoyed a strong martial tradition (quite different from the Danagla) and were proud to form the backbone of the S.D.F. and the Police in the Northern Sudan'.[50] Although the Danagla, as we see here, were perceived to be less martial and often filled the role of the merchant in colonial ethno-stereotyping, they also

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[45] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 25.
[46] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 25, Johnson, *Root Causes*, p. 5.
[47] Fergus Nicoll, *Sword of the Prophet: The Mahdi of Sudan and the Death of General Gordon* (Stroud, 2004), p. 51.
[48] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 25.
[49] Discussion, 'Law', *Condominium Remembered*
[50] Buchanan Memoirs, 10 May 1982, SAD 797/8/29.

found their way into the police elsewhere in Sudan. One colonial official in the Gezira observed that 'the majority of ghaffirs are Danagla and Shaigia, and come here to get what they can out of the Gezira'.[51] The use of Danagla and Shayqiyya appears to have been a necessity the colonial state accepted grudgingly, as

> The local man has been tried at the job but has failed. Westerners are increasing and are an improvement on the Northerner, in that they are less likely to bully the local Arab.[52]

Thus the British recognized the same tendency for the Shayqiyya police to act as 'bullies' as had been present in the nineteenth century, but were unwilling or unable to prevent it, as the next chapter will show. The strategy of bringing in westerners, who were often Mahdist-affiliated, was a strategy adopted by the colonial state to combat the pro-Egyptian influence amongst groups such as the Shayqiyya in the police. In 1924 the government used the *Ansar* supporters of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi to attack demonstrators with whips and sticks during the White Flag Revolt (see below).[53] After the British expelled Egyptian Army units from Sudan following the revolt, the Condominium government decided to create a new police post to guard the European trading centre in Khartoum. The acting governor of Khartoum decided to rely on the colony of Darfurian Ta'isha *Ansar* in Omdurman, a hangover from the era of Mahdist rule, selecting eighty of the most able-bodied men.[54] However, this did not affect the fact the central police force remained dominated by the Shayqiyya.

There was a key difference in the British strategy of employing the Shayqiyya as a 'martial race' and the use of such tactics in other parts of the empire. Elsewhere, the British cultivated 'masculine' and 'rugged' types from the rural peripheries of a colonial territory to police the literate and educated population of the towns, who formed the bulk of the nationalist movement.[55] However, in Sudan the

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[51] Longe, Handing-Over Notes Northern Gezira District, Nov.-Dec. 1934, SAD 641/5/30.
[52] Ibid. 'Northerner' here should be taken to refer to an inhabitant of the riverain region in between Wadi Halfa and Khartoum, rather than of 'Northern Sudan' as a whole.
[53] Elena Vezzadini, 'The 1924 Revolution: Hegemony, Resistance and Nationalism in the Colonial Sudan' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Bergen, 2007), p. 242.
[54] Sudan Annual Report 1924, FO 407/201 p. 180. Vezzadini, 'The 1924 Revolution', p. 242.
[55] Streets, *Martial Races*, pp. 162-168; Robb, 'The ordering of rural India', p. 128.

Shayqiyya overlapped with both these groups, serving as clerks, lawyers and administrators as well as soldiers and policemen. For instance, the first Sudanese chief justice, Muhammad Abu Rannat, and a pioneering nationalist politician, Ahmad Kheir, were both Shayqiyya.[56] The Sudanese police at the riverain centre had relatively high levels of literacy. Standards began to rise when Plumbridge established a training school for police officers in Omdurman in 1913 and in 1915 introduced allowances for police clerks to foster increased literacy.[57] A police training school was opened in 1926[58] and by 1937 62 per cent of the Khartoum police force could read and write.[59] It was this versatility in the role of the Shayqiyya, both as a 'martial race' and educated elite, that would complicate British policies towards the development of the police in Sudan.

Colonial fears of 'the effendi' and the structuring of the police force in the aftermath of the White Flag Revolt

After the proto-nationalist White Flag Revolt of 1924, the Political Service became increasingly focused on preventing the spread of the educated class of nationalist and often pro-Egyptian Sudanese, including professional policemen, throughout Sudan's provinces. The revolt was engineered by the White Flag League, which was founded by 'Ali 'Abd al-Latif, a Sudanese army officer of Dinka origins. It espoused the principle of unity with Egypt, though this was possibly just a tactic for obtaining Egyptian support.[60] The League, which ultimately provoked mutinies by both Egyptian and Sudanese battalions that would be put down by British troops, triggered a number of colonial anxieties about the positions that Sudanese were taking in the state apparatus. Firstly, it demonstrated co-operation between ethnically heterogeneous groups within the officer corps of the army, in spite of the divisions

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[56] P. M. Holt & M. W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day* (London 2000), p. 151.
[57] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 37, 41.
[58] Governor-General Annual Report for 1927, p. 17. [Hereafter GGAR].
[59] GGAR 1937, p. 222.
[60] Daly, *A History*, p. 113.

between 'Arab', often Shayqiyya officers, and 'Sudani' officers recruited from Islamized ex-slaves from the peripheral regions, such as 'Abd al-Latif.[61]

The revolt also emphasized the existence of a substantial constituency of government officials, officers and merchants 'of more prominent social origins' within the riverain elite who although not exclusively pro-Egyptian identified with the model that Egyptian nationalism had established and had begun to press the government to set in motion a plan for the eventual independence of Sudan.[62] This nascent nationalist movement had a solid base in the literate class of Sudanese clerks, soldiers and other officials, known as the *effendiyya*, who had benefited from the appearance of government schools at the riverain centre.[63] They had begun to agitate against Britain and in favour of her co-dominal partner, Egypt, as a reaction to the British supporting notable and religious figures over the secular and educated elite.[64]

The British feared that expanding the central system of government would empower this 'effendi' class, as well as create a sizeable category of 'detribalized' Sudanese from the peripheries who – having been removed from their more local ethnic ties – would become more inclined towards nationalism. Indeed, Abu Bakr claims that a number of young educated police professionals had been sympathetic to the Revolt.[65] This fear of the educated 'effendi' elite clearly had an effect on the structure of the police force in Sudan. While the increasing numbers of educated policemen in the urban riverain areas led to the growth of a police force at the centre that was becoming increasingly centralized and professionalized, in the provinces British administrators attempted to keep the police as an adjunct to the administration or delegate policing altogether to the Native Administration.

Police-administration tensions and the limited growth of the central force
The administrators' contempt for educated policemen led to a series of tensions with the modernizing British professionals who were keen to develop the force. These

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[61] Vezzadini, 'The 1924 Revolution', p. 210.
[62] Daly, *A History*, p. 113.
[63] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 288. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism*, p. 30. Hasan Abdin, *Early Sudanese Nationalism: 1919-1925* (Khartoum 1985?), p. 104.
[64] Abdin, *Early Sudanese Nationalism*, p. 104.
[65] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 40.

frictions first came into evidence after the dismissal of Plumbridge in 1920 following a falling-out with the then civil secretary. This disagreement focused on the two principal issues that caused frictions between the administration and police professionals: police education and the right of the professionals to exercise independent control over provincial forces. Initially, the disagreement was caused by the civil secretary's refusal to accept Plumbridge's proposal that police officers and NCOs be sent to Egypt and England for further training.[66] The civil secretary argued that there simply were not enough funds for such a mission, although it is more likely that the administration was worried about the potential politicization that could result from officers visiting Egypt in particular, which was in the throes of anti-British nationalist agitation; the administration would turn down a similar request from José Penney when he was commandant of the Police School in 1927.[67] Mu'tader also claims that the civil secretary had also repeatedly written to Plumbridge requesting that he not interfere with the provincial forces, and it was rumoured that Plumbridge was aspiring to become commissioner of police, a position which did not exist at this time.[68] This was something the civil secretary resisted, since creating a commissioner of police would hamper the administration's unchecked control over the police forces of Sudan.[69]

Struvé, governor of Upper Nile, wrote in 1926 that police officers and administrators rarely got on well.[70] This was often due to different attitudes towards the 'Sudanese character'. Struvé complained of his local police officer, Coryton, that he 'does not understand Sudanese, and always favours any man who has a tinge of yellow in him… Coryton cannot see any virtue in the Sudani's qualities, and denies them even courage'.[71] DCs thus asserted their own 'special knowledge' of Sudanese culture. They often took great pride in their police forces and disliked the possibility that they might fall into the hands of those who knew the local languages and people

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[66] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 44.
[67] Ibid., p. 51.
[68] Ibid., p. 44. Unfortunately, Mu'tader does not reference this exchange of letters and I was unable to trace any such documents in the National Record Office – although this is unsurprising given the patchy availability of the holdings there.
[69] Ibid., p. 44.
[70] K. C. P. Struvé, Handing-Over Notes for Upper Nile, 11 Aug. 1926, SAD 212/9/3.
[71] K. C. P. Struvé, Handing-Over Notes for Upper Nile, 11 Aug. 1926, SAD 212/9/3.

less well.[72] They also often reacted negatively to the education of policemen and demanded more 'martial' qualities. Owen recalled that

> There were even District Commissioners who somewhat suspected that, from an innate if twisted feeling that education saps a man's virility and virtue, these damned fellows who would wield a pen must at best be 'pansy' and sea-lawyers and at worst be crooks; and that the old, illiterate, unimaginative nugget was more reliable.[73]

In spite of the administrators' mistrust of educated policemen and British professionals, at the centre the combination of economic development and the perception of a growing nationalist threat to the colonial state necessitated the slow growth of the police force. Although initially hired as an intelligence expert, Plumbridge is now regarded by Sudanese police officers as the father of the modern, professional police force in Sudan, and with some justification.[74] Apart from his efforts to improve literacy, he also established a general service register, constructed numerous police barracks (*qushlaqat*),[75] and organized traffic regulation and the guarding of those awaiting trial.[76]

When Ewart arrived as police adviser in 1924, his report on existing police arrangements was scathing and he recommended the establishment of a more centralized system. He re-organized the Public Security Department into three departments, one for record-keeping, another for 'investigation' (*al-mubahith*), and another for 'supervision' (*al-muraqaba*).[77] Nevertheless, as the threat of Mahdism receded and the British colonial regime in Sudan became increasingly obsessed with a variety of external political threats, such as Egyptian nationalism and Communism, this department came to be increasingly focused on preserving the colonial 'gateway'. The British colonial government responded to the events of 1924 by proposing a plan of action that would comprise 'preventive action of all sorts against

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[72] H. A. Nicholson Memoirs, n. d., SAD 777/10/45.
[73] Owen memoirs, c. 1960-1, SAD 769/11/43.
[74] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 45.
[75] Although often referred to by Sudanese as *'Ashlaq*.
[76] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 40.
[77] Ibid., p. 51.

possible outside agencies – such, for instance, as Egyptian enclaves, like that of the Irrigation Department, still in Sudan, and the infiltration of Bolshevik propaganda from Arabia'.[78]

The re-organization of the Public Security Department also left the police firmly in the hands of the administration. Ewart observed:

> I am strongly of the opinion that, for as long as it is possible to visualize, the Province must remain the unit of Police administration, with the authority of the Governor unimpaired, and scope for local variations. I can see no present or prospective justification for a superior departmental organization for the police.[79]

Neither was the newly re-organized Public Security Department to exercise significant criminal instead of political functions. Ewart argued that 'original professional crime with wide ramifications does not exist in the Sudan, and no elaborate Criminal Investigation Department is required'.[80]

The limited governmental ambitions of the colonial administration and its combined fear of, and contempt for, educated Sudanese also explain why the numbers of officers passing through the Police School remained extremely limited. Just as expansion of educational facilities for training clerks and civil servants was reined in as a result of the White Flag Revolt, the Police School after its opening in 1926 remained to an extent stillborn, with the number of officers graduating each year in the late 1930s staying in single figures.[81] Apprehension about police education culminated in 1935 with the closure of the Police School out of fears that the newly educated generation of policemen were becoming too attracted to the nationalist movement, although the school was re-opened later in the same year, albeit as a school for the training of administrators as well as policemen.[82]

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[78] Sudan Annual Report 1924, p. 171.
[79] J. Ewart report, 21 April 1925, NRO Civ Sec (1) 36/1/2.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 52; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 43-5.
[82] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 50-51. Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 23.

The provincial and district administrators of the Political Service theoretically retained executive control over the police in the exercise of their crime-fighting duties. Nevertheless, the professional British police commandants who were appointed by the governor-general in the wake of the White Flag Revolt gradually became responsible to the commissioner of police as head of the Police Department for matters of internal administration. The Police Headquarters first started sending out circulars to provincial police forces in 1930 and after this its bureaucracy gradually expanded as a regular regime for reporting criminal cases was established.[83] In the urban areas, which presented more opportunities for a professional style of policing, Owen recalled that 'the Police became a distinct organization merely co-operating with the Administration'.[84] However, the areas in which this obtained were relatively few. In 1934 the governor-general observed of the police: 'Except at Khartoum, Port Sudan, and, to some extent, in Darfur and the Blue Nile Provinces, this force is being administered as a part time function by Political Officers'.[85] In 1937 the governor-general appointed senior members of the Political Service as 'Inspectors of Police' in every province except Equatoria, which was still left without any inspector, and Khartoum and Port Sudan which possessed a 'Commandant of Police' with the 'requisite professional qualifications'. The railway police also possessed such a commandant.[86] In other words, the only places where specialized professionals were in charge of the police were the capital and the colonial state's major port, where the Department of Public Security had assumed direct control over law and order in 1923.[87] This demonstrated the state's focus on 'gatekeeper' security.

The colonial state paid lip-service to the issue of police independence in 1938 when a Director for Public Security, José Penney, was appointed head of a re-organized Public Security Department. Yet this remained a hollow position subservient to the civil secretary and the provincial police forces continued to exist under the control of their local governors.[88] Nevertheless the 'Director for Public Security' was given the task of overseeing a more elaborate Criminal Investigation

[83] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 54.
[84] Owen memoirs, SAD 769/11/44.
[85] Note on Police by Governor-General, Stewart Symes, dated 14 July 1934, NRO Civ Sec (1) 99/1/3.
[86] GGAR 1937 p. 12.
[87] Kenneth J. Perkins, *Port Sudan: The Evolution of a Colonial City* (Boulder, 1993), p. 156.
[88] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 102.

Department. Its remit included dealing with suspicious deaths, arms-trafficking, drugs-trafficking, counterfeiting, stealing, shop-pilfering and pick-pocketing.[89] In 1942, the Public Security Department would be transformed into a far more substantial 'Police Headquarters' with greater powers of supervision over the provincial police forces, although this would be strongly contested by local administrators, as will be shown in Chapter 3.[90]

The same period witnessed the establishment of the 'Special Branch', also referred to as the 'Security Intelligence Branch', under James Coutts, the Deputy Director for Criminal Investigation and Security. Although the functions of this body were purely political, it drew its staff entirely from the CID branches of the regular force. Its purpose was to monitor the activity of trade unions, leftist students returning to Sudan after having received their education in Egypt, and the Graduates' Congress.[91] The government had sanctioned the formation of the Graduates' Congress in 1938 to act as sop to educated Sudanese who had passed through the intermediate schools, but this body had soon started to object to the government's slowness in devolving power to Sudanese and acted as a forum for nationalist ideas.[92] Since such groups had their regional base almost entirely within the northern riverain centre, this further skewed the geographic focus of the central police.

Administrative control over the police in the provinces
In the provinces, members of the Political Service attempted to stall the growth of this centralized police force by using government policemen for their own administrative purposes. Owen recalled that in the rural areas the police remained to a large extent 'the district commissioner's men'.[93] Sudanese 'police officers' in the countryside were never quite what their title implied. In the 1920s they were frequently recruited from the training school for administrative 'sub-Mamurs', rather than the Police School, and their functions overlapped with those of administrators.[94]

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[89] Penney to Civil Secretary, 23 Nov. 1939, NRO Civ Sec (1) 99/1/3.
[90] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 25; Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 104.
[91] Hussain Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn al-Dawla Imam Mahkama al-Tarikh* [The State Security Organisation before Court of History] (Cairo, 1993), p. 63.
[92] Woodward, *Unstable State*, p. 58, 68-69.
[93] Owen memoirs, SAD 769/11/44.
[94] Note on 'Mamurs + Sub Mamurs: The Future of the Mamur', A. Redfern to J. Madden, 15 Sep. 1929, NRO Civ Sec (1) 50/3/12.

British administrators argued that the police officer who possessed exclusively criminal functions was too much of a 'one line man', except in major towns.[95] The demand for 'police officers' with more administrative specialisms began to shape the evolution of the Police School itself, which was re-organized as a joint administrative and police training centre in 1935.[96] Until it was re-organized as a 'Police College' once more in 1948, this would absorb students from Gordon College, the school established by the colonial government for the purpose of training local Sudanese to serve in the administration, and would thus produce far less technically specialized officers.[97] Under the new organization, entrants would acquire both administrative and police training before being assigned as either 'police' sub-*mamurs* or 'administrative' sub-*mamurs* upon leaving the school.[98]

Meanwhile, both the rank and file (*anfar*) and NCOs would be recruited locally and trained in local depots, although they could be sent to the Police School for specialized courses.[99] Local administrators often assigned them multiple roles, including serving as drivers, prison warders, tax collectors, labour organizers, and locust exterminators – and guards for ginning factories in the Gezira Scheme, prisoners on guarantee schemes, and even for the DC's children against crocodiles.[100] Often, too, they acted as a sort of 'retinue' for the DC, escorting him while out on trek and chivvying the baggage animals.[101] This was typical of colonial administrative cadres, who often exploited their position to live out militaristic and aristocratic ideals and exercise a form of authority that had fallen into abeyance in Europe.[102] Rowton Simpson, a former DC, recalls that in al-Ubayyid he and other administrators were accompanied by mounted policemen on a 'town ride' bearing the British and Egyptian national flags, sometimes briefly arresting a town inhabitant

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[95] Note on 'Future of sub-Mamur' by Angus Gillan, El Obeid, 31 Dec. 1928, NRO Civ Sec (1) 50/3/12.
[96] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 23.
[97] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 23.
[98] GGAR 1937 p. 12.
[99] James, *Condominium Remembered*; AR 1927 p. 17. Police General Regulations 1928 Section 3, in C. H. A. Bennett (ed.), *The Laws of Sudan Vol 2*. (London 1956), p. 17.
[100] D. Evans, Western District Annual Report for 1939, 14 Jan. 1940, SAD 710/7/26. Gawain Bell, *Shadows on the Sand: the Memoirs of Sir Gawain Bell* (London, 1983), p. 66. Winder memoirs, n.d. c. 1930s, SAD 104/15/17. Longe, Handing-Over Notes, Northern Gezira, Nov.-Dec. 1934, SAD 641/5/33. Peggy Vidler Memoirs, 1987, SAD 890/9/8. Evelyn Simpson Memoirs, 1987, SAD 890/8/25.
[101] T. Owen Memoirs, SAD 769/11/40.
[102] Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London, 1992), p. 237.

for 'failing to stand up or for not dismounting from his donkey or otherwise not displaying proper respect'.[103] Thus administrators preferred a personal force which prioritized loyalty above literacy and would sacrifice professional police specialization to participate in the general administration.

There was little place in this system for Police School graduates with technical training in criminal investigation. Although Plumbridge's training school – and after 1926 the Police School as well – increasingly started to turn out trained Sudanese who would from 1923 take up roles as 'Police Officers'[104] under either British commandants of police or British DCs, the administration preferred that such officers should be restricted to the riverain areas. In 1934, the governor-general observed that recent Police School graduates dispatched to serve in the ranks should preferably do this in Wad Medani, Khartoum, Port Sudan or Atbara, the principal towns of the urban riverain region.[105]

Meanwhile, Political Service officers outside the riverain centre often used arguments about preserving local cultural difference to substitute a less substantial form of local training for Police School education. In 1932, R. E. Bailey, the governor of Kassala, argued that local Beja policemen would be 'likely to return from Khartoum bewildered instead of improved' whilst 'the atmosphere here is more wholesome and natural'.[106] Thus the province administration sent local policemen for a limited one-month course in Kassala town, rather than allowing them more professional training in Khartoum. Duncan Cumming, who combined the roles of DC for Kassala District and provincial police commandant, argued that although this was a 'simple' course and 'the number [of policemen] who know the elements of a policemen's duties...is small', the local training system was justified since 'the fact that the men work among friends and in their own environment appears to outweigh the advantages of the longer course given at the Omdurman Police Training School'.[107]

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[103] Rowton Simpson Memoirs, c. 1976, p. 40, SAD 720/4.
[104] The first Sudanese to be appointed as 'Police Officers' were Yahya Omran, Ahmed Gelly and 'Abd al-Rahman Taha. Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 15.
[105] Note on Police by Governor-General Stewart Symes, dated 14 July 1934, NRO Civ Sec (1) 99/1/3.
[106] R.E. Bailey, Governor Kassala, 'Foreward on Mr Cumming's Police Note', 10 Oct. 1932, SAD 989/7/89.
[107] D. C. Cumming, 'A General Note on the Kassala Police', 9 Oct. 1932, SAD 989/7/91-93.

Similarly, in Darfur during 1929, meanwhile, the British police commandant established his own system of training based on a touring system whereby, together with two other NCOs, he would tour the districts giving instruction to local policemen. Again, it seems that this system of training was far less professional than that in the riverain centre. The local branch of the SDF in Darfur, the Western Arab Corps, played a major role in this training.[108] Dupuis, the province governor of Darfur, used this system of training to substitute local officers for more specialized officers trained in the Omdurman Police College. Dupuis proposed creating a new type of police officer to work only in Darfur. Such an individual would be selected 'for his fitness for administrative responsibility, and for his general utility, rather than for his proficiency in specialized police work'. Dupuis was in fact using this new type of 'police officer' to substitute for Gordon College-trained *sub-mamurs*, who, he complained, were 'invariably of the intelligentsia class'. Not surprisingly, this system did not provide officers qualified to run the Darfur police in the long run. The first Sudanese commandant of the Darfur Police, Ahmed Gelly, appointed in 1946, would be a Police School-educated professional from the riverain region.[109] The fact that, when the British did begin to allow the 'Sudanization' of the police, they relied on an officer recruited from the riverain region to manage the force in Darfur, reflected their persistent reluctance throughout the colonial era to expand professional methods of policing in the provinces. Meanwhile, they would compensate for their refusal to expand the centralized police system into the rural peripheries by cultivating more local forms of policing.

Administrative policy towards the Native Administration police

The Political Service also reduced its reliance on the regular police to deal with infringements of colonial law by delegating criminal policing to the Native Administration. This administration was formalised by a series of ordinances in the 1920s and 1930s which served the function of excluding riverain 'effendis' from provincial administration. In 1922 the government issued the Power of the Nomad Sheikhs Ordinance, which devolved judicial and police functions on the rulers of

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[108] GGAR 1932, p. 110.
[109] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 28.

various nomadic 'tribes' in the north. It was followed in 1927 by the Powers of the Sheikhs Ordinance, which extended similar powers to the rulers of sedentary 'tribes' in the north.[110] The policy was particularly keenly applied in the regions of Darfur, Kordofan and Kassala.[111] A similar policy was also developed for the south, where after 1922 the government began to establish 'Chief's Courts' which would be endowed with similar powers to those enjoyed by the *Shaikhs* in the north.[112] In some places the creation of 'Native Authorities' simply amounted to a recognition of already existing local notables who had exercised *de facto* authority since the beginning of the Condominium and assisted the police in a similar manner in the 1910s and 1920s;[113] elsewhere, the colonial state was forced to step in and establish customary authority where it had not previously existed.[114]

The colonial state legally empowered Native Administration bodies to exercise police powers. In the Criminal Procedure Code, *Shaikhs* were granted authority to play the role of policemen in investigating and drawing up reports on suspicious deaths in their area; and they were legally bound to report the passage of suspected criminals through their village, quarter or district.[115] The colonial administration also decided that the newly empowered local potentates would need their own police forces to match their new legal powers. The new forces were known as 'chiefs' police' in the south and 'retainers' of the *Nazir* or *Shaikh* in the north. Both *Shaikhs* and their retainers had the power to arrest without warrant in cases where ordinary policemen could arrest without warrant, such as cases of homicide, bodily harm, theft, robbery and certain types of assault.[116] The extent to which the Native Administration and its police system supplemented the government court system in criminal work varied from province to province. In Khartoum, the vast majority of criminal cases continued to be tried in government courts. In provinces such as Blue Nile and Kassala, which were relatively well integrated into the riverain

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[110] Daly, *History of the Sudan*, p. 118.
[111] Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 220.
[112] Daly, *History of the Sudan*, p. 119.
[113] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 31.
[114] Daly, *History of the Sudan*, p. 118.
[115] 1925 Code of Criminal Procedure, articles 110 and 110A, in Cecil Bennet (ed.), *Laws of Sudan Vol 9* (London, 1956), p. 167.
[116] 1925 Code of Criminal Procedure, article 107, in Bennet (ed.), *Laws of Sudan* (London, 1956), p. 165. Also see Schedule I, pp. 230-268, for offences for which policemen could arrest without warrant.

centre, there was more of a balance.[117] In Kassala, government courts dealt with 2,768 criminal cases in 1938 while the 'Native Courts' administered 2,015.[118] However, in the more isolated province of Darfur, which possessed a Native Court even in the provincial capital, Fasher, the vast majority of criminal cases were dealt with by the Native Administration.[119]

Johnson argues that the Native Administration police remained supplementary to the regular police as rural courts were separate and largely subordinate to the urban courts.[120] This may have been the case, but the overstretched colonial administration afforded these police considerably more authority than in theory they should have possessed. Native Administration authority even extended into some of the major urban centres. From February 1930, the town *'Umda* and his Native Administration *ghaffirs* were made responsible for maintaining public security in the 'native quarter' of Fasher Town, which was understood to be the whole town except the British cantonment and Western Arab Corps lines.[121] In the same year, control of the town 'watch and ward' in Kassala was handed over to the force of 'native retainers' under the 'native bench' of the town.[122] Similar systems obtained in Tokar and Gedaref by the early 1930s.[123] In Dar Rizeigat and Dar Masalit, Native Administration *ghaffirs* were left in sole charge of CID work,[124] apparently in the latter case because the Sultan of Dar Masalit objected to the use of government police.[125] Even where the government police were permitted to make investigations, the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulated that two *Shaikhs* must accompany the police on any search of property in order to act as witnesses, which was a further indication of their pervasive influence.[126]

These forces were even further from meeting the professional police ideal than the government police. Often, their creation was simply a legal empowerment

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[117] GGAR 1938, p. 110.
[118] GGAR 1938, p. 105.
[119] GGAR 1938, p. 119.
[120] Johnson, 'From military to tribal', p. 165.
[121] Governor Darfur to Civil Secretary, 5 April 1931, NRO Civ Sec (1) 1/22/64.
[122] GGAR 1930, p. 125.
[123] D. C. Cumming, 'A General Note on the Kassala Police', 9 Oct. 1932, SAD 989/7/91-93.
[124] Dudley Lampen, Handing-Over notes for Darfur, 1949, SAD 731/2/79.
[125] B. Lewis, Handing-Over notes for Dar Masalit, 1952, SAD 600/3/9.
[126] 1925 Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 73, in Bennet (ed.), *Laws*, p. 154.

of already existing chiefly retinues.[127] Bell recalled that Nuba 'Chief's Police' in the 1930s were taken to small settlements like Talodi for 'a few days' course of drill and basic police duties', but this was usually the limit of their training.[128] C. A. Willis, as Governor of Upper Nile in 1930, argued that 'the name is not exactly wholly suitable, because they will include not only police but trained men of all sorts, as opportunity is found to train them in any capacity, whether medical, veterinary or mechanical'.[129] Barter wrote of one set of retainers in Hadendoa District that 'their activities are wide, varied and to a great extent unorganised'.[130] Thus the Political Service ensured that the Native Administration police forces were subject to even less regulation and institutionalization than the regular force.

Policing and 'Southern Policy'

The situation in the south of Sudan was particularly revealing of the challenges faced by a colonial state trying to restrict the influence of the riverain north in the governance of the peripheral regions. Between 1930 and 1947 the British administration declared a new 'Southern policy', the purpose of which was to foster separate cultural and political development for the region.[131] But in some cases British policy towards the police facilitated the continued northern penetration of the south that had begun in the nineteenth century. As mentioned above, in Upper Nile the Mounted Police force, largely composed of discharged Sudanese soldiers from the north, was also intended to double for the army.[132] There was little local recruiting in Upper Nile, largely due to the aversion of the colonial state towards pastoralist communities in the south.[133]

In 1930, with the rise of 'Southern Policy', the colonial state attempted to diminish northern influence in the Upper Nile. As Willis observed, 'This limitation of the use of mounted police has been proved to be necessary as the Northern

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[127] See, for instance, Willis, 'Violence, authority and the state', p. 106. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 19.

[128] Bell, *Shadows*, pp. 66-7.

[129] C. Willis to Civil Secretary, 16 March 1929, NRO Civ Sec (1) 50/3/12.

[130] G. Barter, Hadendoa District Annual Report 1931, 15 Jan. 1932, SAD 448/1/75.

[131] Robert O. Collins, 'Sudanese nationalism, Southern Policy and the unification of the Sudan, 1939-1946', in Mahasin al-Safi, (ed.), *The Nationalist Movement in Sudan* (Khartoum, 1989), pp. 222-265. Wai, 'Pax Britannica', p. 375-6. Johnson, *Root Causes*, pp. 11-15.

[132] F. Kingdon, 'First impression taking over notes' 1945 for Upper Nile, SAD 946/5.

[133] Johnson, *Root Causes*, p. 15.

Sudanese cannot be trusted not to loot, rape, and generally misbehave when let loose on people they call "Abid" [slave]'.[134] Once again though, this attempt to combat police abuses was somewhat half-hearted. Willis regretted that 'the mounted police are still in the process of growing and the unmounted police southern type [sic] are only recently organized and still require a good deal of training'.[135] Thus it was decided to substitute southern-style police in all stations south of Malakal and retain northern Mounted Police in Malakal, Kodok, Melut and Renk.[136] However, it is unclear to what extent this policy was actually carried out and in 1932 economic recession forced cutbacks in the number of foot police in the province, whereas the Mounted Police continued to 'form the first line of defence'.[137]

Where they were retained, the Mounted Police were very much intended to intimidate rather than protect the local population. MacPhail, the DC of Northern District, Upper Nile in 1938, observed that the advantage of northern Mounted Police was that 'the moral effect of horsemen on certain of the local tribes is still considerable'.[138] MacPhail's notes on use of the 'mounted police' included guidelines on how to make surprise raids on villages and round up cattle and people. Just like the slave-hunting mercenary armies of the nineteenth century, the Mounted Police were expected to form *zeribas*, make-shift fortresses constructed out of thorny trees, to provide them with defence from local communities, and to guard prisoners captured in the name of enforcing law and order.[139] Identification with the north was a key element in the status of these policemen. In 1945 Kingdon wrote that

> The idea of the F.S. [Financial Secretary] that they can be shortly replaced by Nilotics on a lower rate of pay is quite impractical. The majority of them must remain northerners or southerners who are detribalised and to all practical purposes, northerners, with a sprinkling of Nilotics as interpreters.[140]

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[134] C. Willis, Handing-Over Notes for Upper Nile Province, 1931, SAD 212/13/29-32.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] GGAR 1932, p. 147.
[138] MacPhail, 4 Dec. 1938 'Notes on mounted police', SAD 762/8/1.
[139] Ibid.
[140] F. Kingdon, 'First impression taking over notes' 1945 for Upper Nile, SAD 946/5.

The situation in the two other southern provinces of Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal was somewhat different. The founding of the Equatorial Corps in 1910 provided a number of soldiers who could be brought into the police in Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal.[141] In Equatoria and Western Bahr al-Ghazal, a far greater number of mission schools was established among the sedentary communities than in Upper Nile and these produced numerous recruits from the Zande, Lotuko, Madi, Moru, Jur and others.[142] However, Arabic became a *lingua franca* for policemen even in Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal. According to A. N. Tucker, who was invited to be a language consultant to the south of Sudan in 1923, Arabic had a 'great prestige' because 'the native police are not as a rule recruited from the tribes among which they function, but from neighbouring or even distant tribes, speaking totally different languages'.[143] In these provinces, too, the state chose to restrict the influence of the central police, who would supposedly act as a conduit for the spread of northern riverain influence, and to develop Native Administration instead. Between 1930 and 1932 the number of regular police in Equatoria was reduced from 484 to 331. It is true that this was partly due to the global recession, but the official report observed that it was made possible in particular by the 'prestige' of chiefs' administrations.[144] In Equatoria there were 712 chiefs' police by 1931[145] and an impressive 14,200 criminal cases were recorded to have been tried by Native Courts in 1937.[146] The chiefs undertook a similar burden of public security in Upper Nile province. Longe observed of Shilluk District in 1944 that there was little need for the government to worry about 'tribal fights' so long as killings were in the heat of battle; and that 'Chiefs need reminding that public security is their own duty and they will not be given government police for the asking'.[147]

Thus with regard to policing, as in other regards, the south represented an extreme periphery of the colonial state. Although both government and northern and Arabic influences did spread there throughout the colonial period, the government

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[141] C. Willis, Handing-Over Notes for Upper Nile, 1931, SAD 212/13/29-32.
[142] Johnson, *Root Causes*, p. 18.
[143] Ushari Ahmed Mahmud, *Arabic in the Southern Sudan* (Khartoum, 1983), p. 49.
[144] GGAR 1932, p. 142.
[145] Note on Mongolla Province by Governor, Mongolla Province, 25 Oct. 1932, NRO Civ Sec (1) 4/5/26.
[146] GGAR 1938, p. 129.
[147] Longe, Handing-Over Notes for Northern District, Upper Nile, 1944, SAD 642/5/14.

ensured that the professional ethos of policing that was beginning to evolve in the north did not. The Political Service was particularly keen to develop the Native Administration in order to prevent the use of government police in the south, and where government police were deployed they acted as a quasi-military force that was distant from the society around it.

The spatial distribution of police resources

The objectives of the central administration were demonstrated by the distribution of police resources and professional police personnel. When Kyles, the assistant commissioner of police, introduced his system of 'beat patrols' in 1944, it was only applied in Khartoum, Port Sudan, Wad Medani, Kassala, al-Ubayyid, and Atbara.[148] It was clear that the majority of police resources were to be devoted to guarding the security of Sudan's capital, principal port and major development scheme. In 1947, the Khartoum police force possessed a headquarters staffed by a British commandant, C. M. Coutts, as well as two Sudanese police *mamurs*. There were also two British police superintendents attached to staff district commands in Khartoum and Omdurman districts, the latter of which also possessed a Sudanese assistant superintendant. This was in addition to the numerous staff in the National Police Headquarters. Meanwhile, Blue Nile Province as the centre of the country's principal development scheme possessed a British commandant, a Sudanese superintendent and three police *mamurs*. In Kassala province, there was a commandant and superintendent in Kassala itself, in addition to two British superintendants in Port Sudan. However, Darfur and Upper Nile Provinces possessed only a single commandant of police, and Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal provinces were at this stage yet to acquire commandants at all.[149]

These disparities are also evident in terms of the spatial distribution of rank and file policemen. The provinces of the south and west lost the greater number of police during the cuts necessitated by economic depression in the 1930s. In Darfur police numbers were cut from 491 to 301 between 1926 and 1932.[150] Even after the expansion of the state following World War II the government kept the presence of

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[148] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 27.
[149] *Half-yearly staff list of the Sudan Government*, 1 March 1947, pp. 11, 63-72.
[150] GGAR 1932, p. 110.

the police in the south and west limited in comparison with the centre. In 1952, the cities of Khartoum and Port Sudan alone possessed 988 and 447 policemen respectively, while Blue Nile Province as a whole had 973 men. In contrast, the entire province of Darfur possessed only 519 government policemen, Upper Nile 687, Equatoria 422, and Bahr al-Ghazal 340.[151] These figures reflected the priorities of an administration that was principally concerned with securing the principal urban centres of the colonial state in the eastern and riverain region, and restricting the influence of the institutions, personnel and cultures of the central state in the peripheries.

Administrative neglect of government law codes in provincial policing

Throughout the colonial period, members of the Political Service serving in the provinces, such as governors and DCs, used their authority over the police force to enforce their own understanding of how Sudan's regions should be policed. While the Legal Department saw provincial police forces as potential vectors for the emergence of a centralized law enforcement system upholding universal principles of law, administrators frequently criticized the impracticality of attempting to use such forces to apply a modern or 'civil' system of law in the regions. The result was the development of a form of administrative policing which eschewed the use of government policemen to launch detailed criminal investigations. Instead, administrators would either leave Native Administration personnel and their police forces to resolve local offences, or use both Native Administration and government police forces to apply arbitrary forms of justice that paid little heed to the niceties of the central legal codes. Supposedly traditional methods of imposing justice that were in reality often innovative were used to justify excluding professional methods of policing from the local criminal process. Even though the judiciary in the late colonial period tried to prevent the subjection of the law to administrative purpose and encourage local administrators to conduct criminal investigations in a more

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[151] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 177-8, table no. 8.

professional manner, these local officials often opposed this and continued in practice to exercise their own system of policing.

The lack of interest that local administrators showed in launching detailed investigations was exemplified by the DC of Nyala, who observed in 1944 that

> Police seldom arrive to investigate a crime until some days after it has happened. As there are few fully literate police in the District and none of them are experienced in investigation, no investigation is likely to be complete or accurate… I seldom feel able to draw any conclusion from a contradiction of a statement given to the police and I think most experienced magistrates find the same.[152]

Administrators resented having to use provincial police forces to resolve offences under the Sudan Penal Code that resulted from *shaklas*, or large inter-village fights, where they believed that local methods of dispute resolution might have been more appropriate. In 1945, the governor of Darfur, Dudley Lampen, wrote to the civil secretary expressing his resentment at being required to command police investigations into every homicide case that occurred in the province. Recent homicide trials that had been conducted in Darfur involved those resulting from two *shaklas*, one between the Fur and Beni Hussein, and another between the Berti and Meidob. Lampen protested that

> In both cases, but particularly in the first, an enormous amount of work fell on the investigating police, and the magistrates and the judge (in all three cases the District Commissioner) for a result which carried only some of those responsible. The District Commissioner had to hold down a difficult, and in one case dangerous tribal situation threatening public security, while the lengthy criminal proceedings progressed as no settlement could be effected until the processes of law were finished.[153]

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[152] DC Nyala to Governor Darfur, 22 Nov. 1944, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher. A. 32/1/3.
[153] Lampen, Governor of Darfur to Civil Secretary, Legal Secretary, 28 May 1945, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher. A. 32/1/3.

Instead Lampen supported the use of Native Courts which would 'punish with an eye on the final settlement' by using 'blood money' or *dia* settlements to compensate the relatives of the deceased and thus facilitate a peace (*sulh*) between the opposed factions.[154] The collective nature of *dia* punishments, which fell on the entire kin-group from which the killer or killers came, was in Lampen's eyes infinitely preferable to the more retributive nature of the westernized Sudan Penal Code. From the 1920s to the 1950s, administrators like Lampen had a number of similar debates with judges, usually persuading them to reduce heavy sentences of imprisonment after agreeing that *dia* should be paid.[155] This occurred even after the abolition following World War II of the section of the Sudan Penal Code that sanctioned awarding compensation to the family of homicide victims, since this abolition merely furthered the use of *dia* settlements out of court as an administrative rather than judicial practice.[156]

In Lampen's view, the European legal practice of attributing individual guilt simply caused a greater deterioration in 'public security' by distributing punishments unevenly, rather than balancing the culpability of the respective parties to the fight. If the Legal Department wanted to impose a more decisive form of justice, Lampen believed – just like the DC in Nyala cited above – that this would require 'trained investigating police, better communications, transport to get them to the spot and a Province Judge who could relieve overworked District Commissioners'.[157] It is ironic that Lampen should have pointed this out, since elsewhere administrators would discourage the emergence of an educated and professionalized police force. By supporting the continued practice of *dia*, the Political Service was helping to maintain a sphere in which Sudan's professional judiciary and professional police force had little capacity to intrude.

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[154] Lampen, Governor of Darfur to Civil Secretary, Legal Secretary, 28 May 1945, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher. A. 32/1/3.

[155] See, for instance, Sudan Government vs Mohd Ahmed Mohammed AC-CP-183-33 BP-Maj.Ct.-41.C.75, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 2; Sudan Government vs Ahmed Isagha AC-CP-262-42 DP. Maj. Ct-41.C.15-42, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 3.

[156] Sudan Government vs Koko Kuba Angello AC-CP-113-50 KDN-Maj.Ct-26-50, SAD Hayes Box 5 File 2.

[157] Lampen, Governor of Darfur to Civil Secretary, Legal Secretary, 28 May 1945, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher. A. 32/1/3.

Another means by which administrators avoided the need for Police School-trained criminal investigators was by use of footprint trackers. Their use reflected provincial administrators' fetishization of the concept of 'local knowledge'. Rowton Simpson observed how trackers could 'also memorise a footprint left by a putative criminal and later be able to pick it out at an identification parade. This identification was most impressive'.[158] Not surprisingly, judges were less impressed and their criticism of local officials' use of trackers emphasized the administrative tendency to neglect strict legal procedure. Judicial criticisms observed that trackers were often provided with information before they traced 'footprints' to a culprit's house and urged administrators to use two sets of trackers.[159] They also observed that 'the identification may be dishonest because of professional pride, laziness, desire for revenge, or personal grudge'[160] and that trackers 'are subject to a tendency to draw conclusions first, and then make facts fit them'.[161]

Colonial administrators running local courts also displayed an unwillingness to be burdened by niceties of English legal procedure with regard to *habeus corpus*. R. C. Mayall proudly recalled in his memoirs how he dealt with the case of three robbers who had attacked three merchants leaving Nahud, where he was DC. Mayall suspected that the robbers had hosted the merchants in Nahud prior to their departure, and hoped that the one blind merchant who had survived the attack would be able to identify the culprits.

> I therefore sent word back to Nahud to the police officer that every man who lived in the street where the blind man had stayed was to be arrested on suspicion and questioned about the crime. I then continued my trek, but cut it short and returned to Nahud about ten days later. The blind man, I found, was better, but still in hospital and about 170 men were still detained in prison on suspicion without a charge having been laid against them. Thank goodness Habeas Corpus did not run in Nahud!!

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[158] Rowton Simpson memoirs, SAD 720/4/19.
[159] Sudan Government vs Kheir El Seed Saboun Omer AC-CP-207-247 KSA-Maj.Ct-24-47, SAD Hayes Box 2 File 4.
[160] Criminal Court Circular dated 14 April 1955, NRO 2.D.1. Fasher A. 32/1/1.
[161] Sudan Government vs Gumaa Gasm el Sid AC-CP-83-43 BNP-Maj.Ct-21-43, SAD Hayes Box 11 File 37.

Mayall's tyrannical behaviour did achieve results; an identity parade was later held in which the blind man claimed to have identified the murderer (presumably by his voice).[162]

The issue of *habeus corpus* provided another area of friction between provincial administrators and the lawyers in Khartoum, although it was not until later in the colonial period that the Legal Department started to challenge administrative laxity with regard to the rights of the accused. In 1950 a new Criminal Circular, No. 27, was distributed. This reminded administrators that under Section 236 of the Criminal Procedure Code the police had the power to imprison a suspect without trial for 15 days before they must be produced before a magistrate, at which point – should the prosecution not have enough evidence available – they should apply for a remand. In 1952, the governor of Darfur distributed this circular, reminding his DCs that he had recently issued a provincial order that all unconvicted prisoners should appear weekly before a magistrate. However, he regretted that 'in spite of this order instances have been occurring in which local courts – who have no power to remand – send prisoners back to gaol for long periods without the magistrate apparently being aware of it'.[163] Thus even during the late colonial period the administrative sphere of arbitrary, non-professional and illegal policing persisted, unrestrained by the attempts of the Legal Department to control it.

The anti-individualistic nature of administrative justice was also apparent in DCs' continued use of collective punishment. One extremely irregular but common colonial practice was to arrest the families of criminals to convince them to turn themselves in.[164] During his time as assistant district commissioner in Port Sudan in the early 1920s, J. W. Miller recalled that at one point he visited a nearby community and arrested 11 men, 6 women and almost 600 goats to force them to hand over a murderer.[165] In his memoirs from Upper Nile, J. Winder recalled how his predecessor as DC at Akobo, J. C. Alban, dealt with Nuer cattle thieves. He would

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[162] R. C. Mayall memoirs, 1940, SAD 851/7/38.
[163] Criminal Circular Letter No 1/1950 3/2/1950 Lecture by J. Lomax on Criminal Court Circular no. 27, NRO 2.D.1. Fasher A. 32/1/3.
[164] AC-CP-249-29 KDN-Maj.Ct-41.C.49-29, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 1.
[165] J. W. Miller to his mother, 26 Feb. 1923, SAD 968/9/5.

have the Eastern Nuer Chief's Police visit the suspected sections, and then 'take hostage' all the cattle and marriageable girls to force the section to hand over the culprits.[166] Such practices remained current even in 1953, when following a murder in Bor District suspected to have been committed by a Murle 'all Murle over a very wide area were rounded up, with their cattle, for questioning'.[167] Hence we see a new and innovative notion of law being formed – one that was not quite like pre-colonial law and not quite the law the colonizers had claimed to introduce either.[168] This level of capacity to incarcerate was novel to Sudan but the manner of its use was also at variance with British law. T. H. R. Owen recalled of communal punishment that:

> Such punishment has no basis in law. It is an administrative measure, and provided that it is scrupulously reserved for suitable instances, is entirely justified…In a highly developed community criminal responsibility is rightly a purely individual matter. Under conditions of tribal life this is much less so; and when a given community, man, woman and child, is actively or tacitly abetting a series of crimes there is nothing inequitable in enforcing communal responsibility and it is the only feasible method of guarding public interests.[169]

The Sudanese community was thus stereotyped as a collective, de-individuated crowd. This was convenient for the colonial state, which, as seen above, usually possessed neither the resources nor local knowledge to make investigations and pinpoint individual culprits. Instead its policing in the provinces consisted for the most part of 'administrative measures'.

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[166] Winder Memoirs, SAD 541/14/13.
[167] Bor District Annual Report 1953/4, SAD 930/6 Microfile 236.
[168] For a similar argument being made with reference to colonial governance in Kordofan, see Willis, *Hukm*, pp. 29-31.
[169] T. Owen Memoirs, SAD 769/11/28.

The effects of the bifurcated system on the extension of police methods

British officials themselves often acknowledged that the divisions inherent within the system of policing in Sudan sapped the capacity of the government to spread technical police procedure throughout Sudan. They often conceded their failure, or reluctance, to establish co-operation between the various police forces in the country, and to establish throughout the country efficient forensic systems and drugs trade controls. Thus the deliberate fostering by the Political Service of the centre-periphery rift left the state unable to merge the professional system of policing which obtained at the centre with the more amateur forces ran by local administrators.

For instance, the disjointed system of policing in Sudan led the government to take only weak measures against the cannabis trade. This was in spite of the fact that since the beginning of the twentieth century medical and legal professionals throughout the British Empire had been touting the supposed link between cannabis and criminality to justify greater police intervention in the societies that Britain had colonized.[170] In the 1920s and 1930s trade in hashish was spreading throughout Sudan, originating in the cannabis farms located in the dense forests of Bahr al-Ghazal, from where it was brought down the Nile.[171] Colonial administrators and policemen either played down the issue or made excuses as to why effective measures could not be taken against the trade. Although plain-clothes police were used to make searches, officials tended to stress that discoveries were made as a result of direct information or by chance when the police were searching for other things.[172] It was noted that local communities were rarely hostile to drug smugglers[173] and that such information as was received was a result of personal grudges against those involved.[174] In 1935 the police commissioner to Port Sudan observed that he was unable to prevent the smuggling of opium into Sudan from

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[170] See James H. Mills, *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade and Prohibition, 1800-1928* (Oxford 2003), pp. 210-218.

[171] Questionnaire on 'Dangerous Drugs Traffic' filled in by Superintendant of Khartoum Police, 13 Feb. 1936, NRO KH2.Prov. A. 10/1/3.

[172] Annual Drugs Report for 1930, NRO KH2.Prov. A. 10/1/3.

[173] Report by Commandant of Police Khartoum, 3 Feb. 1937, NRO KH2.Prov. A. 10/1/3.

[174] Governor Upper Nile to Civil Secretary, attaching report by DC Yirrol, 14 Feb. 1935, NRO Civ Sec (1) 13/7/27.

Jeddah as the plain-clothes police did not have an 'interest in' or 'aptitude' for the work.[175] In the same year, the governor of Khartoum told the civil secretary that 'there is no doubt that when the Police Force of the country is reorganized and there is more co-operation and liaison between the Police Forces of the various Provinces, much more effective measures will be possible and there will be far greater possibilities of tracking down imports [of drugs]'.[176] This was in effect an admission of the inadequacy of the fragmented system of policing the colonial state had established, though the extent to which provincial administrations were genuinely eager to co-operate with the police in this regard is questionable. It is worth noting that when the government police force, in the 1950s, did launch a concerted campaign to deal with cannabis production at its source, the conduct of this campaign was looked upon with some disdain by the local governor (see Chapter 3).

Administrators were often forced to acknowledge that the localized crime-fighting system they had arranged in Sudan was incapable of dealing with inter-regional crime. In 1932 Arkell admitted that gangs of international camel thieves operating through Sennar, Kordofan and White Nile Province were usually 'much too clever for the native courts, who [sic] have difficulty in collecting all necessary accused and witnesses'.[177] Another type of intra-regional theft that British officials admitted to failing to deal with was that which occurred on the railways and steamers. This became a particular problem during World War II, when a large quantity of highly marketable goods was reported stolen. In a frustrated circular sent out in 1945, the civil secretary remarked that

> The amount of the stolen property recovered is negligible, and the number of thieves caught and prosecuted is very small. This reveals that something is very seriously wrong with the police investigations of these cases.

He went on to blame this on lack of liaison between the railway police and the provincial police forces, noting that the time between the theft being reported and

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[175] Mynors to Civil Secretary, for Police Commissioner Port Sudan, 15 Feb. 1935, NRO Civ Sec (1) 13/7/27.

[176] Governor Khartoum to Civil Secretary, 16 Feb. 1935, NRO Civ Sec (1) 13/7/27.

[177] A. J. Arkell, Handing-Over Notes for Sennar District, Nov. 1929-May 1932, SOAS Library MS 210522 Box 1.

action being taken was on average over three weeks.[178] This indicates that the efficient co-operation between police forces anticipated by the Governor of Khartoum in 1935 was, in 1945, yet to occur.

British officials often acknowledged the inadequacy of the forensic aspect of the police work in the provinces. Due to the centralized nature of the professional police apparatus, administrators and policemen investigating murders in the provinces would have to send forensic evidence all the way to the Lee Stack Research Laboratories in Khartoum. Moreover, administrators' poor training in forensic science often led to the results of investigations being botched. As late as 1952, Ministry of Health officials in Khartoum were complaining that provincial administrators were ruining medico-legal investigations by sending forensic specimens that were unsealed, unregistered and often wrapped together as one piece.[179] This demonstrated that, in spite of the increasing role of technical departments at the twilight of the colonial era, these departments remained dependant on local administrators who possessed little technical expertise. Following a murder trial in Kordofan in 1942, the appeal judge ridiculed the local DC for stating that his Sudanese medical assistant had given his evidence 'extremely well':

> How is it possible to regard seriously the views of a witness who states "The blood on the knife was human blood. I could recognise the distinctive smell of human blood when the knife was brought to me, and I am prepared to swear to this without any analytical examination"? As the Senior Medical Inspector has written, this is nonsense. Not only is it common knowledge that it is impossible to distinguish human blood by smell but it is even impossible for the most skilled medical expert to distinguish it by microscopical examination.[180]

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[178] Civil Secretary to all Governors, 22 Dec. 1945, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher A. 32/1/3.
[179] M. Haseeb, Assistant Director of Research at Ministry of Health to Director of Medical Services at Ministry of Health, 10 Dec. 1952, NRO 2.D.1. Fasher A. 32/1/3.
[180] Sudan Government vs Sabit Rahamtalla AC-CP-191-42 KDN-Maj.Ct-52-42. SAD Hayes Box 1 File 3.

The ease with which this isolated DC in Kordofan followed the intuitive recommendation of his medical assistant perhaps reflected the administrative tendency to believe that modern, scientific modes of criminal procedure should not be applied in Sudan. The British did attempt to apply modern forensic techniques at the Lee Stack Research Laboratory in Khartoum, one of the primary purposes of which was to 'to aid criminal investigations in poisoning cases...by the detection and experimental determination of toxic agents, particularly those obscure potent substances employed by the natives'.[181] However, these substances were to remain largely obscure to the British. In 1946, the director of the laboratory admitted that it was impossible for him to identify by chemical analysis the vegetable poisons that were often used as murder weapons in southern and western Sudan.[182]

Overall it seems that British officials were willing to acknowledge and accept that there was a disconnect between the professional police system found in the centre of the state and the non-technical forms of policing administered by the Political Service in the provinces.

Conclusion

The colonial state, in its persistent reluctance to bring a 'British' style of policing to Sudan, revealed its limited integrity. This weakness was reflected in the fact that the colonial police came to resemble the Egyptian Army, which was necessitated to some extent by an aggressive policy towards neo-Mahdist millenarianism and various independent societies in the Nuba Mountains and the south. However, even after the overt military challenges to the state were removed, the British colonizers were reluctant to develop systems of policing that would put into practice a thorough regulation of Sudanese society. Partly this was because of the colonial administration's pre-occupation with purely political policing and its focus on protecting its main strategic nodes. However, it also reflected wider ideological and political tensions within the colonial state itself. The British had become reliant on

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[181] Patrick Francis D'Arcy, *Laboratory on the Nile: A History of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories* (New York, 1999), p. 47.
[182] R. Kirk, 'Some vegetable poisons of the Sudan', *Sudan Notes and Records* 27 (1946), pp. 127-151.

one of the riverain ethnic groups, the Shayqiyya, to man the police force at the urban riverain heartlands of the state. Whilst these officers, encouraged by British professionals, began to develop a more specialist and educated outlook to meet the requirements of policing the urban riverain economy, the Political Service became wary of employing these riverain professionals throughout the country. This was partially because agents of the Political Service preferred to assert their own outlook with regard to the policing of provincial Sudan, which eschewed modern and professional methods. It was probably also due to the fact that the administration did not wish to expand a force dominated by a riverain ethnic group such as the Shayqiyya at the same time that educated professional groups in the riverain centre were becoming increasingly involved in the nationalist movement.

The result was that the colonial state established a bifurcated system of policing in Sudan. In this system, the administration left the specialized police professionals educated at the Police School to manage the major towns of the riverain area while delegating provincial policing to Native Administration bodies. Meanwhile, the Political Service used government policemen in the provinces to serve as the personal retinues of British officials. This system ensured that the administration, which often admitted to the lack of unity within the police system, did not subject the vast majority of Sudanese to the specialist, technical, and individualistic forms of policing envisaged in the Sudan Penal Code and Criminal Procedure code.

2 'Guarding the guards': the limited ambitions of the colonial administration to govern police violence, c. 1922-1956.

On 16 November 1948 the Khartoum police clashed with an unauthorized demonstration in the capital organized by the Ashiqqa', the party of the pro-Egyptian Sudanese, which resulted in the death of five of the participants due to botched use of tear gas. J. M. Kyles, the commissioner of police at the time, concluded that the tear gas bombs – imported from Britain – had exploded too fiercely because they had been 'seriously affected by the climate'.[1] The police's inability to predict how tear gas would react in an African climate was symptomatic of the colonial state's incompetence in attempting to apply British methods of 'soft' or 'civil' policing in an African environment. On a more basic level, the incident displayed the limited capacity of the colonial state to control the use of force by its constabulary.

This chapter will continue to assess the extent to which the colonial state was capable of exercising widespread governance of Sudanese society. It will cover the period from the early 1920s, when the Political Service was entrenching its position as the dominant faction within the state, until the end of the colonial period in 1956, at which stage the Political Service was increasingly being challenged by the rise of the technical departments such as the police. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the colonial administration was for political reasons keen to avoid establishing the kind of modern and rigidly institutionalized police force that would grant it an impartial monopoly over the use of violence. The consequence was that, with its authority weak at almost every level of this force, the state struggled to discipline those policemen who were supposed themselves to discipline the colonial population. Thus the chapter will also examine questions of subaltern agency by arguing that Sudanese policemen, far from being the compliant tools of colonial rule, exploited colonial institutions to serve their own purposes.

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[1] Robertson to Governor-General, 24 Nov. 1948, SAD 527/12/55.

It is often argued that colonial violence in the Middle East and Africa was due to a rigid division between a foreign and hostile state and local society.[2] However, this neglects the porosity of colonial power structures and the extent to which colonial states favoured the interests of particular groups within subaltern society above those of others. Here it will be seen that in Sudan the Condominium state allowed the upper echelons of the central police in the riverain area to be captured by a specific ethnic group in this region's elite, the Shayqiyya.[3] This often led the police to follow the agenda of this group and more specifically that of the Khatmiyya sufi order and National Unionist Party (NUP), to which the Shayqiyya had links. Thus in the riverain area the weakness of the colonial police was, as Chabal and Daloz would put it, its 'poor emancipation' from local society,[4] rather than its distance from it. This was most noticeable in the period leading up to independence, when the NUP was most vociferous, and hence it will be seen that the police remained to some extent weakly institutionalized even at the time when colonial police forces in Africa experienced the most expansion.

This chapter will also consider the effect that the administration's refusal to extend the professional system of policing into Sudan's provinces had on its ability to regulate its regional forces. It will be seen that the Political Service made only limited efforts to control corruption and abuse of power within the provincial police forces and even less effort to guard against it amongst 'chief's police' forces. Partially this reflected the typical colonial fear that punishing policemen would 'lessen their authority' in the eyes of colonial subjects.[5] However, the half-heartedness of the administrators' attempts to prevent corruption also reflected the same anti-governance outlook and insistence upon the 'status quo' they displayed when arguing that professional standards of policing had little place in Sudan's provinces. Although this was on one level a policy of deliberate neglect, the policy of the colonial state clearly did change the status quo, since by providing arms and authority to both government and Native Administration police forces it altered the balance of a variety of local conflicts. In this sense colonial police policy was

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[2] Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State*, p. 449. Chazan et al, *Politics and Society*, p. 38. Hills, *Policing Africa*, pp. 30-1.
[3] Although, as seen in the last chapter, the state attempted to limit the influence of this group in the peripheral regions.
[4] Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 25.
[5] Tollefson, *Policing Islam*, p. 14.

transformative, but the state did little to control the transformations it had unleashed. The impersonation and abuse of plain-clothes police powers for criminal purposes was another phenomenon that reflected the weak institutionalization of the colonial state, and its inability to control the extent to which its authority was mimicked and subverted.

The chapter also seeks to investigate the extent to which police violence occurred on an atomistic level and the extent to which it was a part of over-arching state policy. As McCracken observes with regard to colonial Malawi, 'if police coercion was pervasive, the extent of their control was not'.[6] This chapter will demonstrate that the violent acts of colonial policemen were also a result of the vulnerable position into which their neglect by the colonial state had put them, although admittedly this was to some extent an inevitable side-effect of the logistical challenges posed by the sheer size of Sudan. Isolated and under-equipped policemen often found that they had little choice but to use violence if they were to enforce the state's will, particularly since the weak and porous system of security created by the colonial state did little to regulate the possession of weapons amongst the Sudanese population. This was demonstrated even in Khartoum during the Neguib Riots of 1954, when members of the outnumbered and ill-equipped provincial police force were hacked and bludgeoned to death with weapons nominally outlawed in the capital. These riots will be given special attention in this chapter, since they revealed two specific flaws within the colonial system: first, the vulnerable position into which the porous system of colonial security put the police; and second, the northern riverain bias within the police which prompted the savage handling of the mainly rural and *Ansari* rioters. It is in this relationship between violence and vulnerability that we see the roots of the 'weak' but 'fierce' state identified by commentators on the Middle East.[7]

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[6] John McCracken, 'Authority and legitimacy in Malawi: policing and politics in a colonial state', in Anderson and Killingray, *Policing the Empire*, p. 179.

[7] Nazih J. Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1995), p. 449.

Government failure to regulate police abuses

The subversion of police authority at the central level

As observed in Chapter 1, the positions in the government police force in Sudan not occupied by British officers were dominated by the Shayqiyya, an ethnic group with links to the Khatmiyya sufi Tariqa, the largest and most influential Tariqa in Sudan. This Tariqa had accrued particular influence amongst Sudan's mercantile elite in the nineteenth century and had built close relations with both the Egyptian and then the Condominium regime.[8] However the government's reliance on the influence of this Tariqa to some extent biased its own actions, demonstrating how colonial institutions could be subverted to serve the agendas of particular groups. The influence of the Tariqa was particularly important where the government police were at their strongest, in the riverain areas of central Sudan, where the dominance of this particular ethnic group biased police action in ethnically and religiously-tinged political conflicts in a manner that the colonial state had little capacity to control.

This was demonstrated by the controversial use of police firearms at the town of Hag 'Abdallah on the Blue Nile in 1947. The events occurred as the police were responding to trouble caused by protests against an article published in the *Sawt al-Sudan* newspaper which contained an attack on Sharif 'Abd al-Rahman Yusuf al-Hindi, *Shaikh* of the Hindiyya Tariqa of which most of the local residents of Hag 'Abdullah were members. The inhabitants suspected Shayqiyya merchants of Hag 'Abdullah town of being behind the article and as a result several hundred villagers took part in an organized attack on the town, wrecking the shops of two merchants and seriously injuring another. The official report claimed that the police, who were composed mainly of Shayqiyya, quickly arrived and opened fire on the crowd, killing six and wounding two.[9] Although the consequent trial concluded that the police action had been justified by the need to restore order, Winifred Johnson recalled in her diaries that the police had fired ninety rounds into the crowd and not one over their heads or at their feet, killing six and wounding forty (not two).[10] This

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[8] Daly, *A History*, pp. 107, 114.
[9] PIS Aug.-Oct. 1947 p. 17, TNA FO 371/63047; Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, Aug. 1947, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/7/17.
[10] Winnifred Johnson, Diaries, Aug. 15 1947, SAD 751/19/26.

was in contravention of official guidelines that the police should first give the crowd a chance to disperse,[11] which, as Robertson, the civil secretary, admitted privately,[12] they did not do in this instance, and that, if they failed to disperse, the police should shoot first at the knees. Moreover this excessive use of force had decisive ethnic, sectarian and political consequences. Since the majority of the police involved in the incident were Shayqiyya, the government's Political Intelligence Summary concluded that 'the whole affair is regarded by the local inhabitants as a tribal fight between the Shaigia on the one hand and the followers of the Sherif on the other, and the fact that the latter lost not only six men killed but also had to pay a large fine and incur sentences of imprisonment is held inequitable'.[13] The result was a political disaster, with the local Shayqi *Shaikh*, Falal Ibrahim, becoming so unpopular that the government was forced to suspend him.[14] The incident demonstrated that use of force by agents of the state could rarely be impartial in local conflicts and often made them worse.

Even more revealing of the frailty of the colonial state was the fact that its reliance on the Khatmiyya-supporting Shayqiyya in the police force hampered its exercise of authority in strongly Khatmiyya areas. This became particularly problematic for the colonial state in the years after World War II, when a great number of Khatmiyya were involved in nationalist protest against it. After blaming the anti-government stance of Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, the head of the Khatmiyya Tariqa, for an attack on the police by Hadendoa in Port Sudan in 1948, Robertson was advised by colleagues that 'any determined action against them would be dangerous as the police and Eastern Arab Corps Company are largely Khatmia'.[15] This attitude was also reflected in the despairing remarks of E. D. Arbuthnot, the DC of Shendi in 1951, that it was impossible to curb the activities of Khatmiyya youth groups in breach of the Penal Code as 'practically everyone' sympathized with them, including the police. Arbuthnot regretted that 'an attempt by me to enforce the law strictly would almost certainly lead to ignominious failure'.[16]

[11] A. Wynne, Police Commandant Blue Nile Province to Superintendent of Police Wad Medani, 21 March 1950, attaching 'Police Alarm Order No. 1', SAD 627/4/34.
[12] Roberston to C. Davies, Sudan Agent, 23 Aug. 1947, SAD 521/9/9.
[13] PIS Aug.-Oct. 1947, p. 17, TNA FO 371/63047.
[14] PIS Aug.-Oct. 1947, p. 17, TNA FO 371/63047.
[15] Robertson to Mayall, 16 Dec. 1948, SAD 522/3/42.
[16] E. D. Arbuthnot to Governor Northern Province, 20 Jan. 1951, SAD 849/7/50-2.

The extent to which the administration was hamstrung by its dependence on the Shayqiyya in the police and army was fully revealed in a memorandum by Luce, the senior adviser to the governor-general, in 1954. He admitted that in spite of the British administration's long-running political battle with the NUP, which was much closer to the anti-British Egyptian government than the Umma Party, independence under the NUP would be 'more likely to achieve H.M. Government's aim for the Sudan' than independence under the Umma; this was because the NUP could rely on the army and police, the majority of whose officers were Khatmiyya.[17] In other words, the relationship between the NUP and the police and army forced the British administration to co-operate with a political party to which it had a firm aversion. Thus the British administration's relationship with its police force reflected the fact that, as in other aspects of colonial governance and politics,[18] it was as much controlled by the sectarian tensions that dominated contemporary northern Sudanese society as it was able to use them for the benefit of the state.

'One of the disadvantages of isolated police posts': administrative indulgence of corruption and violence amongst government provincial forces

The manner in which the colonial state had allowed the police in the riverain centre to exercise violence on behalf of a particular ethnic group was mirrored at a local level by its lax attitude towards corruption and violence among forces operating in Sudan's peripheries. A Kordofan monthly report from 1938 observed that the wife and mother of a policeman had been arrested for possession of *araki*, a Sudanese liquor, and wryly observed 'Quis custodiet ipsos custodies?' ('Who guards the guards themselves?'). This remark typified the reconciled attitude of British administrators towards law-breaking within the police force. One DC observed of police in Dar Masalit that 'it is worth a merchant's while to slip them £10 to let a consignment of goods through'.[19] Sometimes policemen used their position to extort money from members of the public. Another DC observed of Raga, where there was no government official above the rank of police sergeant, that 'apparently the Police are abusing their powers, even racketeering on Greek merchants'.[20] Again the language of the official here is somewhat distant and off-hand. Penn observed as DC

[17] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 376.
[18] Ibid., p. 391.
[19] B. Lewis, Handing-Over Notes for Dar Masalit, 1952, SAD 600/3/19.
[20] F. Hunt, Diaries, July 5 1941, SAD 693/1/61.

in Sennar in 1935 that the 'Railways Police in the dam and our own posts in the market and Wad El Haddad have great opportunities of making money by threatening lorry-drivers for technical offences such as over-loading, or by delaying their passage unnecessarily over the dam'.[21]

What is interesting about these accounts is that they seem to reflect an attitude of casual acceptance of this state of affairs by the colonial authorities: the colonial state did not have much desire to turn even its most important instrument of governance into a well-regulated institution. When Leslie James, the modernizing commandant of the Khartoum police, tried to do this he was ridiculed by administrators (see Chapter 3). Only occasionally did administrators make efforts to punish corruption. For example, in 1932 the governor of Halfa recorded that the authorities had heavily punished two policemen for collaborating with three Sudanese who were liquor smuggling, but admitted that carrying this out between Egypt and Sudan was easy if the police patrols could be bribed.[22] In 1952 the customs department was obliged to introduce a rewards system for policemen who caught smugglers, implying that they could not be relied on to carry out their duties without special incentives.[23]

The banalization of police violence was further evidence of the colonial administration's limited ability to govern its own system of governance. This violence was at its most arbitrary where police forces continued to bear a direct resemblance to the original military forces of colonial occupation and were thus alien to Sudanese society. The *Hajjana*, or police camel corps, which as Abu Bakr recalls generally had the opportunity to 'interfere' with local villages by seizing food without payment, was probably the best example of this.[24] Hawley says that in the late 1940s the police in Gedaref were 'sometimes heavy handed with their truncheons' when dealing with alcohol–related affrays, so he attempted to teach them jujitsu as a means of 'reducing broken crowns'.[25] The continuing 'outsider' status of policemen could lead to violence as break-downs of trust occurred when

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[21] Penn, Handing-Over Notes for Sennar Province, Nov. 1933-Nov. 1935, SAD 722/11/34.
[22] Governor Halfa to Civil Secretary, 13 Aug. 1932, NRO CivSec (1) 43/1/7.
[23] B. Lewis, Handing-Over Notes for Dar Masalit, 1952, SAD 600/3/19.
[24] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 82.
[25] Hawley, Donald, *Sandtracks in Sudan* (Norwich, 1995), p. 59.

they attempted to enforce the law. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, the relationship between police and Sudanese communities was considered so fragile that the Criminal Procedure Code required the presence of local *Shaikhs* during property searches. When two policemen were killed by the angry inhabitants of a property in Omdurman in 1944, the commissioner of police directly attributed the deaths to the failure to enact this provision.[26]

However, the most blatant examples of police violence against local communities occurred in southern Sudan, where the force continued to resemble an army of occupation (see Chapter 1). McComas recalled one incident in Equatoria where his sergeant-major, Magorbok Aciner, took a girl from a local village to his hut and refused to return her to her relations upon being summoned to do so by the village chief. Upon their arrival at his hut to demand the surrender of the girl, Magorbok fired a 'warning shot' at her approaching relations before giving in and surrendering the girl. The chiefs later told McComas that having heard this shot 'we guessed it was war between the police and the people'.[27] The idea that there could be a war between 'police' and 'people' indicates just to what extent the government police were still perceived to be outsiders. Moreover, Magorbok's behaviour recalls the period of the initial colonial invasions of Africa, when colonial soldiers were granted free license to take women from local communities.[28] Another example of police behaving in an aggressive manner towards local people came in Upper Nile in 1937. The Province Monthly Diary reported matter-of-factly in April that

> Some Anuak visitors from the Baro came to blows with a policeman. The Anuak hosts from the village of Purithor South-West of Pil decamped across the river. The chief has been instructed that if he does not return and pay his tribute within a month, the village will be destroyed.[29]

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[26] J. M. Kyles, Comissioner of Police and Prisons to all Governors, 22 Nov. 1944, NRO 2.D.1 Fasher A. 32/1/3.
[27] R. G. McComas Memoirs, 1982, SAD 815/9/8.
[28] Timothy Parsons, 'All *Askaris* are family men: sex, domesticity and discipline in the King's African Rifles, 1902-1964', in Killingray and Omissi (eds.) *Guardians of Empire: the Armed Forces of the Colonial Powers, c. 1700-1964* (Manchester 1999), pp. 167.
[29] Upper Nile Province Monthly Diaries, April 1937, NRO Civ Sec (1) 57/5/20.

However, two months later the local official established that the fight between police and Anuak broke out because of the 'bullying' behaviour of the police, who had fought with the Anuak for some giraffe meat and seized a number of the women from the village to punish them. The Anuak had consequently deserted the village for fear of further reprisals. Again, this represented an imitation of the tendency of colonial militaries to live off the countryside and prey on local women.[30] The local authorities had clearly assumed too easily that the police were in the right. The report noted apologetically that 'This is one of the disadvantages of isolated police posts which cannot be sufficiently supervised'.[31] Thus the colonial state was not all-seeing and could not always control the transgressions of its police force, let alone the Sudanese population. If we follow Agozino's argument that it is disparities of power rather than 'underdevelopment' or poverty that creates crime,[32] then we might conclude that the use of armed constabularies to police local communities actually increased the potential for violent conflict and disruption of the local social fabric. In other words, the British had created a class of police more prone to crime than those whom they were supposed to be policing.

Colonial police violence was also partially a result of the state's indulgence towards those who were found guilty of it. Admittedly, policemen who broke the law were tried in the colonial courts for offences including murder, accepting bribes, causing death through negligence, intimidating witnesses, fabricating evidence, theft, causing deaths through drink-driving, illegal arms-dealing, and beating prisoners in custody.[33] However, the punishment they received was often light. Magorbok, the sergeant-major who abducted a local girl, was merely transferred and demoted to lance-corporal by the local administration in Equatoria.[34] Hussein Hamo, an ex-officer, recalled that in about 1950 a young policeman in Darfur called Mahmoud Haroun was jailed for six months for beating a man in custody. However, when the

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[30] Killingray, 'Gender issues and African Colonial Armies', in Killingray and Omissi, *Guardians*, p. 226.
[31] Upper Nile Province Monthly Diaries, June 1937, NRO Civ Sec (1) 57/5/20.
[32] Biko Agozino, *Counter-Colonial Criminology: A Critique of Imperialist Reason* (London, 2004), p. 30.
[33] 'Nafidha 'ala hadiqa al-madi', Interview with Hassan Muhammad Ahmad Hamo, *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1981 p. 13; Bahr al-Ghazal Province Monthly Diaries, July 1948, NRO CivSec (2) 30/6/15; Kordofan Province Monthly Diaries, March 1938, NRO CivSec (1) 57/8/32; T. Owen Memoirs, SAD 769/11/45; Sudan Government vs Epua s/o Meciki AC-CP-218-44 EP-Maj.Ct-41.C-23-44 SAD Hayes Box 1 File 3.
[34] R. G. McComas Memoirs, SAD 815/9/8.

Darfur police commandant, Ahmad Geili, moved on to Khartoum he asked as a parting request from the British governor that Haroun have his sentence reduced to only two months so that his dismissal from the service could be avoided; this was granted.[35] Thus, even during the later colonial period when the legal department was making its most strenuous efforts to regulate the police (see Chapter 1), a regional governor was willing to treat offending policemen leniently. To some extent these policies reflect the tendency of the administration to protect its own interests and those of its henchmen. However, they also demonstrated a more fundamental incapacity and unwillingness to reform and discipline the very body of men that was itself intended to discipline the colonial population.

The limited regulation of the Native Administration
The inability of the state to regulate the actions of its policemen was most noticeable in the areas where it was forced to rely upon proxy policemen attached to the Native Administration. Although the actions of chiefs and their police forces were theoretically supervised by local DCs, the colonial administration had in practice little capacity – and relatively little desire – to regulate the violence of its Native Administration police forces. This was in spite of the fact that it had little trust in these bodies, as was displayed by its vacillating policy on arming them. The first instance of arms being issued to Native Administration forces occurred when this was approved by the acting governor of Mongolla Province in 1924: 50 old-fashioned Remington rifles were issued without ammunition. The intention was for these arms to be purely symbolic, representing the authority of the chiefs' police.[36] When Willis demanded 280 Remingtons with 10,000 rounds of ammunition for Nuer, Dinka and Shilluk chief's police, he was refused outright, it being noted that such a policy was 'dangerous as in the event of trouble in the case of the Nuer the rifles might go to swell their existing armoury'.[37] However, R. E. H. Baily, the governor of Kassala, by persistently appealing to the governor-general throughout the late 1920s and pointing out that retainers would have to face armed criminals in the course of their duty, managed to gain permission for those in the Butana area to

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[35] 'Nafidha 'ala hadiqa al-madi', p. 13.
[36] 'Note on the arming of Chief's Police and Retainers Employed by Native Administrations', 21 March 1930, NRO Civ Sec (1) 4/5/26.
[37] Ibid.

be given access to a small amount of ammunition.[38] Ammunition was also granted to retainers and 'chief's policemen' in areas that had not yet been cleared of arms, such as Fung Province, Upper Nile Province, the Nuba Mountains and the western Bahr al-Ghazal.[39]

The colonial government had limited ability to control the numbers of arms in the hands of the police. Although in 1924 the governor-general had only sanctioned the issue of 50 old Remingtons to the chiefs' police forces in Mongolla, by 1931 583 out of the 712 chiefs' police were armed.[40] Moreover, it seems unlikely that in these areas the colonial authorities trusted their Native Administration policemen any more than those who already possessed firearms. Thus in 1931 the civil secretary suggested that in selecting future chief's police 'he saw no objection to the appointment of natives who already possessed rifles of their own as opposed to the natives who did not possess them. The effect of this would be to bring under better control rifles already in the tribesman's hands'.[41] In other words, the best way to police those armed illegally was to make them the police. This evidence raises a serious question over arguments which stress the omnipotence of the colonial power, such as Killingray's assertion that the great imperial powers 'sought, largely successfully…to disarm the indigenous civil population in the colonies and (colonial forces excepted) to keep modern weapons in European hands'.[42] The bracketed caveat exposes the ambiguity in Killingray's statement. If any group of men with guns were capable of being made policemen, were these colonial forces or loose colonial proxies? Either way they were unlikely to be unswerving servants of the state.

By emphasizing the lax approach of the colonial administration we should not underestimate the undeniably transformative effect of its policies on society at a local level. Policies towards the Native Administration, as Justin Willis argues, were innovative in practice even if 'traditional' in theory, because they offered power to

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Note by C. Young, 24 March 1930, NRO Civ Sec (1) 4/5/26.
[40] Note on Mongolla Province by Governor, Mongolla Province, 25 Oct. 1932, NRO Civ Sec (1) 4/5/26.
[41] Native Administration and the firearms situation in Sudan, 25 Oct. 1932, NRO Civ Sec (1) 4/5/26.
[42] Killingray, "Introduction", in Killingray and Omissi, *Guardians*, p. 6.

those willing to defy social mores in order to seize labour or demand taxes.[43] Thus the colonial state provided these newly empowered policemen with arms and ammunition, but often failed to regulate the manner in which they used these new assets. Harold MacMichael, in justifying the system of Native Administration in Sudan, argued that while chiefs, *Shaikhs* and *Nazirs* had 'a predilection for tyranny', this must be accepted since 'the native prefers to submit to a few abuses at the hands of his own Chief than to be pestered with rules and regulations and view-points of alien origin'.[44] This resort to cultural relativism – somewhat misleading given the essentially novel source of some of the abuses – typified the lax approach that British administrators took towards corruption and brutality in Native Administration police forces. Just as was the case with government police, accounts of corruption amongst such 'police' are interesting not so much because of the (usually predictable) nature of the corruption as of the resigned attitude adopted by colonial officials in giving them. Arkell in Dar Masalit observed of corruption amongst the Sultan's retainers that 'though no doubt they occasionally 'akal' [eat] the 'nas' [people], still [it happens] almost certainly less than before the occupation'.[45] Boustead, a local administrator in Darfur, recalled that the *felagna*, or 'chief's orderlies' of one Darfurian *shartai* of the 1930s, were 'notoriously brutal at times', without mentioning any steps he took to remedy this.[46]

Indeed, the administration's fear of the challenge that the central judiciary and police system posed to its own authority led it to prevent these institutions regulating the Native Administration. Willis demonstrates that in 1936, the civil secretary and local administration in Dar Kabbabish were willing to ignore investigations conducted by the legal secretary and a local police inspector to favour a relative of the Kabbabish *Nazir* Ali el Tom, who had used his influence to marry an already wedded woman. The civil secretary resented the affront that these investigations represented both to his own status and that of the Native Administration. The local administration thus allowed the resulting case to be tried

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[43] Willis, "Violence, authority and the state", p. 90.
[44] Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, p. 157.
[45] J. Arkell, Report on Dar Masalit (undated, circa 1927), SOAS Library MS 210522 Box 1.
[46] Hugh Boustead, *The Wind of Morning* (London, 1971), p. 116.

in Ali el Tom's court, in spite of the fact that this led to a 'grave miscarriage of justice', admitted to by the deputy civil secretary.[47]

Not surprisingly, the state could do little to control the manner in which the behaviour of chiefs' police forces affected local conflicts. Nadel, the anthropologist of the Nuba writing in the 1940s, observed that local Nuba were upset about chief's police imposing livestock fines because 'the all-embracing viewpoint of kinship makes you see in the tribal policeman, not impartial agents of the law, but members of another clan or family who have come to take what is yours'.[48] Another example of how the colonial state exacerbated ethnic rivalries in the course of nominally pursuing justice came after the flight of eleven Dinka Aliab from Terakeka prison in 1953. The official report observed that 20 Mandari from a local cattle camp were summoned to assist the police in catching these refugees, and were 'naturally ... willing to join in any anti-Dinka campaign and immediately armed themselves with spears, bows and arrows, clubs and other paraphernalia of war'.[49] Although the police sergeant appears to have persuaded these Mandari to re-intern the eleven Dinka without recourse to their extensive war-gear, this was strong evidence of the partiality of colonial justice, which tipped local power balances in favour of colonial agents. Such activity certainly represented a 'trickle-down' of colonial power but it was a 'trickle-down' that the state barely controlled.

The limits to police institutionalization and the abuse and mimicry of plain-clothes powers

The failure of the colonial state to regulate the 'trickle down' of power that it had set in motion was also apparent in the exploitation of police powers both by plain-clothes officers themselves and by those who impersonated them. This phenomenon was also indicative of the limited institutional identity of the force. The fact that abuse of plain-clothes powers was a particular problem in Condominium Sudan reflects two important themes: the confusion caused by the divisions between separate branches of the colonial state and the manner in which individuals exploited the limited regulation of the police to make it serve their own purposes. Given a far

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[47] Willis, 'Hukm', p. 33-4.
[48] S. Nadel, *The Nuba: An Anthropological Study of the Hill-tribes in Kordofan* (London, 1947), p. 352.
[49] Equatoria Province Monthly Diaries, Aug. 1953, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/3/6.

greater degree of independence, and without any particular ideological commitment to the colonial state, plain-clothes policemen frequently operated as a law unto themselves.

In one particularly embarrassing incident, one plain-clothes policeman was convicted after he apprehended two civilians committing no specific breach of the law and then picked a fight and killed one of them. Summing up the case, the provincial judge insisted that after these events only uniformed police should be employed in Nahud, as

> It is customary for such plain-clothes policemen to be known to all the undesirables of the town. They tend through officiousness and an overweening sense of the importance of spy work to make a nuisance of themselves to ordinary inoffensive citizens, and there is an ever-present danger of them being bribed.[50]

In a similar manner, the use of plain-clothes agents by C. A. Willis's Intelligence Department between 1921 and 1925 caused a great deal of discontent amongst members of the provincial administrative staff, who feared that they were acting as 'agent provocateurs' and conducting general spy work in their provinces without their knowledge.[51] This was another example of the structural tensions that existed between the central police body and the administration, which resented the appearance of the latter's agents in the provinces. Robertson's method of dealing with problematic plain-clothes figures during his time as a local DC was indicative of the antipathy between the two departments:

> These agents in many cases used their position to blackmail influential or wealthy local people with the threat of a damaging report to the Director of Intelligence. I heard many such stories and asked for the Governor's advice. The answer was simple. The agents had no obvious means of livelihood and could not admit officially that they were intelligence agents; nor would that department acknowledge them. They could therefore be arrested as

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[50] Sudan Government vs Ahmed Ajalo AC-CP-79-40 KDN-Maj.Ct.21-40, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 2.
[51] J. Ewart report 21 April 1925, NRO Civ Sec 36/1/2.

vagabonds. I often wondered what my dossier at Intelligence H.Q. was like after I had dealt with a few of these men in this way.[52]

The world of plain-clothes policemen also reflected the limited integrity of the state in a more fundamental regard, as was seen in their mimicry by ordinary members of the public: people often impersonated them for the purpose of extorting money from citizens.[53] This was not a rare occurrence. In 1925 Ewart referred to 'the numerous fraternity, which levies blackmail in the guise of the "Government informer"', blaming this on the lack of communication between the Public Security Department and provincial administrators.[54] In October 1949 it was reported that 'The rate of arrests in the Northern Gezira District for the impersonation of plain clothes policemen remains steady at one a month'.[55]

One possible explanation for this phenomenon would be that the colonial government did not make clear enough to its subjects that plain-clothes policemen were obliged to provide identification before they could charge anyone. Since plain-clothes policemen doubled as both criminal investigators and intelligence agents, local authority figures were wary of challenging persons they could not identify. One *Shaikh* in Blue Nile who failed to arrest a recently-released prisoner impersonating a medical assistant offered by way of justification that he felt he must have been a member of the secret police.[56] Since subjects of the colonial state were familiar with arbitrary and often unexplained actions on the part of what to them was a mysterious and distant new regime, these actions could easily be mimicked by random individuals who effectively made themselves microcosms of the colonial state. That this state could be so easily mimicked was indicative of its limited presence in Sudanese society. It is noticeable that individuals with most knowledge of the state were least vulnerable to this type of trickery; for instance, an ex-soldier uncovered one such imposter when he asked to see his pay-book.[57] Migrant populations were most vulnerable as they had the least knowledge of police procedures in their

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[52] James Robertson, *Transition in Africa* (London, 1974), p. 20.
[53] Sudan Government vs Ahmed Ajalo AC-CP-79-40 KDN-Maj.Ct.21-40, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 2.
[54] J. Ewart report, NRO Civ Sec 36/1/2.
[55] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, Oct. 1949, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/8/19.
[56] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, March 1942, NRO CivSec (2) 30/7/17.
[57] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, July 1949, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/8/19.

temporary home. Creed pointed out that the 'Fellata' communities of West African pilgrims were frequent victims of such men in Nahud.[58]

Crowd control and the relationship between violence and vulnerability

Police violence was often a result of the administration's unwillingness to commit to any serious regulation of the force which would prevent the abuse of police power; but it also occurred because the administration's physical neglect of the police left it weak and vulnerable, and put it in a position where resorting to violence was the only way to enforce it authority. In 1948, the police in Port Sudan were forced to use firearms against a group of Hadendoa who assaulted the district prison, killing five or six of them.[59] After these events, the Assistant Sudan Agent in London passed on a telegram concerning the killings to a young friend in Exeter. 'The British are having a bad time', he commented on this, 'They are being pushed about. Why are they killing so many of our poor Sudanese? Are they afraid?'[60]

Indeed, the interplay between vulnerability and violence played a crucial role in police activity throughout the colonial period, and was symptomatic of the Condominium's inability to establish an extensive system of social control. Given the weak resources that the colonial administration afforded them, the police often found themselves out-gunned and undermanned when dealing with rebels, urban criminals, and armed brigands. Policemen often suffered heavy casualties in the armed uprisings that occurred during the early period of colonial rule. For example, 17 were killed during Wad Habouba's Mahdist revolt at Katfia in 1908.[61] After the assault on the government police post at Nyala during the famous uprising of 1921, 20 policemen were killed and 16 injured out of a total of 40.[62] Police posts often formed the most obvious targets during rebellions, as during the White Flag Revolt

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[58] Sudan Government vs Ahmed Ajalo AC-CP-79-40 KDN-Maj.Ct.21-40, SAD Hayes Box 1 File 2.
[59] Note by Broadbent, Governor Kassala, on 'Law and Order in Kassala', 23 Dec. 1951, SAD 403/10/42-3; Robertson to Mayall, 16 Nov. 1948, SAD 522/3/6. The first source claims six Hadendoa were killed, the second five.
[60] J. Hartley, Assistant Sudan Agent to Sudan Agent, 26 Nov. 1948, SAD 522/3/27.
[61] Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim, *A Study of Neo-Mahdism in the Sudan, 1899-1956* (Leiden, 2004), p. 38.
[62] H. C. Jackson, *The Fighting Sudanese* (London, 1954), p. 28.

when the police barracks in Khartoum was assaulted and a number of policemen killed.[63]

Even after the phase of early rebellions against the colonial government had passed, the physical vulnerability of policemen indicated the fragile nature of the state's presence. In 1947, the Legal Department issued a circular stating that 300 cases of assaults on policemen had been recorded in the last year in the capital alone, and that as a consequence magistrates should always impose substantial prison sentences for such offences.[64] Reports from the south in the early 1950s contain accounts of chiefs' policemen being either beaten up or running away from local fights;[65] policemen were still being killed by Anuak bandits on the Ethiopian frontier with Upper Nile Province.[66] Andrew Paul, the governor of Kassala province, observed that 'it was possible as recently as 1951 for an armed policeman who attempted to intercept six Hadendowa raiding Beni Amer cattle to be cut down with over sixty sword wounds on his body'.[67]

Another factor that made provincial policemen vulnerable was the ready availability of firearms throughout the country. For instance, in 1932 one DC in White Nile estimated that there were 300 rifles in his province 'at a conservative estimate' and that 'hardly any youth who cannot lay his hands on L.E. 4 has not got a rifle'.[68] Police campaigns on the Ethiopian border in the aftermath of the conflict with Italy in 1941 struggled to impound the numerous firearms that spread throughout the regions of Sudan bordering Ethiopia during the conflict, which local populations usually hid outside villages in hollowed-out trees.[69] In a series of anti-poaching campaigns in the 1940s on the Dinder, near the Italian border, the police came under fire from armed poachers. In one particular incident two policemen were ambushed by a gang of fourteen heavily armed poachers and one was shot dead.[70]

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[63] Leonard Bousfield, *Sudan Doctor* (London, 1954), p. 169.
[64] Criminal Court Circular No. 42, 13 Oct. 1949, NRO 2.D.1. Fasher A. 32/1/1.
[65] Bahr al-Ghazal Province Monthly Diaries, Nov. 1952, NRO CivSec (2) 30/1/2; Upper Nile Province Monthly Diaries, Nov. 1953, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/5/13.
[66] Upper Nile Province Monthly Diaries, Sep. 1952, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/5/13.
[67] Andrew Paul, *The Beja Tribes of Sudan* (Cambridge, 1954), p. 121.
[68] Arkell to Governor White Nile, 3 July 1928, SOAS Library MS 210522, Box 1.
[69] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, June 1941, June 1942, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/7/17.
[70] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, March 1946, NRO CivSec (2) 30/7/17. Elliot Balfour Memoirs, 1981, SAD 759/11/50.

Indeed, it was this relationship between vulnerability and violence that made the policing of political troubles in this period so chaotic. Firearms were used frequently by policemen to deal with crowd protests in the post-war era, as was the case during the protests at Hag 'Abdallah (see above). Other instances were at Tokar in 1946, where police used firearms in a clash between Nurab Arabs and western labourers, killing three of the Arabs; and they used them again to quell the Rufa'a Riots of 1947, although here casualties were relatively light (three injured) as the official injunction to fire first at the ground was followed.[71]

The failure of 'soft' methods of control contributed to this failure to avert the need for violence on the part of the police. In the 1930s, before the introduction of tear gas, police units usually had to resort to firearms to break up affrays in rural areas.[72] Although tear gas became a key asset in urban policing following the rise of protests in the wake of World War II, the effects of its use were variable. It was used with success to break up fights between western labourers in the Khartoum Deims,[73] against demonstrations staged by the pro-Communist International Struggle Front,[74] and during a riot by members of the Fellata ethnic group in Darfur.[75] However, on other occasions – notably during the unauthorized demonstration led by the *Ashiqqa'* leader Mohamed Nur el Din, on November 16 1948 (discussed above) – its use was disastrous. Robertson recalled of this event that:

> The police were instructed on my authority to prevent the procession going on and they used tear smoke bombs to disperse them when they refused to go peaceably. Unfortunately some of these bombs seem to have been flung among the crowd and five persons died later in hospital as a result of the loss of blood.[76]

As a result of this incident Robertson instructed Kyles, the commissioner of police, to make an investigation into the state of the tear gas bombs. He concluded that they

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[71] PIS Aug.-Sep. 1946, TNA FO 371/53328; Note on Law and Order in Kassala, by Broadbent, Governor Kassala, 23 Dec. 1951, SAD 403/10/42-3.
[72] Boustead, *Wind of Morning*, p. 121.
[73] PIS Aug.-Oct. 1947, p. 21, TNA FO 371/63047.
[74] Gezira Province Monthly Diaries, Nov. 1948, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/8/18.
[75] Henderson, Governor Darfur, Darfur Annual Report 1951-2, SAD 534/14/41.
[76] Robertson to Mayall, 16 Nov. 1948, SAD 522/3/6.

were 'seriously affected by the climate' and as a result exploded either too softly or too fiercely, making them a danger to nearby civilians. At this point Robertson stated that he was issuing orders that these bombs not be used again and a fresh supply investigated.[77] Nevertheless, by 1951 Corfield, the governor of Khartoum, had agreed to the request of Beatty-Pownall, the commissioner of police, that the exact same model of tear gas grenade should be brought back into service. 'I understand', he argued, 'that they are difficult to use without hurting someone but that it is probably preferable to rifle fire'.[78]

A yet more compelling demonstration of the relationship between police vulnerability and police brutality came a mere month after Sudan's full independence on 1 January 1956. It was brought about by the police mishandling of a strike made by cotton cultivators at Juda, near Kosti, on 21 February 1956, barely two months after official independence. The police opened fire on the crowds of demonstrators after tear gas had failed to disperse them and the ensuing conflict lead to the death of twelve cultivators and three policemen.[79] Worse still, the police arrested as many as 281 suspects and found that the only place available to intern them in was the newly built army barracks, which was unsuitable to hold so many detainees. As a result of overcrowding, 189 of those detained were found dead from heat exhaustion the next morning: thus the police were responsible for a massacre.[80] The press blamed the departed British administration for the weak and divided system of policing they had left behind. Meanwhile, senior officers blamed the catastrophe on the government for failing to provide an adequate number of policemen in the province, arguing that it was this that forced the police to close the windows of the barracks for fear of the prisoners fleeing.[81] Again, this was compelling evidence of the relationship between the administration's neglect of the force and its excessive use of violence.

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[77] Robertson to Governor-General, 24 Nov. 1948, SAD 527/12/55.
[78] C. Beatty-Pownall, Commissioner of Police, to Corfield, Governor Khartoum, 30 Oct. 1951, and response 12 Nov. 1951, NRO 2.Kh. Pro. A. 31/1/4.
[79] Adams to the Foreign Office, 21 Feb. 1956, TNA FO 371/119668.
[80] Adams to the Foreign Office, 23 Feb. 1956, TNA FO 371/119668.
[81] *Al-Istiqlal*, 29 Feb.1956.

The Neguib Riots

This chapter will conclude with a case study of the Neguib Riots, as the events surrounding these riots are indicative of a number of important themes that have been discussed throughout the chapter. They demonstrated the failure of the colonial state to prevent the police as an institution being sucked into ethnic, religious and political conflicts; they also showed up the extent to which the porous security systems in place in the capital and the inefficient and ill-equipped nature of the Khartoum police force deprived the state of 'soft' systems of coercion and necessitated a violent, frantic and knee-jerk response to the riots.

The riots, which are referred to by Sudanese as the 'March Events' (*ahadith maris*), occurred on 1 March 1954, during the transitional period from colonial rule to self-governance (1954-6). Although these events took place during the twilight of the colonial era, the police were at this time still responsible to a British governor-general, and the Khartoum force was still under a British commandant, McGuigan. The riots were precipitated by the arrival of the Egyptian president, Muhammad Neguib, to Khartoum in order to participate in the inauguration of the new Sudanese parliament. The main party supporting Neguib's arrival was the National Unionist Party (NUP), a party recently formed from previous pro-Egyptian groups that had the backing of the Khatmiyya order and Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani.[82] However, it was resented by the Umma party, the party of the Mahdist *Ansar* movement that opposed union with Egypt. The majority of the Umma party's *Ansari* supporters came from rural regions of northern Sudan, particularly the western provinces of Kordofan and Darfur, although there were also many from the regions of the Blue Nile and White Nile south of Khartoum. Groups of *Ansaris* began to flock into Khartoum and their anti-Egyptian protests ultimately led to a violent clash with the Khartoum police force, which was mainly composed of Khatmiyya and NUP-affiliated Shayqiyya.

One factor which led to the demonstrations running out of control was the less than impermeable nature of security on the outskirts of Khartoum. According to Ahmad Muhammad Yas, a senior NUP figure, the key Umma leader Siddiq al-

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[82] Holt & Daly, *A History*, pp. 138-139.

Mahdi and his fellow Mahdist, Khartoum Police Superintendent Mustafa al-Mahdi, had formed an agreement that neither the police nor the *Ansar* would carry weapons during the protests of 1 March.[83] However, a number of *Ansaris* violated this agreement and it was not till late on that the police realized that what they thought had been sticks wrapped in leather carried by the *Ansar* were swords.[84] The trial held into the events rebuked Mustafa al-Mahdi for preventing a policeman disarming the *Ansar* on the grounds that it would provoke hostility.[85] These arms included knives concealed by the *Ansar* under their *jallabiyas.* Some Sudanese police officers and historians would later argue that the role of Mustafa al-Mahdi in allowing the *Ansar* to bring their weapons through was part of a British conspiracy to derail Sudanese independence by forcing the introduction of a state of emergency, noting that a number of other senior (and presumably Khatmiyya) officers were transferred out of Khartoum just before the riots occurred.[86] However, if this was the case then it had tragically ironic consequences for Mustafa al-Mahdi himself, who later died amidst the riots.

The actual outbreak of the Neguib riots also demonstrated the frailties of the police riot control procedures. One crucial factor appears to have been that the police magistrate, in the north-west end of the square, was not equipped with any public address apparatus and was thus incapable of communicating a command to disperse to the various groups of *Ansar* located within it.[87] As a result, tear gas was resorted to without an effective warning. The results were not just ineffectual in dispersing the *Ansar* but in fact extremely provocative, as Luce recalled:

> Owing to a high wind the gas was only partially effective, but it was sufficient to enable the police to reform. But it also inflamed the temper of the crowd without disabling them.[88]

According to the report delivered at the trial, ten to fifteen minutes of chaos followed in which eleven policemen were killed by either sticks or knives.[89] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*

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[83] Ahmad Muhammad Yas, *Mudhakhirat* [Memoirs], (Khartoum, 2001), p. 260.
[84] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 2 March 1954.
[85] HC Maj.Ct/14/1954 AC/CP/181/1954, 8 Aug. 1954, NRO 2.D.1.Fasher (A) 32/1/1.
[86] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn,* p. 64.
[87] HC Maj.Ct/14/1954 AC/CP/181/1954, 8 Aug. 1954 NRO 2.D.1.Fasher (A) 32/1/1.
[88] Draft Chapter by Luce, SAD 830/1/44.

recalled that the protestors surrounded Mustafa al-Mahdi's car and smashed the windows and that when he got out of it he was stoned, axed and knifed to death.[90] McGuigan died after having been reportedly stabbed 36 times.[91] The police were at this stage so overrun that they could not even recover their injured[92] and were being forced to jump into the river.[93] The engagement was turning into a ritual humiliation of the police, with one of the rioters taking a police baton and horse and riding around in front of the fallen police declaring 'criminals, fear the police…these soldiers standing in front of you'.[94] However, the police, with the assistance of the palace guard, eventually regrouped and drove the *Ansar* away, firing indiscriminately at the retreating crowd.[95]

According to Luce, 11 police were killed and 66 injured during the riots, with about 21 civilians killed and 45 injured.[96] Thus in the very capital of the colonial state, its agents of law and order had proved to be supremely vulnerable. The bloody response to the victimization of the police by the *Ansar* gave ample evidence of how this vulnerability, brought about by the inability of the colonial state to provide an over-arching system of security and effective 'soft' methods of control, caused violent action by its police forces that it could do little to prevent.

The nature of the police response to the riots was also evidence of the colonial government's inability to prevent police action being prejudiced by political, ethnic and religious agendas. The days following the Neguib Riots witnessed an immediate and violent series of reprisals against westerners and *Ansaris* on the part of the Khartoum police. Taking full advantage of the declaration of emergency powers permitting the police and army to ignore *habeus corpus* and keep prisoners without charge for up to 14 days, they had arrested 300 westerners and *Ansaris* by 5 March, including prominent Umma party figures.[97] Further arrests on 7 March followed the cordoning off and searching of a number of houses at 11

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[89] HC Maj.Ct/14/1954 AC/CP/181/1954, 8 Aug. 1954 NRO 2.D.1.Fasher (A) 32/1/1.
[90] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 2 March 1954.
[91] A. Arthur Memoirs, Feb. 1982, SAD 726/7/32.
[92] W. Baillie-Strong to 'Kaid', 11 March 1954, SAD 895/1/1-3.
[93] Governor Bahr al-Ghazal Province to B. A. Carlisle, 8 April 1954, SAD 725/5/49-50.
[94] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 2 March 1954.
[95] A. Arthur Memoirs, SAD 726/7/32; Yas, *Mudhakhirat*, p. 261; *al-Umma*, 3 March 1954.
[96] Draft Chapter by Luce, SAD 830/1/44.
[97] *Al-Ra'i al 'Aam*, 2-5 March 1954.

o'clock in the evening, which led to the discovery of sticks and knives.[98] Even more arrests were made outside Khartoum, notably in Hassaheissa and Sennar, where the trumpet-blowers held responsible for inciting the *Ansar* crowds were taken into custody.[99] There were also arrests in Atbara, where a key Umma politician was seized,[100] and in Shendi, where two young Zaghawa *Ansaris* working on an agricultural project were interned on account of incriminating battle wounds.[101] The series of arrests finally ended with the termination of emergency law on 11 March.[102]

This all occurred within the context of sectarian tension heightened by the fact that the rioters had mainly been *Ansaris* and the Khartoum police (in spite of the role of Mustafa al-Mahdi) mainly Khatmiyya. As Luce observed, this tension 'was further increased by the Ansar belief, justified to some extent, that the police, who were predominantly Khatmiyya, were making use of the state of emergency to avenge themselves unfairly on the Ansar'.[103] The fact that arrests were made in riverain areas such as Khartoum, Atbara, Shendi, Sennar and Hassaheissa but not in Kordofan and Darfur themselves suggests that police activity was restricted on a geographic and sectarian basis (see Chapter 1). The Khatmiyya were not strong enough in the Mahdist stronghold of western Sudan for the police to risk provoking retaliation by making arrests there. In Khartoum, the Umma party newspaper complained that those arrested were being 'packed into prison and they are punished, tortured and they are respected persons exposed to the worst sort of persecution'.[104] Moreover, the police were said to be arresting random Umma politicians and then releasing them when they could find no justification for keeping them.[105]

Once again, the British felt powerless to challenge the strength of the pro-Khatmiyya, pro-NUP feeling within the police. There were fears that the police would reveal evidence linking the key Mahdist figure, Sayyid Siddiq, to the rioting,

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[98] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 8 March 1954. Carrying knives and sticks had been made illegal under Khartoum municipal regulations in the 1940s. See AR 1945 p. 141.
[99] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 8 March 1954.
[100] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 5 March 1954.
[101] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 9 March 1954.
[102] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 11 March 1954.
[103] Draft Chapter by William Luce on the Transitional Period in Sudan, SAD 830/1/48.
[104] *Al-Umma*, March 7 1954.
[105] *Al-Umma*, March 8 1954.

which would have destabilized the political situation even further.[106] Moreover, Luce decided that the British could not declare a constitutional state of emergency as this would cause disaffection in the predominantly Khatmiyya army and police.[107] The position was even more uncomfortable because pro-NUP figures felt that British administrators and police officers were responsible for the catastrophe on account of their inadequate handling of the build-up to the riots.[108] At this point British families were beginning to evacuate,[109] but tensions eased when on 23 May Sayyid Siddiq al-Mahdi was allowed to leave the country having given his evidence to the police prosecutor Fadl el Obeid, as directed by the magistrate.[110] A British intelligence report observed that 'For some days afterwards the reaction of several of the Police Officers was uncertain but the rank and file remained unmoved and, with the peaceful ending of the enquiry shortly afterwards the matter dropped into the background'.[111] It seems that Sudan's newly inaugurated prime minister, Isma'il al-Azhari, may have played a key role in preventing further reprisals, in spite of the insistence of a number of his fellow party members that all Umma Party politicians be arrested.[112] Nevertheless, the events before and after the Neguib Riots represented clear evidence of the colonial government's limited ability to exercise an impartial and controlled monopoly on violence.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the British administration continued throughout the colonial era to cherish the personalized, quasi-militaristic styles of policing that it had fostered in Sudan, knowing that the creation of a more professional system would pose a threat to its own authority. The result was that it made little attempt to transform and 'govern' its own police force; thus the police force became a means by which the colonial state's agents could use the state, just as

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[106] Draft Chapter by Luce, SAD 830/1/48.
[107] Draft Chapter by Luce, SAD 830/1/64.
[108] V. Eyre to his mother, 9 Aug. 1954, SAD 693/2/66.
[109] Draft Chapter by Luce, 830/1/64.
[110] PIS May-June 1954, TNA FO 371/108328.
[111] PIS May-June 1954, TNA FO 371/108328.
[112] Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: the Case of Sudan* (London, 1978), p. 81.

much as the state could use them. On a macrocosmic level, this refusal to create a heavily institutionalized force was reflected in the continuing domination of the non-British higher ranks of the police by members of the same ethnic groups from the riverain area to Khartoum's north who had also tended to monopolize other non-British positions in the government. Thus the state in its policing of Sudan often reflected both the prejudices and agendas of this particular group. Furthermore, the political and religious affiliations of this group to the Khatmiyya sufi order and its political ally, the NUP, hampered the capacity of the colonial state to use the police against these particular groups when it wished. It also led to the police acting arbitrarily against the sectarian and political opponents of the Khatmiyya, as during the Hag 'Abdallah riots of 1947 and Neguib Riots of 1954. However, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter, police identity was not simply defined by the historic dominance of the Shayqiyya but also, particularly after World War II, by a growing professional ethos appropriated from senior British police officers – although this would simply cause further tensions within the colonial state due to the Political Service's distrust of police institutionalization.

The administration's unwillingness to set up a well-regulated and institutionalized police force was also demonstrated by its establishment of independent police forces attached to the Native Administration, which again it had little commitment to regulating and which often tipped the balance in various local conflicts. The fact that the colonial government created a well-armed police force which it made little effort to regulate also facilitated the abuse of state power by corrupt and violent members of the force, and 'fake' policemen whose capacity to impersonate the state served the ultimate judgement on its divided identity. However, resorts to violence by the police whilst they were performing duties such as riot control, suppressing rebellion and everyday criminal policing, were also a result of the vulnerability in which they were left by the Condominium regime's neglect of their development. Thus by proudly clinging to its own power the administration had sapped the overall power, independence and impartiality of the colonial state.

3 'What the men are crying out for is leadership': The Khartoum Police Strike of 1951 and the battle for administrative control[1]

On 4 June 1951, the commandant of the Khartoum police, Leslie James, learnt of a secret meeting being held by 70 members of his constabulary to discuss the formation of a police federation. Incensed by the plotting, he summoned the Khartoum force's reserve company to break up the gathering. Although it dispersed without trouble, the disgruntled policemen regrouped to form a march near the Khartoum North Workers' Club, chanting anti-imperial and Communist slogans; before it eventually ended, the demonstration was accompanied by 300 members of the public. On the next day, 5 June, James dismissed 11 of the demonstrators, thereby provoking a strike of all 700 police constables in Khartoum; on the following day they were joined by the local railway police and most of the warders from Khartoum Province Prison. It was only after a further week, during which the SDF was called in to maintain order, that the striking policemen returned to duty. Robertson, as civil secretary and acting governor-general, rapidly called for a commission of enquiry (subsequently known as the Watson commission[2]) which made scathing criticisms of both the methods and personalities of the professional British police officers in Sudan. The result was the summary dismissal of James, his deputy G. F. Harrison, as well as 222 of the strikers.[3] Although termed a 'mutiny' by British figures such as James, Roberston, Harrison and Watson this event is universally remembered by Sudanese policemen – as well as by Sudanese and non-Sudanese academics – as a strike. What do these events tell us about the relationship between the Political Service and the professional police officers in Sudan, and between these British officers and their Sudanese constables? And how did the police relate to the wider nationalist movement?

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[1] A shortened version of this chapter has already been published. See William Berridge, 'What the men are crying out for is leadership: the Khartoum Police Strike of 1951 and the battle for administrative control', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 39 2011, pp. 121-142.
[2] Watson was a former member of the Political Service who joined the Legal Department in 1944.
[3] PIS May/June 1951,TNA FO 371/90109; Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/13-30.

The fact that the official custodians of the colonial state went on strike against it compels us to be wary of understanding the Sudanese police as the faithful collaborators of the colonial state in its battle against the emergent nationalist movement. Anderson and Killingray observe that colonial states struggled to maintain morale amongst their police forces, which were stigmatized by nationalists for their role in stifling public protest.[4] This proved particularly true in India, where two police strikes in 1945 and 1947 heralded the demise of colonial rule.[5] However, this chapter will demonstrate that Sudanese policemen also forged a more positive identification with the nationalist movement and particularly the labour movement, whose organizational tactics the police strikers borrowed. The strike did not emerge out of a vacuum, as Sudanese policemen had been preparing for action since before their officers issued a memorandum to the governor-general in 1948, demanding improved terms of service, housing, and the establishment both of a separate department for the police as well as a 'federation' to represent their grievances. Sudanese policemen and the nationalist movement both aspired to the establishment of a force that, rather than being used to crush nationalist demonstrators, would act more often as a tool of modern government and protect society against crime. Nevertheless, the strike ultimately failed to secure sufficient support amongst the nationalist movement to put significant pressure on the British, which probably reflected the fact that the police remained trapped by their role in arresting nationalist leaders and subduing demonstrations. This chapter will demonstrate that whilst the limited achievements the strike did achieve revealed the failure of the colonial state to establish a complete social divide between the police and the nationalist and labour elite at the centre, its overall failure revealed the colonial state's success in dividing the force between centre and periphery (see Chapter 1).

The strike also offers an opportunity to examine the various ideological divides within the colonial state and the manner in which they impacted on police practice. It has been argued that colonial states in post-war Africa increasingly attempted to develop their systems of governance so as to incorporate their subjects as individuals within a wider social body.[6] Historian of late colonial Africa have

[4] Anderson & Killingray, 'Policing the end of empire', p. 9.
[5] Arnold, 'Police Power', p. 56.
[6] Cooper, *Decolonization and African* Society, p. 15.

argued that in doing so they offered increasing scope to technical departments, such as the police, to exercise wider authority throughout colonized territories.[7] However, it will be demonstrated here that the Political Service sought to delay this process by emphasizing the social, cultural and ethnic divisions between Sudan and Britain, and within Sudan itself. The administration used the strike as an opportunity to scapegoat the British police professionals who had slowly begun to turn the Sudanese police into a modern crime-fighting force; it also used it to vindicate the administrative viewpoint that Sudan was not prepared for a modern and bureaucratic system of policing. In particular, the attempts of both the Legal Department and the police professionals to create a more disciplined and legally regulated force were held to indicate an overly governmentalist approach inappropriate in Sudan. The debates over personal responsibility that emerged in the aftermath of the strike should therefore be understood as an expression of various ideological and political conflicts between the colonial administration and these professional officers. Acrimonious debates with regard to the 'character' required of British professionals and Sudanese policemen also concealed the more instrumental grievances of the police rank and file with regard to housing, pay and service conditions.

British police professionals such as James and Harrison had made the administration aware of these grievances, but their complaints against the administration also involved a wider conflict of ideas concerning the development of the force. The Watson commission had attempted to depict the Police Strike as a result of divisions between the British police officers and their Sudanese subordinates, but emphasis was placed on these divisions partly to conceal many of the shared grievances that these parties had against the administration. Educated Sudanese officers, as well as British professionals such as James, wished to create a police force in Sudan that was literate, professionalized, independent and non-military. British professionals strove to take police authority out of the hands of the Political Service and distribute it between an independent police department and the newly emerging units of local government. Meanwhile the Political Service tended to obstruct all such developments, fearing that an independent and educated force would incline towards nationalism, and preferring instead to see police forces both as

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[7] Anderson & Killingray, 'Policing the End of Empire', pp. 7-8. Leonardi, 'Knowing Authority', p. 48.

personalized retinues of local administrators and offshoots of the army whose first priority was to guard the security of the colonial state. Eventually, the colonial state won out, exploiting the police's lack of support in the nationalist movement. Although limited concessions were made towards policemen's material grievances, the strike was used as a pretext to reverse all the political gains achieved between 1945 and 1951 and to put control over the police back into the hands of the administration.

The background to the Strike

The increasingly governmentalist role of the Sudanese police

The period following World War II witnessed the emergence of an expanded police force in Sudan led by technocratic professionals who slowly began to challenge the anti-governance orientation of the administration. It displayed an expanded central bureaucracy and made more attempts to regulate and discipline its officers, as well as to compile information about the various activities deemed criminal by colonial law. The police historians Abu Bakr and Salim acknowledge that the period after the war was a genuine point of transformation for the Sudanese police.[8] New branches were created at the summit of the administration in Khartoum, with a new headquarters and complete control over the Khartoum Police as well as, theoretically, over the police in the provinces.[9] Meanwhile a number of new professional officers were hired, including J. M. Kyles and L. M. Mackay from the Palestine Police. More importantly, a number of officers were hired from the Metropolitan Police in London, including D. G. Brown, Leslie James and Gordon Price.[10] A new system of crime returns was introduced, to be compiled month by month and district by district by the local police officer, and staff at the police headquarters were encouraged to make more regular visits to their colleagues in the provinces.[11]

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[8] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 104, Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 131-133.
[9] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 104.
[10] Note on 'Police Transfers', 3 June 1943, NRO Dakhlia (2) 99/1/2.
[11] *Proceedings, Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan*, Proceedings of the Third Session, 23-28 May 1945, debate on 'The State of Public Security', pp. 21-27.

The role of officers arriving from Scotland Yard, especially James, was crucial. James was not impressed by the lax system of policing that had been operated by the Political Service. As superintendent of Khartoum District Police in 1946, he observed with some exasperation that 'As no statistics have been compiled in previous years no reliable statement concerning the growth of drug traffic can be made'. He added that 'the traffic in Hashish is much heavier than ever' and that 'the difficulties besetting the Police in checking traffic control are almost insurmountable'.[12] The next year, the governor of Khartoum observed that the police were now 'very active' in making raids on drug addicts and traffickers, having been required by Kyles, the commissioner of police, to make a special effort in this regard.[13]

This newly governmentalist police ethos also involved a far more systematic attempt to regulate the police themselves. James, as commandant in Kassala between 1947 and 1950, made a much greater attempt to 'discipline' the force than any of his predecessors in the administration. In his report for 1948, he observed that he had punished 693 of the 1,000 officers in the force for 'breaches of discipline'.[14] Out of these, James dismissed 76 for misconduct, 9 for inefficiency and had 11 sentenced by court. He was almost as strict in the next two years, imposing a total of 1143 disciplinary punishments, 94 dismissals and 22 court sentences.[15] In a debate held in 1982 for Durham University's *Condominium Remembered* series, Gawain Bell, a former administrator, criticized James's observations about the 'poor discipline' of the police. 'I find it hard to subscribe to that', he remarked.[16] In reply, James said that

> These would be offences of drunkenness on duty, or slovenly appearance, that kind of thing. They weren't serious offences like corruption or giving false evidence in court.[17]

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[12] Report on Dangerous Drugs traffic, note by Leslie James, 19 Feb. 1946, NRO KH2.Prov. A. 10/1/3.
[13] Report on Dangerous Drugs traffic, note by J. Longe, 13 March 1947 Governor Khartoum, NRO KH2.Prov. A. 10/1/3.
[14] L. James, Commandant of Police Kassala to Governor of Kassala, 19 Feb. 1948, SAD 769/8/12.
[15] ibid.
[16] Deborah Lavin (ed.), *The Condominium Remembered: Proceedings of the Durham Historical Records Conference, 1982. vol 1., The Making of the Sudanese state* (Durham 1991). See 'In Discussion- Law', p. 90.
[17] Ibid, p. 89.

However, the numerous court cases mentioned in James's report were presumably for the more serious type of offence. Thus it was clear that he did not have the same resigned attitude towards 'indiscipline' and 'corruption' as his counterparts in the administration (see Chapter 2). This conflict of attitudes would prove highly relevant in the debates that followed the Police Strike.

The 'secret struggle' between administration, judiciary and police

Debates about the administration of the police force in the post-war period would reveal precisely how acute the ideological and political divides between the various branches of the colonial state had become. Although the police were gradually becoming a more centralized force in the aftermath of World War II, the issue of who controlled them was in reality a very thorny one. Control was contested between administrators, on the one hand, who feared the effects that professionalization would have on the 'martial' qualities of policemen and more importantly their political malleability, and – on the other – modernizing British professionals and judges who strove for an independent, apolitical force. Mu'tader states that at this time a three-way 'secret struggle' over who should control the police was being waged between Kyles, the commissioner of police, Sir Charles Cummings, the legal adviser to the government, and the provincial governors.[18]

The 1948 police memorandum provoked particularly bitter criticism of the manner in which professionalization had affected the 'character' of police officers. Hancock, the Governor of Kassala, argued that

> I would deprecate any further improvement of terms of service… I believe that we may be recruiting our police officers from too highly educated persons and that it would be better for the majority of our officers to be less highly qualified academically and perhaps endowed with more robust physical qualities. The Legal Department are demanding high standards of police procedure in the courts, but it is surely more important for a policeman to be able to quell a riot or deal with violent criminals.[19]

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[18] Mu'tadar, *Kitab*, p. 63.
[19] Governor of Kassala to Robertson, 31 Dec. 1949, SAD 527/7/46.

Furthermore, the administration feared that British professionals sympathized too much with educated policemen and their demands. Robertson wrote to all the provincial governors observing that he was not 'absolutely certain' that 'one or two British officers' were unsympathetic to the police agitation.[20] Hancock responded by stating that James had listened 'too sympathetically' at a meeting held by Sudanese officers concerning their situation, adding that 'he has very strong feelings himself about departmentalising the police, and improving their terms of service'. Gordon Prince, one of the other officers hired from London, 'probably took the same line'.[21] James made his own feelings towards the administration very clear when he observed in a debate with a number of former administrators in 1982:

> I would have to admit myself that there were occasions when I felt the police service was under some pressure from the central government to take action as you might say in support of central government ideas. There is a danger of the police service seeing itself as an instrument of the government, of becoming over-powerful.[22]

James also observed that 'the police service felt that they would be supported by the courts in adopting a very strict objective attitude and we would have expected an offence to be proved to the hilt before we instituted proceedings, whether or not it was convenient to the government'.[23] This reflected some of the support that the British police professionals had from the Legal Department, who were used to criticizing administrators for their abuses of legal authority and particularly of *habeus corpus*.[24]

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[20] Robertson to Governors, 24 Dec. 1949, SAD 528/7/39.
[21] Hancock to Robertson, 31 Dec. 1949, SAD 528/7/46.
[22] Lavin (ed.), *Condominium Remembered*, p. 90.
[23] Ibid, p. 90.
[24] See Chapter 1.

'The last thing that we should relinquish to weaker hands': The Marshall Report and debates about centralizing the police force

Attempts to reform provincial administration in the late 1940s offered more scope for the various branches of the colonial state to vie with each other for authority in the field of law and order. In 1949, the Sudan government hired A. H. Marshall, city treasurer of Coventry, to prepare a report on the feasibility of establishing local councils in Sudan's provinces to replace British DCs, thus adapting the old system of Native Administration into a more regulated form of local government.[25] Amongst other issues, the Marshall Report would focus on the possibility of devolving police powers on these councils. The debates this provoked would demonstrate the manner in which the Political Service used the notion of regional diversity to stall the expansion of the central police into Sudan's provinces.

In the aftermath of the war police professionals had been making strenuous efforts to bridge the gap between central and Native Administration police forces. In 1945 courses were introduced in the provinces so that members of the regular police would train Native Administration retainers in their work. In the late 1940s local authorities in major northern towns such as al-Ubayyid and Kassala were already in charge of corps of night-watchmen who were assigned to specific quarters to prevent theft, continuing the 1930s policy of granting control of such watches to the Native Administration (see Chapter 1).[26] In 1947 Kyles, the commissioner of police, issued a memorandum recommending that control over the police in the provinces be transferred from the DCs to the newly formed Local Authorities that were intended to replace the Native Administration.[27] Thus the regular police and local administration would be merged, as had been suggested in 1945 by Local Authority officials on the Advisory Council.[28] The inclination of police professionals to devolve control over policing to elected or semi-elected local bodies reflected the desire of police professionals to establish a 'civil' system of policing akin to that which existed in Britain.

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[25] Martin Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 257.
[26] Gawain Bell, *Shadows*, p. 168.
[27] A. H. Marshall, *Report on Local Government in Sudan* (Khartoum, 1949), p. 62.
[28] *Proceedings, Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan*, Proceedings of the Third Session, 23-28 May 1945, debate on 'The State of Public Security', pp. 21-27.

In spite of these desires, the role of both the District Commissioner and the Native Administration in policing remained more significant at the time of Marshall's tour of Sudan's provinces. As he made his report, Marshall acknowledged that

> In a few areas, operation control is by local commandants, but in the main District Commissioners control day-to-day work. Policeman guard the merkaz [provincial headquarters], accompany the District Commissioner on trek, drive the merkaz vehicles and do administrative work for the District Commissioner such as the supervision of prisons.[29]

Other functions that the police continued to exercise in the post-war era were accompanying the DC on town rides and guarding members of British administrators' families.[30] Thus the police still acted in the provinces as administrative assistants for the DC as had been the case in the pre-World War II period. The relationship between the police and DC remained strong since in all but the most urbanized of districts the latter still had magisterial roles.[31] In spite of the plan to merge government and Native Administration forces under local authorities, the outsourcing of policing to the retainers of the Native Administration also continued. These remained, in Marshall's words, 'a quasi-tribal police force attached to the tribal hierarchy, acting as messengers for chiefs, and doing a considerable amount of public security work, including a deal of the arrest of wanted persons'.[32] G. M. Tibbs recalls that in the rural areas of late colonial Sudan *Nazirs* and *'Umdas* remained responsible for tax-collection and law and order, for which they still possessed 'their own tribal police force'.[33] In 1947 55,598 criminal cases were dealt with by Native and Chief's Courts compared to 22,442 that were resolved by government courts in accordance with the Sudan Penal Code.[34]

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[29] Marshall, *Report on Local Government*, p. 60.
[30] Michael and Anne Tibbs, *Sudan Sunset* (Lynchmere, 1999), p. 65. Graham F. Thomas (ed.), *The Sudan Journal of Ismay Thomas* (Lewes, 2000), p. 89.
[31] Marshall, *Report on Local Government*, p. 60.
[32] Ibid, p. 60.
[33] Tibbs, *Sudan Sunset*, p. 60.
[34] GGAR 1947, pp. 18-19.

Marshall advised in his report against an immediate devolution of police authority to local authorities, noting that they could be 'swayed by sectional feelings in times of stress' and that most Sudanese he had interviewed felt 'that the proposed units of local government either are not fit to take over the police, or would not be fit for many years to come'.[35] Marshall thus recommended devolving police authority to a series of elected supra-local *ad hoc* bodies that would cover the area of, and co-operate with, several local authorities.[36] However, he acknowledged that since in many areas fully constituted local authorities were yet to form the DC would have to retain effective control over the police in these regions for some time. Robertson, addressing the governing council after the publication of the report, exploited its ambiguity and emphasized that the Local Government Advisory Board felt 'the present was far too early for any transference of authority over the Police Force'.[37] He thus recommended successfully to the council that its discussion would be 'premature'.[38]

Lampen, the governor of Darfur, more clearly demonstrated the administration's views on this matter when he wrote to Robertson in the same year. 'Public security', he maintained, 'was our first responsibility on coming into the Sudan and it should be the last thing that we relinquish to weaker hands'.[39] Neither was the Political Service eager to replace the authority of the local councils with the authority of an expanded central force. Rather, the police would continue to remain under the authority of the DC as in the past. Robertson told the governing council that the Marshall Report had advised against a strong, centralized police force in Sudan on a number of grounds. These included the fact that such an apparatus would be too cumbersome and make the chain of control 'too long and too remote'; it would also cause the force to become 'full of paperwork'. Interestingly, Marshall himself argued that a strong central police force could act as a potential weapon of persecution and that 'the methods of a central force would become too unified for a country whose leading characteristic is the great variation between the Districts'.[40] Thus once more the language of Sudan's cultural diversity and potential persecution

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[35] Marshall, *Report on Local Government*, p. 62.
[36] Ibid, p. 60.
[37] *Comments on Dr Marshall's Report on Local Government* (Khartoum, 1949), pp. 17, 20.
[38] Ibid., pp. 17, 20.
[39] Lampen to Robertson, 29 March 1949, SAD 731/3/49.
[40] Marshall, *Report on Local Government*, p. 61.

by the centre was being used by the administration to uphold its own arbitrary hold over power and to stall the extension of central technical departments.

In spite of Robertson's efforts to prevent the extension of a centralized police system into Sudan's provinces, it was exactly this for which Beatty-Pownall, the commissioner of police, was resolved to push. In 1950 he wrote a note that recommended establishing the police as a separate department of government under the civil secretary. Beatty-Pownall acknowledged the wrangles of recent years when he wrote that 'a strong and efficient force is more likely to be obtained under a Police Department than under the present system, whereby nobody really knows who is or who is not in charge of the police'.[41] While he acknowledged that the control exercised by provincial governors over the police must be 'very much closer' than that exercised over employees of other departments, he advised that local police officers should have considerably more independence at the district level.[42] 'We are proposing now', he suggested, 'that the District Commissioner should have no control over the district force except by virtue of his powers as a magistrate. This means that the police officer will be forced to act very much more on his own initiative'.[43] Beatty-Pownall further argued that since the DC would disappear under the Marshall report, the state should rapidly set itself to training police officers to replace them in exercising security roles at district level.[44] Robertson acknowledged that at the recent governor's meeting it had been agreed that the 'time was ripe' for a police department in 'most parts of the country' and thus Beatty-Pownall's proposal provided a 'good basis for consideration'.[45] However, while passing the latter's note over to a fellow member of the Political Service for review, Robertson observed that his 'chief worry' was that 'the Governor (and District Commissioner in the out district) should have adequate power over the police force at his disposal'.[46] One governor, Hancock, had argued that the creation of a police department should only occur when there were sufficient personnel with 'sufficient knowledge of the

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[41] Note by C. Beatty-Pownall on 'The re-organisation of the Sudan Police as a Department', 14 March 1950, SAD 726/2/3-10.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Robertson to Governors, 30 March 1950, SAD 726/2/2.
[46] Robertson to Arthur, 30 March 1950, SAD 726/2/1.

country',[47] again reflecting the administration's belief in its unique understanding of the Sudanese. Thus the lines of conflict between administrators and police professionals, between local knowledge and technical expertise, were clearly drawn before the strike.

Police grievances

The influence of nationalism and the clamour for a 'civil' police

The behavior of the Sudanese constabulary in the post-war period demonstrated that, far from being isolated from Sudanese society at large, they were often strongly influenced by it. The fact that Sudanese policemen came from the same relatively homogenous riverain social groups which provided the basis of the nationalist movement in Sudan (see Chapter 1) contributed towards this. Although the influence of the Shayqiyya riverain ethnic group in the government police force often led it to identify with a narrow religious and sectarian agenda (see Chapter 2), these officers at times associated with broader trends within the nationalist movement. Both policemen and members of Sudan's educated elite pushed for a system of 'civil policing' akin to that which supposedly existed in Britain, in which the police force would be used to protect rather than oppress the public.[48] 'We consider that the occupation of the CID with political business' the newspaper *al-Rai' al-'Aam* commented in 1948, 'makes them miss many opportunities to uncover the traces of crimes and thefts'.[49] 'Should we accept,' the same newspaper argued two months later, 'that you apply in our country the worst of what exists in the regimes of Eastern governments even though it is said in the Governing Council that our regime corresponds with the most modern of administrative regimes in Britain while the police go out with cudgels (*hirawat*) and bombs and bullets to clash with demonstrations?'[50] This represented the capacity of Sudanese nationalists to 'mimic' colonial values in order to expose the ambivalence of colonial discourse.

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[47] Hancock to Robertson, SAD 528/7/46.
[48] *Proceedings, Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan*, Proceedings of the Third Session, 23-28 May 1945, debate on 'The State of Public Security', pp. 21-27.
[49] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 3 Sep. 1948.
[50] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 20 Dec. 1948.

However, members of the force were not insensitive to these criticisms. In the secret meetings held before the Police Strike, members of the force protested at being forced to 'beat those demonstrating in the cause of freedom', and the 1948 police memorandum demanded the establishment of a better relationship between police and public.[51] Hussein Hamo recalls that while he was an officer in Khartoum Bahri in the late 1940s, he policed a nationalist demonstration organized by various parties calling for the end of colonialism. Hamo allowed the demonstration to proceed from the Graduates' Club to the Workers' Club and then back again, in spite of what he claims were repeated demands from Harrison, his British officer, that he 'go out there and beat those people'.[52]

Another index of the extent to which Sudanese policemen were open to wider social influences was their mimicry of the techniques practiced by various sectors within the Sudanese nationalist and labour movement. Members of the police were inspired by groups such as the Sudan Workers Trade Unions Federation, the Sudan Students Union and the Unions of Farmers and Women, all of which were using the power of education and literacy to gain concessions from the government.[53] Thus Sudanese policemen increasingly attempted to facilitate the education of the force. This was the fruit of the efforts of senior officers such as Ahmed Gelly and Bilal Awad, who encouraged an emphasis on recruiting more literate and hence more politically aware individuals, touring schools in search of candidates who could do the three month training course at Omdurman. By 1950, the first ten of these had graduated and immediately began to arrange the syndicalist mobilization of the police, learning from the methods used by trade unionists.[54] Each of them formed their own secret cell located in the various police districts (*gisms*) in Khartoum, in addition to one cell in Port Sudan. These started publishing pamphlets demanding increased support for literacy in the police, the administration's greatest bugbear.[55]

The aspirations of these men to achieve a status similar to that of other labour groups were frustrated when the government refused their memorandum of 1948.

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[51] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, pp. 6-8.
[52] Hamo, 'Nafidha 'ala hadiqa al-madi', p. 10.
[53] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 6.
[54] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 64; Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 6.
[55] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta* pp. 149-150; Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh,* p. 8.

This demanded the creation of a police federation akin to the one that existed in Britain, a new police law, the promotion of Sudanese within the police, more courses at the Police College, and generally improve service conditions.[56] Their pamphlets complained particularly bitterly about policemen being housed in their horses' stables and whole police families living in a three-by-three metre room.[57] All in all, the police were frustrated that they had not won similar concessions granted under new labour legislation to other workers, not least their clerical counterparts, who had far less dangerous, time-consuming and unpopular work.[58] Thus these men saw the education of new generations of policemen not as a means of spreading colonial values but of gaining their own rights and of reducing their dependency on their colonial master.

The frustrated aspirations of the officer corps

The Police Strike came at a time when professional Sudanese officers were gradually rising through the ranks of the force and trying to forge a more prosperous position for Sudanese policemen in the colonial world. They identified with the demands of British police specialists for increased professionalization and departmental status; and they were frustrated by the efforts of the Political Service both to favour the administration and stall the ascent of Sudanese officers to positions of higher rank.

The prospect of Sudanese officers rising through the ranks was initially treated with some disdain by the British. In 1939, predicting an upsurge in nationalism in Sudan similar to that in other 'Oriental' countries, Penney, the director of public security, observed that 'Political development of this sort eventually translates itself into political agitation and presents practical police problems which cannot effectively be solved by Sudanese officers'.[59] Sudanese were thus initially kept from serving as police commandants in the key centres of urban nationalism until after World War II, although in 1940 Yahya Omran was appointed as commandant of police in the more remote region of Darfur.[60]

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[56] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 64; Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 6.
[57] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 8.
[58] Robertson to Provincial Governors, 24 Dec. 1949, 528/7/39 SAD; Governor Blue Nile Province to Robertson, 3 Jan. 1950, 528/7/43, SAD.
[59] Penney to Deputy Assistant Civil Secretary (Personnel), 11 March 1939, NRO CivSec (2) 99/1/3.
[60] *Half-yearly Staff List of the Sudan Government*, April 1940 (Khartoum, 1940), p. 17.

After World War II, the British were forced to make more concessions to the aspirations of this corps of men, partly due to the need to expand the force but more to deal with the expansion of urban nationalism and the urban economy. In 1946, Amin Ahmed Hussein was appointed as a superintendent at police headquarters and Babiker Deeb as an assistant superintendent to Leslie James in the Khartoum police, while a number of Sudanese were appointed to superintendent, assistant superintendent or 'police *mamur*' roles throughout the country.[61] Amin Hussein would go on to become the commandant of police in Blue Nile Province in 1949, where he would make strenuous efforts to improve service conditions (see Chapter 4). By the time the Police Strike occurred in 1951 there had been a further wave of Sudanizations, with six Sudanese being appointed to important positions in the police headquarters in 1950, including Babiker Deeb as the commandant of the CID.[62]

Nevertheless, individuals in both the British administration *and* Police Department expressed distrust towards promoted Sudanese officers. A note by the director of public security on serving British and Sudanese police officers in 1943 cast doubt on the capacity of a number of the serving Sudanese police officers for promotion. Ahmed Geili was described as 'potentially competent if properly supervised and driven' but 'ambitious, conceited and excitable'.[63] Robertson observed in 1951 of Khalifa Mahjoub, who had recently been appointed as a Police Commandant in Upper Nile, that 'The trouble...is that he is really a bounder and I think it is on the social side that he falls down'.[64] As civil secretary, Robertson was wary of entrusting police posts seen as politically sensitive to Sudanese officers. Upon the transfer of Amin Ahmed Hussein in 1950, he decided to send him to Kassala, as it could be 'more easily Sudanised' than the other provinces. Robertson argued that 'Khartoum and Northern are more likely to have labour or political troubles; B.N.P. has its rather peculiar Gezira problems; in the Southern provinces the organization of more professional police forces requires the guidance of British

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[61] *Half-yearly Staff List of the Sudan Government*, Sep. 1946 (Khartoum, 1946), pp. 10-11, 68-72.
[62] *Sudan Government List*, Sep. 1950 (Khartoum, 1950), pp. 15, 77-88.
[63] 'Note on British and Sudanese Police Officers and Established Proposals for 1943', NRO Civ Sec (1) 99/1/3.
[64] Robertson to Longe, Governor Malakal, 22 March 1951, SAD 529/3/2.

officers for some time yet'.[65] When serving at Wad Medani in 1948, the same officer was described as 'very anti-British' by Winifred Johnson, wife of the DC there.[66]

It also seems that the British thwarted the ambitions of Sudanese police officers by favouring the administrative officers in terms of both potential for advancement and service conditions. The result of this was that a number of police officers, who had been trained jointly with administrators between 1937 and 1948 (see Chapter 1), only entered the police because they could not find posts in the administration. In 1949 the governor of Khartoum observed that there were 20 police officers who had been 'compelled' to join the police on these grounds.[67] Henderson observed in the same year that this had happened to Ahmad Widalla, who 'passed quite high up and is in my opinion much better suited to be an administrative officer than a police officer'.[68] The implication was that the administrative service was an elite service, whereas the police was an inferior service and was to be treated as such.

As already noted, just like British officers such as James, these educated Sudanese officers also wanted the police to be a civil body under a genuinely independent department (*maslaha*) run by police professionals.[69] This was also observed by Beatty-Pownall in his note of 1950, when he stated that officers who had been through the police training school and studied on specialized courses to the United Kingdom 'all feel that they are part of a technical service, which should be commanded and directed by its own technical officers'.[70] Part of the reason for this was that departmental status would mean a greater number of high-ranking posts for police officers. Beatty-Pownall also argued that these officers particularly resented being responsible to DCs, since these British administrators were often a lot younger than themselves.[71] Thus it can be seen at this time that officers working in the riverain centre possessed a clear sense of institutional identity and institutional

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[65] Robertson to Hancock, 16 Feb. 1950, SAD 528/7/29.
[66] Winnifred Johnson Diaries, 13 May 1948, SAD 752/3/10.
[67] Longe, Acting Governor Khartoum to Commandant of Police Khartoum, 9 Feb. 1950, SAD 528/7/53.
[68] Henderson to Robertson, 31 Dec. 1949, SAD 528/7/40.
[69] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 6.
[70] Robertson to Arthur, 30 March 1950, SAD 726/2/1.
[71] Ibid. The same point is also made by K. D. D. Henderson, *Set Under Authority* (Somerset, 1987), p. 147.

interests. These officers also had a clear set of grievances against the administration which defined the context in which the strike would occur.

Police motives in the immediate build-up to the strike

After the officers' memorandum of 1948, the British administration was complacent about the notion that discontent could spread from police officers to the rank and file and NCOs. This probably reflected typical administrative presumptions that it was only a minority of the most educated Sudanese that objected to colonial rule. When the officers' discontent was discussed at the governors' meeting of 1950, it was agreed that 'there is little danger of the disgruntled officers affecting the morale of the lower ranks',[72] in spite of senior British police officers warning that this would happen.[73] The Police Strike demonstrated the extent of the governors' misjudgement: the committee which carried out the strike was composed of ten privates (*anfar*) and one corporal (*onbashi*), while the 'shadow committee' set up to manage it included three privates (*anfar*), four sergeant-majors (*sol*), a sergeant (*shawish*) and a lance-corporal (*wakil*).[74]

There were numerous reasons for the spread of police discontent to the NCOs and rank and file. There was a great deal of homogeneity between the officer corps and other ranks – both Sudanese officers in Khartoum North, for instance, were promoted rankers.[75] A number of *muawins*, lower-ranking officers promoted from the ranks, had sympathized with the 1948 memorandum.[76] The fact that no strike action occurred in Wad Medani and al-Ubayyid reflected the fact that there were Sudanese commandants in these towns with whom the strikers sympathized.[77] As demonstrated above, it was literate rank and file officers recruited by Awad and Gelly who first started syndicalist mobilization in the ranks of the police. All eleven of the strike leaders came from riverain Sudan, and seven from Northern Province,[78] so it is likely that they would have sympathized with the nationalists and labour

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[72] Robertson to Hancock, Governor Kassala, 16 Feb. 1950, SAD 528/7/29.
[73] Notes on meeting of provincial governors, 9 Feb. 1950, SAD 528/7/54.
[74] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 18; Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 2.
[75] Report of the Watson Commission, SAD 691/6/26.
[76] Wallis to Robertson, 3 Jan. 1950, SAD 528/7/45.
[77] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 21.
[78] Note by N. McInnes, Assisant Civil Secretary (Prisons), on 'The Prisons Service in the recent mutiny', Khartoum June 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.

agitators who also came mainly from this area. Again, this reflected the failure of the British to play 'divide and rule' in this regard.

Even as the strike was occurring, British officials did not do justice to its deep roots in Sudan itself and its relationship to wider trends in Sudanese nationalism. This was due to the tendency of officials to attribute unrest in Sudan to malevolent 'outside' causes and to take public gossip for intelligence. This led them to attribute more influence than was warranted to the machinations of the *Ashiqqa'*, the militantly pro-Egyptian wing of the National Unionist Party, and the influence of Communism in Sudan. The official intelligence report on the strike noted that while many Communists openly encouraged the police during the strike, 'Many Sudanese believe that the outside impetus and the money used to bribe the police to mutiny came from the non-Communist but anti-British Egyptian Government working as usual though their agents, the *Ashiqqa'* leaders'.[79] Robertson noted during the strike: 'the latest news of the Egyptian share in it all is that the *Ashiqqa'* are promising all men who have been dismissed that they will be re-employed by the Egyptians'.[80] In one respect this prophecy was fulfilled, when in March 1952 Egyptian officers came to Sudan to recruit for King Farouq's personal guard and hired 300 to serve in this capacity from 'ex-policemen, detribalised southerners and riff-raff from the market'.[81] However all that this demonstrated was opportunism on the part of the Egyptians and a number of policemen who found themselves out of a job after the strike; it was not conclusive evidence that the Egyptians had inspired the police to mutiny.

The only actors charged in this respect, apart from the Police Committee itself, were Muhammad Sayyid Sallam, the supposedly pro-Communist president of the Trade Unions Federation, and Shafi' Ahmad al-Shaikh, its secretary. These two were each sentenced to a one-year term of imprisonment. Robertson suspected Sallam might be a channel for Communist funds designed to support the police of West Barracks during the strike.[82] Nevertheless, the role of the Communists and

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[79] PIS May-June 1951, TNA FO 371/90109.
[80] Robertson to R. C. Mayall, Sudan Agent, 13 June 1951, SAD 522/15/58.
[81] PIS July-Aug. 1952, TNA FO 371/96847.
[82] Robertson to Commandant Police Khartoum, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.

labour agitators beyond the ranks of those police involved in the strike was equally marginal and opportunistic. *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam* argued that

> No foreign hand would have been able to move this strike if they [the strikers] had not been affected by a number of grievances. If these grievances had been eliminated, no foreign hands – if they did exist – would have been able to affect policemen secure in the knowledge their legal rights were being guaranteed.[83]

The police strikers only established contact with al-Shaikh because they were seeking a lawyer to help them draft a constitution for a police federation and all the other lawyers they had spoken to had turned them down.[84] With regard to the exhortations of the police by Sallam and Shafi', Roberston himself admitted: 'I think the Police Soviet has made a mistake in allowing this, as the great bulk of the rank and file are not for revolution, but want a few minor improvements in their terms of service, and little else'.[85]

Although Robertson was playing down the extent of police grievances, this was an admission that the roots of the problem were somewhat closer to home. Indeed, all of the strikers' demands were apolitical, the first 14 focusing on terms of service. They included salary increases, increases to urban and long service allowances, post-service pensions (as opposed to mere gratuities), longer leave periods, free education for police children until intermediate level, the provision of sanitary housing for both married and unmarried men, alterations to the recruitment and promotion system, and the creation of a body to 'fight for these rights'.[86] The last two demands were prompted by the excessive discipline that the strikers felt had been meted out by their senior British officers, presumably James and Harrison. Item number 15 demanded the abolition of 'revengeful severe punishment'.[87] The administration would give these latter demands particular attention in the subsequent inquiry.

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[83] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 11 June 1951.
[84] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 15.
[85] Robertson to R. C. Mayall, Sudan Agent, 9 June 1951, SAD 522/15/52.
[86] Copy of the strikers' memorandum, SAD 691/6/12.
[87] Ibid.

The Watson Commission, the government-sponsored inquiry into the causes of the strike, concluded that 'there is no evidence of any direct agitation from any external sources, communist or otherwise'.[88] This exposed the misjudgement in British officials' arguments – built on a misconceived and paternalist belief in the gratitude of Sudanese subjects to their British colonizers – that opposition to the colonial state in Sudan could only be stirred up from outside. Rather than passively absorbing external ideologies, the nationalist and educated policemen who inspired the strike were motivated both by the successes of fellow nationalists in other fields of work, as well as frustration at the poverty of their service conditions.

Suppressing the strike

Hopes were high at first that the administration, initially represented by the governor of Khartoum, would reach a favourable deal with the 'Police Committee' speaking for the strikers. However the strike committee would ultimately be undermined by a number of factors, including the loyalty of the SDF, the geographically limited basis of the discontent, lack of support from the nationalist movement, and the success of the British in making the police relatively unpopular among the nationalist population.

The Police Committee began with three initial demands: first, that the policemen who had been dismissed following the meeting that James had broken up should be re-instated; second, that James and 'Abd al-Nur Khalil, another figure associated with excessive 'discipline', should be transferred; and third, that the government should recognize the rights of the police to form a federation. Since the 1948 memorandum specifically mentioned the British Police Federation[89] we should assume that this did not mean a police trade union with the legal power to strike, but simply a representative body to put forward police grievances to the government.

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[88] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/30.
[89] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 64

The first two demands were agreed to quickly, demonstrating James' weak position and ultimate expendability.[90] However, although on 5 June the governor of Khartoum, accompanied by police officers Deeb, Wynne and Picton had met the strikers and promised that all three demands would be met immediately, the government procrastinated in complying with the third.[91] At first the governor insisted that Beatty-Pownall, who did not return until the evening of 7 June, would have to come back to discuss the federation with the committee; and then there were debates as to whether the federation could be appointed directly by the civil secretary or whether the matter would have to be referred to the Legislative Assembly.[92]

At this time a number of factors led to a breakdown of trust between the negotiating parties. Firstly, the arrival of SDF contingents on 7 June to replace striking jailers in Khartoum prison, directly adjoining Khartoum Police Headquarters, led members of the committee to fear that the administration was manoeuvring against them. The governor of Khartoum became more insistent that any 'police federation' should be 'properly formed and legally constituted', which would of course take time. Disagreements over this and the government's suspicion of the influence al-Shaikh was beginning to exercise over the strikers led the negotiations to break down.[93] Eventually the government, frustrated at the rise in thefts, housebreakings and the like that occurred in the absence of the police, used British troops to arrest the strike committee and intern them in Khartoum jail.[94] Although the government was unable to reach an accord with the second committee, formed in the wake of these events, Sudanese intermediaries – first of all Judge Abu Rannat on 10 June, then 'Abdullah Khalil in his position as head of the Legislative Assembly on 11 June – succeeded in persuading the striking policemen to return to work, although no immediate agreement had been made with regard to their grievances.[95]

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[90] Memo on strike by Governor of Khartoum, 22 July 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Memo on strike by Governor of Khartoum, 22 July 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.
al-Ra'i al-'Aam, 11 June 1951.
[94] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 17.
[95] Memo on strike by Governor of Khartoum, 22 July 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.

Why were the British able to de-rail the strike? Firstly, it must be emphasized that the strikers never threatened to use physical force against the government, even though they were sitting upon a large stockpile of arms. The rapid arrival of contingents of the SDF from Gedaref and al-Ubayyid in just under 26 hours and their seizure of the contents of the police arsenal at night as the strikers slept, guaranteed control of the security situation to the British. This said, it is clear that some of the SDF resented being used against the strikers[96] and Robertson admitted it would have been a 'severe test' had the SDF been required to fire on the police.[97]

Another indicator of the strike's limited success was its failure to spread outside the principal towns of the central riverain region. As mentioned above, the police held out from striking in Wad Medani and al-Ubayyid because of the presence of Sudanese commandants there, although the Wad Medani police sent a telegram of support.[98] A group of 45 policemen at Atbara and a large proportion of the Port Sudan police also went on strike in support, although this happened in the days after the Khartoum strike had already been ended.[99] There was no support for the strike in the west or south, in spite of the strike committee attempting to reach out to the police in these regions. One of its demands was that northern and southern rates of pay should be equalised.[100] However, the fact that policemen in the south were unable to react to this attempt to reach out to them demonstrated the success of the administration in fracturing the police force by leaving the educated professionals to police the riverain core and adopting a more administrative form of policing in the peripheries (see Chapter 1). It was the same case in the west, where the governor of Darfur reported that 'The police themselves had very little interest in the affair and did not understand it'.[101] Thus the Police Strike had failed to unite officers from central and peripheral backgrounds.

Most importantly, the strike did not receive widespread support from any sectors of the nationalist movement other than the Communist Party. Although the head of the taxi union rented 150 houses at his own expense to shelter the families of

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[96] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*. 15.
[97] Robertson to Whistler, 21 June 1951, SAD 529/5/25.
[98] PIS May-June 1951, TNA FO 371/90109.
[99] PIS May-June 1951, TNA FO 371/90109.
[100] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 14.
[101] Governor Darfur to Robertson, 16 June 1951, SAD 529/5/33.

the strikers after the government had cast them out of the police barracks,[102] no other branches of the labour movement went on strike.[103] Nor did the strike receive any support from the mainstream political parties.[104] All of the northern political parties during the period leading up to full Sudanese independence in 1956 were set on achieving this goal by peaceful means, a tactic which ultimately proved successful. The Legislative Assembly was at the time dominated by the Umma party, since the pro-Egyptian Unionist parties had boycotted the 1948 elections. The Umma would have had little reason to support the strike as they had a relatively close alliance with the British;[105] in any case the majority of police officers were Khatmiyya. This is probably why 'Abdullah Khalil, who was also head of the Umma party, told the strikers: 'You do not understand that this movement is contrary to law and that the government has the power to destroy you all'.[106]

Neither did the strikers receive any support from the head of the Khatmiyya order, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani,[107] although the fact that al-Mirghani sent 'some of his high-ranking types' to tell the strikers to return to work reflected the importance of the Khatmiyya order among them (see Chapter 2). Another reason for the strike's lukewarm reception, as Robertson suggested, was that the strikers' belated embracing of Communist support lost them the sympathy of less radical nationalist groups. For instance, the editor of *al-Sudan al-Jadid*, prompted by the chants of the pro-Communist demonstrators who accompanied the Police Strike and protested against the Korean War, asked 'what is the relationship between General MacArthur and the demands of the Sudanese Police?'[108] Finally, it should be remembered that while the police aspired to join the broader flow of Sudanese nationalism, the government had to some extent succeeded in isolating them from the public by using them – despite the efforts of Sudanese officers to get around this onerous duty – to suppress nationalist demonstrations, thereby earning them the title 'black English' (*ingliz sud*).[109] The Sudanese historian Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim recorded how the

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[102] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 25.
[103] Robertson to Howe, 18 June 1951, SAD 522/15.
[104] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 161.
[105] Martin Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, pp. 269-271.
[106] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 161.
[107] Muhammad, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 16.
[108] Zubeir Muhammad Zubeir, *Tarikh ma Ahmalahu al-Tarikh*, p. 11.
[109] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 212.

perception of the Sudanese police changed during the period of the railway workers' strikes, when he stated that they were 'stripped of their virtuous and human features when they began to strike and kill their citizens with no compassion and no mercy'.[110] Thus Robertson remarked that the strike was likely to fail as 'public opinion…is anti-police anyhow'.[111] Thus while the police were clearly inspired by other sectors of the nationalist movement, the administration had succeeded in keeping them just separate enough to be able to crush the strike.

The Watson Commission and the politicization of the strike

The manipulation of the inquiry by the Political Service
The inquiry into the strike further laid bare the extent to which ideological divides within the colonial state had influenced the development of the police force in the country. The ability of the administration to dictate the manner in which the Watson Commission investigated the strike was further evidence of its pervasive power in police matters. The administration would manipulate this inquiry so as to vindicate its belief that the police should be subservient to the Political Service and serve its political goals. Hayes, the chief justice, was horrified by the administration's behaviour in arranging the Watson Commission within 15 days of the Police Strike. As he pointed out, the administration's swift action denied their scapegoat, James, of whom Hayes was himself a staunch supporter, the chance to prepare a proper defence. It had also denied him and the other judges the chance to bring their legal expertise to bear on the inquiry.[112] Harrison, the other senior police officer dismissed by the government, was on leave at the time he was officially scapegoated and thus wrote angrily to Robertson protesting his inability to defend himself.[113] James himself observed to Harrison that 'my lawyers have taken the line that the report is based on impressions and not on fact, that the enquiry was secret with no opportunity to cross examine and that some witnesses were admittedly prejudiced'.[114] Harrison

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[110] Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim, *al-Nida' fi Daf' al-Iftira'* [A Call to Rebutt Calumnies] (Khartoum, 195-?), p. 33.
[111] Robertson to R. C. Mayall, Sudan Agent, 9 June 1951, SAD 522/15/52.
[112] Hayes to Legal Secretary, 11 Aug. 1951, Uncatalogued Hayes papers, SAD G//S 875.
[113] Harrison to Robertson, 10 Aug. 1951, SAD 691/6/3-6.
[114] James to Harrison, 5 July 1951, SAD 691/6/78.

complained that Robertson's dual role as civil secretary and acting governor-general had allowed him to dictate the whole affair. It is worth noting here Daly's judgement that Robertson could be 'small minded, vindictive, sly and intolerant'.[115] In his role as civil secretary he had recommended to the executive council that James and Harrison be dismissed and then presided over the council's acceptance of his recommendations in his capacity as governor-general.[116] Harrison's letter outlined an interpretation of events contrasting significantly with that of Robertson and the administration, which dominated the Watson Commission.

By manipulating the inquiry, Robertson and the Political Service were able both to underplay the structural grievances of the police and blame the strike on individuals whose 'character' failings were held responsible for the discontent of their men. In this regard, at least, they seem to have had a great deal of material to work with. The report concluded that 'a spirit of something approaching suspicion, envy, distrust, appears to have permeated the higher officers' cadre of the force'.[117] Beatty-Pownall and Jim Coutts, the head of the Security Intelligence Branch, had become bitter enemies, while Leslie James had tried to 'steer the line' between them but ended up too distant from Coutts.[118] The report of the Watson Commission was probably truthful here, since these disputes were acknowledged by Harrison.[119]

However, some of the report's other criticisms were little short of deliberate character assassination. James, apparently, did not possess 'tact and the gift of leadership', whereas Harrison was 'a man of fiery temperament…unsympathetic to his officers and men'.[120] Both James and Harrison were held to have failed to win the sympathy of the lower-ranking Sudanese officers and rank and file. James in particular could not 'count as a supporter one single soul of the Sudanese'.[121] Although it is true that James was unpopular in Khartoum, where the strike committee had demanded his dismissal, it is worth remembering that in Kassala he was seen by the governor as *too* sympathetic to his men.

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[115] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 246.
[116] Harrison to Robertson, SAD 691/6/35.
[117] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/15.
[118] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/15.
[119] Harrison to Robertson, 3 Sep.1951, SAD 691/6/65.
[120] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/21.
[121] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/21.

There was an even more political motive for the dismissals of Harrison and James. In writing to the executive council to justify their treatment, Robertson observed that he did not think that they could 'usefully continue service in the Sudan, with regard to the duties of the Province CID Branch and the Security Intelligence Branch of Police Headquarters'.[122] James, as demonstrated above, believed that his police force should avoid being a tool of the government. Robertson observed that his province police force had resented the house searches made by the Security Intelligence Branch in Khartoum and Omdurman and its attempts to deal with the province CID branch directly.[123] While the commission targeted James heavily, its treatment of Coutts, the head of Security Intelligence, was more lenient. Although the report acknowledged that he had split the force 'into two camps', it also stated that 'the loyalty of the Sudanese to him' amounted to 'genuine affection'.[124]

More generally, Robertson used the aftermath of the strike and the Watson Commission to justify reversing some of the gains that professional police officers had obtained from the administration after World War II. Robertson quite emphatically recommended to the executive council that 'reverting to the old system' was essential as 'the chief objective at the moment must be to rebuild the morale of the force'.[125] This met with approval and by July Robertson could write to the governor of Khartoum informing him that the executive council considered that 'in future the Governor <u>must</u> exercise more control over police matters than he has done in recent years. He must be in much closer touch with his Commandant, and must be prepared to interfere and override him when he considers it necessary'. This would be in matters concerning 'public security' not 'technical police administration'. Moreover, the province was to be divided into police districts in which the DC must be responsible to the governor for law and order. 'He must therefore take a considerably greater part in the supervision of police matters than before'.[126] In 1952 Governor Charles de Bunsen wrote to Picton, the new commandant of police: 'I mean to regard them not, as hitherto, as a sort of

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[122] Robertson to Secretary, Executive Council, SAD 691/6/7.
[123] Robertson to Secretary, Executive Council, SAD 691/6/7.
[124] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/16.
[125] Robertson to executive council, undated memo attached to Nightingale to Harrison, 20 Aug. 1951, SAD 691/6/11.
[126] Robertson to Governor Khartoum, 24 July 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.

constabulary on the English model, but as an army in the field…The old theory, always unrealistic and premature in most peoples' opinion, finally proved fatal last summer'.[127] Hence police independence was to be curtailed both at province and district level and the police force was once more conceived by the government as a quasi-military body.

'Knowing' the Sudanese

The Watson Commission enabled the Political Service to have its own views about the Sudanese 'character' and the merits of administrative policing in Sudan vindicated. Police officers like James and Harrison had supposedly failed to gain the sympathy of their officers because they did not understand this 'character' in the same way that administrators did. One key incident cited by the commission to demonstrate the lack of affinity between officer and constable was a general meeting held to debate the administration of the canteen fund. Watson chose to describe this meeting as being like an 'Arab meglis'[128] – a gathering which conventionally fell within the administrator's range of expertise – as if to emphasize the professionals' folly in believing they could manage police staff in Sudan in the same manner as in Britain. The fact that they only possessed an elementary degree of Arabic and were thus forced to speak through interpreters, was another failing the commission emphasized to indicate the officers' unsuitability in a Sudanese environment. The friction between officers and men soon reached its catharsis as Harrison 'got angry, banged the table and made some rather indiscreet remarks alleging they were the worst of men he had ever seen'.[129]

Meanwhile, the decision of James and Harrison to appoint two Copts, Christians indigenous to Sudan, as deputy superintendents was considered insensitive on religious grounds; and since these officers did not have the same attachment to their men as fellow Muslims would have been likely to achieve, they could not 'act as a conduit for their woes' either.[130] In this James and Harrison compared unfavourably with Coutts, who had served 19 years in the country and

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[127] De Bunsen to Commandant of Police, 7 April 1952, SAD 529/13/8-9.
[128] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/23.
[129] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/23.
[130] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/26.

'knew exceptional Arabic'[131] – and was, of course, more willing to carry out the administration's political agenda.

The highly personal assault on the abilities of professional police officers served a political purpose for the commissioners of the report, who sought to demonstrate that Sudanese policemen preferred a more personal and less professional style of leadership. If the professional police officers were failing to elicit the sympathy of their men, then it justified a return to the 'good old days' where the DC, a jack of all trades, controlled the police as his own quasi-military force. The Watson Commission insisted that 'what the men are crying out for is leadership' and cited Khartoum police constables brought before the commission who claimed they would be happy under just a DC and their own promoted officers. The report also insisted that the emphasis on literacy and the use of the written word in communications was breaking down personal relationships between police officer and constable, a criticism that went hand in hand with the administrative dislike of educated policemen.[132]

A good deal of the language of the commission and Political Service officers about the importance of 'personal relations' with Sudanese was hypocritical. As Daly and Deng demonstrated in the oral research they conducted for *Bonds of Silk*, deeply personal relationships hardly ever existed between administrators and their immediate subordinates. One official remembered that there was 'hardly any social life' with them, while another stated: 'Of course I got to know my servants and staff very well as individuals, but not on any basis of equality'.[133] A Sudanese informant recalled that relationships were 'very stuffy, formal, polite'.[134] Although a minority of officials admitted to having close relationships with servants in the more relaxed atmosphere of the countryside, one British official remarked that the experience was not possible in Khartoum.[135] Hence the highly idealized relationship between DC and police discussed by Robertson was a convenient contrast to Harrison and James'

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[131] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/15.
[132] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/17.
[133] Daly and Deng, *Bonds*, pp. 34-5.
[134] Ibid., p. 114.
[135] Ibid., p. 37.

behaviour, but not a credible one, especially since it contrasted rural experiences with urban ones.

In spite of this hypocrisy, the administrators who had acquired renewed influence over the police quickly used the opportunity granted to them by the strike to impose their views on the 'character' of policemen. Pease, the DC of Khartoum, wrote to the new commandant of police on 15 June 1951 describing those recently recruited in Khartoum for the Police College as 'gutter-snipes', 42 out of 49 he had dismissed from the school. He added that he had last been posted in Roseires in Blue Nile Province and that if he had known that Khartoum was lacking in quality recruits he could have provided some men who would have been 'illiterate, mostly, yes, but loyal and tough'.

Pease also dismissed one of the key aspects of the centralized police force, the police oath, as being insufficient for eliciting the loyalty of the majority of the men:

> There is only one oath to a Moslem and that is a religious one. The Police Oath is the oath used in England and many other countries, but it is in my opinion entirely unsatisfactory here. I do not think the oath should necessarily be uniform for everyone in this country: for instance an Ingessenawi or a Nubawi, I believe, swear on the rifle and five rounds of ammunition.[136]

Again, administrators were using cultural relativism as the context for undermining the centralization of the police and dividing it into separate ethnic and religious factions.

Disputes over 'discipline'
The issue of 'discipline' provided another opportunity for the Political Service and the Watson Commission to drive home their point about the unpopularity of the senior British police officers among their men and express their distaste for an overly

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[136] G. E. C. Pease, District Commissioner Khartoum to Commandant of Police, 15 June 1951, NRO 2.Kh.P 31/1/21.

legalistic approach towards the management of the force. Harrison was described as 'very regimental' and 'a strict disciplinarian';[137] James was said to have similar faults. However, their attitude towards 'discipline' was also in some respect a reflection on the policy of administrative neglect of the police that had been practised in the years before their arrival. The commission reported that James felt that 'discipline in administrative matters and particularly kit and turn-out' had 'become slack' under Coutts. He thus began to inspect night patrols and inflict punishments on those poorly turned out that, according to the commission, 'the whole force felt…unjust'.[138] It seems to have been mainly these actions that brought about the strikers' demands for less 'severe punishment' and for James and 'Abd al-Nur Khalil, who administered the punishments, to be dismissed. 'I stressed that you were always scrupulously fair', James wrote to Harrison after the inquiry, '– even if you expected a higher standard of conduct than the Sudanese were accustomed to give'.[139]

Some of the criticisms of 'excessive discipline' also reflected administrative dislike of judicial regulation of the police. This seems to have been a particular reason for the targeting of the police magistrate, Mr Whitlock. Ostensibly, he was targeted by the commission for being 'irritable and unsympathetic'; it noted a case where he had dismissed a policeman simply for using a piece of paper hidden behind his notebook to refresh his memory while reporting a traffic incident.[140] However, Hayes' protest at the decision to censure Whitlock revealed that the administration's hostility to him may have been prompted by another motive. Hayes hinted that Whitlock might have offended officers by 'insisting on observance of the safeguards for the accused contained in our procedure'.[141] Hayes recalled that Whitlock had reported a number of officers to him for not following the correct legal procedure and in all of these cases he had upheld Whitlock.[142] Debates over the 'discipline' of policemen therefore once more demonstrated a clash of outlooks. On the one hand were judges and police professionals who aspired to a legally regulated and well organized force; on the other were colonial officials who had a more flexible attitude

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[137] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/21.
[138] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/25.
[139] James to Harrison, 6 Sep. 1951, SAD 691/6/79.
[140] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/19.
[141] Hayes to Legal Secretary, 11 Aug. 1951, SAD G//S 875.
[142] Ibid.

towards legal procedure and were ever willing to latch onto attempts to discipline the police in order to charge professionals with 'not understanding' the Sudanese.

'A depressed class, neglected by the government': housing and service conditions

While the Watson Commission emphasized the 'personal' factors that had contributed towards the Police Strike, it played down to some extent the seriousness of the more structural grievances of police officers with regards to their housing and service conditions. The approach of the commission's report to these issues was indeed ambiguous in the extreme. Towards the end of the document it was admitted 'that the police as a whole did have a subconscious feeling of being a depressed class, neglected by the Government particularly as regards housing'.[143] Nevertheless, this appeared as a barely developed footnote to a conclusion that was otherwise a diatribe against the inadequacies of the senior members of the force. It seemed that the convenors of the Watson Commission had been directed not to consider housing as a major grievance, for the issue was only dealt with under 'minor grievances' in the major body of the text. The report stated that:

> This subject we include under the head of minor grievances, but it is minor only in relation to our terms of reference and to the refusal of the Police to go to work on June 6th. It is indeed, we believe, the major grievance the police have.[144]

How the 'major' grievance of the police would be of 'minor' relevance to their going on strike is quite unclear and the use of the phrase 'terms of reference' certainly suggests guidance by the administration. Nevertheless, the report did reveal a shocking state of neglect, noting that houses in Khartoum East station condemned as unfit for habitation in 1937 were still in use. It also charged the government with failing to comply with its statutory liabilities under the Police Regulations (section 16) to provide barrack accommodation for married and unmarried men. It was noted that this left a deep-rooted feeling of neglect among the rank and file and that 'the Central Government must accept its proportion of the blame'.[145] In spite of this

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[143] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/30.
[144] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/19.
[145] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/19-20.

statement, which reversed the previous pattern of blame, no criticism was made of the government in the conclusion to the report. Moreover, other issues were simply glossed over. Pay, apparently, was only an issue because housing was expensive, whereas

> other minor points such as sick leave, inadequacy of gratuities and the like have been mentioned en passant, but we pass over them without comment. They clearly had no bearing on the troubles and are matters of minor importance.[146]

Harrison for one certainly felt that the report had made light of the issues of pay and housing, complaining that these questions, which appeared in the strikers' list of grievances, were dealt with as major grievances by the strikers, whereas criticisms of James and himself were dealt with as major grievances but not listed in the strikers' grievances.[147] This was a slight deception: the last three strikers' grievances dealt with problems of the systems of promotion and discipline, for both of which James and Harrison were culpable.[148] Nevertheless, the rest of the grievances focused on housing and service conditions, from which the report clearly tried to deflect some of the attention by targeting the 'character' of the British officers. Robertson, writing confidentially to a colleague in Accra, offered a more balanced view than that produced by the commission he sponsored. While writing to the Sudan agent in London he produced the mono-causal explanation that 'our police officers are a pretty poor lot, and we may have to make some radical changes'.[149] However, he told 'General Whistler' a different story:-

> The officers generally seem to be out of touch with their men, but of course that was not the only cause of the trouble. I think police grievances have been neglected in the past and perhaps they have been badly done by in comparison with the SDF.[150]

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[146] Watson Commission Report, SAD 691/6/18.
[147] Harrison to Robertson, 3 Sep. 1951, SAD 691/6/63.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Robertson to Forster, 19 June 1951, SAD 529/5/14.
[150] Robertson to General Whistler, 21 June 1951, SAD 529/5/25.

Such an admission of the administration's failings did not appear in any correspondence with fellow Sudan officials.

Indeed, the efforts of the police professionals to rectify the housing grievances of their men showed them in a far better light than members of the Political Service. Harrison claimed to have raised the issue of housing with 'the highest official in Sudan', pointing out that 30 homes deemed unfit for habitation were still being used as married quarters by police, and observing, as Muhammad did in his account of the strike, that the mounted troops were still living in their horses' stables.[151] Harrison also claimed to have raised the issue of police clothing and short-term contracts; and he criticised the administration for not forestalling the demands of the police union with an inquiry into their grievances.[152] The standards of housing in the provinces were even worse than they were in Khartoum. In Kassala, for instance, plans in 1945 to build brick and stone houses with grass roofs for policemen had to be set aside due to cost; and all but six of these planned houses were replaced with cheaper wood and grass, mud-plastered houses.[153] Leslie James himself observed, as commandant of police in Kassala in 1949, that housing for police in the province was 'still inadequate' and that 'it is doubtful whether the LE.7000 approved in the 1949-50 building proposals will be sufficient even to house all single police for whom the government is legally bound to provide accommodation'.[154]

However, in some respects the approach of the British police professionals towards the material needs of their men was just as unsympathetic as that of the British administration. One of the reasons that James and Harrison fell out with their men was their decision to shut down the Khartoum police force's canteen fund, which was being used by bachelors to secure loans for childbirth in order to settle up with their mistresses. James had in 1950 issued an order to the effect that all loans for childbirth would be terminated. Harrison believed that, rather than being used to help with the family lives of policemen, the fund should contribute towards the development of sports teams to compete with those of the SDF. It was the

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[151] Harrison to Robertson, 3 Sep. 1951, SAD 691/6/59-62.
[152] Harrison to Robertson, 3 Sep. 1951, SAD 691/6/57, 72.
[153] GGAR 1949, p. 188.
[154] Kassala Police Annual Report 1949, SAD 769/8/41.

disagreement of Sudanese officers with this proposal at the canteen fund meeting that led Harrison to lose his temper and state that this was 'the worst exhibition of lack of esprit de corps that I recollect having come across'.[155] While this revealed that Harrison was almost certainly responsible to some extent for the breakdown of relations with his men, this story revealed the somewhat paradoxical nature of the commission's critique. Rather than revealing a modern bureaucrat obsessed with literacy, Harrison's views demonstrated his belief in the public-school ideals of self-sacrifice, manliness and esprit de corps of the Political Service, as well as to the imperial belief that Africans should be educated to be 'less self-centred, take pride in the corporate body of which he is a member'.[156] However, the Sudan government, which, as Harrison complained, had never provided any funding for the development of a sports team, had neglected the police to the extent that its officers could not live up to these ideals.

Thus, while the emphasis of the Watson report was deliberately twisted so that the 'personal' factor appeared more prominent in the events surrounding the Police Strike, the prevalence of housing and service conditions as an issue in the strikers' demands betrayed its true importance. Watson, Harrison and Robertson were all aware how badly the police had been neglected in this regard by the British, whose policies were in stark contrast to those of emerging Sudanese police commandants such as Amin Hussein, who had immediately emphasized the importance of using funds to improve police living conditions.

The approach taken to service grievances after the strike
The government did make some efforts to ameliorate police conditions in the aftermath of the strike, although its efforts fell well short of meeting the full demands of the strikers and were largely focused on the riverain centre, hence deepening the urban-rural dichotomy within the police system. Robertson requested that the Development Committee release funds for the improvement of police stations and the Police College; he also asked the financial secretary to make further provisions in the development budget 'for the betterment and replacement of existing

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[155] Harrison to Robertson, 3 Sep. 1951, SAD 691/6/41.
[156] J. A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*, (Harmondsworth 1986), Ch. 3.

housing which has been found below standard'.[157] 'I have already speeded up and completely re-organised the grossly delayed police re-housing program', De Bunsen informed the Khartoum commandant of police, 'and you have been ordered to report progress every 3 days. There will be no relaxation of pressure on PWD [the Public Works Department] and Municipal Engineer until it is completed'.[158] The new houses comprised two mud rooms with a kitchen and a store.[159] Moreover, a Police Club was set up with government support.[160] Nevertheless, even by 1953 the Police College entry guidelines were forced to admit that there were 'not sufficient houses' to implement its policy of allotting one to every police officer's post.[161] Moreover, the positive changes that did occur led to an even greater disparity between the police forces in Sudan's urban towns and its rural peripheries, which as Daly rightly comments was an example of the government 'greasing the squeaky wheel'.[162]

Robertson also jettisoned the administration's initial promise to consent to the establishment of a police federation, instead substituting a provisional order amending the Police Ordinance that sanctioned the formation of 'Police Associations' on a provincial basis. This order was officially confirmed by the Legislative Assembly on 30 October 1951. In response to a member's observation that the police ought to have a country-wide federation, Robertson said that 'The federal principle suggested could be achieved quite easily by Commandants pooling at the annual meetings the proposals put forward by their respective local associations'.[163] While the associations were to be elected by the police rank and file, this geographic decentralization and the reliance on the commandants to express grievances on a central basis undermined the potential for united expression of police grievances. Furthermore, the associations were to be limited to matters of welfare and efficiency while discipline, promotion and 'individual complaints' were excluded from the remit of the associations since 'order had to be preserved in the

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[157] Robertson to Secretary, Executive Council, SAD 691/6/7.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Robertson to K. D. D. Henderson, 31 Jan. 1952, SAD 529/11/51.
[160] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, 182.
[161] 'The Sudan Police College, Conditions of Entry and Service for Police Cadets (1953 Ktm)', NRO Dakhlia (2) 99/1/2.
[162] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 327.
[163] *Weekly Digest of Proceedings, Legislative Assembly of Sudan.* Daily Summary, Tuesday 30 Oct. 1951.

Police Force'.[164] Thus by the beginning of the period of transitional government in 1954 only a start had been made to meeting police grievances over service conditions.

The continuation of the administration-police dispute into the late colonial period

In the two years following the strike the power struggle between the police and the administration, which would continue to resent the extension of the central crime-fighting apparatus into the provinces, would continue unabated. James was dismissed for good, although Harrison – after his impassioned defence of his conduct – was allowed back on probation on condition that he should remember 'that personal contacts and sympathy with the rank and file are as important as good paper work'.[165] On 19 August 1952, Beatty-Pownall, who had not been as involved in the events of 1951 as James and Harrison, caused further friction by issuing a letter in which he stated that the authority of the police headquarters would be extended throughout the provincial units in Sudan. He insisted that governors should delegate their powers over the police to the commandants of police 'as soon as possible'.[166] A practical example of the extension of the central crime-fighting apparatus into the rural periphery could be seen in the campaigns against hashish that were organized in the south after the appointment of British police commandants in Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria. A drive against hashish in Bahr al-Ghazal saw 350 people arrested and over 300 of them crammed into the province's overflowing prisons; this elicited sarcastic remarks about the 'ill-timed zeal' of the police from the local administrator, T. H. R. Owen.[167] It was this cynicism towards an interventionist style of policing that made governors refuse outright Beatty-Pownall's demand that they devolve their powers.[168]

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[164] Ibid.
[165] Robertson to Beatty-Pownall, 20 Oct. 1951, SAD 691/6/76-7.
[166] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 120; Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 183-4.
[167] T. H. R. Owen letters home from Wau, SAD 647/4/40.
[168] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 184.

Nevertheless, as independence approached, the rapidly diminishing British administration decided to concede to a number of police demands, having lost any incentive to pursue its power struggle with them. On 5 April 1953, on the directions of the governor-general, the governors of the provinces delegated their powers under Section 8 of the Police Ordinance to their commandants of police, making them responsible for all technical, administrative, organizational and disciplinary aspects of police work. The commandants would become answerable to the commissioner of police, who would in turn be answerable to the governor-general.[169] Unsurprisingly this change engendered a further series of frictions. Although the governor remained responsible for law and order, administrators objected that it would be impossible for him to maintain security when his principal security force was part of an independent body responsible to someone in the distant capital.[170]

Meanwhile, the police headquarters protested that police independence had not gone far enough and on 7 December 1953 the commissioner of police passed the governor-general a memorandum signed by 42 officers demanding the establishment of an officially independent police department.[171] This was something the government had promised to investigate in the aftermath of the strike, but on which it had stalled. However, this memorandum was successful in persuading the British administration to grant genuine departmental status to the police, effectively separating them from the newly established ministry of interior, which had effectively replaced the civil secretary's office.[172] This concession probably reflected the fact that the Political Service had been morally deflated by the 1952 Anglo-Egyptian agreement, which had made the imminent independence of Sudan inevitable,[173] and had thus to some extent abandoned their drive to retain a decisive monopoly on power.

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[169] *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Southern Sudan during August 1955* (Khartoum 1956), p. 11. K. D. D. Henderson, *Sudan Republic* (London, 1965), p. 120.

[170] *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Southern Sudan*, p. 11.

[171] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 121.

[172] Al-Walid al-Haq al-Sadiq, 'Mahakim al-Shurta' ['The Police Courts'], p. 7, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/drast.php, visted 3 May 2010. *Sudan Almanac* 1954 (Khartoum, 1954), p. 64.

[173] Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 353.

Thus when the police force was fully Sudanized and handed over to its first Sudanese commissioner, Amin Ahmed Hussein, on 4 December 1954,[174] the departing British administration could claim to have bequeathed Sudan an 'independent' police force on the British model, but this was only true in the most superficial sense. While British administrators may finally have lost interest in their power struggle with the police, their Sudanese successors re-engaged in that struggle with vigour. Tensions would continue throughout the transitional period, as 'very rude letters' were exchanged between the police and administration.[175] These tensions surfaced once more following the Southern Mutiny of 1955, during which a number of police and army units rebelled against the government. Claims were made to the Cotran Commission, which investigated the mutiny, that one of the causes of the breakdown in security in the south was the fact that, because of the transfer of police powers to an independent department, 'the administration knew no more about what was secretly going on in a Province than the man in the street'.[176] The Cotran Commission dismissed these claims, stating that the administration was fully aware of what was going on throughout the mutiny and that the police officers who participated in it were caught up in wider regional tensions and were not motivated by their conflict with the administration.

Nevertheless, the newly Sudanized administration soon found a pretext to terminate the Police Department's brief period of self-regulation, using the police responsibility for the massacre at Juda in 1956 (see Chapter 2) as a pretext. Members of the administration blamed the massacre on the police, arguing that they had not consulted them about the decision to put the men in the barracks because of their recently granted status as an independent department.[177] These statements led to a rapid escalation in the tensions between the police and the administration.[178] Eventually, the latter won out, as the government put the police back under the Ministry of the Interior and cancelled the position of the commissioner of police.[179] This was particularly humiliating for the police as the post-colonial civil service, the successor to the Political Service, also fell under the aegis of the Ministry of the

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[174] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 122.
[175] *Report of the Commission of Inquiry*, p. 12.
[176] Ibid., p. 12.
[177] *Al-Istiqlal*, 25 Feb.1956.
[178] *Al-Istiqlal*, 1 March 1956.
[179] Andrews to Lloyd, 16 March 1956, TNA FO 371/119668; Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 275.

Interior. Since both services operated within the same ministry, transfers between them were permitted; and, since administrators continued to receive higher salaries, a number of the best qualified policemen transferred.[180] Moreover, provincial police commandants were once more made subservient to governors and DCs in the provinces.[181] Thus the police department's two-year independence would represent little more than a blip in a long history of colonial and post-colonial authoritarianism.

Conclusion

The Political Service at first portrayed the Police Strike as a product of subversive *Ashiqqa'* and Communist activity and then as the fruit of character inadequacies, failures of 'leadership', and attempts to introduce a professional style of policing on the part of the British police officers leading the force. Each of these was only a partial truth. Both the Communists and *Ashiqqa'* exploited the situation without creating it. Its roots lay more in the frustration of the police with poor service conditions and their ability to identify with other sectors within Sudanese society that had been successful in improving their own lot. The strike also reflected the desire of Sudanese police officers for a professionalized, modernized and nationalized police force rather than an adverse reaction to professionalization. While James and Harrison seem culpable of poor man-management on their own evidence, their lack of personal identification with the Sudanese was typical of imperial practice rather than the exception that Robertson and his commission charged. If anything, it was the sympathy of modernizing professionals likes James with Sudanese demands for an apolitical, independent and better funded Police Department that made them dangerous to the administration. The Political Service was able to use the strike to vindicate its own model of 'administrative policing', representing the strike as the inevitable result of an attempt to apply modern methods too soon. The models of 'civil' and 'military' styles of policing are more useful for analyzing the politics of the relationship between administrators and professional

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[180] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 275; Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 78.
[181] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 276.

police officers than for depicting a smooth and periodized transition in colonial policy.

Moreover, the Watson Commission minimized the instrumental grievances with regard to pay and housing that most likely provided the real motivation behind the strike. Thus it was as much a political performance as a genuine investigation and it achieved its aim. James was dismissed and the police remained directly under the aegis of the executive until just before independence, leaving a legacy of administrative direction of police affairs that would prove to be highly relevant to the post-colonial period. Although Sudanese police officers attempted to exploit the divisions within the colonial state by demanding a 'civil' police force themselves, the administration was able to frustrate their demands. Part of the reason the Police Strike failed to achieve all its goals was that, in spite of the fact it was influenced by the wider labour and nationalist movements, it had become isolated from colonial society at large when the British government used it to crush demonstrations and arrest agitators. By using the police as a tool of oppression, the government had bound the police to itself and was thus not obliged to grant it the same privileges acquired by other sectors of society envied by the police. The successes and failures of the strike were also connected to the colonial policy of dividing the force along regional lines. While the strike was initially so successful in the riverain centre and gained limited concessions there because of the relative social and cultural homogeneity of the force in that region, it acquired little support outside this core. This was indicative of a wider centre-periphery split in Sudanese nationalism that would continue to be relevant to the development of the force throughout the twentieth century.

4 The 1964 October Revolution and the peak of 'civil' policing in Sudan

For liberal Sudanese, the 'October Revolution' of 1964, by which the military regime of General Ibrahim Abboud was removed, remains a 'glorious memory'[1] of a halcyon age where mass civil disobedience was capable of overthrowing arbitrary regimes. Sudanese intellectuals proudly claim that the leaders of the October Revolution had achieved the task of removing a dictatorial regime through mass civil disobedience 'for the first time in Africa and the Middle East'.[2] On one level, the police force was cast in this drama in its usual role as the villain of the piece. Nevertheless, this chapter will show that the events which provided its spark – the invasion of Khartoum university campus and the shooting of the student Ahmad Qurayshi – were, in the frenetic manner in which they unfolded, indicative of the police's weakness and limitations as a systematic tool of regime coercion. Moreover, the reaction of the police to the October Revolution and the criticism they received during it showed their social porosity and their capacity to adapt and mimic the educated and professional sectors of Sudanese society comprising the 'modern forces' (*al-quwwat al-haditha*) that had engineered the public protests. Just as during the Police Strike of 1951 the strikers had followed the strategies of the emergent professional unions, so it will be demonstrated that following the October Revolution police officers sought similarly to strengthen their professional and institutional identity and gain concessions from the regime. Although events following the 'University Incident' (as Qurayshi's killing would become known) would mark the high point of the internal police drive for greater reform and institutional autonomy, it will be seen that they also highlighted the ambivalent position of the police: at once a part of the state and in tension with the various factions that dominated it. These factions would include the post-colonial civil service, the military (in power between 1958 and 1964), the 'modern forces' that

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[1] Mahgoub al-Tijani Mahmoud, "October, 1964...ways to return" *Sudan Tribune*, 21 Oct. 2003.
[2] Gallab, *The First Islamist Republic*, p. 56. 'Abd al-Wahhab 'Abd al-Qadir, "21 October: fi dhikri thawra al-sha'ab", *al-Ra'i al-Akhar*, Oct. 1996.

dominated the transitional regime which lasted for five months following the October Revolution, and the sectarian political parties – the Umma, PDP and NUP – that replaced the 'modern forces' after the 1965 elections. Thus the police were both hampered by and able to exploit the divides within the state.

Studying the institutional development of the police force during this period enables us to explore questions about the level of agency that it was able to exercise and thus understand the precise extent of its independence within the state. As during the late colonial era, police officers sought to expand police education as a means to increase the professionalization of the force – since, as Hills observes, professionalization facilitates autonomy.[3] In the 1960s professional officers also attempted to achieve autonomy by making the force akin to a family in its own right, fostering economic self-dependence through the establishment of co-operative projects and financial provision for the children of its members. Autonomous police forces can act almost as unions[4] and this occurred in 1964 and 1965 in a similar manner to 1951, with policemen using strikes and demonstrations to exact concessions from the regime.

How strong was the notion of civil policing in this period? The legacy of the 'University Incident' and the October Revolution of 1964 would prove highly relevant to a force that, facing increasing public stigmatization for what was depicted as the murder of Qurayshi, increasingly attempted to represent itself as a civil force. The chapter will argue that a number of Sudanese officers attempted to apply values that their British colonizers had advocated but not exercised, consciously attempting to re-engineer their image and expand the police force so as to make it more accessible to the public. However this did not necessarily represent police 'autonomy' and a capacity to change sides at will, as Marenin would have it[5] – political purges and public condemnation of the police both played a significant role in encouraging the police to adapt their image. Nevertheless, the considerable restraint exercised by both the public and the judiciary over the Sudanese Police Force during the early postcolonial period challenges prevailing scholarly and

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[3] Marenin, 'Policing African States', p. 3, Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 3.
[4] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 31.
[5] Marenin, 'Policing Nigeria', p. 87.

journalistic depictions of African and Middle Eastern police forces as predatory and alienated from society.[6] The independence and institutional authority of the judiciary during this era enabled it to regulate to some extent the corruption and politicized abuse of power by policemen to an extent that was not possible during other periods. Moreover, the fact that the majority of the police force within the central urban areas, in which revolutionary activities occurred, continued to hail from the same relatively homogenous and socially integrated riverain population made it possible for the media to 'shame' the police.

This chapter will show that Sudanese police officers in the 1960s were attempting to build a 'governmentalist' and transformative force, developing the technologies of social control they felt had been denied to them by a colonizing power with a limited focus on purely political security. The function of this police force would be to respond to the emergence of novel forms of crime that had begun to appear in the twentieth century and to safeguard urban Sudanese civilization. In this sense, the Sudanese understanding of what a 'civil' police force represented was fundamentally exclusionary because it effectively otherized Sudan's vast rural frontier regions, especially in the west and south. Even in the Nile Valley area, the concept of the 'civil' police force was never fully realized and the public remained suspicious of the force on account of the colonial legacy and the continuing manipulation of the police by politicians.

The University Incident and the role of the police during the October Revolution

The physical clashes between police and students that led up to the shooting of Qurayshi would demonstrate that police violence was as indicative of police weakness and the ineffectiveness of their methods of control as it was of a deliberate policy of brutality (see Chapter 2). The shooting occurred in the context of increasing tension between the Ministry of Interior and student groups over the

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[6] For examples of the prevailing depiction of policing, see Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, pp. 77-8. Bayart, *Politics of the Belly*, pp. 77, 264.

latter's right to hold seminars criticizing the government's war policy in the south. On 10 October the ministry had forbidden further discussion of the 'southern question' within the university and arrested and then released on bail the president and secretary of the Khartoum University Students' Union.[7] The union responded on 14 October with a letter accusing the government of tyrannical behavior towards itself and in dealing with the situation in the south, which resulted in its entire executive council being arrested on 15 June.[8] Thus when the students gathered again on 21 October, the police again tried to break up their meeting. It appears that the students were alerted to their arrival by the discovery of plain-clothes men mingling among them and had prepared themselves by bringing sticks and stones into the boarding houses.[9] Immediately rejecting an ultimatum to disperse, they were sprayed with tear gas. However, the circumstances of how long it took the police to open fire and why they did so, remain unclear. According to the Egyptian newspaper *al-Akhbar*, it occurred almost immediately after the students had started throwing stones.[10] However, a reporter in the Sudanese paper *al-Sahafa* claimed that it happened after a one and a half hour battle between students and police.[11] The Sudanese Ministry of Interior statements and British embassy both reported that the police had been encircled by students by the time they opened fire.[12] The ministry spokesman stated that it was an officer of the rank of *Hakimdar* (commandant) who had given the order to open fire and that he had shouted two warnings beforehand.[13] Whatever the cause of the order, its result was the effective martyrdom of Qurayshi and the injury of around 80 other students.

While the University Incident and its aftermath demonstrated the potential for police violence, it also showed the limitations on the use of the contemporary police as a tool against opposition elements. 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim, a serving officer at the time, argues that the police made a mistake in actually entering the university campus as this inevitably led to them being surrounded by students and

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[7] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan: al-Ma'zaq al-Tarikhi wa Afaq al-Mustaqbal* [Sudan: The Historical Dilemna and Hopes for the Future] (Beirut, 1996), Sir I. Scott to FO 25 Oct. 1964, TNA FO 371/178810.
[8] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 267, Sir I. Scott to FO 25 Oct. 1964, TNA FO 371/178810.
[9] Sir I. Scott to FO Oct. 25 1964 TNA FO 371/178810; Translation of *al-Akhbar* attached to memo dated 10 Nov. 1964, FO 371/173231.
[10] Translation of *al-Akhbar*, FO 371/173231.
[11] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964 p. 2.
[12] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964 p. 5. Sir I. Scott to FO 25 Oct. 1964, TNA FO 371/178810.
[13] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964 p. 5.

being forced to open fire. According to Ibrahim, the police leadership at the time was divided over whether to enter the university or wait outside and disperse the students if they chose to demonstrate on the streets.[14] The use of plain-clothes policemen – contrary to their whole purpose – simply exposed the police to the students. As for the tear gas, this was no more successful than it had been in the colonial period (see Chapter 2). Henderson states that most of it 'blew back or was thrown back in their faces'.[15] Witnesses recalled that the students retreated to the dormitories and waited for the police to run out of tear gas bombs, then attacked again.[16]

The limited coercive capacities of the police were also demonstrated by their inability to prevent the indefatigable 'Abd al-Rahman Mukhtar of the daily *al-Sahafa* from printing and distributing 13,000 copies of a special edition exposing what had occurred. This edition conveyed the protest petitions of the teachers, lawyers, judges, and press editors, as well as a very detailed account of events surrounding the shooting. While it was being prepared at the *al-Sahafa* headquarters, Mukhtar received a visit from police officer Ismat Maani, who insisted on seeing the proofs for the next day's edition. However, Mukhtar was able to meet him outside and convince him that the proofs were not yet ready and that he would not publish any of the petitions. Mukhtar then ordered his staff to continue writing without speaking a word to each other, and using only candlelight, to avoid attracting further police attention.[17] This also suggests that the police were at this time still wary of intruding upon private space, thus giving elements opposed to the regime vital opportunity for manoeuvre.

The police response to the public condemnation of the shooting
The resultant edition of *al-Sahafa* would highlight the vulnerability of the police to public and social condemnation of their use of coercion, demonstrating their limitations as a tool for the intimidation of the public by military regimes. Apart from publishing all the petitions of complaint penned by doctors, university lecturers and lawyers concerning the 'savagery' of the police during the University Incident, the newspaper told other stories of how the police dealt with the ensuing

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[14] Ibrahim, *'Awraq*, p. 115.
[15] Henderson, *Sudan Republic*, p. 205.
[16] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct 1964, p. 13.
[17] *Al-Sahafa,* 25 Oct 1964, pp. 6-9.

demonstrations.[18] These included accounts of them insulting women and beating and shooting innocent demonstrators in front of young children.[19] The doctors described the wounds they had seen inflicted by the police on the students as if they had been struck 'in a battle between noble Muslims and Jews callous of heart'[20] and refused to treat injured policemen who were instead sent to military wards.[21] The university lecturers, who also protested the action, described the university as a *haram jadir b'il taqdis* (sanctuary worthy of reverence).[22] It is likely that at a time when urban Sudanese society was still relatively close-knit, this public and religiously-tinged stigmatization would have significantly demoralized the police force, which was still at this time largely composed of recruits drawn from the same riverain backgrounds as the student protestors.[23]

Soon after the shooting, the lawyers' and judges' associations declared a strike and marched out onto the street.[24] They also issued a petition, which emphasized that the police action not only contradicted legal regulations (*yatanafi wa al-qawa'id al-qanuniyya*) but had also violated the '*haram*' (sanctuary) of the university which was a '*mihrab muqaddas*' (holy sanctum). Most importantly, the judges stated that the shooting of Ahmad Qurayshi should be treated as a crime of intentional homicide. [25]

The immediate effect of this moral and legal condemnation of the behavior of the police by the professional groups and the media was that large sections of the police started to refuse orders to open fire on the public, which in turn played a crucial role in the continuation of the demonstrations that eventually toppled the regime. This happened in particular after the Ministry of Interior issued a statement blaming the police themselves for opening fire on the students, and claiming that no orders had been issued sanctioning this. Thus a number of policemen, realizing that they would not be supported by the regime and would perhaps be liable to

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[18] Ibid. p. 1.
[19] Ibid. p. 13.
[20] Ibid, p. 26.
[21] Henderson, *Sudan Republic*, p. 205.
[22] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964, p. 1.
[23] Henderson, *Sudan Republic*, p. 201.
[24] *Al-Sahafa* ,25 Oct. 1964, p. 1. Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 269.
[25] *Al-Sahafa* 25 Oct. 1964, p. 1.

prosecution if they used further force in similar situations again, began to refuse to act against demonstrations and even joined the crowds instead.[26] The police also showed their deference to the judiciary by agreeing to disperse when commanded to do so by 'Abd al-Majid Imam, who led the judges' and lawyers' demonstration.[27] Mahgoub al-Tijani, a liberal ex-policeman, recalls that

> The Sudan's police was positively acting towards people. They did not shoot at them with gunfire. They did not rush to arrest them. They sometimes abandoned certain stations to avoid confrontation with the demonstrators.[28]

Leftist activists also have a similar memory of events to that of al-Tijani. For example, one ex-Communist recalled that the police in Khartoum remained inactive for three weeks afterwards because 'they did not want to hurt the people'.[29] The police also adopted non-confrontational behavior in towns such as Port Sudan and Dueim, as the Revolution spread to the provinces.[30]

However, the active nature of the force's participation in the Revolution can be exaggerated. While policemen and those nostalgic for the Revolution often proudly remember how they 'joined the people', the extent to which this actually happened is by no means clear. K. D. D. Henderson, a European witness, implies that they were simply overwhelmed by the situation. He states that on Friday 23 October 'the police were thoroughly demoralized and stood by helplessly' as demonstrators hijacked their broadcasting apparatus, sabotaged their vehicles and committed various acts of vandalism.[31] Aging Khartoumers tend to remember that those policemen who joined in the demonstration did so in plain-clothes, leaving their uniforms at home.[32] This would seem to indicate that their involvement was as individual citizens rather than as policemen. Meanwhile, some policemen continued to support the army in clashing with demonstrators and killed three more of them on

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[26] Translation of 'al-akhbar', FO 371/173231.
[27] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 44.
[28] Mahmoud, "October, 1964...ways to return".
[29] Ex-communist, Interview, Khartoum, 16 Dec. 2010.
[30] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 11 Nov. 1964, 13 Nov. 1964.
[31] Henderson, *Sudan Republic*, p. 205.
[32] Retired schoolteacher, Interview, Khartoum, 26 Dec. 2009.

the evening of 25 October.[33] Nevertheless, it is clear that large sections of the force refrained from further action against demonstrators for fear of legal and public reprisals. Thus the events that followed the University Incident epitomized the dilemma of Sudanese policemen, who were socially stigmatized and caught between competing pressures exercised by different factions within the state – in this case an intransigent military government and an independent judiciary.

The police and the transition from military to parliamentary government

It is difficult to assess precisely how important police passivity towards demonstrations was in toppling the regime and in subsequent events. Although Sudanese officers did not exactly play a decisive political role, it seems that their inactivity enabled other political actors to put pressure on the departing regime and its successors. Certainly, the role of the military should be acknowledged. Sudanese are fond of stating that the army determines precisely what occurs in Sudanese politics; and it is clear that it was the rebellion of left wing officers led by Farouk Hamdalla and Hashim al-Atta within the army itself on 26 October that played a key role in persuading the military rulers to step down.[34] A number of historians have also stressed the importance of the fact that Abboud himself was not keen to hold on to power.[35] Nevertheless, by its passive approach towards the demonstrations the police had to some extent forced the hand of the army by bringing it into direct confrontation with the Sudanese public. When anti-regime demonstrators led their decisive 'march towards the Palace' on 27 October while civilian leaders were negotiating with the Supreme Council inside, it was the military that was forced to confront them. The army opened fire with machine guns, ultimately killing tens of demonstrators. Thus the military found itself in the same position in which the police had been put days before: forced into the use of legally and morally questionable violence against the public.[36] The historian Hajj Hamad recalls the effect this had on soldiers, observing that some grabbed the weapons of their comrades to prevent them harming demonstrators. He also suggests that the demonstrators were stronger than the soldiers not because of force of arms but 'because we were of them'.[37] Thus

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[33] Edgar O'Ballance, *Sudan, Civil War and Terrorism, 1955-99* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 23.
[34] Mahmoud, "October, 1964".
[35] Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Alsir Sidahmed, *Sudan* (New York, 2005), p. 31.
[36] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 272. Muhammad Mahjoub, *Democracy on Trial* (London, 1974), p. 188.
[37] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 273.

while the (in)action of the police force during the October Revolution was not decisive, indirectly it put a great deal of pressure on the army which may well have contributed to the military regime's decision to relinquish power.

During the transitional period police inaction would continue to have significant political consequences, although again this was perhaps as much evidence of police passivity as it was of police autonomy. Although the Revolution had demonstrated the capacity of the police to act independently of the regime, it also left them in a state of disarray. On 14 November Abboud was forced to resign as president, and was replaced by a 'Transitional Regime' dominated by the 'Professional Front', which contained a number of leftists and labour activists who had been monitored by the police under Abboud's regime.[38] The new minister of interior in this regime was a southerner, Clement Mboro. According to one former northern security official, Mboro blamed the police for having previously arrested him on suspicion of affiliation to the southern rebel movement. Mboro appointed Franco Garang, the brother of the influential southern Communist, Joseph Garang, as head of his office, which supposedly gave the Communist movement a means to influence the ministry and take revenge on their old opponents in the police.[39] There were purges of senior officers, including the commissioner of police Abbas Muhammad Fadl, and his deputy for criminal investigation, 'Abdullah Abbaro.[40]

The force remained in shock on account of these political reprisals against it for its role in the University Incident and in consequence adopted a stoic attitude towards the outbreaks of crowd violence that occurred during the transitional regime of Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifa. They 'were still demoralized and had tacit instructions not to interfere with demonstrations' during this period.[41] On 9 November, a Communist purporting to be a member of the transitional regime used Radio Omdurman to spread a rumor that the army was planning a coup, prompting crowds of Communist-led demonstrators to erect barricades and block traffic. The police appear to have been singularly passive during these events, and it was ultimately the *Umma* party, through its deployment of the *Ansar* against the rioters, that broke up

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[38] Daly, *A History*, p. 183.
[39] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn*, p. 92.
[40] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 44.
[41] Henderson, *Sudan Republic*, p. 209.

the protests.[42] The police were similarly passive during the 'Black Sunday' riots of 6 December, when southern migrants living in Khartoum began rioting after hearing false rumours that the plane of the southern minister of interior, Clement Mboro, had been shot down. The media observed that the police simply stood by and watched the ethnic violence between northerners and southerners ensue.[43] In a statement the next day, al-Khalifa defended the police by stating that events following the October Revolution had made them uneasy in dealing with demonstrations,[44] although Hajj Hamad claims that the police had specific orders not to deal with the riots, perhaps reflecting the fact that the regime was just as nervous as the police themselves about the use of violence against Khartoum citizens.[45]

Al-Khalifa's government would finally make its position clear after the police *did* use their firearms on 18 February 1965, against striking workers at a cotton ginnery in Port Sudan. Al-Khalifa and his minister for prime ministerial affairs Muhammad Jabara Awad publicly condemned this incident, promised a full investigation, and stated that the police would not be used to violently disperse strikes or any other kind of gathering in the future.[46] Naturally, these promises were forgotten after the transitional government's replacement by a far more conservative government, less closely linked to the unions, after the March elections. Nevertheless the reaction of the al-Khalifa government towards the Port Sudan shootings was further evidence of how, in the aftermath of the Revolution, the tensions within the state had continued to leave the police in a state of paralysis. Given the uncertainty of the dispensation of power at this time and their continuing exposure to public criticism, officers – with the exception of those involved in the Port Sudan shootings – seem to have decided that inactivity posed the least risk to themselves.

Police-society relations

The October Revolution put the spotlight firmly on the relationship between the police and the Sudanese public, in some respects offering an opportunity to sections of society to make the police 'theirs'. For instance, in the aftermath of the

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[42] O'Ballance, *Sudan: Civil Wars and Terrorism*, p. 23.
[43] *Al-Sahafa*, 8 Dec. 1964.
[44] Sir I. Scott, Ambassador Khartoum to FO 7 Dec. 1964, TNA FO 371/173232.
[45] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 283.
[46] Salih Umar, '18 Maris 1965, Intifada Ummal Shahn wa'l Tafrig' ['18 March 1965, the uprising of the dock workers'], *Ajras al-Hurriya* 1 May 2010.

Revolution, with the police in chaos and senior officers being purged, popular committees composed of 'citizens' began to call on members of the police to join units known as the 'National Guard' (*al-haras al-watani*) and even donated their own guns and cars to them.[47]

The police themselves, both before and after the October Revolution, were determined to represent themselves as a 'public' force. Policemen were afraid that the reputation of being 'black English' (*ingliz sud*),[48] obtained while they had been suppressing nationalist and trade union demonstrations in the late colonial period, would carry over into the nationalist era. A symbolic effort to renegotiate this image had been made in 1961 by replacing the old militaristic colonial motif of the police of two crossed rifles with the one still used by the Sudanese police today, that of the 'sleepless eye' (*al-ayn al-sahira*) and 'hand of help' (*al-yadd al-musa'ada*).[49] This was a conscious attempt by the police to decolonize the old Condominium motif, which according to one policeman writing in 1965 was designed to put fear into the Sudanese people and 'has distorted the image of the police to this day'.[50] Moreover, the helpful hand and watchful eye emphasized what are seen to be the two key aspects of a modern and civil police force, a panoptical vision and a willingness to help the public.

In spite of this bid to re-engineer their image, the police had struggled to develop a strong relationship with the public, particularly during Abboud's regime. Key elements in this lack of trust were the twin political and criminal functions that the police continued to exercise. This was evidenced at a press conference in 1964 when *al-Ra'i al-'Aam* reported that

> Mukhtar Muhammad Hasan asked the Minister of the Interior whether he
> knew that the investigative police (*al-bulis al-mubahith*) disappear in national
> dress (*al-jalbab al-watani*) to get information secretly. However, it is not

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[47] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 13 Nov. 1964.
[48] See Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 212 for this term.
[49] 'Abd al-Ghafur 'Abd al-Da'im, 'al-'ayn al-sahira wa al-yadd al-amniyya al-musa'ada' ['The watchful eye and secure hand of help'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1964, pp. 42-43.
[50] Ibid., pp. 42-3.

long before they are required to give evidence and thus reveal themselves and after this the crowds treat them with reservation.[51]

When *al-Ra'i al-'Aam* interviewed the deputy commandant of the Omdurman police, Joel Akec, on this subject in July 1964 he observed that when members of the public were willing to accept police help they usually demanded that they come to their houses in a vehicle other than a government car.[52] Thus the public, deprived of a genuinely community-orientated police force, were willing to accept police help only if officers displayed no connection with the state. Another useful observation made by Akec – who, as a southerner, perhaps offered a more detached viewpoint – was that the problem of lack of trust in the police was more profound in the cities than in the countryside, which to him seemed counterintuitive as he treated trust in the state as a question of 'awareness' (*wa'i*).[53] However, popular suspicions could easily be explained by the fact that urban areas were where the CID cracked down on trade unions and student movements, to which many urban Sudanese were in some way connected.

After the October Revolution, the police would launch a new drive to represent themselves as a 'civil' force, but they continued to struggle to refute their stigmatization in the press as a tool of colonialists and military dictators. In 1965 two articles appeared in *Police Magazine* bemoaning the charges in the newly liberated Sudanese press that the police had a minimal presence on the street and were unable to solve crimes.[54] Their author, 'Abdullah Ibrahim, argued that the press was deliberately exploiting the negative image of the police created by colonialism. It was this that deterred citizens from assisting the police, demoralized policemen and encouraged criminals.[55] Thus even during what would later be regarded as the halcyon days of civil policing, both the legacy of the politicization of the force by the colonial state, and its contemporary manipulation by various political groups, were

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[51] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 8 July 1964.
[52] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 3 June 1964.
[53] Ibid.
[54] 'Abdallah Muhammad Ibrahim, 'al-bulis wa'l-sahafa' ['The police and journalism'], *Majallat al-Shurta,* May 1965 pp. 29-30; 'Abdallah Muhammad Ibrahim, 'al-bulis wa'l-sahafa', *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1965 pp. 23-26.
[55] Ibids.

sowing the seeds of mistrust between police and public – in spite of the social links that existed between them at the riverain core.

Relations between judiciary and police

As observed above, the actions of the Sudanese judges during the October Revolution provided clear evidence of the moral and legal influence an independently-minded judiciary could exercise to rein in police brutality directed by the political executive. Throughout the revolutionary period, judges showed little eagerness to sanction police actions against demonstrators. In Port Sudan, the commandant of police used tear gas to disperse a demonstration only after disobeying the order of the resident judge, who reportedly observed that 'the country would change in a few minutes' and that dispersing the crowd would lead to innocent women and children being hurt.[56] Here, the police officer was willing to disregard judicial authority but in Khartoum, the events that followed the 'University Incident' demonstrated that the police both feared and respected it. They showed their deference to the judiciary by refusing to disperse the demonstration of lawyers and judges and withdrawing at the command of Chief Justice 'Abd al-Majid Imam.[57]

The 'Abd al-Majid Imam incident was a key moment in a chain of legal and political tensions that occurred in the early nationalist period between Sudan's soldiers and politicians on the one hand, and the most legally principled of judges on the other. Abboud, on taking the reins of power in 1958, had rapidly announced a state of emergency and declared war on perceived political subversives, using the CID to arrest Communists and members of banned political parties. The regime was also particularly harsh on youth organizations, using the police to arrest their members in Fasher and Medani, and sending police with whips and tear gas into the libraries and classrooms of Khartoum University to detain students who had protested against the regime.[58] As part of this crackdown, the first military regime

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[56] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 13 Nov. 1964.

[57] *Al-Sahafa*, 25 Oct. 1964; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 44. Although Mohammed Ahmed Mahgoub claims that he and other politicians managed to negotiate with the Supreme Council via Chief Justice Abu Rannat and allow the strike to continue. See Mahgoub, *Democracy on Trial*, p. 189.

[58] APD 25 Jan. 1959; *al-Sahafa* 25 Oct. 1964 p. 21.

extended to one month the period of detention without trial for those deemed subversive of 'national security', which could be extended by the minister of interior if he believed the reasons for arrest remained.[59]

However, the judiciary proved to be unwilling to rubber-stamp arbitrary methods. Their refusal to capitulate in the face of executive tyranny recalled the clashes between the judiciary and administration over *habeus corpus* in the colonial era. As a result, while the police frequently intimidated and arrested Communists, they were often unable to justify holding them for long periods or to make persuasive cases for prosecution. For instance, the police case against 'Abd al-Khaliq Mahgub, leader of the Sudan Communist Party, was dismissed by the attorney-general in 1960.[60] This was after 'Abdullah Abbaro, the head of the CID branch within the force, had refused to divulge most of his evidence on the grounds that it involved 'state secrets', and one prosecution witness had withdrawn his testimony claiming that it was fabricated and that he was coerced into attesting the truth of it by Abbaro.[61] Abbaro, who was present at the University Incident, would be discharged from service after the Revolution, in which the judiciary played a key role.[62]

In the aftermath of the Revolution, the judiciary continued to maintain its institutional autonomy and authority over the police force and this ensured that both were respected by the politicians of the second parliamentary regime. It was police officers acting on behalf of the attorney-general who investigated senior army officers who had exploited the military's period in power to accumulate illegal wealth in the 'forbidden riches' (*thara' al-haram*) case.[63] 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim recalls that in 1965 the minister of interior, Ahmad al-Mahdi, was accused of assault by a lawyer whom he attacked with a stick during an Umma Party meeting. Ibrahim states that after the incident al-Mahdi came willingly to the police station and surrendered the stick, which demonstrated his respect for the police.[64] Sudanese

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[59] Anonymous publication, *Silsila al-Muqawama al-Wataniyya al-Kitab al-Awwal: al-Ahd al-Aswad yuqaddim al-Kitab al-Aswad* [A Sequence of National Resistance Book One: A Black Age Presents a Black Book] (September 1960), IISH, SCP Collection.
[60] APD 27 Feb. 1960.
[61] APD 10 Oct. 1959. Anon., *Silsila al-Muqawama*.
[62] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 44.
[63] Ibid., p. 44.
[64] Ibrahim, '*Awraq*, p. 25.

police officers were also publicly entrusted with the investigation into the actions of the generals who attempted to overthrow the parliamentary government during the Khalid al-Kidd coup attempt of 1967. They also acted as witnesses for both the defence and prosecution at the trial.[65]

The authority that the judiciary could exercise over the police was further demonstrated by the fact that policemen who committed criminal acts on or off duty continued to be tried in the mainstream courts, even during the Abboud Regime.[66] In 1961, a civilian court convicted a policeman for killing a man who resisted arrest.[67] In another court case from the same year, a Sudan justice dismissed an accusation of assaulting a public servant made by a policeman against a man he had tried, with little justification, to arrest in Wau market. The justice, al-Fatih Awouda, observed that policemen 'should not be allowed to please themselves with (their) powers. Abuse of power leads to a disregard of the law of the state, and disregard of the law', he concluded, 'leads to a state of chaos.'[68]

Policemen were also tried in the mainstream courts in the second parliamentary era.[69] However, as was the case during the colonial era, a criminal conviction by a judge did not necessarily debar a policeman from continuing to serve in the force. In 1964 a court in Khartoum found a policeman guilty of causing a man to lose his eye by poking it in a fight. The presiding magistrate awarded the policeman a 15 pound fine, but observed that he did not expect the policeman to be dismissed as he was not wearing official clothes at the time.[70] It also remained easy for policemen to get away with abuses in Sudan's peripheral regions, where state judicial authority continued to be weak. One former officer, Abu Humayd Ibrahim, recounts that while he was serving at Raja in Bahr al-Ghazal in the 1960s a policeman was found to have abducted a local girl and hidden her in his house. Rather than being dismissed from the force, the local police authorities simply dealt with the 'misdemeanour' by transferring him to Wau.[71] Thus even in the 1960s,

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[65] *Al-Sahafa*, 15 Feb. 1967, 26 Feb. 1967.
[66] Al-Sadiq, 'Mahakim'.
[67] Sudan Government v. Bushra Hamadein AC-CP-422-1961, SJLR 1962.
[68] Sudan Government vs Justin Mahmoud Lemi and others PC-CR-REV-13-1961, SJLR 1963.
[69] *Al-Ayyam*, 1 Nov. 1965.
[70] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 22 March 1964.
[71] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, pp. 176-7.

when regulation of the police by the judiciary was still strong, the willingness and ability of the state to control police criminality was still limited. The policies of the judiciary during this period reflected an unresolved conflict within the state that had been inherited from the colonial power, between legal professionals who strove for a well-regulated and apolitical police force and policemen and politicians who sought to evade such regulation.

The continuing struggle for a 'civil' police force

Professionalization and education

Partly as a response to some of the negative public opinion that had persisted even after the Revolution, and partly as a means of improving their status as an institution, a number of officers launched a concerted effort to transform the Sudan's police into a more identifiably modern and civil force. As in the colonial era, one key factor in this drive was education. This expanded considerably between the late 1950s and the 1970s, at least in comparison with the colonial era. While the numbers of police officers graduating from the Police College between 1937 and 1941 were in single figures, by the 1950s these figures were in the twenties and in the 1960s the numbers had reached the thirties.[72] In 1959 the Police College was moved to a new building in Khartoum to meet the needs of advanced training. Education played an increasingly more important role in the police system. In 1967 the minister of interior announced that the Police College would start taking in university students, arguing that crime in Sudan had developed to the extent that a greater level of ability was required to deal with it.[73] In 1968 the system of promotion was modified so that officers were required to take examinations in order to rise through the ranks, with 165 officers sitting promotion examinations in that year.[74] Hills argues that post-colonial police training differed little from that of the colonial era, but such claims are not entirely true.[75] When Abu Humayd Ibrahim took his proficiency pay exam in 1971 he studied both psychology and sociology, neither of which was offered on the

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[72] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 52, Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 43-5.
[73] *Al-Sahafa*, 1 Feb. 1967.
[74] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 13 Aug. 1968.
[75] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 5.

Police College curriculum during the colonial era.[76] The result of this education was that officers such as Ibrahim developed a far more sophisticated view of criminal behavior and compiled records on miscreants that analyzed their family relationships, personal lives and educational experience.[77]

The prestige of the Police College at this time was reflected in the numerous senior positions its graduates took up outside the police. Salim's *Tarikh al-Shurta* (History of the Police) lists several prominent individuals who graduated from the Police College in the late 1950s and during the 1960s and took up posts as diplomats, members of parliament, provincial governors, and government ministers.[78] The last time Salim mentions any individual graduating from the College who would later take up a senior post is in his entry for 1976, which underlines the importance of the College in the 1960s and early 1970s.

An indication of the new, educated, outlook of the force was the appearance of the *Police Magazine* (Majallat al-Shurta), which began publishing in 1961. Here police officers and students of the Police College expressed views that could broadly be seen as progressive, humanitarian and modernist. One article suggested to policemen that they had a 'humanitarian message' (*risalatak insaniyya*) to send.[79] Modern sociological texts such as Michael Banton's pioneering work *The Policeman in the Community* were reviewed.[80] The police considered that they were adapting to meet the needs of an urban society that was increasingly breaking down the bonds of village and 'tribe' (*qabila*).[81] Thus, when the police depicted themselves as the protectors of the people what was often meant was the people of urban Sudan and the central 'Arab' riverain region in particular. The vast western and southern regions of Sudan that were still perceived as 'tribal' were otherized in language similar to that used by the former British colonizers. Southern Sudan was referenced

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[76] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 203.
[77] Ibid, p. 233.
[78] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, pp. 41-6.
[79] Qureishi Muhammad Faris, 'zamili rijal al-bulis' ['Our colleague the policeman'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1964, pp. 35-38.
[80] See *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1965 pp. 52-3. For the importance of Banton's work in the Anglo-American criminological canon, see Simon Holdaway (ed.), *The British Police* (London 1979), p. 2.
[81] Tawfiq Salih, 'al-bulis yatatawwar ma' tatawwur al-jarima' ['The police developing with the development of crime'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, July 1966.

in the *Police Magazine* primarily in the context of amateur anthropology[82] and 'tribal fights' (*al-mushajarat al-qabaliyya*), which were described as a feature of 'backward primitive societies'.[83] Thus the education that was so key to the professionalization of the police force was also strengthening its geographical, cultural and racial biases. The 1960s – and the aftermath of the Revolution in particular – were also a period in which the police were particularly successful in managing the technical development of the force. The field of technical expertise was another realm in which the Sudanese had felt 'left behind' because of colonialism. In 1948, for example, journalists bitterly lamented that policemen were not carrying cameras to photograph crime scenes or using police dogs, which were being used in other Arab countries.[84] After dealing with a case of embezzlement in the late 1950s, Sudanese magistrate Jalal Ali Lutfi complained that police handwriting and fingerprint experts had not been much use as Sudan's British colonizers had never given them 'a proper scientific training'.[85]

To remedy these deficiencies, in the mid-1950s the force established a relationship with West Germany which resulted in the provision of a new telex system, alongside the opportunity for officers to be sent for training to that country.[86] By 1967 the West Germans had finished establishing a telex system for the police that covered all of Sudan's provinces and major cities; they had also provided a system of mobile radios to be used in cars and steamboats.[87] After the Revolution this relationship became particularly fruitful, a new criminal laboratory being established in 1965 with equipment, training and expertise provided by West Germany.[88] Also, police dogs were imported from Egypt and by 1968 were being successfully used by the Criminal Investigation Department.[89] As the police system expanded, more and more citizens began reporting offences to the police. The figure

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[82] 'Abd al-Rahman Jizouli, 'qabila al-dinka wa ta'adud al-zawjat bi'l nisba l'il malakiyya al-maashiya' ['The Dinka tribe and polygamy with regard to cattle ownership'], pp. 15-19, *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1964.
[83] 'Abd al-Rahman Jizouli, 'al-mushajarat al-qabaliyya' ['Tribal fights'], *Majalla al-Shurta*, Aug. 1964, pp. 7-10.
[84] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 3 Sep. 1948.
[85] Ibrahim, *'Awraq*, p. 50.
[86] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 34.
[87] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 136-7.
[88] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 44.
[89] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 11 Sep. 1968.

for the number of offences reported to the police in Sudan per 100,000 of the population rose from 2,159 in 1965 to 2,608 in 1969.[90]

The year 1960 witnessed the emergence of the '*bulis najda*', although it was not until 1968 that this new unit was furnished with new cars and up-to-date communications equipment.[91] The meaning of '*najda*' is somewhat ambiguous and therefore difficult to translate. Hans Wehr translates '*bulis najda*' as 'riot squad' with reference to Egypt, although in Sudan the crowd control functions were clearly performed by other units (see Chapter 5). One ex-policeman informed me that *najda*, in this context, should be translated as 'rescue', which emphasized the desire of the police to help the people, in keeping with the popular image the police were then trying to develop. However, the English language press at the time translated '*bulis najda*' as 'Emergency Police'.[92] The 'Emergency Police', who continue up until the present day, were there so that

> If you have a thief come to you, any problem, your wife is ill, would like to give birth, you can get help from them. It is not only for riots.[93]

Indeed, the 'Emergency Police' possessed a special, easy-to-remember telephone number to facilitate access by the public.[94] However, it is important to remember that at the time that this body was established, only the most developed quarters of northern riverain towns would have access to telephones.[95] This again demonstrates how the ethos of civil policing espoused by the policemen of this generation in fact excluded vast numbers of Sudanese in the peripheries.

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[90] Figures taken from the Central Bureau of Criminal Records at the National Police Headquarters in Khartoum, Sudan, cited in Mohamed el-Amin el-Bushra, *Criminal Justice & Crime Problem in Sudan* (Khartoum 1998), p. 87.
[91] APD 18 June 1960, Wizara al-Irshad al-Qawmi, 'Wizara al-dakhiliyya al-bulis' MEDU/17/3/Administration, *al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 5 Jan. 1968.
[92] APD 18 June 1960.
[93] Senior police officer B, former head of Public Security Organisation and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.
[94] APD 18 June 1960.
[95] Al-Mahdi, *Jarima*, p. 114.

The struggle to demilitarize and depoliticize the police

A number of police officers in this period were keen to demonstrate that, being a civil force, the Sudanese police were non-military and independent of politics. In 1966, Commandant Babiker Ahmed Abid declared proudly in the *Police Magazine* that the police were a 'civil force' (*quwwa madaniyya*) and so differed significantly from the army in terms of their functions, training and the laws that governed them.[96] However, the 'civil' nature of the police was something that was constantly contested. The conflict between the new civil service – the successor to the Sudan Political Service – and the police continued along much the same lines as in the colonial era. One senior police officer recalled in an interview that Sudan's post-colonial administrators 'wanted to keep the same standard, the same situation as in British rule' whilst 'the police, mainly, they say that they are educated, they are specialized in their field of work, and they need not go to a person who is not specialized in … security matters'.[97]

As we have seen, the degree of authority which the Police Headquarters had managed to achieve over the provincial forces in the late colonial era was soon curtailed in the early independence era as the official power to govern these forces was handed back to the administration;[98] this occurred even though police officers often retained *de facto* responsibility for the training, administration and technical management of their local forces.[99] After the 1958 coup, Abboud transferred responsibility for 'security' in the provinces from the civil administration to military governors, thus placing the police commandants there under a new set of masters.[100] However, in some respects the decline in the status of the civil governors and district commissioners enhanced the authority of the police. The 1961 Provincial Administration Law, designed on the advice of a judicial committee under Chief Justice Abu Rannat, acknowledged the *de facto* authority of police commandants in technical matters and decreed that provincial police commandants should once more be responsible to the police commissioner for the administration, organization and

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[96] Babiker Ahmed Abid, 'a'araf bulis biladak' ['Know the police of your country'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, July 1966, pp. 22-23.
[97] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 21 March 2011.
[98] See last chapter.
[99] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 278.
[100] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 277.

discipline of the force.[101] The Abu Rannat committee also rehabilitated the position of the police commissioner by updating the 1928 Police Law so as to grant him legal authority to issue orders to commandants – which he had, in practice, been doing without sanction for some time.[102]

Thus Hills' argument that after independence African police forces increasingly blurred with the military[103] is not entirely applicable in the Sudanese case. Nevertheless, under army rule the police were often made to feel like the 'little brother' of the military, following behind the army in grandiose military parades and being expected to carry out all the tasks of the armed forces (including dangerous quasi-military roles in the south) without receiving any of the benefits.[104] However, by the 1960s the force had achieved at least some level of success in establishing itself as an institutionalized and civil force independent of the army. This was also how they were seen by a group of Somali police students visiting the Sudanese Police College in 1965, who compared them favourably in this respect with their own more military-style police force.[105]

As well as seeking to disentangle a civil force from its historical military connection, in this period the Sudanese police were fighting for institutional autonomy and separation from politics. During the October Revolution itself the force experienced a number of purges at the hands of leftist politicians. After the 1965 elections saw the return of the more conservative political forces, the Umma party – which initially dominated the new government – created its own security organization. This was largely composed of *Ansaris* and, according to Bayoumi, 'supervised over' (*ashrafa 'ala*) the police.[106]

The parliamentary period following the Revolution also revived the old struggle between administrators and police professionals. The appointment of an

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[101] Salim, *Tatawwur*, pp. 277-278. *Sudan Almanac 1962* (Khartoum 1963), p. 86.
[102] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 279.
[103] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 2.
[104] 'Abbas Salih Musa, *Mishwar fi Durub al-Khidma al-Madaniyya* [Errands on the Paths of the Civil Service] (Khartoum 2005), p. 63. Sudanese government official, Interview, Durham, 16 June 2009. APD, 10 March 1959. Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 170.
[105] 'Mugabila akhira ma' dubbat as-Somali'in' ['The recent meeting with Somali officers'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1965.
[106] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn*, p. 67.

administrator, Clement Mboro, as the new minister of interior, provided a particular focus for police frustration. Immediately after the Revolution the police sent a memorandum to the government demanding the removal of the civil servants from the ministry. However, this proved fruitless and according to Mu'tader a group of administrators led by an ex-policeman, Amir al-Sawi, controlled the ministry 'from behind the scenes' (*wira'a al-kawalis*), regaining the power they had lost to the military during Abboud's regime and frustrating police demands for a separate department.[107] Nevertheless, police commandants continued to be directly responsible to the police commissioner for the administration, organization and discipline of the force, although the province governors retained their executive control over the police in matters relating to law and order.[108] However, police officers continued to struggle with administrators in the Ministry of Interior throughout the second parliamentary regime, leading a group of police officers to send another memorandum to the minister in 1969 demanding the removal of Amir al-Sawi and his group.[109] Thus even during a decade that represented a high-point in the police drive for autonomy, this autonomy was contested by soldiers, administrators, and politicians.

Corporatization: The emergence of a 'Police family'

The goal of creating an institutionalized, modern police force, which entailed detaching its members from the bonds of family and 'tribe', was sometimes depicted in terms of transforming the force itself into a kind of 'family'. The 'family' ethos in the police also reflected a desire to escape reliance on a fickle economy and a government that had a limited capacity to provide for the wants of its employees. The force had a good deal of success in achieving this kind of corporate identity in the early nationalist period, at least at the riverain centre. Amin Hussein's reforms in Wad Medani in 1950 represented the earliest example of the nationalist generation of Sudanese policemen attempting to achieve this. Apart from improving police housing in Wad Medani, Hussein established a police 'benevolent fund' to which volunteers would contribute five piastres at first and then twenty-five piastres monthly. The accumulated funds enabled policemen to improve collectively their

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[107] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 132.
[108] *Sudan Almanac 1965-1966* (Khartoum 1966), p. 92.
[109] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 132.

family life through the provision of various services: hiring nannies to educate young police children, financial support for the education of children up until university, providing a place where police wives could be looked after during pregnancy, support and loans to policemen on marriage, financial support to police widows, and finding jobs for those who left the police on grounds of disability so that they would have an income in addition to the pension provided by the government.[110] Once he became commissioner of the force in 1954, Hussein began to spread these benefits to all police units in the country; indeed, an overall 'Police Benevolent Fund' (*sunduq mal khayyari*) was created.[111] The money set aside for educating police children even allowed the sons of a number of policemen to attend universities in Europe and the wider Middle East, which further increased the attractiveness of the police as an occupation at that time.[112] The setting up of police social clubs in most of the important police centres in Sudan was another feature of the later 1940s and early 1950s.[113]

In the early 1960s, developing an idea first practiced by Hussein in Blue Nile Province in 1951, a police co-operative project was established which enabled policemen to invest funds in agricultural land in Port Sudan. This scheme was used to provide food for policemen and their families, reduing their dependence on local traders for sustenance.[114] By 1964 the profits of this scheme had reached 14,000 Sudanese pounds.[115] One article in *Police Magazine* even used the word '*usra*' (or family) with reference to the establishment of these projects, noting that members who co-operated in it would 'raise the level of the members of this family' (*rafa' mustawa afarid hadhihi al-usra*).[116]

Sudanese policemen also pushed strongly to wrestle concessions from the government that would benefit this 'family' and were particularly successful in

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[110] Abu Bakr, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p.180.

[111] 'Abd al-Rahman Qarafi, 'i'alam al-Shurta wa mujtama' al-Gezira' ['Police media and Gezira society'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 2007, p. 47.

[112] Ibid., p. 47.

[113] Equatoria Province Monthly Diary Aug. 1953, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/3/6; Upper Nile Province Monthly Diary March 1953, NRO Civ Sec (2) 30/5/13; Note by L. James, Commandant of Police in Kassala 19 Feb. 1948, SAD 769/8/12.

[114] APD, 29 June 1963. Hussein Muhammad Hussein, 'al-jami'yyat at-ta'awuniyya wa rijal al-bulis' ['Co-operative societies and policemen'], *Majalla al-Shurta*, Jan. 1964, pp. 53-4.

[115] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 18 June 1964.

[116] Hussein, 'al-jami'yyat', pp. 53-4.

doing so during the Revolution period. Despite – or perhaps because of – the continuing struggle against military, political and administrative control, this period was one in which Sudanese policemen regained some of the spirit that had driven the Police Strike of 1951. In November 1964, policemen in Blue Nile Province staged a massive demonstration, leading a procession to the provincial headquarters and presenting the governor with a petition demanding the formation of a police union, increased salaries, the creation of a pension system, and a modification of the allowance system. The governor reportedly agreed to these demands, admitting that they were fair.[117]

In January 1965, a number of police officers put a plan to the Ministry of Interior to develop the police by advancing salaries and providing increasing job specialization. By May a ministerial 'Committee for the development of the police' under judge Muhammad Abu Qasim was established. This interviewed policemen throughout Sudan's provinces and recommended increasing their salaries, bonuses and compensation for injuries.[118] All of these recommendations were passed without qualification in October of the same year.[119] However, as the more conservative Umma party strengthened its grip on power, a less sympathetic line was taken. When around 300 policemen demonstrated against their conditions in Khartoum in October 1965, the Umma-dominated government arrested them all and temporarily suspended the press due to its coverage of the story.[120] Eventually nearly a hundred were fired for their involvement in the demonstration.[121] However, police officers recall that throughout the 1960s methods such as strikes and negotiation were broadly successful in improving the collective lot of the police.[122]

Most married policemen in this period lived in the police barracks, or *ashlaq*, alongside their wives.[123] Some however were granted permission to live outside the

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[117] *Al-Sahafa*, 20 Nov. 1964.
[118] *Al-Sahafa*, 7 Jan. 1965; *al-Ayyam*, 27 May 1965; 'Akhbar al-Bulis', *Majallat al-Shurta*, April 1965
[119] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 132.
[120] C. C. Wilcock to J. Dodds, 28 Oct. 1965, TNA FO 371/184145.
[121] *Al-Ayyam*, 29 Oct. 1965, 15 Nov. 1965.
[122] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009.
[123] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.

barracks with their wives on condition that it was not in a place where the policeman was, in the words of one senior officer, 'mingling with people who are *majanoun* [mad] or whatever else' – suggesting that the force was keen to keep its men out of the regions collectively deemed 'nests of crime' (see Chapter 6).[124] Policemen's wives were usually housewives, or could be nurses or cleaners (*farrashat*), and since – unlike members of the army – the police were not regularly transferred, family lives at least had the prospect of being relatively stable.[125] However, relationships with extended family could cause problems, particularly because of the difficulties involved in travelling long distances in Sudan. In 1964, a policeman serving in Khartoum was dismissed from service and imprisoned for three weeks after he had absented himself from service for 26 days to travel to al-Ubayyid in order to console his aunt on a family bereavement.[126] Nevertheless, the severity of his punishment is in itself revealing of the drive for greater professionalism at this time. Thus it seems that a number of officers were committed to developing a sense of corporate identity in the early nationalist era.

Conclusion

The period of the October Revolution and the 1960s in general demonstrate that the police were influenced by the same fissures within the state that had been a feature of the colonial era. The first military regime sought to use the police force to provide for its own political security against students and trade unionists, while both the administrators of the second parliamentary regime and the political parties sought to curtail police independence and establish personal control over the workings of the force. On the other side, the judiciary sought to prevent the arbitrary use of the police by both military and parliamentary regimes, while its condemnation of the 'University Incident' demonstrated the authority it could exercise over police

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Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.

[124] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.

[125] Sudanese academic, Interview, Durham, 6 Oct. 2009.

Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.

[126] *al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 15 March 1964.

behaviour. Sudanese police officers revived the same spirit that had motivated their battles against the administration in the late colonial era, using the post-October period in particular to push for improved service conditions and a larger, better equipped, and professionalized force. The force in the 1960s attempted to carry out the values of 'civil' policing that the British colonizers had kept confined to rhetoric, struggling to shake off the negative reputation that it had acquired under both the colonial and military regimes. The communal life of the police barracks and investment in mutual co-operative schemes also created a sense of institutional identity amongst policemen that furthered their capacity for autonomous action. Thus the 1960s represented a time in which both police professionals and the judiciary were capable of challenging the regime and fostering the development of a police force that aimed to provide security for Sudanese society as a whole.

However, even though Sudanese remember this era fondly in comparison with what would follow it, there are a number of caveats to the characterization of the 1960s as a high point in the history of civil policing. While the events following the 'University Incident' demonstrated that the force was socially porous to the extent that its condemnation within urban society led it to adopt a non-confrontational role towards political demonstrators, this did not necessarily represent positive action. Indeed, it left the field open for a variety of other political actors to impose their will by force. The police never quite captured the trust of the public and there were times when they were still subject to political manipulation. Furthermore, the development of the force remained heavily focused on the urban areas of northern Sudan and the language of 'civil' policing both excluded and otherized the rural peripheries.

5   Institutional fragmentation of the Sudanese police in the 1970s and 1980s.

As Joel Migdal has observed, post-colonial regimes are often forced to choose between developing the central institutions of the state to extend its overall mobilizational and defensive capacity, and weakening them to prevent them becoming the focus of alternative centres of power.[1] The police in Sudan have been a particularly good example of such a body, since they can theoretically hold regimes to account for corruption and other abuses of power,[2] despite being a useful defensive asset and offering the government the kind of technical expertise of which more blatantly politicised institutions were bereft. Ja'afar Numayri, the leader of the military coup that overturned Sudan's parliamentary system in 1969 and established the 'May Regime', was in particular need of such defensive assets. The 'Free Officers' who led the coup were divided between a Communist faction ousted in 1970 and groups of Arab nationalists, Ba'athists, Nasserists, and more pragmatic developmentalists; and the resulting infighting within the Revolutionary Command Council led the Communists to launch a brief but bloody three-day coup attempt under the leadership of Hashim al-Atta in 1971. After the failure of this attempted coup lead to Numayri's return, the Revolutionary Command Council dismissed itself and appointed him as president – a position he would increasingly use to rule by personal decree.[3] He would face further resistance from the students who had led the *Sha'aban* riots of 1973 and the National Resistance Movement, an armed coalition of the former religious parties (Umma, DUP, ICF) that with Libyan backing invaded Sudan and attempted to overthrow the regime in 1976.[4] Numayri continued to expand the police as a means to counter these challenges, while simultaneously using the military to develop his own security organizations.

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[1] Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capacity in the Third World* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 207, 213.
[2] Hills, *Policing Africa*, p. 41.
[3] Mansour Khalid, *Nimeiri and the Revolution of Dis-May* (London 1985), p. 30, 148.
[4] Daly, *A History*, pp. 167-174.

However, this chapter will demonstrate that as Numayri's own security organizations grew stronger and his dependence on the police was reduced, his regime was able to revert to old colonial techniques by crippling the police as a central institution, and exerting executive power over the various provincial forces under the slogan of 'decentralization'. A number of scholars, politicians and development workers have often tended to see decentralization in countries like Sudan as a purely positive phenomenon because of its ability to solve the problems posed by regional difference and prevent concentration of power amongst narrow central elites;[5] however, this approach neglects the extent to which dictators such as Numayri used decentralization tactically, as a means of dividing and ruling over central institutions that posed a threat to their own authority.

Thus it will be shown that the civil policing project, which modernizing officers had continued to develop after the strong foundations built in the 1950s and 1960s (see Chapter 4), was gradually neglected by a regime which increasingly reverted to focusing its resources on protecting the main strategic bases of its own power. Ideals of civil policing also fell afoul of the Islamist movement, which, as Gallab has argued, 'perceived the Sudanese not as worthy citizens with civil and human rights' but rather as 'individuals and groups owned by the state'.[6] The alliance between the Islamic Charter Front (ICF), the political wing of the Islamist movement, and the military regime would lead to a further subversion of the authority of the police. The chapter will reveal that the period after 1983, during which Numayri's newly 'Islamized' laws were implemented, demonstrated exactly how porous the identity of the police force had become, as policemen were mimicked and supplemented by the state security services, the military, Islamists, and criminals. While the criminal laws became increasingly arbitrary, by loosening the judicial regulation of the police force the state increasingly lost control over the way its agents (or those who impersonated them) implemented them – as in the colonial era.

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[5] See, for instance, Randall Fegley, *Beyond Khartoum: A History of Subnational Government in Sudan* (Trenton 2011), pp. 39-50, 291.
[6] Gallab, *The First Islamist Republic*, p. 11.

Numayri's tenure would demonstrate that the police could be manipulated by one or other of the various competing political groupings within the regime, such as the military or the Islamist movement. But were the police completely divorced from the rest of Sudanese society in this period? It will be seen that the April *intifada* of 1985, which overthrew the dictator, would demonstrate the influence that wider Sudanese society could also still exert on the police. Just as after the 1964 October Revolution (see Chapter 4), the leftist and professional organizations who led the uprising held the ambivalence of the police force during the popular demonstrations against Numayri to demonstrate their sympathy with the Sudanese public, and thus once more began to champion the idea of a civil police force. Although some commentators on post-colonial Africa have argued that parliamentary regimes were equally as brutal as their military counter-parts,[7] the parliamentary period that followed the *intifada* would demonstrate that this was not entirely the case, as lawyers' bodies and the judiciary acted on numerous occasions to prevent the abuse of the police by the political executive. Thus it will be demonstrated that the old conflict between the executive and legal organs of the state over the use of the police that had begun in the colonial era (see Chapter 1) still persisted, although Numayri had more than ever tried to resolve it in favour of the executive during his period in power. Meanwhile, the police leadership and other public bodies would attempt to rebuild the force as an institution in the post-*intifada* period, but only had limited success in reversing the process of fragmentation that had occurred since the late 1970s. This chapter will first explore the wider ramifications of the complex pattern of relations between the police, the military and the Islamic Charter Front for the 'civil policing' project, before comparing the fate 'civil' policing in the military regime with its fate during the parliamentary regime that followed.

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[7] Reid, *History*, p. 320.

Police-military tensions and the creation of parallel security organizations

Tensions between the police and military in Sudan were indicative of a post-colonial state divided into a variety of competing institutions. Recalling his dismissal from the post of minister of interior by Numayri in 1979, the ex-minister observed that:-

> The army officers when they are governing and ruling and so on, they try to undermine the police, you see. Because of the jealousies and so on.[8]

However, relations between police and military were not always hostile during Numayri's regime. Initially his government pursued a strategy of incorporating the most politically useful police units into the regime, even though it was simultaneously developing its own parallel and militarized security organizations which would gradually replace the police in their 'national security' function. This was not unusual, since post-colonial dictators usually preferred a multiplicity of security organizations so that they could play them off against each other.[9] This was particularly important in the context of the power struggles that dominated the early years of the Numayri regime.

The regime's immediate establishment of the National Security Organization (NSO) in 1969 represented an attempt by the military to colonize the field of domestic security policing. It was, in the words of one of its officers, 'like a child born out of a branch of military intelligence' (*tifl walidan li-fara' min al-istikhbarat al-'askari*).[10] The regime supplied it with officers recruited directly from military intelligence and made directly responsible to Numayri.[11] Rather than borrowing CID men, the NSO acquired 2,500 operatives of its own to perform security work.[12]

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[8] Senior police officer B, former head of Public Security Organisation and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.
[9] Hills, *Policing Africa*, pp. 36-7.
[10] Muhammad 'Abd al-Aziz, and Hashim Abu Rannat, *Israr Jihaz al-Israr: Jihaz al-Amn al-Sudani 1969-1985* [Keeping secret the apparatus of secrecy: the Sudanese Security Organisation, 1969-1985] (2nd. Edition, Khartoum, 2008), p. 26.
[11] Salim, *Tatawwur* p. 448; 'Abd al-Aziz and Abu Rannat, *Israr Jihaz al-Israr*, p. 26.
[12] 'Abd al-Aziz and Abu Rannat, *Israr Jihaz al-Israr*, p. 47.

However, the establishment of the NSO did not simply represent an attempt by the military to dominate the police, since its creation was also related to the power struggles amongst the 'Free Officers' themselves. They represented a mixture of Ba'athists, leftists, Nasserists, pragmatists, nationalists and Communists, although the Communist element was certainly strongest during the early years of the regime.[13] This affected the development of the NSO, which was initially so dominated by Communists and their Soviet trainers that those applying to join it were expected to answer either 'Communist' or 'Devoted Communist' when asked to indicate their political affiliation.[14] Not long after the installation of the 'May regime' an internal rift between Numayri and the Communists developed, culminating in a brief coup by a pro-Communist General, Hashim al-Atta, in 1971. In the period before and after this short-lived coup, which lasted only three days before Numayri's return to power, Numayri and his allies on the Revolutionary Council removed all the Communists from the security services, including the NSO.[15]

Numayri's regime was forced to rely to some extent on the regular police force in the wake of the attempted coup – indicating the fact that all the institutions of the regime were so pervaded by the political struggles that had occurred in the last two years that he could not trust any single one by itself. Indeed, members of the police had a major role in rounding these up after Hashim al-Atta's failed coup – al-Atta himself was arrested by a police officer.[16] This said, even the police themselves had to be purged of a large number of Communists who had been absorbed into their ranks between 1969 and 1971. These included 26 university graduates whom the leftist minister of the interior, Farouk Hamdalla, admitted to the Police College in 1970.[17] Nevertheless, it seems likely that it suited Numayri to preserve the political roles of both the police and the NSO as he did not have sufficient confidence in either.

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[13] Holt & Daly, *A History*, p. 196.
[14] 'Abd al-Aziz and Abu Rannat, *Israr Jihaz al-Israr*, p. 26.
[15] Muhammad Sa'id Qalandar, *Sanawat al-Numayri: Tawthiq wa Tahlil al-Ahdath wa Waqa'i Sanawat Hukm 25 Mayo fi al-Sudan* [Numayri's Years: Documentation and Analysis of the Events and Reality of the Rule of the 25 May Government in Sudan] (Khartoum 2005), p. 167.
[16] Amina 'Abd al-Wahhab, 'Ifadat jadida li-dabit al-shurta qama bi-i'ataqal Hashim al-Atta' ['New statements made by the police officer who arrested Hashim al-Atta], *Akhir Lahza*, July 31 2010. Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 23.
[17] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, pp. 189-190. Qalandar, *Sanawat*, p. 167.

In line with this policy, the regime continued to develop the political branch of the police, the Public Security Organization (PSO), which would in effect serve identical functions to those claimed by the NSO. Another reason for maintaining the PSO was that it possessed far more expertise, since its men were trained security professionals possessing records on activists and politicians in Sudan dating back generations.[18] This demonstrated the fact that specialist knowledge possessed by bureaucratic institutions made it difficult for regimes to bypass them entirely.

Thus initially Numayri did not adopt a policy of outright neglect of the police force, but of gradually bringing it under closer control by both himself and the regime as a whole. Although the PSO initially functioned as a separate department within the Ministry of Interior and would continue to be staffed by Police College students, Numayri separated it from the regular police in 1973 and put it under his personal command.[19] The commissioner-general of the police and other senior officers were made members of the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU), the political party Numayri formed to bolster his regime after the 1971 counter-coup.[20]

From the late 1970s, Numayri began to rely less on the police for the maintenance of regime security, as the army began to acquire more expertise in controlling domestic politics in the north. Thus in 1978 he merged the PSO with the NSO to form the State Security Organization (SSO). Umar Tayyib, a leading general who would also assume the functions of vice-president in 1982, was appointed head of this new organization.[21] This precipitated a rapid decline in police–military relations. In 1979 Numayri established a new pay scale that effectively placed police officers one pay-grade below their companions in the army, making the rank of an 'amid of the police equivalent to an 'aqid in the army. This led to great disappointment among police officers and the 'supreme leadership' (*al-qiyadat al-'ulya*) of the police and prison service sent a memorandum of protest to the minister of the interior, [22] who was at this time 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim, the former head of

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[18] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn*, p. 91.
[19] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 48.
[20] Ibid., p. 50.
[21] 'Abd al-Aziz and Abu Rannat, *Israr Jihaz al-Israr*, p. 30.
[22] *Al-Midan*, Feb. 1979. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, pp. 318-321.

the now dissolved PSO. This in turn provoked a dispute between Ibrahim and Numayri, which led to Ibrahim's dismissal and the dissolution of the Ministry of Interior through presidential decree no. 52 in February 1979.[23]

In response to these measures, Abu Humayd Ibrahim recalls that large numbers of policemen announced their resignations, even leaving the country before waiting to hear if they were accepted.[24] 'Abdallah Hasan Salim, who was the police commissioner-general at the time, claims that both he himself and a large section of the officer class considered offering group resignations but feared that their departure would have left the police in almost total disarray.[25] Numayri was slowly and successfully marginalizing the police and Abu Humayd Ibrahim remembers bitterly the contempt he publicly showed for them at this time.[26] As a result, policing became a highly unattractive profession; instead, according to one interviewee, all young men were keen to enter the ranks of the SSO.[27] Although the new SSO was manned by members of both the old PSO and NSO, in 1980 Numayri reportedly fired 31 members of the new organization, the great majority of whom were from the police.[28] Overall it seems that professional police officers, after having initially developed a relatively positive relationship with Numayri's government, became increasingly distant from and in conflict with the political executive towards the end of the May Regime.

The impact of military rule on the institutional identity of the police

The fate of the police as an institution was tied to the pattern of its relations with the military regime. In the first years of the May regime, the Sudanese police became a more specialized, professional and well-equipped unit, and acquired an increasing status within the government. The initial support provided by the regime to the

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[23] Ibrahim, *'Awraq*, p. 57. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 313.
[24] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 227.
[25] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 320.
[26] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 227.
[27] Anti-Numayri activist and former Ba'athist politician, Interview, Khartoum, 20 Dec. 2009.
[28] *Al-Midan*, Oct. 1980. Qalandar also refers to 'struggles' between the members of the army and members of the police in the SSO soon after its establishment. See Qalandar, *Sanawat al-Numayri*, p. 449.

police also permitted the continuation of the ethos of 'civil' policing that progressive officers had developed in the 1950s and 1960s. However, as the regime's own security agencies grew stronger, it began to neglect the police and in 1979 launched a strong assault on its institutional identity by dissolving the Ministry of Interior, as already noted. This neglect of the police also mirrored the deterioration of other public services during the later years of the May Regime.[29] The regime thus reduced the status of the police system to a level similar to that which had obtained in the colonial era: the police force was subject to politicized regional bureaucrats and was granted resources only to supervise the major 'nodes' of the post-colonial economy.

The initial fortunes of the police within the government

The arrival of the military regime initially guaranteed a more favourable position for the police within the government. While military regimes in Sudan have historically tended to undermine the police, they have also undermined the civilian administration, and ultimately the power struggle between civil servants and policemen within the Ministry of Interior (see Chapter 4) was resolved in favour of the latter. The police gained increasing importance within this ministry, which was divided into five new departments under the overall authority of a senior police officer, Ziada Satti, as 'director-general'.[30] This led to the development of a 'security' ethos in the ministry, hampering the remaining offices such as that of the office of the commissioner for refugees, who felt that the 'hegemonic' position of the police had led to unsympathetic positions being taken towards refugees in the country.[31] This of course reflected the fact that 'civil policing' in Sudan remained focused on protecting the population of the riverain heartlands of the state (see Chapter 6).

The initial dominance of the police in the Ministry of the Interior was not paralleled in provincial governments, where there was instead a revival of the bifurcated system of the colonial era in which provincial police forces were subject to the control of security-focused central government bureaucrats. At the beginning of the May Regime, provincial police commandants did become responsible to the

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[29] Daly, *A History*, p. 178.
[30] Ahmad Qaradawi, *Refugee Policy in Sudan, 1967-1984* (New York, 1999), p. 90; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*.
[31] Qaradawi, *Refugee Policy*, p. 90.

heads of their various units in Khartoum, who in turn remained directly under the commissioner-general. The commissioner-general was responsible for the 'supervision and good administration of the force', and appointing the officers immediately below him.[32] However, these commandants remained responsible in the realm of security to provincial commissioners, the senior provincial representatives of the SSU, in the role of the latter as heads of the Province Security Committees (*lijan amn*).[33] The 1971 People's Local Government Act, 1971, stated that 'The Commissioner shall be responsible for the maintenance of order and security in the province and shall submit reports to the Minister of Interior'.[34] This commissioner was appointed directly by Numayri. The strengthening of the position of the police within the Ministry of Interior thus demonstrated only a partial and short-lived degree of success in their battle with the administration.

This relatively favourable situation for the police disappeared after the development of their tensions with the military which followed the creation of the SSO in 1978. Following the dismissal of the minister of interior in 1979, Numayri shattered the unity of the police force by dispersing its various units among other government departments. Thus the CID was attached to the attorney-general, and the Passports, Emigration and Nationality Police to the Ministry of Finance. Numayri's decree also gave responsibility for promoting and transferring officers to the general secretariat of the cabinet office (*al-amana al-'aama li-majlis al-wuzara'*). This left the emasculated Police Headquarters as an office to which the Police College and the administration and training of the police were subject. Meanwhile regional police forces were placed under provincial commissioners appointed by Numayri, who became responsible for the general administration of local units, including such tasks as promoting NCOs.[35]

In response to protests from police officers about the effects of the new measures, Numayri issued a presidential decree that established a new Police Headquarters in Khartoum which would be supervised by a re-styled 'Inspector-

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[32] Salma Agarib, 'Unified Command', *Sudanow*, Oct. 1979, pp. 26-7; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 47. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 287-8.
[33] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 47. Salim, *Tatawwur al-Qawanin*, p. 289.
[34] John Howell (ed.), *Local Government and Politics in the Sudan* (Khartoum, 1974), p. 117.
[35] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 230; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 54.

General' reporting directly to him. However, while this Headquarters regained control over the CID, all the other decentralization measures remained in force, and the provincial forces would remain responsible to the inspector-general only via the province commissioner.[36] The 1979 Police Law confirmed the fragmentation of the police by describing them, along with the prison service, as multiple 'Regular Forces' instead of a single 'Police Force'.[37]

One particularly important aspect of Numayri's decisions towards the police in 1979 was that he also took direct personal control of the Central Reserve Police (CRP), which had been created five years earlier to merge the various 'riot squads' (*buluk*) into one body.[38] Salim argues that one reason for Numayri's move was that the establishment of the CRP, which had received military training in Egypt, increased the 'jealousy' (*ghaira*) of the army towards the police, particularly after its successful involvement in repulsing the 1976 coup attempt.[39] Thus Numayri's actions further demonstrated the fact that the decentralization measures of 1979 were occurring in the context of a power struggle between himself, the army and the police.

Meanwhile, The People's Local Government Act of 1981, which capped Numayri's policy of regional 'decentralization', stipulated that it was the prerogative of the regional governors who had replaced provincial commissioners under the Act to 'supervise over police forces'.[40] This thus provided for a more direct form of control over the police than that stipulated in the 1971 act. The regional governor was appointed by Numayri from a list drawn up by local SSU branches and could be removed by the president at any time.[41] Thus the 'decentralization' of the police in fact simply amounted to a re-assertion of control by the political executive. 'Abdalla

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[36] Denis A. Rodenelli, 'Administrative Devolution and Economic Development: The Sudan's Experiment with Devolution', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 19 (1981), pp. 595-624 at p. 609. Salma Agarib, 'Unified Command', *Sudanow*, Oct. 1979, pp. 26-7; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 53. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 336.

[37] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 54.

[38] Senior Police Officer B, former Head of Public Security Organisation and Minister of Interior, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010; Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 146; Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 230; Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 54. Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 336.

[39] Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 319.

[40] Shaikh al-Din Yusuf Mannallah, *al-Hukm al-mahalli khilal al-qarn: 'ard tahlili li-tajriba al-Sudan, 1899-1988* [Local Government throughout the Century: An Analytical Study of the Sudanese Experience, 1899-1988] (Khartoum, 1998), p. 161.

[41] Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 224.

Hasan Salim, the re-styled 'Inspector-General' at the time, argues in his history of police laws that the new system allowed the police to be run by 'local bodies' who were 'unqualified to lead an important apparatus such as the police'.[42] Admittedly Salim, particularly in his disdain for the fact that regional governments were insisting on employing officers from their own regions,[43] is perhaps indicative of the jealousy with which the riverain professionals cherished their monopoly over the police. Nevertheless, it seems that decentralization was being used by Numayri as a political tool to marginalize the police. Salim observes that by decentralizing the police Numayri passed the burden of financing them onto the newly formed regional governments, which had extremely weak financial resources in comparison with the central government – and that the new measures were therefore just another tactic for undermining the police.[44] Just as in the colonial era, regional differences were being used as an excuse to justify the ruling political executive in the state dominating and weakening the other central institutions.

The fate of 'civil' policing and of the corporate existence of the police under the military regime

The police force during the May Regime continued to espouse the same doctrine of civil policing that had been pursued during the early nationalist period, but would struggle to uphold this ethos as the government began to starve it of influence and resources towards the end of the 1970s. Nevertheless, at the inception of the May Regime a new 'Department of Public Relations' was established to focus on improving relations between the police and the public.[45] The director of this new department, Muhammad Muhammad Dahab, exploited the populist rhetoric of the May 'Revolution' by stating that 'security had been transformed into power in the hands of the people for the purpose of the people'.[46] While this was in itself only rhetoric, the May regime did initially adopt a developmentalist approach towards the police. In 1974 the government supplied the 'Emergency Police', which continued in the northern urban areas to serve 'humanitarian' functions such as bringing pregnant

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[42] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 340.
[43] Ibid., p. 340.
[44] Ibid, pp. 321-2.
[45] 'Marhaban bik Mayo "amlan wa raja"' ['Welcome May regime in hope and expectation'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, May 1974 p. 4.
[46] Muhammad Muhammad Dahab, 'Marfa' al-ittika'' ['A port of rest'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, May 1974 p. 26.

women to hospital, with a further 41 new vehicles.[47] The first female students entered the Police College in 1972.[48] The force also became increasingly specialized. For instance, the CID had by 1974 acquired separate branches specializing in matters such as forensics, drugs, forged currency, homicide, and offences against property.[49] The status of the Sudanese police at this time was demonstrated by the fact that in 1974 Sudan was able to begin lending officers to the newly independent United Arab Emirates.[50] In 1977 the force also became more distinctively 'Sudanese' as the old Turkish officer ranks (*Hakimdar*, *Onbashi*, *Sol*) were abandoned and new Arabic titles were introduced (*'amid*, *'aqid* etc) – although this in itself reflected the central importance of riverain Arabism to the police force.[51] Thus the experience of the Sudanese police in the early years of the May regime was a comparatively positive one for the force: it became more professionalized, specialized, and institutionalized, in spite of the increasing influence of politics in its public role. It was also becoming a more accessible force. Between 1970 and 1978 the figure for the annual number of offences reported to the police per 100,000 of the population ranged between 3,011 and 2691.5, a steady increase on the figure from the 1960s (see Chapter 4).[52]

The Sudanese police force also remained a fairly privileged institution during the early years of the May regime. Its independent financial strength was reflected in the establishment of a 'Police Branch' at the Sudanese Real Estate Bank (*al-Bank al-'Aqqari al-Sudani*).[53] These developments were certainly favourable in comparison with what would happen to the force later on during the May regime. The Police Law of 1971 also specified new service conditions and post-service benefits.[54] However, this law was a legacy of Farouk Hamdalla, who was executed for his participation in Hashim al-Atta's ill-fated coup in the same year.[55]

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[47] Idara al-allaqat al-'ama, 'Ihtifal bi-tadshin 'arabat al-najda al-jadida' ['Celebration to inaugurate the new emergency police wagons'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1974 pp. 20-21.
[48] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 50.
[49] Rashid Ahmad Geili, 'al-Takhassus fi al-bulis' ['Specialisation in the Police'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1974 p. 37.
[50] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 146.
[51] Ibrahim, *Mudhakirat*, p. 66.
[52] See el-Bushra, *Criminal Justice*, p. 87.
[53] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 51.
[54] Ibid., p. 51.
[55] Police Officers, 'Police Law', in Mahgoub al-Tijani Mahmoud (ed.), *Sudan Law and International Human Rights Norms: Comparative Research* (Lewiston 2000), p. 420.

After the bitter disputes of 1978 and 1979, the regime's increasing marginalization of the police force impacted on both its level of resources and its capacity to act as a public service. The technical standards the force had begun to achieve in the 1960s were allowed to slip as the regime began to transfer key resources to the SSO.[56] The result was a rapid deterioration in the facilities that had been available to the police in the 1960s. In 1978, 50 per cent of police cars were off the road and, according to former police officer Abu Humayd Ibrahim, the Ministry of Interior refused to provide the funding for their repair.[57] Salim claims that the fact the police were budgeted for on a provincial basis after the 1979 measures had a negative impact of the provisions of uniforms and technical equipment to local officers.[58] The police dogs acquired in the 1960s were neglected and became infested with insects, a minor but pitifully indicative metaphor for the wider neglect of the police.[59] In a 1981 edition of the *Police Magazine* 'Amid 'Abdallah 'Abdu Kahin lamented the fact that a decline in police numbers and equipment had resulted in a deterioration in police standards, a circumstance for which, following the 1985 *intifada*, he immediately blamed Numayri's regime.[60] Meanwhile, the figures for offences reported to the police slowly declined, with the average per 100,000 inhabitants dropping from 2,599 in 1979 to 2,093 in 1982, and to 1,899 in 1984.[61] This was more likely indicative of the lack of police presence than a drop in crime levels.

Nevertheless, although the May regime neglected the police as a whole throughout the later 1970s and 1980s, the period did see further specialization at a central level through the introduction of the 'Technical Police' (*al-Shurta al-Finniyya*) in 1983. The Technical Police absorbed secondary school leavers and undergraduates who were immediately placed in complex administrative roles in the

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[56] *Al-Midan*, Apr. 1983.
[57] Salma Agarib, 'Crime in Khartoum: The Rise in Break-ins' *Sudanow*, Dec. 1978; Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 299.
[58] Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 340.
[59] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 304.
[60] Al-Amid Abdallah Abduh Kahin, 'al-Shurta bayna al-amsi wa al-yawm' ['The police between yesterday and today'], *Majalla al-Shurta*, Sep. 1981, pp. 21-22; El Hidai Ahmed, 'Crime Pays?', *Sudanow*, Nov/Dec 1986, pp. 8-11.
[61] See el-Bushra, *Criminal Justice*, p. 87.

passport and traffic sections.[62] This reflected the fact that while Numayri hampered police professionalization in a legal and political context, he increasingly accepted it in a bureaucratic context to respond to the challenges of the modern urban economy in and around Khartoum and other important northern towns. These jobs became popular since entrants started with a salary equivalent to that of a sergeant in the police, but this did not increase the attractions of service in the rank and file.[63] Naturally, this further underlined the dichotomy between the affluent, literate elite within the police and the neglected rank and file, a dichotomy mirroring the inequalities within urban riverain society at the time (see Chapter 6).

Islam and 'civil' policing

Although the regime was increasingly neglecting the police as an institution, those officers who developed a progressive outlook in the 1950s and 1960s remained committed to the ideologies associated with civil policing that had been developed in the early nationalist period. Even at a time when the regime was preparing to replace Sudan's existing criminal and police laws with a more arbitrary, punitive and supposedly more 'Islamic' set of laws, senior police officers remained committed to showing that progressive police values could work in an Islamic framework.

One senior police officer, Hasan 'Atiallah, writing an article in 1982 entitled 'International Human Rights in Islam', argued that some of the tolerant attitudes of the UN Charter on Human Rights could be discerned in classical Islamic philosophy. For instance, he observed that the Hanafite school of Islamic law permitted Christians to both drink alcohol and eat pork as a measure of religious tolerance. In addition, 'Attiallah commented that the Qu'ran advocated a gradualist approach towards the removal of alcohol from Muslim society, using the force of faith rather than physical compulsion to discourage its consumption.[64] In 1981, Ma'mun Mubarak published an article in the *Police Magazine* arguing that the coercion of evidence, whether by physical or psychological methods, was ineffective. Mubarak

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[62] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.

[63] Al-Abid Ismad al-Hajj Khalid, 'limadha irtafa'at mu'adilat al-jarima?' ['Why have crime levels risen?'] *Al-Raya*, 6 July 1985; Senior Police Officer D, Former Commissioner-General of Police and Minister of Interior, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.

[64] Hasan 'Atii Allah, 'Al huquq dawliyya li'l-insan fi Islam' ['International human rights in Sudan'], *Majallat al-sujuun*, April 1982, pp. 52-54.

not only pointed out that Sudan's constitution and criminal laws forbade torture, but also cited in support of his argument a saying of 'Umar 'Ibn al-Khitab Radiullah, one of the rightly-guided caliphs. Radiullah had observed that 'a man will not be truthful about himself should you have hidden him or beaten him or bound him' (*laysa ar-rajul 'aminan 'an nifsahu idhan anta akhfeytuhu au darabtahu au awthaqtahu*).[65]

Another police writer, Mahjoub al-Tijani, wrote an article in 1982 trying to establish Islamic and Sudanese pretexts for the reform-minded criminal system Numayri was about to reverse. Al-Tijani analyzed the Khalifa 'Abdallahi's penal policy during the Mahdist state, arguing that the Khalifa showed elements of a correctionist policy by sitting amongst criminals in prison and praying for their repentance.[66] Thus a number of Sudanese police officers felt Islam offered scope for a liberal, progressive and reformist interpretation of the criminal law distinct from the deterrent and arbitrary form of Islamic law Numayri was about to introduce. Again, this demonstrated the distance between police agendas and the agendas of the political executive.

The 'Islamization' project and the increasing fragmentation of the police

Numayri's 'Islamization' of Sudan's legislation in 1983 reflected a new set of regime priorities that also changed its relationship with its police force and in turn the relationship between police and society. Previously the May regime, like its predecessors, had been focused purely on providing for its own political security, but now it required a police force that would participate in the cultural re-engineering of society as a whole. When Numayri first launched his 'Islamization' project with the September Laws of 1983, he acknowledged that Islam was a religion which 'condemns people with proof' and 'in which privacy is inviolable'.[67] However, he radically changed his approach in May 1984 when he declared a state of emergency

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[65] Muqaddam Ma'mun Mubarak, 'Hukm al-Ikrah fi al-Bi'a' ['The rule of coercion in the world'], *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1981.
[66] Mahjoub al-Tijani, 'al-falsafa 'iqabiyya fi al-Mahdiyya' ['Penal philosophy in the Mahdiyya'], *Majallat al-Sujuun*, April 1982, pp. 24-6.
[67] Mansour Khalid, *Nimeiri and the Revolution of Dis-May* (London, 1985), p. 268.

and equipped both the police and a variety of non-police bodies with arbitrary powers designed to facilitate a totalitarian transformation of Sudanese society. Justifying these actions, Numayri argued that

> Islam has its state of emergency…and when society is seen to have become corrupted and to have deviated strongly…we declare a state of emergency…we enter houses…we search…we search people everywhere…he who drinks behind doors…he who commits adultery….the houses of prostitution…every house we shall enter and search…Islam has ordered us to take such measures as well, for despite it being the religion I have mentioned…we are now in the phase of correcting and amending.[68]

Nevertheless, Numayri's plans to use the police to 'correct' and 'amend' Sudanese society fell apart for reasons similar to those that prevented the colonial state using its police force to 'civilise' Sudanese society. Numayri had chosen both to fragment his police force and starve it of resources in the years leading up to the crisis in 1983. Given the effect that his policies had had on the morale of the force, he could only really impose his laws by further undermining it as an institution – by coercing the police into enacting the laws and using the other security forces to bypass police authority.

Part of the reason that the authority of the police force became so fragmented at this time was that both Numayri and the Islamist movement – which was also attempting to usurp the authority of the police – were pursuing their own distinct agendas in spite of the nominal alliance between them, which would eventually disappear in March 1985.[69] Thus the police suffered a twin-pronged assault on their status, with Numayri attempting to militarize them and outsource their functions to the military and a series of vigilante groups, while the ICF tried to incorporate police officers within the Islamist movement and use its own security wing to usurp the police authority. The resulting confused fragmentation led to a situation in which members of the public did not know who the police were meant to be, leading to widespread mimicry of police authority. Thus while it is questionable whether the

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[68] Ibid., p. 268.
[69] Lesch, *Sudan*, p. 57, Gallab, *First Islamist Republic*, p. 74.

'Islamization' project managed to transform society in the manner which the regime intended, it certainly led the authority of the state to impact more immediately on the lives of the Sudanese. However, just as in the colonial era (see Chapter 2), the state could not control the extent to which its authority was subverted during this process.

The Islamic Charter Front and its subversion of police authority

By the time the 'September Laws' were promulgated in 1983, the ICF had used the close relationship it had developed with Numayri since the latter's 'National Reconciliation' with the political parties in 1977 to expand its organization within the country and to infiltrate the state apparatus.[70] Hasan al-Turabi, the mercurial leader of the ICF, became attorney-general and headed a parliamentary committee which was to modify the legal system so as to conform with *shari'a* law.[71] Although Numayri removed Turabi from the post of attorney-general in 1983 and appointed his own personal advisers to draft the final version of the new laws, the ICF continued to support the new legislation and prominent ICF figures such as al-Mukashifi al-Kabbashi were given seniors positions in the new judiciary.[72] The ICF had been aided by the vast financial resources afforded to it by its economic links to the Arab Gulf states and control over the system of Islamic banking that had begun in Sudan after 1977.[73] From 1978 the Islamist movement used these funds to expand its own 'police' system, including the 'Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice' (*'Amr bi'l-Ma'ruf wa'l-Nahi al-Munkar*) groups that had begun to appear in northern cities, offering financial incentives to the inhabitants of the poorest quarters to join them.[74] These groups acted as a 'civil wing' (*janah madani*) of the ICF which penetrated society by operating through 'networks of gangs'.[75]

Numayri appears to have set the precedent for outsourcing police work to these vigilante groups with his promulgation of the Protection of Public Tranquility Act of 1982, which sanctioned the direct recruitment by the police of volunteers who

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[70] Gallab, *First Islamist Republic*, pp. 72-73.
[71] Lesch, *Sudan*, p. 53. Layish & Warburg, *Re-Instatement*, pp. 75-6, 91.
[72] Layish & Warburg, *Re-Instatement*, pp. 37, 43. Qalandar, *Sanawat*, p. 452.
[73] Gallab, *First Islamist Republic*, p. 91.
[74] Abd al-Majid Aleish, *Yawmiyyat al-Dawla al-Islamiyya* (Khartoum, 2005), p. 21. Shaikh Abd al-Jalil al-Nadhir al-Karouri, *Athr Juhud al-Inqadh fi Tazki'a al-Mujtama'* [The Effects of the Salvation's Efforts to Purify Society] (Khartoum 2005), p. 18.
[75] Haydar Ibrahim Ali, *Azima al-Islam al-Siyasi* [The Crisis of Political Islam] (Alexandria, 1992).

would be empowered to arrest law-breakers and instantaneously try them.[76] As 'Abdullahi Ibrahim argues, this legislation would 'loom large' in the practices of the 'Prevention of Vice' groups after the official 'Islamization' of the law in 1983.[77] Officially, the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Act of 1983 did not give the 'Prevention of Vice' teams any authority to inflict vigilante-style justice. Indeed, it stipulated that those who observed immoral acts should merely inform the proper authorities 'without resorting to defamation or slander or spying or trespassing on other people's freedoms'.[78] Al-Mukashifi al-Kabbashi, who was a member of the Supreme Court and president of the Criminal Court of Appeal in Khartoum during the implementation of the September Laws, argued in his defence of the 'Islamization' project that these groups merely had the task of 'directing and guiding' (*wazifa tawjihiyya wa irshadiyya*), and had no executive authority to inflict punishment.[79] Nevertheless, these groups would often assist the physical application of the laws, for instance by reporting inhabitants of 'suspicious houses' (*manazil mashbouh*), who they believed to be practising pre-marital sex, to the police.[80]

Furthermore, it is clear that a number of these groups appear to have taken police authority in the manner sanctioned by the 1982 Act – although probably without the official permission of the police themselves. In 1984, members of the ICF began to argue that they were more qualified than the other security forces as the latter had been established during the period of *jahiliyya* (ignorance).[81] Numayri, after he chose to denounce the Islamist movement later in 1984, claimed that the 'Prevention of Vice' groups had exceeded their legal authorities and started to assume police authority.[82] As one of the contemporary critics of the 'Islamization' of the law argued, they took police powers

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[76] Ibrahim, *Manichean Delirium*, p. 244.
[77] Ibid.
[78] 'Qanun al-Amr Bi'l Ma'arouf' ['The Propagation of Virtue Law'], Sudan Police Headquarters Website, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/laws.php visited 7 July 2010.
[79] Al-Kabbashi, Mukashifi Taha, *Tatbiq al-Sharia* [The Application of Sharia] (Cairo, 1986), p. 31.
[80] Abd al-Majid Aleish, *al-Aqwal wa al-Afa'al didda al-Nisa'a wa'l Atfal, 1984-2009* [Sayings and Acts against Women and Children] (Khartoum 2010), p. 21.
[81] *Al-Midan*, June/July 1984.
[82] Fatih Osman, 'Sudan: much promise, some problems', *Arabia*, Nov. 1984, pp. 18-22, copy found in Allison Papers, SAD /15/36.

in a very chaotic way, because they are not trained, and they think they have the right to do so, so they intrude people's privacies, and they just implement what they thought is right on other people… they gave them the power to implement the laws they thought in their head on other people, if they think that woman is not wearing good...they can whip her.[83]

It appears that a number of groups also actively impersonated policemen or other members of the 'security forces' in implementing the law, taking advantage of the manner in which the regime itself had subverted police authority. In June 1984, the first vice-president, Umar Tayyib, issued a statement observing that 'infiltrators' (*mundassin*) who had been 'dressing up in the uniform of the regular forces' had been arrested for committing crimes while so dressed.[84] Tayyib stated that directives had been issued to the army, police and prison forces stipulating the need to carry identity cards, implying that this had not been a regular practice beforehand.[85] The statements made by Tayyib, who was a staunch opponent of the Islamist movement,[86] were quite possibly a reference to the attempts of ICF-linked bodies to usurp police authority. However, the phenomenon could also have been a result of individual criminals 'impersonating' policemen – one famous group of criminals active during this period made it their practice to wear police uniforms whilst burgling shops at night-time.[87] As one critic of the new legislation observed, impersonation of policemen had become a particular problem since 1983 as the law had become 'so wide that you can harass anyone if you are a policeman' so that 'some people they say, a young man is driving his car with a girl, they will stop them and say we are police, and they show fake documents, and they say you have been kissing her, and they extort money from them'.[88]

However, the ICF themselves were clearly responsible for a great deal of the subversion of police authority. In 1985, Numayri accused the movement of having

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[83] Prominent member of the Republican Brothers, Interview, Khartoum, 6 Dec. 2010.
[84] 'False military uniform wearers arrested in Sudan', Omdurman Home Service 0430 gmt 3 June 1984, BBCSWB ME 7661/A/4, 5 June 1984.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Gallab, *First Islamist Republic*, p. 74.
[87] Mubarak Bilal, 'al-qissa al-kamila li-i'adam wa salb al-Wathiq Sabah al-Kheir (4)' ['The complete story of the execution and crucifixion of Wathiq Sabah al-Kheir'], *al-Dar*, 10 Feb. 2010.
[88] Lawyer, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.

'penetrated various organizations of the regime', including the police and prison services.[89] In 1983, during his earlier period of alliance with the Islamist movement, Numayri had begun to send police, army and prison officers to the 'African Islamic Centre' (*al-merkaz al-Afriki al-Islami*) to obtain diplomas in 'the Islamic call' (*al-da'wa al-Islamiyya*) and study the principles of *shar'ia* and *fiqh*.[90] While this was to some extent a state-sponsored Islamization project, Hasan al-Turabi was involved in the study programme and the centre often took it upon itself to recruit officers independently, particularly during the *'umra*.[91]

The militarization of policing under the state of emergency
Some members of the Sudanese police had remained committed to a 'civil' system of policing. As a result, in order to compel them to implement arbitrary legislation, the May regime was forced in 1984 to enact a new Police Law. This in effect marked a return to the old colonial understanding of the police as 'an army in the field' (see Chapter 3), although the principle was taken even more literally now. The new law, according to Mahgoub al-Tijani, was 'almost a copy of the armed forces law'.[92] It facilitated the establishment of a 'Police High Council' that had the power to impose the death penalty on members of the police for disobeying a legal order.[93] Numayri himself admitted publicly that the new code was influenced by the armed forces and state of emergency laws and 'allowed for martial courts to be promptly formed in the field in order to try those who neglected their duties'.[94] This new law also gave the regional governors and the commissioner of the national capital an increased degree of supervision over the police.[95] Meanwhile, a senior intelligence officer, Ibrahim Ahmad 'Abd al-Karim, was appointed head of the Police Force in Khartoum.[96]

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[89] 'Numayri's Attack on Muslim Brotherhood: Dismissals and Reported Arrests' Omdurman Home Service 0430 10 Mar 1985, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (BBCSWB) ME/7897/A/11, 12 March 1985.

[90] Aleish, *Yawmiyyat*, p. 31. The first Commissioner-General of Police under the pro-Islamist 'Salvation' Regime of 1989, Awad Khojali, was one of the officers recruited at this centre. See Hayder Ibrahim Ali, *Suqut al-Mashroua' Hadari* [The Fall of the Civilisational Project] (Khartoum 2004), p. 87.

[91] Ibid., p. 31.

[92] Police Officers, 'The Police Law', p. 423.

[93] Ibid., p. 396.

[94] 'Numayri on Islamic Law and Corruption', SUNA 1045 gmt 19 May 1984, BBCSWB, ME/7649/A/2, 22 May 1984.

[95] 'Police decentralised', SUNA 1800 gmt 30 May 1984, BBCSWB ME/7659/A/12, 2 June 1984. Salim, *Tatawwur Qawanin*, p. 339.

[96] 'New Police Appointments', SUNA 1422 gmt 15 May 1984, BBCSWB ME/7645/A/13, 17 May 1984.

Numayri's numerous acts of legislation also gave police powers to a variety of non-police bodies, particularly to the branches of the 'security forces' linked to the military. His May 1984 emergency legislation stipulated that 'All soldiers of the People's Armed Forces shall have all the authority stated in this order or in any law, ordinance or other orders, such as that of the security forces'.[97] The phrase 'security forces' presumably refers to the police in this context, although it is frequently used in other Middle Eastern contexts to refer jointly to the army, police, and other paramilitary bodies. For instance, members of the army were given the same level of permission to enter houses without a warrant that were granted to the police under the emergency legislation.[98] Khartoumers recall that the new legislation was applied by all the 'security forces' jointly, and informants struggled to distinguish between the roles of the regular police, CRP, military and SSO in applying the laws.[99] Again, this reflected the extent to which police authority was subverted, fragmented and dispersed in this period.

The April *intifada* and police-society relations

In spite of the efforts of Numayri and his allies to subordinate, fragment and control the police, the latter would demonstrate at the climax of the May regime that they were still vulnerable to popular pressure. After the 'second' *intifada* in April 1985, the police force was praised by the leaders of the uprising for not opening fire on demonstrators, just as in the 1964 popular uprising which had overthrown the previous military regime. In both uprisings, labour agitators and professional groups had organised mass civil disobedience to force the military rulers out of power. Nevertheless, the second uprising differed in that the military leadership, having denounced Numayri, quickly assumed control of the situation and established a

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[97] 'State of Emergency declared in Sudan', Omdurman Home Service 1728 gmt 29 April 1984, BBCSWB ME/7631/A/6, 1 May 1984.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Prominent Republican Brother, Interview, Khartoum, 6 Dec. 2010. Anti-Numayri activist and former Ba'athist politician, Interview, Khartoum, 20 Dec. 2009. Darfuri Masalit inhabitants of Um Bedda, Interview, Um Bedda, Khartoum, 25 Dec. 2010.

'Transitional Military Council' (TMC) which would see the country through a one-year transitional period in the lead-up to the national elections of April 1986.

Although the various leftist and professional groups constituting the 'National Alliance' which led the uprising gained less power than their predecessors in 1964, they still attempted to use it to represent the police as a civil force that had acted on the side of the people. At a conference held in November 1985, the National Alliance accepted the police force's request that it should be acknowledged as being among the first forces which carried out the *intifada*.[100] This would reflect the wider attempts of the left-wing and professional bodies to make the police a 'public' force in the period before and after the *intifada*. This trend was assisted to some extent by the fact that the creation of the SSO had left the police as a body devoted to crime-fighting (albeit that crime-fighting after 1983 became politicized in itself), the neglect of which since 1978 had become a source of public concern. Participants in the uprising now recall that the police 'helped the people' because they were 'linked to them' and opposed the lack of 'justice' (*'adala*) under Numayri.[101] However, popular identification with the police occurred in a somewhat different context during the 1985 uprising. Whereas the 1964 uprising effectively represented a movement originating in the urban professional elite, the latter *intifada* was the fruit of a temporary social alliance between this group and the marginalized populations of the shanty towns (see Chapter 6).[102] The fact that the police identified with the uprising and were remembered as being 'linked' to the people therefore reflects the demographics of the police force itself.

As was the case during 1964, the extent to which the police had an active and autonomous role in the uprising is somewhat questionable. During its first days, between 27 March and 3 April, the police did participate in campaigns to rid the capital of the unemployed 'vagrants' held to be responsible for it, and used batons, tear gas and gunfire on rioters, reportedly killing between six and eighteen of them

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[100] *Al-Midan*, 22 Nov. 1985.
[101] Ex-Communist, Interview, Wad Medani, 16 Dec. 2010. Resident of Umm Bedda, Interview, Umm Bedda, Khartoum, 16 March 2011.
[102] Hussein, *al-Faidan*; Munzoul Assal, 'Urbanization and the future of Sudan', *Making Sense of Sudan*, posted 29 Jan. 2008, http://blogs.ssrc.org/sudan/2008/01/29/urbanization-and-the-future.

on 27 March.[103] Nevertheless, witnesses tend to recall that it was the SSO and CRP that played the principal role in crushing the demonstrations.[104] However, as one former member of the regime recalls, even these units adopted a hesitant and uncoordinated strategy towards the rioting because they were bound to take their orders directly from Numayri, who was in America at the time.[105] This was another example of how personal control over police units could diminish the overall power of the state.

However, identification with popular sentiments doubtless played some role in making the police adopt an ambivalent attitude towards the suppression of the demonstrations.   There were leaflets issued in the name of a 'Police Officers' Association' indicating that the police would be willing to join in any campaign against the regime, although the latter dismissed these as propaganda spread by the Sudan People's Liberation Army, the southern rebel movement.[106] It was on 3 April that the police first appeared to participate alongside the demonstrators, who began to lift policemen onto their shoulders chanting 'police go with the people'.[107] Nevertheless, it seems that these actions were largely symbolic and eyewitnesses recall that the police did not participate themselves in the demonstrations in any active way.[108] However, their refusal to carry out orders was important enough. By 5 April, one of the decisive days of the uprising, even the riot police were actively refusing to confront large crowds of protesters.[109]

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[103] Abbas Abd al-Karim, Abdallah al-Hasan and David Seddon, 'The generals step in' *MERIP* Reports 135, pp. 19-24.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Zein al-Abdin Muhammad Ahmad Abd al-Qadir, *Mayo: Sanawat al-Khasb wa'l Jafaf* [(The) May (Regime): Years of Fertility and Drought] (Khartoum 2011), pp. 172-175. Abd al-Qadir observes that the fact that vice-president Umar al-Tayyib was present in Khartoum made no difference as the heads of the various units were supposed to report to Numayri directly. He further observes that one reason that other senior figures in the regime were nervous of exercising direct control over the situation was that a previous vice president, Liwa Muhammad al-Baghir Ahmad, had been forced to resign after Numayri criticized the measures he took against demonstrators during the anti-government riots of 1973.
[106] Abdel-Karim, al-Hasan and Seddon, 'The generals step in'; 'Radio SPLA reports police refusal to use force against demonstrators', Radio SPLA 1300 GMT 3 Apr 1985, BBCSWB ME/7918/A/105, April 1985.
[107] *The Times*, Monday April 1 1985.
[108] Retired schoolteacher, Interview, Khartoum, 26 Dec. 2010; Anti-Numayri activist and former Ba'athist politician, Interview, Khartoum, 20 Dec. 2009.
[109] Abdel-Karim, al-Hasan and Seddon, 'The generals step in'.

The ambivalence of the police during the April uprising reflects a long term trend in the attitude of police officers during the May regime: resentment at the insistence of the regime's leaders that they use arbitrary methods against anti-regime activists, to whom they often possessed social links. 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim, the head of the PSO, maintained a close friendship with opposition leader Hussein al-Hindi and insisted that one of the reasons that Numayri dismissed him was that he told the dictator he would not assassinate opponents such as al-Hindi on his behalf.[110] A number of officers refused to be transferred to 'security' and chose instead to remain in the regular police force because they resented being used as the state's tool against its own people.[111] There were times when policemen refused to fire on student demonstrations when ordered to do so by their officers.[112]

The sympathy that members of the underground opposition had with police officers was reflected in the views of the underground Communist organ *al-Midan*, which reported that during the heated discussion between senior police officers and the minister of interior in 1979 one officer had accused the regime of spending more money on its own security than on that of its citizens.[113] That *al-Midan* managed to acquire such information implies that the underground leftists must have had some links to the police, again demonstrating that the police were not simply a malleable tool of the state. In the regions of Deim and Sahafa in Khartoum, the Communist Party, in spite of being outlawed by Numayri after 1971, exercised *de facto* control over a long period of time partly because of its links to the police.[114]

The identification of the professional groups with the police force after the *intifada* also demonstrated the extent to which the creation of state security agencies had left the police to be seen by the people as a public force responsible for fighting crime. In one sense this was a positive step, except that the regime had

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[110] Ibrahim, *'Awraq*, p. 101. Although Ibrahim's claim that he was tolerant of his personal friend is probably believable, ex-Communists claim that he was somewhat harsher and more willing to break regulations when dealing with them. Ex-communist, interview, Wad Medani, 22 Jan. 2011. Zein al-Abdin Abd al-Qadir's claim that he imprisoned one senior politician in the May Regime simply because he criticisd the effectiveness of the PSO also casts an element of doubt upon his professionalism. See Abd al-Qadir, *Mayo*, pp. 163-166.

[111] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 238. *al-Midan*, 19 Dec. 1986.

[112] *Al-Midan*, May 1975.

[113] *Al-Midan*, Feb. 1979.

[114] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, p. 154.

simultaneously starved the police of resources by transferring funding to the SSO. Thus public criticisms of the police became focused on their inability to respond to crime, rather than their more political actions. In 1981, 'Amid 'Abdalla Kahin admitted that 'We have become the talk of the clubs in society not out of hatred or fear of us but [in fact] one question after another is asked about our condition and the reason for our continuous absence'.[115]

Public reactions to the deterioration in police standards show an element of continuity with attitudes towards the police in the 1960s. Local bodies tended to see the regular police as a force that could be made 'theirs', in lieu of the state providing for their protection. Abu Humayd Ibrahim recalls that during his time serving as a police officer at Nahud in the late 1970s he managed to persuade the local council to supply funds to fix police cars in Nahud. The governor of Kordofan, a political appointee, had apparently refused a request for such funds on the grounds that the police were the only institution which did not obey him.[116] However, a degree of cynicism towards the police amongst local public bodies also remained on account of their association with corruption. This was evident when in June 1981 the demand of the governor of Khartoum that representatives of trading houses and professionals' unions should contribute towards funding the police was met by the objection that the police themselves 'could be counted amongst the list of criminal gangs and robbers'.[117] In this respect, by distancing himself from the police Numayri had also to some extent succeeded in distancing the police from society; by depriving the force of both funds and judicial regulation (see below) he had created a force that was likely to prey on members of the public.

Nevertheless, after the *intifada* both the media and a number of public bodies launched funding campaigns designed to transform the police into a more 'public' force. In December 1985 the post-*intifada* Sudanese Youth Union also held social events at the Blue Nile Casino to raise funds for them and established a number of projects including work camps focusing on the maintenance of a fleet of good police

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[115] Kahine, 'al-Shurta bayna amsi wa al-yawm', p. 22.
[116] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, pp. 299-300.
[117] *Al-Midan*, June 1981.

cars.[118] In 1986 the newspaper *al-Sahafa*, after producing a number of articles criticizing the weak police presence in the poor and heavily populated neighbourhood of Haj Yousif, established a popular fund (*sunduq*) to provide support for the police. This fund aimed at establishing new police posts and buying more police cars, beginning in Haj Yousif.[119] The campaign encouraged the police to be seen as the protectors not just of the historic and affluent 'Arab' areas of Khartoum, but the newly risen 'African' shanty-towns of which Haj Yousif was a prominent example. In 1988, the minister for youth and sports issued a decision decreeing the establishment of 'Societies for the Friends of the Police' (*jama'iyyat asdiqa' al-Shurta*) on a national and regional level to encourage donations from local communities.[120] These events demonstrated the closer links that could be fostered between the police and public bodies during civilian regimes.

Contrasts between policing in the parliamentary and military regimes

The more open atmosphere of the 1986-89 parliamentary period would reveal more clearly the institutional divides within the state that the May regime had tried to manage by bypassing judges and police officers who were unwilling to sanction the regime's abuse of the police. A comparison between the parliamentary and military regimes demonstrates that, while both the political parties of the parliamentary era and Sudan's military rulers tried to manipulate police authority to further their own political goals, the greater independence of the media, the judiciary and other legal bodies during the second parliamentary period restricted the capacity of politicians to do so. One critic of the third democratic regime, whilst deeply critical of the parliamentary politicians' inability to repair the economy and provide effective governance, acknowledges that they presided over a greater freedom of the press and that independent legal bodies such as the Sudanese Lawyer's Association were able

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[118] *al-Midan*, 5 Dec. 1985.
[119] *al-Sahafa*, 12 July 1986.
[120] *al-Siyasa*, 1 April 1988, 9 June 1988.

to prevent the full revivification of the Septembers Laws.[121] Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the capacity of the judiciary and media to expose and prevent abuse of the police was largely restricted to the developed urban areas of the riverain north; police authority continued to be abused in the urban and rural peripheries (see Chapter 6). Moreover, although professional groups, the media and police leaders once more strove for a centralized and independent force in the third parliamentary period, they struggled to reverse the process of fragmentation and mimicry of police authority that had escalated out of control in the 1983-5 period.

A more civil force?

After the *intifada*, its leaders aspired to an apolitical, united and public-orientated Sudanese police force. It was the 'National Alliance' that pressured the TMC to dissolve the SSO and return the majority of its functions to the police, demonstrating the influence that these professional, liberal and educated groups could exercise in police matters.[122] After the SSO was dissolved, a governmental committee was established to re-distribute its resources among the other security organs, including the police.[123] Sudanese police officers also took the re-emergence of democracy in Sudan as an opportunity to push once more for a more civil, well equipped and independent force. As the newly elected premier Sadiq al-Mahdi was due to take office on 29 March 1986, the entire police leadership offered him their collective resignation, demanding that inequalities between the police and the army in terms of pay and equipment be removed and improvements made to the police pensions law.[124] The new government concurred swiftly with these demands and the police withdrew their resignations on the following day.[125] Such tactics on the part of the police leadership could only succeed during a period of parliamentary rule. As seen above, a similar collective protest in 1979 had led to Numayri dismissing 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim as minister of interior and deliberately breaking up the force. When the police leadership attempted a similar threat of mass resignation during the next period of military rule the military simply chose to fire the upper echelon of the police officer corps *en masse* (see Conclusion).

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[121] Kamal Osman Salih, 'The Sudan, 1985-9: the fading democracy', in Peter Woodward (ed.), *Sudan After Nimeiri* (London 1991), pp. 45-75 at pp. 47, 63.
[122] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn al-Dawla*, p. 94-5.
[123] Bayoumi, *Jihaz Amn al-Dawla*, p. 5; *al-Midan*, 30 Jan. 1986.
[124] *Al-Sahafa*, 29 March 1986, *al-Midan*, 29 March 1986.
[125] *Al-Midan*, 29 March 1986.

However, the police were able to secure certain gains from the parliamentary rulers. The National Assembly soon passed a law guaranteeing a pensions allowance to any policemen who served for 20 years, a privilege that had previously only been enjoyed by members of the army and the SSO.[126] Furthermore, in 1985 the new minister of interior, Abbas Medani – who was, for the first time since 'Abd al-Wahhab Ibrahim's dismissal, a policeman – had announced that the new Police Act would re-centralize the force, removing the presidential powers that Numayri had enjoyed and once more giving the commissioner-general a greater power of supervision over local police forces.[127] Nevertheless, not all the arbitrary aspects of the old 1984 Police Act were removed by the new law. It still permitted the imprisonment of a policeman for six months for the somewhat vaguely defined offence of 'disobeying orders', which could simply mean refusing to offer a salute to an officer.[128] Summary police courts could still be established that were permitted to inflict any punishment on policemen, including dismissal from service.[129]

It also became clear that the parliamentary regime was not willing to reverse completely the process of politicization of the police that had occurred during Numayri's regime. Although the cabinet issued a statement in late 1985 claiming that police officers dismissed arbitrarily under Numayri would be returned to service, the process appears not to have commenced, and in March 1988 200 such officers sent a memorandum of protest to the prime minister insisting that they be reinstated.[130] It appears that the police had little more presence on the ground during this period than they had done in the later years of the Numayri regime. Figures for offences reported to the police per 100,000 of the population between 1986 and 1989 varied from 2,098.9 to 1,751.5.[131] Although the committee established to transfer resources from the dissolved SSO to the police issued a statement in September 1985 that it had transferred 44 cars to the police, *al-Midan* disputed this since they had in fact been transferred to an organization called the 'National Security Organization'. This was not a part of the Police Department but responsible to Abbas Medani as

[126] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 317.
[127] *al-Ayyam*, 17 Aug. 1985.
[128] Police Officers, 'Police Law', in Mahmoud (ed.), *Sudan Law*, p. 421.
[129] Ibid., p. 420.
[130] *al-Ayyam*, 11 March 1988.
[131] See el-Bushra, *Criminal Justice*, p. 87.

minister of interior, who would later claim that the dissolution of the SSO was a mistake.[132]

Intense public debate over the exact status and functions of the mysterious National Security Organization continued throughout the third parliamentary era, until a new National Security Law was passed in 1988 which established the 'Sudanese Security Organization' (*Jihaz Amn al-Sudan*). The political functions of this organization were clearly signposted by Sadiq al-Mahdi's appointment of his own top Umma Party security man 'Abd al-Rahman Farah as its chief.[133] However, unlike the dissolved SSO, this body did not share the police's legal powers of arresting and interviewing on oath and its functions were officially limited to intelligence gathering.[134]

The political parties would also attempt to both mimic and manipulate the authority of the police. In June 1988 the Umma-dominated government decided to pension off the commissioner-general of police, Ibrahim 'Abd al-Karim and his deputy, 'Abd al-Latif Ibrahim, in spite of the objections of the DUP chairman of the Council of State, Ahmad Ali al-Mirghani.[135] However, the political parties would later come to a mutual agreement that commissioner-generals of the police would be chosen from individuals with no party affiliation.[136] In spite of giving up the plan to control the police, each of the main parties started to bypass it by creating their own private security organs. They started hiring their own security personnel, often from ex-SSO operatives, who frequently impersonated real police personnel. The NIF in particular continued to maintain its own security apparatus, which would form the basis of the Salvation Regime's security organ when it took power in 1989.[137] The level of chaos this behaviour produced was aptly summarized in an article in the *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, published in February 1989, which reported that

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[132] *al-Midan*, 9 Sep. 1985; Senior police officer D, Former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.
[133] Anderson, *Sudan in Crisis*, p. 176.
[134] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 461. However, Farah recently admitted in an interview with a Khartoum newspaper that during this period he co-ordinated with Abu Nidal and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in an unfulfilled plan to assassinate the southern rebel leader John Garang. See *al-Ahram*, 30 March 2011.
[135] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 7 June 1988.
[136] Salim, *Tarikh al-Shurta*, p. 57.
[137] A. H. 'Abd-al Salam and Alex de Waal (eds.), *The Phoenix State: Civil society and the Future of Sudan* (Trenton 2001), p. 117.

It has incidentally come to public attention that some political parties keep private police forces in the name of private party security. Some of these personnel, particularly that [of] one of the ruling parties has been posing as regular state security personnel and have on several occasions terrorized citizens. These have become among the faked policemen of the national capital who masquirate [*sic*] as security personnel.[138]

Thus the parliamentary regime failed to reverse the process of subversion and diffusion of police authority that had begun after 1983. Although the police were offered a greater degree of centralization and improved service conditions, the party leaders attempted to control the upper echelons of the police cadre whilst simultaneously bypassing the force through the creation of parallel party-based security organs.

Politicized police brutality: arbitrary powers of arrest
The new legislation issued by the May regime had facilitated greater abuse of police and state security powers by Sudan's military rulers than would be the case during the parliamentary regimes that followed and preceded it. A key example of this was the 1970 National Security Law, which, paradoxically, allowed the NSO (and later the SSO under similar legislation) to remain outside the law. It conferred upon it the right to investigate and arrest suspected opponents of the regime and bring such individuals to a court after consultation with the legal adviser to the military, or the minister of justice, rather than the prosecutor-general.[139] The subservience of the police to the NSO was confirmed by the subsequent 1971 National Security Law, which authorized its members to order policemen to apprehend individuals on behalf of the intelligence services, thus forcing policemen to conduct arrests with no legal sanction.[140] Thus Numayri's new laws not only created a more powerful rival to the police but also made the police its tool.

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[138] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, Feb. 8 1989.
[139] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 453.
[140] Ibid., p. 455.

The willingness of the regime to conduct mass arrests under these new laws played a major role in preventing anti-regime demonstrations developing in the same manner that had occurred in 1964. 1500 students were arrested after the 1973 riots.[141] In 1974, after opposition from lawyers to his unconstitutional modifications to the National Security Law, Numayri altered the constitution so that it did not contradict his laws permitting the potential detention without trial of a citizen for three months for political offences, renewable for an indefinite period without judicial order and without judicial supervision.[142]

In contrast, although Sudan's parliamentary rulers, particularly the premier Sadiq al-Mahdi, attempted to use the police force against their political opponents in a similar manner, the increased legal accountability of the police prevented this to an extent. For instance, on 28 December 1987 the police arrested Dr Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud and two colleagues on the pretext that they had penned a 'seditious' pamphlet.[143] However, in reality this was an attempt to gain revenge for Ushari Mahmoud's exposure of police inaction during the al-Daein massacre of 1987, when government-funded Rizayqat militias had slaughtered over 1,000 Dinka refugees in south Darfur.[144] These reports had incensed al-Mahdi, who as prime minister was responsible for the arming of the 'Murahiliin' militias. The officer who investigated Mahmoud was Major Dalil Adam, who was working near al-Daein at the time of the massacre and had acted as part of an investigating committee that Mahmoud had condemned as a whitewash.[145] These events demonstrated that even during a parliamentary regime the police could be used to intimidate opposition elements.

However, the press freedoms and legal restraints on arbitrary action that prevailed at the time ensured that the police were only able to take limited action against Mahmoud. The Sudan Bar Association organized a defense council of nine lawyers to defend Mahmoud and these sent an appeal to the attorney-general

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[141] Gordon Etherington-Smith to Alec Douglas-Home, 15 Sep. 1973, TNA FCO 93/150.
[142] 'Hawla mu'amala al-mu'ataqalin wa as-sujana' as-siyasiyin fi sujun sulta numayri al-diktaturiyya fi as-sudan' ['On the treatment of the arrested and political prisoners in the jails of the Numayri dictatorship in Sudan'] (London 1977) IISH, SCP Collection.
[143] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 28 Dec. 1987.
[144] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 6 Jan. 1988.
[145] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 6 Jan. 1988.

requesting that Mahmoud be either tried or released.[146] In the event he was released eight days later and able to report the 'political plot' against him to the free press.[147] These events represent significant evidence of the influence that independent legal bodies and the media could exercise to prevent politicians using the police to silence political opponents during democratic periods.

Subversion of police authority during demonstrations

Both parliamentary and military regimes would attempt to subvert police authority in order to combat demonstrations, although the weak position of the judiciary and the media during the military regime furthered the ability of the 'May' rulers to do so. In particular, Numayri's subjection of units such as the PSO, SSO and CRP to his personal control facilitated the arbitrary treatment of anti-regime demonstrations. *Al-Midan*'s admittedly biased accounts of the policing of leftist and anti-regime demonstrations make clear that one of the reasons why the student demonstrations of the 1970s and early 1980s failed to repeat the feat of the 1964 revolutionists was that the police were willing to be more ruthless in the later period. If *al-Midan* is to be believed, seven were shot dead during the student riots of 1973, while the British embassy reported two deaths in Khartoum and another two in Atbara.[148] *Al-Midan* also claimed that in March 1982, the number of dead in demonstrations across Sudan reached 42, whereas 15 food rioters were killed by police in January 1985.[149]

As demonstrated above, one frustrating aspect of 'underground' sources is that they rarely distinguish between the various branches of the security forces, that is, the regular police, the army, and the NSO, PSO, SSO, and CRP. *Al-Midan* frequently refers either to the 'police', which could potentially refer to the PSO, the regular police, or the CRP, or potentially even the NSO or SSO, or to the 'security forces' (*al-quwwat al-amniyya*), which could refer to any of the bodies in question. This in turn is indicative of the general confusion at the time. Thus it is difficult to discern to what extent Numayri's extension of control over the CRP made it a more ruthless tool for crushing demonstrations than the regular police, although this was a

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[146] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 28 Dec. 1987.
[147] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 7 Jan. 1988.
[148] Gordon Etherington-Smith to Alec Douglas-Home, 15 Sep. 1973, TNA FCO 93/150.
[149] *Al-Midan*, Sep. 1973, March 1982, Jan. 1985.

claim made by leftists after the 1985 *intifada*.[150] However, *al-Midan* made claims in the 1970s that the army was suppressing demonstrations using tanks and that the NSO was using its armoured vehicles to crush demonstrators.[151] Numayri certainly used the army during the *Sha'aban* riots of 1973,[152] the railway workers' strike of 1981 and the student demonstrations of 1982.[153] The latter incident forced Numayri to dismiss his vice-president, 'Abd al-Majid Hamid al-Khalil, who led a military delegation to protest at the use of the army against demonstrators.[154]

As for the leaders of Sudan's political parties, while they attempted during the parliamentary regime to treat demonstrations just as ruthlessly as Sudan's previous military rulers, increased pressure from the independent media and judiciary often denied them the same opportunity to do so. Just as in the aftermath of the October Revolution, the police force in the post-April period (including the third parliamentary regime, 1986-9) was subject to moral and legal criticism when used against public demonstrations. In the third parliamentary period, police responses to civil protest were criticized not just by left-wing and liberal organs such as the *Modern Sudan Daily Times* and *al-Midan*, but by more politically centrist papers such as *al-Ayyam*, which described the shooting of two schoolboys in Hassaheissa and Managil in 1987 as 'abominable and objectionable'.[155] Bringing legal cases against the police also remained an important tactic. For instance, after police shot at demonstrators in Omdurman in early 1988, a lawyer, Mirghani Behoun, opened up a case of attempted murder against them on behalf of the student Maisara Omar Abdalla, who was partially paralyzed by police gunfire.[156] Also in 1988, the government sanctioned a legal investigation by the attorney-general's department into four policemen in Kordofan after they were responsible for shooting three schoolchildren protesting at the poor quality of food at their school in Umm Badier.[157]

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[150] Ma huwa dawr al-Shurta al-Ihtiyati al-Markazi?' [What is the role of the Central Reserve Police?], letter from Muhammad Muhammad Kheir to editor, *al-Midan*, 23 Sep. 1985.
[151] *Al-Midan*, Sep. 1973, Dec. 1979.
[152] Gordon Etherington-Smith to Alec Douglas-Home, 15 Sep. 1973, TNA FCO 93/150.
[153] Lesch, *Sudan*, p. 54.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Cited in *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, Oct. 15 1987.
[156] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, Jan. 22 1988.
[157] *Al-Siyasa*, 11 March 1988.

Given the social condemnation to which they were exposed and their legal vulnerability, it is not surprising that during two major civil protests in 1988 the police refused orders from politicians to open fire on the crowds.[158] One of these occasions occurred when Darfuris in Khartoum protested against the government's handling of the deteriorating security situation in their region. The police officer managing it refused demands by a government minister to open fire on the demonstrators on the grounds that such an order would require judicial sanction. When the judge at the march refused to give the order because he believed that the demonstration was entirely peaceful, the minister appealed to the chief justice to try and persuade him to force his colleague to comply. The result was a heated argument in which the chief justice accused the minister of interfering with the independence of the judiciary.[159] That the demonstration continued to be peaceful and unhindered was due to the resolve of the judiciary and its increased status in a democratic government.

Nevertheless, the parliamentary politicians were at times able to negotiate their way around the legal obstacles preventing the abuse of the police force by covertly using their own private security forces to attack demonstrators. This occurred during the second major occasion in 1988 in which the police were unwilling to fire on demonstrators, on the third day of an all-out general strike launched by Sudan's trade unions in response to a sugar price increase. The protesters marched towards the cabinet building, to be met by the police and army using tear gas and opening fire in the air. When the demonstrators continued to press forwards it was not the army or the police but a mysterious group of armed gunmen that opened fire on them, causing thirty injuries and one fatality.[160]

Al-Ayyam reported that the casualties were inflicted by machine gun shots from an unidentified Toyota car, while eye-witnesses reported to *al-Siyasa* that silencer rounds had been identified coming from the Citibank building.[161] The *Modern Daily Sudan Times* alleged that the shooting was done by the Council of

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[158] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, March 15 1988, Dec. 30 1988.
[159] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, March 15 1988.
[160] *Al-Ayyam*, 30 Dec. 1988; *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, 30 Dec. 1988.
[161] *Al-Siyasa*, 30 Dec. 1988

Ministers' 'so called special protection force called the commandoes'.[162] Meanwhile, *al-Midan* blamed armed members of the Umma Party, observing that Umar Nur al-Da'im, a senior Umma Party figure had twice appeared on the national television encouraging Umma supporters to go out onto the streets and clash with the demonstrators. The writer in *al-Midan* took this to be a message delivered to armed members of the Umma party.[163] Thus, even in the democratic period the political parties appear to have found means to bypass the civil system of law enforcement.

Criminality within the police

Although police criminality would become a serious problem throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the military regime took decisive steps to guard policemen against criminal charges. For one thing, in 1970 it altered police legislation so that it became extremely difficult for members of the public to bring criminal charges against them. This did not exactly mean that the police force was lenient on those policemen that committed criminal acts or other misdemeanors; as demonstrated above, by the 1980s the Police Law had become very severe. However, the new laws did grant the police a great deal of authority to deal with criminality within the force themselves. In some respects this indicated the growing strength of the institutional identity of the police. However, more seriously it undermined the capacity of the judiciary to regulate the force in an independent manner; in other words, it hampered the ability of the state to govern its own instrument of governance.

The Police Act, 1970, stipulated that any person wishing to make a criminal complaint against a policeman on the grounds of intimidation, torture, wrongful confinement or hurt should first obtain the permission of the commissioner of police to do so.[164] Krishna Vasdev, a former judge, observes that even where this did occur, complainants were put under significant pressure to withdraw their charges. This was on the pretext of 'protecting the good name of the police in the eyes of the community'.[165] Meanwhile, the 1970 Act established a series of police courts so that policemen could be tried internally for criminal offences alleged to have been

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[162] *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, 30 Dec. 1988.
[163] Babiker Muhammad Ahmad al-Amin, 'Matloub min al-hukuuma al-ifsah: man alladhi atlaqa al-risas 'ala al-jamahir fi masira yawm al-khamis?' ['The government must explain: who opened fire on the crowds during the Thursday procession?'] *al-Midan* 10 Jan. 1989.
[164] Krishna Vasdev, *The Law of Evidence in the Sudan* (London, 1981), p. 325.
[165] Ibid, p. 325.

perpetrated while acting on duty.[166]   This system was maintained with slight variations by the new police laws of 1973, 1977 and 1979. As was the case before, it appears that criminality did not remain an absolute barrier to a continued career in the police. For instance, the 1977 legislation stipulated that a policeman must only be fired from the force should he commit an offence that merited imprisonment for more than six months.[167] Another problem was that, as senior officers would later admit, the police administration at this time did not have sufficient technical capacity to keep efficient records of policemen who had been dismissed from the force, so that a policeman dismissed from one branch of the police could easily rejoin another later on.[168]

Police criminality remained highly prevalent in this era, although it is unclear whether it was the new police court legislation or the general demoralization caused by Numayri's economic neglect of the force that was responsible for it. Even the government-controlled press reported cases of policemen beating journalists, getting drunk in bars while fully uniformed, engaging in illegal hunting and accepting bribes.[169] In 1980 the more independent English language monthly *Sudanow* reported that such was the extent of corruption in the police that when 'little men' in smuggling rings were captured they were too afraid to identify 'big men' for fear that moles inside the force would in turn report them.[170] The underground press also made numerous allegations that police officers charged with breaking up labour protests had been robbing the strikers they took into custody.[171]

Although police criminality remained a serious problem after the return to parliamentary rule, civilian lawyers managed to some extent to make them more accountable. Even though the same system of 'Police Courts' that had existed under the military regime was retained under the 1986 Police Act, civilians did have more

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[166] Al-Sadiq, 'Mahakim', p. 13.
[167] Ibid, p. 23.
[168] Mubarak Bilal, 'al-Dar tanfarid bi-akhtar al-asrar hawla muqtil Amira al-Hakim (18)', *al-Dar*, 4 Jan. 2011. This was the case with the infamous Sudanese murderer Abd al-Sadiq, discussed below, who was initially dismissed from the mainstream police but then joined the courts police and was still serving in it at the time he committed his crime.
[169] *Nile Mirror*, 24 Aug. 1977, 8 Sep. 1979, 20 Aug. 1983; Victor Keri Wani, 'Southern Region: Law and Order- Confronting Crime'; *Sudanow*, Dec. 1982, pp. 17-18.
[170] Alfred Logune Taban, 'Smuggling at Port Sudan: Who's on the run?' *Sudanow*, June 1980, pp. 25-27.
[171] *Al-Midan*, Oct. 1974.

success in bringing into civilian courts policemen who committed crimes against them.[172] However, just as only those with sufficient financial resources to launch cases independently were able to prosecute their abusers in the SSO in the wake of the May Regime's removal,[173] citizens who were able to bring legal actions against policemen were usually affluent. The cases that appeared in the media in this period tended to involve citizens from wealthy and middle class backgrounds. For instance, one involved an engineer in the central administration who brought a legal action against a policeman for breaking his jaw, another a Saudi tourist who claimed that a policeman had robbed him during a checkpoint luggage search.[174]

Most famously, the family of Amira al-Hakim, a schoolgirl abducted and killed in 1987 by a rank and file policeman called 'Abd al-Sadiq, were able to exercise considerable pressure over the police during their crusade bring their daughter's killer to justice. The al-Hakims, a prominent Khartoum family, were able to exert a great deal of on the police by criticizing their conduct of the investigation in the free press. One member of the family, Khalid 'abd al-Moneim al-Hakim, used his position as a *Mulazim* (Lieutenant) in the Khartoum police to convince the investigation team to grant the family's lawyer, Faisal al-Hakim, permission to directly observe the investigations.[175] 'Abd al-Sadiq was eventually caught and confessed to having killed 'little Amira', although the media would continue to offer a variety of conspiracy theories focusing on 'Abd al-Sadiq's mysterious subsequent suicide and the alleged involvement of various politicians and senior police officers in the killings.[176] The case demonstrated the moral influence that civilians and lawyers could exercise over the police through a free media, but it also showed that rights-based policing was restricted to urban and affluent families in the riverain north. Amira al-Hakim was a young, photogenic girl from a rich 'Arab' family in Khartoum whilst 'Abd al-Sadiq was a rank and file police officer hailing from the comparatively peripheral region of Sennar on the Blue Nile.[177]

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[172] Lawyer, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.
[173] 'Abd-al Salam & de Waal (eds.), *The Phoenix State*, p. 121.
[174] *Al-Midan*, 19 May 1987; *al-Siyasa*, 21 May 1987.
[175] Mubarak Bilal, 'al-Dar tanfarid bi akhtar al-asrar hawla muqtil Amira al-Hakim: man qatala Amira al-Sudan (16)' [al-Dar reveals the most dangerous secrets about the killer of Amira al-Hakim: who killed Amira of Sudan?], *al-Dar*, 1 Jan. 2011.
[176] 'Adlan 'Awad, *Jara'im Hazzat al-Sudan* ['Crimes that Shook Sudan'] (Khartoum, 2001), pp. 33-7. Bilal, 'al-Dar tanfarid (18)', *al-Dar*, 4 Jan. 2011.
[177] Bilal, 'al-Dar tanfarid (18)', *al-Dar*, 4 Jan. 2011.

Given that it was usually only the wealthy and socially connected who could gain redress, police criminality remained a problem throughout the third democratic period. In particular, the legacy of the subversion of police authority after 1983 also continued to result in the exploitation of police identity for criminal purposes. The 1986-9 period witnessed a number of incidents in which either genuine or fake policemen abused police identity as a means of committing crimes. 'It has become common practice lately among criminals', observed the *Modern Sudan Daily Times* in 1989, 'to impersonate the police and either visit homes when husbands are out or stop a person on a deserted road'.[178] In particular, there were a number of cases of either 'fake' or real policemen exploiting police identity as a pretext to abduct children. In the famous Amira al-Hakim case, 'Abd al-Sadiq used his police identity to dismiss the protests of a crowd of civilians at the young girl's abduction by claiming he was taking her to the police station. Na'im Muhammad, a former editor of *al-Ayyam*, recalls incidents from roughly the same period where a criminal feigned police identity to abduct and rape a young girl, and where a gang led by a real CID policeman used the man's police identity card as a means to force a young boy to accompany them to an abandoned place where they eventually gang-raped him.[179] In the latter incident Muhammad emphasizes that the boy did not resist precisely because the law forbade resisting a policeman conducting an arrest, demonstrating how dangerous abuse of police authority could be. Thus corrupt policemen and criminals reproduced the manipulation and exploitation of police authority that was being practiced by politicians in a more individualistic context, making themselves symbolic of the anarchic, divided and violent nature of the state.

Conclusion

While Numayri and his allies in the Islamist movement adopted an official ideology that promised to regulate the mores of Sudanese society, Numayri's policy of fragmenting his police force was indicative of a regime that was purely focused on

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[178] *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, Feb. 8 1989.

[179] Muhammad al-Na'im, *Mawasim al-Dima' al-Radhilah: min Milaffat al-Jarima fi al-Sudan* [Seasons of Vile Homicide: From the Crime Files of Sudan] (Cairo, 1991), pp. 9-11, 79-83. al-Na'im does not give exact dates for these events, but his stories all appear to come from the late 1980s.

preserving its own political security and, with the limited exception of the 'Islamization' project of 1983-85, had few aspirations to govern wider Sudanese society. While Numayri and his fellow putschists would initially follow a policy of incorporating the police into the regime, they increasingly fostered a process whereby police authority was subverted by the various state security agencies and other actors. Although the 'Islamization' project of 1983 would be celebrated by its protagonists as a triumph for anti-colonialism, in fact it was part of a process that brought the system of policing in Sudan back to one similar to that which had obtained during the high colonial period. Numayri not only repeated old Sudan Political Service tactics for bypassing the police, but surpassed them. As he introduced a system of legalized coercion in the name of Islam, police officers who had sought to introduce a civil system of policing within the framework of Islam were marginalized and police authority was subverted, fragmented and mimicked at every level. Given the complexity of the political situation, police authority was subverted by an even greater number of factions than was the case during the colonial period – the Islamist movement, the military, opportunistic criminals, as well as by the political parties that succeeded Numayri in the third parliamentary era. By subverting police authority, Numayri had detracted from the overall authority of the state – as he discovered to his cost during the uprising that overthrew him, when his absence from the country left the government unable to marshall the units that the president had put under his personal control.

While the police force was manipulated by almost all of the various 'power centres' in Sudanese society, some police officers continually strove to re-assert the independent and 'civil' nature of their force. After Numayri was replaced by an elected parliamentary regime, their collective protests achieved some success. The 1970s and 1980s showed that, in spite of their anxiety about corruption, local councils and professional associations in Sudan continued to maintain links to the police force and aspire to a notion of 'civil' policing. Moreover, even at their most ruthless the regimes of this period retained a basic degree of dependence on the specialist expertise of the force, particularly when it came to safeguarding the state's key centres of economic power. Similarly, the period between 1985 and 1989 demonstrated the restraint that lawyers, judges and journalists could exercise on the governmental abuse of the police in a freer political climate. Nevertheless, the

process of subversion and fragmentation of police authority was not reversed during this period. Moreover, as the next chapter will demonstrate, notions of civil policing were largely restricted to the populations of the riverain centre.

6 'Nests of Criminals': The spatial and social limits of the civil policing vision, 1964-89

On 1 August 2005, the death of the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Army and newly appointed vice-president of Sudan, John Garang, triggered a wave of unrest amongst the displaced populations of Khartoum to whom he was a hero. Not just southerners, but the marginalized of Sudan at large, took part in the riots, which targeted those identified as members of the riverain elite on an ethnic basis.[1] The police response to the events appeared to range from excessive use of force to total inaction. While they used extreme force to drive the demonstrators out of central Khartoum, their refusal to intervene in the poorest neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the capital, such as Haj Yousif, al-Kalakla, Ma'amura, Soba and Dar al-Salaam, allowed the rioting to escalate there.[2] In total 130 people were killed, mainly in these poor neighbourhoods.[3] Residents of Khartoum complained of a 'security vacuum' and swore to arm themselves with swords and firearms.[4]

Why was the disparity in the levels of security between the central and peripheral areas of the capital so strong? Although understood at the time in the context of Garang's death, the events of 'Black Monday', which uncannily resembled the 'Black Sunday' clashes between northerners and southerners in Khartoum in 1964, were related to a more long term pattern of police unwillingness to deal with crime and outbreaks of violence in the peri-urban areas of Khartoum and other major northern towns. This was indicative of the strategies of post-colonial governments which, like their colonial predecessor (see Chapter 1), focused largely

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[1] Munzoul Assal, 'Urbanization and the future of Sudan', *Making Sense of Sudan*, posted 29 Jan. 2008.
[2] Khalid Mustafa Medani, 'Black Monday: the political and economic dimensions of Sudan's urban riots', *Middle East Report Online*, 9 Aug. 2005 http://www.merip.org/mero/mero080905.html (visited 27 June 2010); 'Khartoum following the death of Dr John Garang de Mabior', *International Federation of Human Rights*, 4 Aug. 2005; Homepage http://www.fidh.org/Khartoum-following-the-death-of-Dr-John-Garang-De (visited 27 June 2010); BBC News, 'Riots after Sudan VP Garang dies', 1 Aug. 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4734517.stm (visited 27 June 2010).
[3] Medani, 'Black Monday'.
[4] Politinfo, 'Calm Returns to Sudanese Capital After Riots', 2 Aug. 2005, http://www.politinfo.com/articles/article_2005_08_02_1904.html (visited 27 June 2010); Medani, 'Black Monday'

on protecting the security of the 'gateway'[5] to the wider world, in this case the commercial regions of Khartoum. Herbst argues that the 'fundamental problem' facing state-builders in Africa has been that of 'projecting' authority over 'inhospitable territories that contain relatively low densities of people'.[6] Nevertheless, this chapter, which will focus on the densely populated peri-urban areas, will demonstrate that the limited presence of the police in the peripheries was not just the consequence of population density and territorial challenges but also of the limited ambitions of the state and the prejudices of its agents. Although the post-colonial governments initially expanded the police, they would in effect mimic the colonial policy of keeping the most modern and civil elements of the force to protect Khartoum and the other major northern towns, thus reproducing the old colonial distinction between 'citizens' at the centre and 'subjects' on the peripheries.[7] The ever-expanding array of central government ministers and civil servants who replaced the Civil Secretary and Sudan Political service, although they often espoused a more technocratic and professional outlook,[8] also inherited assumptions from their colonial predecessors about the suitability of militaristic styles of policing in the south and the merits of relying on the Native Administration rather than the professional force to deal with crime in the countryside.

Thus the various parties, factions, and bureaucratic and military cliques that have dominated the executive and security branches of the post-colonial state have been responsible for this perpetuation and even strengthening of the centre-periphery divide. But a number of policemen themselves also rehashed colonial attitudes (see Chapter 1) that emphasized the 'otherness' of peripheral Sudan and its resilience to modern systems of policing which would deal with criminals on an individual basis. As will be seen, this was why both policemen and local government bureaucrats advocated continuing to use Native Administration personnel to solve crimes even after its official abolition by Numayri in 1970. These views also proved to be particularly important in shaping police policy towards the burgeoning peri-urban areas of post-colonial towns, which were swelled by migrants escaping famine, war and economic stagnation in Sudan's regions. The discourse of senior policemen,

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[5] Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 5.
[6] Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, p. 11.
[7] For this application of Mamdani see Amir Idris, *Conflict and Politics*, p. 10.
[8] See Woodward, *Unstable State*, pp. 117-123, 147.

together with media coverage, suggests that the police either responded to law-breaking in such areas through crude use of force and collective attribution of guilt, or encouraged such neighbourhoods to police themselves in vigilante-style fashion. It will be seen that the 'civil policing' vision which had, as demonstrated in previous chapters, at times served to foster a more socially-orientated view of policing and restrain political abuse of the force at the riverain centre, had a fundamentally limited scope.

Understanding this point enables us to identify the role of the police in shaping the character of urbanization in Sudan. The current debate on post-colonial urbanization sharply divides those who suggest that the rapid expansion of the cities has created a 'melting pot' in which ethnic ties have started to dissolve and those who argue that the manner in which urbanization has occurred in Sudan has merely severed to reinforce existing ethnic distinctions and social disparities. For Assal, conflict in Sudan has 'defeated the melting powers of urban centres' to the extent that 'what we see instead is a reconstitution of primordial identities'. Thus the major urban areas act as 'a configuration of the ills of the countryside'.[9] Whilst it is beyond the scope of this chapter to answer fully whether or not the expanding urban areas have acted as a 'melting pot', what it will demonstrate is that police and government policies have sought to prevent such a phenomenon occurring. The police force, far from offering equal protection to the populations of Sudan's new urban zones, has effectively attempted to recreate the centre-periphery divide within the major towns and cities themselves. It will be demonstrated that their role has been to act as guardians of the affluent urban areas against perceived political and social threats from the countryside and peri-urban regions of the towns, which have been treated collectively as sources of criminals but not of victims. Thus urban policing has fortified a system of unequal citizenship, enforced by an identity card regime used by the police to distinguish the marginalized rural poor from the affluent urban elite. The role of the force in enforcing the centre-periphery divide has been such that it has policed the boundaries between Khartoum and rural Sudan almost as if they were international ones.

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[9] Munzoul Assal, 'Urbanization and the future of Sudan', *Making Sense of Sudan*, posted 29. Jan 2008. Also see attached responses, especially the debate between Assal and Asif Faiz. http://blogs.ssrc.org/sudan/2008/01/29/urbanization-and-the-future/, visited 16 March 2011.

Nevertheless, studying policing in Sudan allows us to observe that the centre-periphery divide, while crucial, is not quite as simple as it at first appears. De Waal argues that the various factions within the central state have always united in keeping power concentrated amongst the riverain elite.[10] However, we will see here that this has not prevented one central faction using peripheral groups against another. Just as the Umma party would use the rural supporters of the Mahdist movement to police the Communist movement in the 1960s, the state in the 1970s and 1980s would accept the inevitability of the 'peripheralization' of the rank and file police in a manner that threatened the 'Nile Decorum'[11] established by the historical riverain elite.

Government policy and the policing of the periphery

Throughout the post-colonial era, the government showed only a limited commitment to expanding Sudan's police system into the rural peripheries. Admittedly, the geographic size of Sudan and weak resources of the state posed a serious challenge to the expansion of the police into the regions, but as demonstrated earlier the government, particularly between 1978 and 1985, deliberately limited the resources it assigned to the police. Thus it effectively perpetuated the bifurcated system of policing between centre and periphery that was established by the British in the colonial era. In particular, the government continued militaristic styles of policing inherited from the Condominium in the south, reproducing the attitude of its colonial predecessor that the region was unfit for a 'civil' system of policing. The limited resources assigned to the police by the state ensured that it struggled to fully replace the *Nazirs*, *Shaikhs* and chiefs associated with the Native Administration in its crime fighting role, in spite of the state's official abolition of the Native Administration in 1970.

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[10] Alex de Waal Blog, 'What Drives Khartoum?'
[11] Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.

The limited presence of the state police in the peripheries

In spite of the strenuous efforts of the police officers of the nationalist generation, establishing a presence in Sudan's rural peripheries proved problematic. In 1963, the official government staff list counted 33 senior officers serving in the capital and another 21 distributed evenly between the other provinces – usually a commandant and two superintendents in each province.[12] Crime statistics compiled by the Central Bureau of Criminal Records for the years between 1965 and 1991 show that by far the greatest number of offences reported to the police were in Khartoum Province, where the capital was located, and Central Province where the major agricultural development schemes were to be found. In each year between 1965 and 1983 Khartoum and Central each registered a greater number of crimes than Darfur and the three southern provinces put together.[13] Given the unbalanced levels of police development in Sudan, these figures should perhaps be taken as an indicator of police presence, rather than the actual level of the activities defined by the state as criminal.

Distance and difficulties posed by the Sudanese environment were certainly factors that hampered the extension of police power into the peripheries. The vast distances that the police were required to traverse in the Sudanese countryside also posed difficulties in investigations and forensic work. For example, a judge observed in a homicide case from 1959 that 'the medical evidence owing to the circumstances of the incident and the long interval between the date of the offence and that of the post-mortem (twenty-one days roughly) is conspicuously unhelpful'.[14]

However, the government played it own role in limiting the presence of the police in the rural peripheries by weakening it as an institution and by starving it of resources. After Numayri's decision to decentralize the police in 1979, smuggling stolen goods or fleeing across provincial boundaries became an obvious resort for criminals because decentralization had hindered communication between police

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[12] *The Republic of the Sudan Staff List* (Khartoum, 1963), pp. 158-61.
[13] See el-Bushra, *Criminal Justice*, p. 87. After the outbreak of the second civil war in 1983 the availability of crime figures from the three southern provinces became patchy.
[14] Sudan Government vs Mohamed Hamid Mohamed Ali, KNC/PC/Maj.Ct/55/59 SJLR (1959).

commands.[15] The governement also began to neglect police communications equipment from the later 1960s onwards, in spite of the positive advances made by the police in this regard during earlier periods. The further extension of the telex system begun in 1954 was hampered in the later 1960s by the breakdown of the West German relationship and the army's determination to prevent potential British suppliers building up their rivals in the police.[16] In any case, this system was not extended to the south where it could be days before rebel attacks on police posts were reported.[17] However, as seen in Chapter 5, it was the deteriorating relationship between Numayri and the police which led to government neglect of police transport and communications equipment from the late 1970s onwards. In 1978, fully half the vehicles allotted to the police were out of commission and awaiting replacement parts,[18] although these difficulties were alleviated to some extent by the later emergence of cheap airplane travel.[19] In 1978 six officers were seconded from the year's group of Police College graduates to study aeronautics and fly the first batch of police planes.[20] However, the use of planes simply enabled the state to focus even more on securing the important 'nodes' of communication.

'Showing the flag': the militarization of policing in the south

Throughout the post-colonial era, the southern Sudan would be considered the Khartoum-based state's extreme periphery. The state's policy after 'Sudanization' – only employing northerners in senior posts within the southern administration, army, and police – would almost immediately trigger a rebellion that eventually developed into an all-out civil war which lasted until 1972 and re-ignited between 1983 and 2005.[21] The policy of the post-colonial government in numerous ways mimicked that of its colonial predecessor (see Chapter 1), in that it was unwilling to adopt anything other than highly militaristic styles of law enforcement in the south.

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[15] Rashid 'Abd al-Rahim, 'Isharat: Markaziyya al-Shurta', *al-Sahafa*, 16 July 1986. Also see Chapter 4.

[16] O. G. Griffith to A. J. Siddall, 3 Dec. 1968, and attached note, 'Talk with Sayed Amir al Sawi, P. U. S., Minister of Interior on 30 Nov. 1968' TNA FO 39/515; English Electric to G. Reddaway, Commercial Counsellor, British Embassy Khartoum, 29 July 1969, TNA FO 39/515.

[17] See report of rebel attack on police post at Adok in *al-Rai' al-'Aam*, 25 Feb. 1965, 27 Feb. 1965, 28 Feb. 1965, 11 March 1965. Even when the

[18] Salma Agarib, 'Crime in Khartoum: The rise in break-ins' *Sudanow*, Dec. 1978.

[19] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Interview, Khartoum 6 Jan. 2010.

[20] Sudan Police Headquarters Official Website, 'al-Idara al-Aam li-tayyaran al-shurta' ['The General Administration for Police Planes'], http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/wahdat-14.php, visited 3 July 2010.

[21] Johnson, *Root Causes*, pp. 21-37, 59-90.

Indeed, the northern administrators and policemen who succeeded British officers during the transitional period (1954-6) immediately inherited the assumptions of their predecessors about the need for paramilitary methods of policing in the south. When Ahmad Sharafi took over from Dening as Assistant DC of Nasir in 1954, he recalled how he requested the use of the Mounted Police from Malakal, repeating an old colonial axiom that 'the Nuer feared cavalry to the greatest of extents'.[22] Though these were not used in this incident, Sharafi later used them in 1955 in line once more with old colonial policy, to demonstrate the force of the government 'or as it is expressed in English, to "show the flag"'.[23]

There could not be better evidence of the continuities between colonial policy and that of the post-colonial northern government. Militaristic methods of policing persisted in the south throughout Sudan's post-independence history. Northern administrators and policemen recall that in the first civil war, policemen were frequently expected to participate in operations against the rebels in spite of their relative lack of military training and were 'expected to carry out all the tasks of the armed forces without receiving any of the benefits'.[24] The government withdrew police from a number of posts located outside the major towns during the first war, as these were vulnerable to rebel attacks, and replaced them with military garrisons.[25]

Given their role in carrying out the militaristic policies of a government in Khartoum which was scarcely representative of southern society, it was far more difficult for the police to breach the gap between state and society in the manner envisaged by the proponents of 'civil policing' in the riverain north. The government gradually ceased to employ southerners in policing the south after their participation in attacks on northerners and mass defections to the rebel movement; where

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[22] Husayn Muhammad Ahmad Sharafi, *Suwar min al-Ida' al-Idari fi as-Sudan, 1942-1973* [A Picture of Administrative Practise in Sudan, 1942-1973] (Khartoum, 1991), p. 99.
[23] Ibid. p. 105.
[24] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 192. Abbas Musa, *Durub*, p. 63. *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 17 July 1968.
[25] APD, 8 June 1957. *Nile Mirror*, 24 Dec. 1970. *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 13 Feb. 1965. *al-Ayyam*, 21 April 1965. Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 162. *The Vigilant,* 6 April 1969.

southerners were still employed by the government, they were never armed.[26] To replace the defectors, the government relied on recruits from the north, who were housed at government expense.[27]

Once war broke out again in 1983, after the police had been under the Southern Regional Government for eleven years, there were again mass defections from the force to the newly-formed SPLA rebel movement.[28] Northerners continued to doubt the loyalty of those that remained in the force. One member of an NIF delegation to Wau in 1986 recalled that they relied on the military garrison rather than the police for protection, claiming of the latter that 'their hearts and swords were with John Garang'.[29] Thus the government again disarmed large numbers of southern policemen and increasingly replaced them with the quasi-military Central Reserve Force.[30]

The government also increasingly substituted militias for the regular police in the south and regions along the north-south border. One example was the ethnic Misseriyya militia, the *murahiliin*, established in southern Kordofan between 1985 and 1986 by the senior Umma-affiliated general, Burma Nasir, and the Umma Party Prime Minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi.[31] The official function of the *murahiliin* was to replace the police force, which had since Numayri's neglect of it in the later years of the May Regime struggled to perform its role of guarding the pasture routes (*himayat al-marahil*) of the nomadic Misseriya in southern Kordofan.[32] Thus rather than responding to the incapacity of the police force by strengthening its presence in the region, Sadiq al-Mahdi's government substituted for it an ethnic militia linked to the Umma party that would in 1987 participate in a massacre of Dinka refugees in el-

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[26] J. I. Parry's Diary of Police Mutiny at Yei, Monday 22 Aug. 1955 SAD 725/1/1-3; *al-Ayyam*, 28 Sep. 1955. Letters from Mrs D. Bennett to Miss E. La Trobe Foster, SAD 817/6/80. Bona Malwal, *People and Power in Sudan: the Struggle for National Identity* (London, 1981), p. 38. APD, 15 June 1957. *The Vigilant*, May 12 1965. William Deng to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, 10 Dec. 1962., TNA FO 371/165683.
[27] Malwal, *People and Power*, p. 38. Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 173.
[28] BBCSWB, SUNA 20 Dec. 1984, ME 7833 22 Dec. 1984. *al-Midan*, June 1983, 15 May 1985, 30 Sep. 1985.
[29] Abd al-Rahim Umar Muhieddin, *Al-Islamiyyun wa Ma'azaq Istilam al-Sulta fi al-Sudan Askariyyan* [The Islamists and the Dilemma of Taking Power through the Military] (Khartoum 2009), p. 102.
[30] BBCSWB, SUNA 20 Dec. 1984, ME 7833 22 Dec. 1984. Senior Police Officer E, former Commissioner-General of Police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009.
[31] Jago Salmon, *A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces* (Geneva, 2007). Johnson, *Root Causes*, p. 82.
[32] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, pp. 313-315.

Daein.[33] In Bahr al-Ghazal province the government armed the Fertit militias known as the 'peace forces' that would engage in violent clashes with the police force of the provincial capital Wau, which was still manned mainly by southern Dinka whose loyalties, as demonstrated above, were suspected by northern politicians.[34] These negative policies towards the regular police, as well as the use of militias, were indicative of the government's lack of commitment to installing a system of civil policing in the south.

Government policies towards the Native Administration

It was not just in the south that the state failed to extend the system of civil policing outside the major urban areas, but in the country as a whole, as was demonstrated by the persistent tendency of the government to use the Native Administration to substitute for the regular police force. In the period leading up to the 1969 coup, Sudan's governments remain committed to preserving the role of the Native Administration system inherited from the British in the management of provincial affairs, including policing. The governments of this period were comprised of a narrow series of political, social and religious groupings that possessed close affiliations to the powerful families who dominated the Native Administration in the north and even organized provincial and district boundaries to allow particular ethnic groups and their *Nazirs*, or *'Umdas*, to exercise influence.[35] Nevertheless, as the police system expanded in the early nationalist period, it would come into much closer contact than before with the Native Administration, even if it did not replace the 'investigative' role of the *Shaikh* or chief. Interviewees recall that Native Administration personnel in the north would cease to possess their own specific police forces. Instead, upon notifying the local magistrate of a crime they would request the use of government policemen to enforce their authority.[36] Thus in the 1960s policemen and Native Administration personnel had a far more symbiotic

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[33] M.A. Mohamed Salih & Sharif Harir, 'Tribal Militias: The Genesis of National Disintegration' in Sharif Harir & Terje Tvedt (eds.), *Short-Cut to Decay: The Case of Sudan* (Uppsala 1994), p. 125. *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 6 Jan. 1988. Colin Legum's Third World Reports 16 Sep. 1987, MEDU/17/1/Gen.

[34] Eddie Thomas, *The Kafai-Kingi Enclave: People, Politics and History in the North-South Boundary Zone of Western Sudan* (London 2010), p. 119. *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, Nov 19 1987.

[35] Rodinelli, 'Administrative Decentralisation', p. 600.

[36] Hamr Nazir, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010; Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009; Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009; Shaikh of Wad Ramleh, Interview, Wad Ramleh, 10 Dec. 2010.

relationship than in the past, although the latter still retained their go-between role. The *Nazir Umum* (paramount *Nazir*) of Dar Hamr in the 1960s claimed that individuals who reported offences directly to the police were turned away and informed that they must first gain permission him.[37] Police interviewees suggested that during this time they were often happy to allow homicides to be quietly resolved by members of the Native Administration by means of *dia* payments, without resort to state courts.[38]

In 1970, Numayri and the Revolutionary Command Council, who had come to power with the support of a variety of leftist factions and were thus initially opposed to the conservative family elites associated with the Native Administration, sanctioned its abolition by Jafa'ar Bakheit, Sudan's technocratic and modernizing minister of local government. The government substituted a series of 'popular courts' as part of an expanded judiciary to serve its legal functions, with whom the police co-operated directly.[39] Nevertheless, Numayri never fully removed the influence of the notables associated with the Native Administration from the countryside, and became less committed to doing so after his violent split with the Communist movement in 1971 and rapprochement with the more conservative political parties in 1977.[40] In the south in particular, the abolition of the Native Administration had little impact on the position of chiefs on the ground.[41] In practice, the *Nazirs*, *Shaikhs* and chiefs associated with the Native Administration continued to exercise a role in the investigation of crimes and resolution of disputes after its official abolition.[42] One former commissioner-general interviewee recalled of the situation after 1970 that

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[37] Interview, Hamr Nazir, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.

[38] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009; Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009.

[39] Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim, *Tasfi'a al-Idara al-Ahliyya wa Nata'ijha fi Darfur* [The Dissolution of the Native Administration and its Results in Darfur] (Khartoum, 2007), pp. 172-3. Former Shaikh of Wad Ramleh, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010. Rodinelli, 'Administrative Decentralisation', pp. 598-601.

[40] Rodinelli, 'Administration Decentralization', pp. 600-606. Southern academic, Interview, Khartoum, 5 Jan. 2011.

[41] Cherry Leonardi, *Local Justice in Southern Sudan* (Washington 2010), p. 24.

[42] Rodinelli, 'Administrative Decentralisation', p. 615.

Strictly it was dissolved, *Khalas* [finished]. But for some time, people used to refer to these Nazirs, and make their complaints to them, and the Nazirs used to help them, in helping them arrest, in helping them search, helping them call the state police to do all these things. But in some areas, *Khalas*.[43]

However, interviewees also claimed that there were simply not enough policemen to replace the old Native Administration.[44] This became an increasing problem in the wake of Numayri's growing neglect of the police following the dissolution of the Ministry of Interior in 1979 (see Chapter 4). Abu Humayd Ibrahim complains that in this period they were expected to fulfill the role of the old Native Administration in resolving inter-ethnic disputes, while the state was refusing to provide them with communications equipment or repair the vehicles that were needed to transport policemen across Sudan's vast countryside.[45]

The limits of the civil policing vision: governmental perceptions of the periphery

Throughout the post-colonial period, the elite of northern bureaucrats, local government officers, and even policemen who were the prime beneficiaries of colonial education continued to demonstrate the persistence of the old colonial belief that vast sectors of Sudanese society outside the urban riverain area were essentially un-policeable by modern methods. The attitudes concerning the essential function of the Native Administration of ʿAbdullah Ali Jadallah, a Sudanese administrative officer from the 1950s until the 1970s and governor of Kassala in between 1966 and 1971, exemplify those inherited by the post-colonial elite from their colonial predecessors. Jadallah cites favourably Gawain Bell, a former British administrator who spoke eagerly about the role played by Ahamda *Shaikhs* and Nuba *Meks* in preserving security. He argues that the *fellata*, or West African community, in

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[43] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009; 'Khalas' in Sudanese colloquial translates roughly as 'it's finished', or 'over'.
[44] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.
[45] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, p. 312.

Sennar were a 'closed society' to all but their Sultan Maiurno, whom he describes as a seemingly 'mythical' figure who 'knew the charms and magics of the fellata'. The police were unable to 'penetrate' (*ikhtaraqa*) this society. As a result, after fruitlessly searching for thieves, they would have to resort to requesting assistance from Maiurno, who would immediately surrender them.[46] In 1987 Hasan Jibril, the executive officer of Umm Ruaba, expressed similar beliefs to Jadallah, claiming in an interview with *al-Ayyam* that 'One *Nazir* is the equivalent of a great number of watchmen (*khufara'*) and policemen'.[47] Again, this demonstrates the tendency of the administrative service, inherited from the colonial predecessors, to regard as alien vast sections of Sudanese society and imply its resistance to modern methods of policing.

One might expect those police officers who remained committed to expanding the police and wrestling institutional independence from administrators like Jadallah to resent the role the Native Administration exercised in crime-fighting in the post-colonial era. Nevertheless, one senior officer who served in the police from the 1950s recalled positively in an interview that the Native Administration was a 'cheap administration'.[48] Another senior officer who had been in the police since the 1970s claimed that Numayri 'made a mistake'[49] when he dissolved it. This reflected the views of other members of the northern administrative elite that the removal of the Native Administration was a negative phenomenon which had led to a rise in crime.[50] Abu Humayd Ibrahim recalls that while dealing with offences reported in Maelig and Hassaheissa, he would establish committees in which the 'oldest and wisest men' in the village gave their advice.[51] He also recounts that during his time in the railway police in the later 1970s he hired a respected

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[46] 'Abdallah 'Ali Jadallah, *Ma'a al-Idara al-Ahliyya fi Masiratiha* [With the Native Administration and its Development] (Omdurman, 2005), p.131.

[47] Umar 'Abd al-Hajj, 'Kurdufan fi haja li-idara al-ahyliyya...am la??' ('Kordofan is in need of Native Administration...or isn't it?'), *al-Ayyam*, 9 April 1987.

[48] Senior police officer B, former head of Public Security Organisation and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.

[49] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Khartoum 6 Jan. 2010.

[50] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009; Former Shaikh of Wad Ramleh, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010; Sudanese academic, Interview, 17 Dec. 2009. Ibrahim, *Tasfi'a*, pp. 177-181; Jadallah, *Ma'a al-Idara al-Ahliyya*, p. 133.

[51] Ibrahim, *Qissat*, pp. 206-215.

Hadendoa *Shaikh*, Haj Nur, to assist him in preventing thefts in the vicinity of the line between Khartoum and Port Sudan that fell within his shaikhdom.[52]

Nevertheless there was clearly some difference of outlook between members of the Native Administration and police officers, as the latter tended to emphasize in interviews the acceptance of police authority more than the former. For instance, while policemen interviewed in the course of this research insisted that local communities would always relent when it was necessary to perform an autopsy on a body, a senior *Shaikh* observed that 'it's a strange behaviour' and 'they rarely agree to it'.[53] However, one senior police officer argued that 'by education, by civilization, they started to know that…this was for the benefit of them'.[54] Again, these statements related to the old debate over whether or not the Sudanese population could be policed using 'modern' methods. In contrast to police officers who argued that the increasing sophistication and networking of crime in Sudan required greater CID centralization,[55] Native Administration officials and their advocates would emphasize the essentially local nature of crime in Sudan. They argued that rural society was still so close-knit that strangers would easily be identified and played down the existence of widespread crime networks in Sudan. As one ageing *Nazir* observed, 'You don't think what happens in America and in England happens in Sudan here...not like Mr Biggs...'.[56]

A number of policemen saw the extension of modern methods of policing into Sudan's peripheries as a natural part of the 'spreading of civilization'.[57] Nevertheless, their understanding of 'civil policing' remained limited to some extent both by the bifurcation of the system of policing established in the colonial era and by their own position as members of a narrow riverain elite with a limited ability to identify with the societies of Sudan's rural peripheries. Thus whilst the police came

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[52] Ibid., p. 261.

[53] Former Shaikh of Wad Ramleh, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010; Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009; Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Interview, Khartoum 6 Jan. 2010; Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.

[54] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009.

[55] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Interview, Khartoum 6 Jan. 2010.

[56] Former Shaikh of Wad Ramleh, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010. This was of course a reference to Britain's Great Train Robber, Ronnie Biggs.

[57] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police.

into conflict with other branches of this geographically restricted governmental elite when striving for institutional independence, they often concurred in the belief in their dependence on the system of Native Administration bequeathed by colonialism.

Police attitudes towards the peri-urban regions of riverain cities

The events of 6 December 1964, or 'Black Sunday', in which the police were widely accused of failing to prevent riots between the northern and southern populations of Khartoum, provide an early example of the inability or unwillingness of the police to manage the challenge urban migrants posed to a system of policing organized on the basis of an urban-rural dichotomy. While southern journalists accused the police of deliberately standing by and allowing anti-southern pogroms, northern newspapers criticized the inability of the police to monitor the influx of southerners into the capital.[58] The riots demonstrated well what Simone describes as the wars in the peripheries coming 'back to haunt' the riverain elite. Hamad claims that the southerners who sparked off the conflict were recent migrants from the war-affected region.[59]

These events foreshadowed the persistent incapacity of the post-colonial Sudanese regimes to police the peri-urban areas of riverain cities, which became a dominant theme in the country's post-independence history. Partly this was due to the sheer pace of urban migration. For instance, Khartoum's population rose from about a quarter of a million in 1956 to almost three million in 1993.[60] A significant amount of this migration was the result of forced displacement caused by drought, famine and war in Sudan's regions.[61] However, it was also due to the fact that the economic policies of the various post-colonial regimes had made urban living far more attractive. As elsewhere in Africa,[62] governments in Sudan have forced rural food producers to sell their produce at a minimal price to benefit traders supplying

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[58] *Al-Ra'i al-Aam*, 9 Dec. 1964. Bona Malwal, *People and Power in Sudan: the Struggle for National Identity* (London 1981), p. 86.
[59] Hajj Hamad, *al-Sudan*, p. 283.
[60] Assal, 'Urbanization'.
[61] Elnur, *Contested Sudan*, pp. 94-7; Simone, *In Whose Image*, pp. 100, 114-116.
[62] Meredith, *The State of Africa*, p. 280-1.

the needs of urban populations.[63] Migration from rural Sudan to the urban centres of the north was experienced as a particular threat to the ruling elite, since the latter was largely composed of an urban clique from the northern Nile with few links to Sudan's vast eastern, western and southern regions. Singerman has observed that in Cairo the Egyptian government has continued to use 'discursive practices of colonialism' to represent 'neglected' regions of the capital as backward.[64] Sudanese politicians, administrators and policemen have developed similar attitudes, representing this migration in terms of a 'ruralization' of the city. Although the notion of the 'ruralization' of African cities has received some academic support,[65] Simone observes that actually what the state fears about rural migrants to cities is their capacity to develop new forms of association that transcend 'traditional' rural values.[66] Nevertheless, by representing these peri-urban areas as essentially rural, peripheral and alien, the government and the police could justify treating them purely as sources of crime and thus deny them the same standards of policing applied in the more affluent urban regions.

Police perceptions of the peri-urban regions

The sense of threat that rural migration to Sudanese cities created amongst the riverain elite is best indicated by the description of the phenomenon in Sa'id al-Mahdi's work *al-Jarima wa'l Uquba* (Crime and Punishment) in 1971. Al-Mahdi was the Dean of the Khartoum Faculty of Law, highly respected by senior police officers, and his views are indicative of a broad correspondence between police officers and other legal professionals within the riverain elite.[67] First of all, he blamed the prevalence of crime in Sudanese cities on the bars where Merissa – the local beer in rural Sudan – was imbibed. He complained that in these bars 'the poor classes (*tabaqat*) migrating from all ends of Sudan, north, west, south and east, meet – members of a tribe sit in a specific place and drink huge quantities of this drink and fights happen between men of tribes from west Sudan and other tribes from other

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[63] Elnur, *Contested Sudan*, p. 56.
[64] Diane Singerman, 'The siege of Imbaba, Egypt's internal 'other', and the criminalization of politics', in Diane Singerman (ed.) *Cairo Contested: Governance, Spaces and Global Modernity* (Cairo, 2009), p. 116.
[65] Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 30.
[66] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, pp. 107-8.
[67] Senior police officer E, former commissioner-general of police, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Dec. 2009.

regions'.[68] In particular, he blamed crime on marginalized groups such as Nuba, southerners and westerners, and brought up the old colonial bugbear of such individuals working as servants and then stealing off their masters.[69] He also referred to the settlements on the edge of the city as 'nests of crime' and 'tribal villages' (*al-qura al-qabaliyya*).[70] Similarly, one former officer informed me that the police 'considered these areas crime areas' full of 'idle person [s]' who had 'left their places where they were needed for agriculture'.[71] People from western Sudan who were in origin migrants from West Africa, the so-called '*fellata*', provoked particular prejudice among police officers. In 1976 a police officer observed in an administrative report that migrants from West Africa 'come from the most backward people in their home countries' and asserted confidently that 'most of the crimes of theft and murder are committed by immigrants'.[72] Al-Mahdi recommended that dealing with the phenomenon of southern and western rural migration required closer 'observation' (*ruquba*) of travel between countryside and city and the spreading of industry (*sina'at*) and agricultural projects (*mashari'a*) to the countryside to absorb potential migrants.[73] Such discourses reproduced almost exactly colonial arguments that increases in crime in riverain Sudan were 'due entirely to western immigrants and riff-raff from the rest of Sudan'.[74]

There were a number of urban legends surrounding the 'tribal', mysterious and dangerous character of the inhabitants of these peri-urban areas. Na'im Muhammad's *Min Milaffat al-Jara'im fi Sudan* (from the Crime Files of Sudan) recalls the story of Dueina, an inhabitant of western Sudan settled in Khartoum after fleeing the 1983-5 Darfur famine, who responded to the arbitrary police actions against the inhabitants of these areas by going on a killing spree against the police. The (almost certainly exaggerated) accounts of this incident recall that Dueina was literally invulnerable to bullets and that it was only when an officer leading a squad

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[68] Al-Mahdi, *Jarima*, p. 110.
[69] Ibid., p. 111.
[70] Ibid., p. 112.
[71] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009
[72] Garth Glentworth and Mahdi Sheikh Idris (ed.), *Local Government and Development in Sudan: The Experience of Southern Darfur Province* (Khartoum, 1976), p. 133.
[73] Al-Mahdi, *Jarima*, p. 111.
[74] GGAR 1932 p. 242.

of the Central Reserve Police recognized that he was a westerner and 'knew *hijab*'[75] that he realized how he could kill him, which was by urinating on his bullet before shooting him.[76] The story of Dueina – although the officer perhaps shared his belief in *hijab* – epitomized how those who policed the peri-urban regions, just like many of their colonial forbears, saw inhabitants of rural Sudan as fundamentally mysterious and ungovernable by modern technology and a modern legal-rational system.

Members of the riverain elite continued to blame the nature of the peri-urban environment of Sudan's expanding post-colonial cities for the state's inability to police these areas. In 1971, al-Mahdi reported that a lack of street lighting and the persistent electrical breakdowns afforded criminals an ample number of dark places in which to operate.[77] Al-Mahdi also observed that police were often informed of crimes too late in the various quarters (*'ahya*) of Sudanese cities because these areas had no telephones, and so usually arrived at the scenes of fights after the killers had fled.[78] In particular, in Khartoum, the non-planned residential areas that frequently housed the city's poorest southern and western migrants were held to provide criminal gangs with havens from authority where they could stash stolen goods and hoard weapons.[79] The sheer scale of these shanty towns and the incapacity of the Khartoum police to operate within them is vividly depicted by Simone, a former advisor to the NIF in the 1980s, writing in 1994:

> There is a shantytown outside of Khartoum known as Gatati South Mayo whose main thoroughfare is called 125th street. Initially conceived as a place where the police could build large, inexpensive housing compounds, Mayo quickly became a place where police seldom ventured. During the last years of the Numayri regime, there was a half-hearted attempt to raze the shanties and displace the residents, but the community resisted fiercely, using weapons stolen from the local police stations and spears.[80]

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[75] In contrast to the conventional Muslim understanding of *hijab*, in West African Muslim culture it often denotes a kind of protective magic.
[76] Al-Na'im, *Mawasim al-Dima'*, p. 56.
[77] Al-Mahdi, *Jarima*, p. 111.
[78] Ibid., p. 114.
[79] *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, 27 Nov. 1987.
[80] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, p. 120.

Police neglect of the peri-urban areas

In spite of what the police wrote about the 'impenetrability' of the peri-urban zones, the main limiting factor on police activity was their prioritization of the safeguarding of the most affluent urban areas and the security of the capital of Sudan's leading businessmen. In 1964 *al-Sahafa* reported that although Ashash al-Fallata, one of Khartoum's shanty-towns, was known as the 'Chicago of Sudan' and no-one dared enter it unarmed, no police post had been established there due to financial stringency.[81] In 1971, al-Mahdi observed that statistics showed that more crimes occurred in the commercial regions and those where government employees and the rich lived and that these areas therefore required greater levels of policing.[82] This was of course a self-fulfilling prophecy, as criminal statistics are as much an indicator of police focus as of criminal activity. Nevertheless it was an attitude shared by police officers themselves. Interviewed in 1978, Police Lieutenant Colonel 'Abd al-Gabir Atia observed that commercial areas with large shops, banks and markets required more policing than residential districts where families were related to each other.[83] This was partially due to police officers' belief that it was the more modern types of crime associated with capitalism that were most difficult to solve, and that in areas where social ties were strong people were usually aware of who was responsible for a particular crime and criminals often simply chose to hand themselves in.[84] 'Abd al-Gabir's argument, made in justification for the lack of police presence in such districts, offers an ironic contrast to al-Mahdi's representation of rural values as being inherently threatening to city life, demonstrating the ambiguities of a police discourse set upon 'otherizing' the peri-urban regions of the capital, whether positively or negatively.

Nevertheless, social and familial bonds do not appear to have prevented crime in the poorest residential areas. Although these were usually depicted as sources of crime in Sudanese criminological literature, they were also the location of most its victims, mainly as a result of almost total neglect by the police. In 1984, an

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[81] *Al-Sahafa*, 20 Nov.1964.
[82] Al-Mahdi, *Jarima*, p. 119.
[83] Salma Agarib, 'Crime in Khartoum: The Rise in Break-ins' *Sudanow*, Dec. 1978.
[84] Sudanese government official, Durham, 16 June 2009; Abdallah Hasan Salim, *al-Taharriyyat wa'l Jina'iyya* [Investigations and Crime] (Khartoum, 1998).

urban survey group reported that although 'all types of crime' occurred at a very high rate in the sizeable neighbourhood of Um Bedda, it possessed only one small police station and was thus 'inadequately prepared to handle crime'.[85] An elderly resident of Um Bedda claimed in an interview that after the 1985 *intifada* the role of this station became purely 'symbolic' (*ramzi*).[86] In 1986 the citizens of Hag Yousif, traditionally home to Khartoum's population of Nuba migrants, repeatedly complained to the police that in spite of continued spates of armed robberies and housebreakings the government had only provided them with one poorly-equipped police post, staffed by a mere two officers.[87] Nevertheless, the police were willing to cover great distances and commit significant resources when a merchant's money was involved. For instance, in 1964 the Gedaref police travelled all the way to the Nuba Mountains to find 3,000 Sudanese pounds that a servant had stolen from his master, and then managed to arrest the servant in Khartoum.[88] This indicates that the spatial limits on police activity were dictated not just by police incapacity but also by the manner in which their resources were directed.

One particular result of the very limited presence of the police in these areas was the rise of vigilantism and other forms of self-defence amongst northern communities in neighbourhoods bordering the shanty-towns occupied by migrants from Sudan's peripheries. This phenomenon was highlighted in particular by the events of 'Black Sunday'. *Al-Sahafa* observed that up until half-past seven at night on 'Black Sunday' the streets were empty of police and controlled by southerners, causing 'citizens' (*muwatinuun* -ie. implying northern residents of Khartoum) to arm themselves with spears and knives, establish barricades, and form patrols to protect their homes. In Burri-Lamab, the northern community was called to arms by the beating of the *nahhas* (drum) and established guards to gather up southerners and hand them over to the police.[89] Ironically, Burri-Lamab had for the first time petitioned Khartoum North rural council for a policeman to be stationed in the

[85] Omer M. A. el Agraa, Adil M. Ahmad, Ian Haywood and Osman M. elKheir, *Popular Settlements in Greater Khartoum* (Khartoum?, 1985), p. 206.
[86] Interview, resident of Um Bedda, Um Bedda, Khartoum, 20 March 2011.
[87] *Al-Sahafa*, 29 June 1986.
[88] *Al-Ra'i al-Aam*, 8 May 1964.
[89] *Al-Sahafa*, 8 Dec. 1964.

suburb in the last few years; the inhabitants claimed that an influx of unmarried migrants (including southerners) to the village had led to an increase in crime.[90]

Jabra, which bordered the shanty settlements of al-Ishash and al-Ushara, was a typical example of a residential area where police absence encouraged violent and retributive forms of local vigilantism. In 1985, Jabra, a settlement of around 8000 people, possessed only one police station with two officers, no car and no telephone. Here, young men equipped themselves with clubs and knives and conducted regular night watches.[91] Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim recalls that such neighbourhood watches in Jabra would identify thieves 'largely on a racial or ethnic basis among those suspicious walkers in the night'. After beating them violently, they would then hand them over to the police, who made little effort to question the vigilantes' actions.[92] In 1965 al-Sahafa reported that residents of Khartoum would assist the police in rounding up those they identified as vagrants, gamblers and pickpockets in the days before the Muslim eid.[93] Often the appearance of vigilantism as a phenomenon was directly linked to state neglect of the police. In 1981 al-Midan claimed that Numayri's neglect of the police in favour of the SSO was leading to a spate of armed robberies and forcing young residents of some quarters (ahya') to form nightly watches (waradiyyat) to protect themselves.[94]

The state made its own attempts to incorporate urban vigilantes into the police, usually with limited results. Salim recalls that in 1976 efforts were made by the Ministry of Interior, supported by East European advisors, to amalgamate the various voluntary late-night neighbourhood watch groups into one cohesive organization, the 'Popular Police' (al-Shurta al-Sha'abiyya). This force anticipated one similarly named that would appear under the 'Salvation Regime' after 1989. However, the 'Popular Police' were soon disbanded after protests from the regular police and after the regime began to 'borrow' its members to provide guards (khufara') for government institutions and take part in public displays of support for the regime, which caused these groups of young men to deviate from their original

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[90] Harold B. Barclay, *Burri al-Lamab: A Suburban Village in Sudan* (New York, 1964), p. 50.
[91] El Agraa et al, *Popular Settlements*, p. 206.
[92] Ibrahim, *Manichean Delirium*, p. 239.
[93] *Al-Ayyam*, 8 April 1965.
[94] *Al-Midan*, April 1981.

purpose of providing their communities with protection from late-night robbery.[95] Nevertheless, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, Numayri sanctioned police delegation of power to vigilantes in 1982, further diluting the authority and presence of the force in the capital's vast urban neighbourhoods. The emergence of the 'Prevention of Vice' groups deployed by the Islamic Charter Front in the period leading up to the 1983 September Laws, many of whom were recruited from the poorest neighbourhoods,[96] also indicated the poor presence of the police force in the more peripheral regions of post-colonial northern cities.

Imposing unequal citizenship: the role of the police in enforcing the urban-rural divide

By otherizing the peri-urban regions of Khartoum and depicting their inhabitants as hostile and violent the police could effectively exclude them from the civil policing project that had gradually begun to emerge at the riverain centre since the Second World War. By representing these neighbourhoods as collectively predisposed towards crime they could justify policing them with collective and punitive means. Thus the police became the physical tool for the state's application of the centre-periphery divide in these areas, conducting 'sweeps' and 'dragnet' operations and demolishing homes in the shanty towns. These campaigns indicated the government's fear not just of the social and demographic change that widespread immigration from country to town would provoke but also the fear that marginalized populations within the major cities would be exploited by political opponents of the regime. These policies further demonstrated that the police were not only trapped within the bifurcated system of governance originally established by colonialism but that they were now actively perpetuating it, driving rural migrants back into the countryside and establishing a system of identity cards to distinguish city-dwellers from rural 'vagrants'. The police further established checkpoints at the edges of cities and allocated resources and attention to protecting the riverain towns and the capital, Khartoum, from the perceived threats of the countryside, including drugs and

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[95] Salim, *Tatawwur*, p. 425.
[96] *al-Sahafa*, 13 June 1978, cited in *Yaymiyyat*, p. 21. Also see Chapter 5.

migrants. Nevertheless, this system would remain fundamentally porous, indicating the limit to the capacity of the police to enforce the urban-rural divide.

'Dragnet' operations and collective policing in the shanty-towns

The result of the police's inability to establish a permanent presence in the shanty towns was that they were, like their colonial predecessors, incapable of identifying criminals on an individual basis. The police would blame poor and under-privileged groups from these peri-urban areas collectively for crimes, rather than targeting criminals on an individual basis. This in itself had echoes of late colonial discourses that justified 'reducing' quarters deemed as 'a hot bed of araki selling and hashish distribution', and undertaking 'sweeps' to arrest 'unlicensed pedlars and small boys'.[97] The process was well underway by the 1960s, and being applied on considerably greater scale than during the Condominium. In May 1964, the Khartoum police declared a new policy which would involve targeting 'nests of criminals' (*awqar mujrimin*).[98] As Singerman has observed with regard to Egypt, where the same phrase was used, such language was important because by stigmatizing the 'environment' of these neighbourhoods the government made all their inhabitants collectively culpable.[99] The next month, after a number of robberies in the area of Khartoum between Sug Arabi and Sikkut al-Hadid, the police took 'severe measures' which involved 50 arrests for 'vagrancy'.[100] In 1968, in response to a wave of thefts and robberies, they conducted a series of campaigns among these so-called 'nests of criminals' in Omdurman. *al-Ra'i al-'Aam* observed that the police found such crimes difficult to investigate because victims of theft were prone to exaggeration (*mubalaga*) in their accounts. As a result, they simply arrested hundreds of 'vagrants' and presented them to court.[101]

Another response to the perceived threat coming from these areas was simply to raze the makeshift residences to the ground and force their inhabitants to return to the country, as recommended by al-Mahdi. As Simone has observed, it was because of the 'relative invisibility and impenetrability' of such areas that 'the state is

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[97] Khartoum Province Monthly Diaries Jan. 1949, NRO Civ Sec 30/6/14. Penn, Handing Over Notes for Lakes District, 1941 SAD 722/11/74.
[98] *al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 20 May 1964.
[99] Singerman, 'The siege of Imbaba', p. 116.
[100] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 12 June 1964.
[101] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 3 Oct. 1968.

basically forced to destroy the entire neighbourhood as its counter-response'.[102] The first legislation sanctioning such actions by the police was passed in early 1961.[103] In 1966 a violent clash occurred between police and the inhabitants of Fitihab when the police arrived, accompanied by tractors, to demolish housing that had been established without government permission.[104] Such policies were halted during the particularly liberal phases of Sudanese politics, such as the transitional periods that followed the 1964 and 1985 uprisings, and after the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement that brought peace to the south, from whence a great number of these peripheral populations came.[105]

However, as Numayri's relations with the south deteriorated in the later 1970s[106] these policies re-emerged. In 1979 the dictator declared that he was launching a campaign of 'public discipline' (*al-indibat al-'aam*), ordering the mass arrest of unemployed people on the outskirts of the capital who were sent to work on the government's newly established, rain-fed agricultural schemes in the countryside.[107] In September 1981 Numayri ordered the police to launch 'dragnet' operations throughout Sudan's major urban centres, particularly the slums, the purpose of which was to 'clean up the country of criminals and jobless elements'. 15,000 individuals were unceremoniously dumped into a holding camp at Sofa, from where they were transported back either to their home provinces, in the case of the unemployed and 'vagrants', or to their home countries in the case of refugees.[108] It reveals a great deal about the urban-rural dichotomy in Sudan that a largely city-based police force chose to deal with the underprivileged groups from which urban criminals sprang by throwing them back into the countryside, where the force had comparatively little practical jurisdiction.

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[102] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, p. 101.
[103] *Al-Ayyam*, 13 Jan. 1966.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Interview, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.
[106] Johnson, *Root Causes*, pp. 56-7.
[107] Aleish, *Yawmiyyat*, p. 26.
[108] Alfred Logune Taban, 'Security Checks'; *Sudanow*, Oct. 1981 p. 22; O'Ballance, *Sudan, Civil War and Terrorism*, p. 122.

These peri-urban populations were heavily targeted by the regime and the police after the 'Islamization' of the legislation in 1983. This legislation occurred at a time when migration to the capital from Darfur in particular was at its peak, due to the famine which was occurring in the western region at that time. These Darfuris were pouring into makeshift settlements on the edges of Khartoum, such as Fitihab, Um Bedda, Mesalma, Radmia and Marzuk, defying the numerous attempts of the police and other 'security forces' to clear them out.[109] It seems that those who implemented the September Laws focused their efforts most heavily on these gateways between rural and urban culture, attempting to protect the affluent and developed regions of Khartoum from the threat which was perceived to come from the shanty-towns. It is worth noting that the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Committees focused their efforts in particular on 'outermost quarters' (*al-ahya' al-tarafiyya*) where prior to the new laws issued by Numayri there had been licensed bars and brothels.[110]

In particular, a vast number of migrants in these regions found guilty of theft were sentenced to have their hands amputated in accordance with the *hadd* penalties of classical *sharia* law. Estimates of the number amputation penalties inflicted between 1983 and 1985 range between 60 and 120.[111] The majority of these were upon the inhabitants of Khartoum's shanty-towns. One contemporary critic of the September Laws recalled that the *mahakim al-adala najiza* (instantaneous justice courts)

> were distributed in the areas, like in these shanty towns...and nobody cares about the people who live in these places, the government is not concerned exactly what is going on, and the people are poor, they don't know their rights, and they are taken to the courts and whipped and amputated and I used

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[109] Simone, *In Whose Image?*, p. 101.

[110] al-Karouri, *Athr Juhud al-Inqadh fi Tazkia al-Mujtama'* [The Effects of the Salvation's Struggle to Purify Society], p. 18.

[111] Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil, 'Human rights and the Islamization of the Sudan legal system' in Richard Gray & Yusuf Fadl Hasan (eds.), *Religion and Conflict in Sudan* (Nairobi 2002), p. 60. Rudolph Peters, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge 2005), p. 167.

to have the pictures of all the people who were amputated at the time, these people all of them, with no exception, they were from these shanty towns.[112]

The victimization of Khartoum's peri-urban populations by the 1983 legislation was quite clearly demonstrated by their participation in the 1985 April Uprising that overthrew Numayri. Secular and leftist figures associated with the Ba'ath and Communist parties helped organize the '*mutasharriddin*', or 'vagrants', who included numerous famine migrants from Sudan's west. In mass demonstrations against the regime they vandalized vehicles and public property.[113] The regime responded with more *kashas*, claiming that there were at least 60,000 'vagrants' in the city.[114] Meanwhile, its newspapers described the demonstrators as 'tramps' and 'rabble' (*gauga'*).[115] This is further evidence that the legislators of September 1983 had abandoned all hopes of individuating these populations and incorporating them into Sudanese society, returning instead to depicting them as a threatening, violent, tribal 'mass', as they were seen during the high colonial period.

After the 1985 *intifada*, the cabinet appointed by the Transitional Military Council responded to criticisms of the previous regime's *kasha* campaigns by declaring such actions unconstitutional on the basis that Sudanese citizens had a right to move wherever they liked in the country.[116] However, police representatives were quick to blame this decision for escalating rates of crime in the capital.[117] Thus, in co-operation with Sadiq al-Mahdi's parliamentary regime (1986-9), they began to re-initiate the *kashas*. In April 1987 the *Modern Sudan Daily Times* estimated that 18,000 urban migrants had been arrested and returned to their home towns.[118] The police often destroyed shanty housing altogether in regions such as Dar al-Salaam

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[112] Prominent Republican Brother, Interview, Khartoum, 6 Dec. 2010. The Republican Brothers were an intellectual movement and political party that campaigned for a liberal understanding of Islam and opposed the conservative form of *sharia* law that Numayri imposed in 1983.
[113] Tijani al-Hussain, *al-Faidan* [The Flood], (Khartoum 1985), p. 17.
[114] 'Abd al-Karim, al-Hasan, and Seddon, 'The generals step in'.
[115] Al-Hussein, *al-Faidan*, p. 8.
[116] Al-Hajj Khalid, 'limadha', *al-Raya*, 6 July 1985.
[117] Al-Hajj Khalid, 'limadha', *al-Raya*, 6 July 1985; El Hidai Ahmed, 'Crime Pays?'; *Sudanow*, Nov/Dec 1986, pp. 8-11; Senior Police Officer D, Former Commissioner-General of Police and Minister of Interior, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.
[118] *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, April 15 1987.

and Shambat to force citizens to leave, provoking violent clashes in which some residents of the shanty towns were raped and killed.[119]

The use of identity cards, which were first legislated for in 1962, would later become one of the police's key tools for the system of 'sweeps'. Although theoretically a means to unite the Sudanese nation, they in effect led the police to play a role in widening the urban-rural dichotomy and enforcing a system of unequal citizenship. Actual identity cards were introduced to Khartoum by the customs and immigration police in 1966 and later to major ports and important provincial cities. Geili claimed in 1974 that the identity card system had been established in all major towns.[120] However, it appears that the Sudanese government first began to attempt to enforce the identity card regime on *all* of Khartoum's citizens as a result of the 1976 coup attempt engineered by Libyan leader Mu'ammar Gaddafi and exiled Umma party leader Sadiq al-Mahdi. The government claimed that the fighters, who had been recruited for the coup by Gaddafi and al-Mahdi in Darfur and a number of the Sahelian countries such as Niger, Mali and Chad, had been infiltrating the residential areas of the capital in the months leading up to the attempted *putsch*.[121] Qalandar, a former member of the regime, claims that the rebel fighters settled in Um Bedda, one of the marginalized settlements on the edges of the capital which was particularly associated with Darfuri migrants.[122] Thus the government – after a campaign of arrests by the Public Security Organization conducted against Darfuris, many of whom, according another political prisoner from the time, had nothing to do with the coup attempt[123] – conducted a new census in Khartoum, ran checks on citizenship certificates and undertook a 're-inspection' of residential areas 'considered a refuge for fugitives'.[124] Thus the identity card regime, which was enforced more strictly in the capital than anywhere else, reflected not just the regime's anxiety about the

[119] *Al-Raya*, 10 Oct. 1987, cited in Aleish, *Yawmiyyat* p. 152; *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, Feb 10 1989; *al-Hadaf*, 12 July 1987.
[120] Rashid Ahmad Jeili, 'al-bitaqa al-shakhsiyya wa ahmiyyatha fi al-bilad'; ['The identity card and its importance in the country'] *Majallat al-Shurta*, Sep. 1974, p. 42.
[121] 'Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia form mutual defence pact after bloody coup attempt against Numayri', MERIP Reports, 50 (Aug. 1976), pp. 23-4.
[122] Qalandar, *Sanawat Numayri*, p. 374.
[123] Interview with Mamoun Sharafi conducted by Muhahmmad Muhammad Kheir, *al-Khartoum*, 27 Sep. 1994.
[124] 'Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia', MERIP Reports, pp. 23-4.

'moral crisis' caused by Khartoum's peri-urban regions but also the fear that they would be exploited politically and militarily by opponents of the state.

Identity cards would later play a vital role in the *kashas* of the 1980s, when the authorities pleaded that non-'vagrant' citizens of Khartoum should carry them at all times to avoid being caught up in the 'sweeps'.[125] Those that did not have cards were ferried back to the countryside, implying again that citizenship was not applied to those hailing from Sudan's rural peripheries.[126] The Identity Card Law of 1981 had stipulated that all Sudanese above the age of 18 had a legal requirement to obtain identity cards.[127] Clearly, possession of identity cards was not widespread even in Khartoum at this stage. It was reported as the 'sweeps' began in 1981 that in the capital 'one of the busiest offices now is the one issuing identity cards'.[128] During the 'sweeps' that preceded the 1985 *intifada*, officials in Khartoum issued a statement 'urging those citizens of the national capital's district government who do not possess identification cards to go to the centres that issue these cards and obtain them'.[129] Meanwhile in Darfur, the vast rural region from which many of the migrants came, it was not until 1988 that the governor established a working plan to hand out identity cards in order to distinguish Darfuris from Chadian mercenaries and other cross-border migrants.[130] Thus the identity card system represented the state using the police to shield the cities from the influx of migrants from the countryside more than it represented any attempt to govern the country as a whole.

Protecting the towns: the role of the police at the urban edge

The police became so intent on enforcing the urban-rural divide that security around the major riverain towns, especially Khartoum, became almost akin to that at a national border. After the first major 'dragnet' operation of 1981, plans were established to 'set up check-points at all the capital's inlets and in all the major

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[125] Al-Hussein, *al-Faidan*, pp. 17, 24; *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, April 15 1987.
[126] *Modern Sudan Daily Times*, 15 April 1987.
[127] 'Qanun bitaqa ithbat al-shakhsiyya' ['The Identity Card Law'], Sudan Police Headquarters Website, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/laws.php (visted on 7 July 2010).
[128] Alfred Logune Taban, 'Security Checks'; *Sudanow*, Oct 1981 p. 22.
[129] 'Khartoum officials review security situation', SUNA 1750 gmt 30 Mar 1985, BBCSWB ME/7914/A/12, 1 April 1985.
[130] 'Adil 'Abd al-Rahman, 'Barnamij li-mukafaha al-nahb al-musallaha yaqu 'ala arba'a mahawir' ['The programme to resist armed robbery is undertaken on four fronts'], *al-Siyasa*, 15 March 1988.

towns of the region'.[131] This system was acerbically satirized in an article by Ibrahim Da'ud in *al-Siyasa* in 1988, entitled 'This is what I would do if I was Minister of Interior! (*Hadha ma kuntu afa'alhu lau kuntu waziran li-dakhiliyya*)', writing at the height of the state of emergency in the 1980s. Da'ud observed that those travelling into Khartoum from Port Sudan could be stopped and have their baggage searched as often as ten times while buses coming from the White Nile region would be stopped both in Jebel Auliya and Azuzab on the outskirts of Khartoum. However, they were not searched at the point of origin, which reflected the capital-focused nature of security. Da'ud also observed that these checkpoints were not even effective at preventing the entrance of drugs and refugees into Khartoum, since there were many potential entrances to the capital which they did not cover, including Omdurman from the west, through the Green Belt (*al-Hizam al-Akhdar*) to the south of the capital, and from the Butana via Bahri.[132] Thus Da'ud's article drew attention not only to the Khartoum-centric nature of security but also to the implications that the police system's inability to monitor the rest of the country had for security in the capital.

Good evidence for the urban bias in policing was the strategy that the national force adopted towards the issue of drugs. As in the colonial era (see Chapter 1), the struggle of the police force to manage the inter-regional trade in drugs highlighted the divided nature of the police system in Sudan. Drugs remained a key issue of concern in the post-independence years. In the 1970s and 1980s social workers began to decry the influence that recreational drug use was having on students, workers and civil servants in Khartoum.[133] The national papers frequently praised the police for making impressive drugs hauls, although these were usually made at key transport nodes and in Sudan's main trade entrepots such as Khartoum, Port Sudan, Nyala, Kassala and Gedaref.[134] For instance, in 1985 the Dangerous Drugs Unit claimed to have burned a number of hashish farms in Gedaref and Port

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[131] Alfred Logune Taban, 'Security Checks', *Sudanow*, Oct 1981 p. 22.
[132] Ibrahim Anwar Da'ud, 'Hadha ma kuntu afa'alhu lau kunt waziran li-dakhiliyya!' ('This is what I would have done if I was Minister of Interior!'), *al-Siyasa*, 12 March 1988.
[133] Mahjoub al-Tijani Mahmoud, 'al-akhtaar al-iqtisaadiyya wa'l ijtima'iyya l'il mukhaddirat' ('The social and economic dangers of drugs'), *al-Siyasa*, 31 May 1988.
[134] *Sudanow*, Feb. 1983; Izz el Din Babiker, 'Law and Order: Drug Smuggling' *Sudanow*, July 1984 p. 54; *Sudan Modern Daily Times*, 8 Nov. 1987, 10 May 1988; *al-Ayyam*, 21 Nov 1985, 29 Nov 1985.

Sudan, and to have impounded 3,101 sheaths being transported on camel back near those cities.[135]

However, the police were usually unable to deal with the sources of drugs, as the regions that produced them were affected by Sudan's various post-colonial conflicts. One senior officer observed that

> We the police, know where the hashish, the drugs, were planted, in the south, in Wau Province, in Southern Darfur, Radom, mintaqa al-Radom [the Radom region], some places in Gedaref, but now the security situation in these places gave the offenders a good chance to plant without being dispersed. So most the operations done by the police is either to burn the farms, or to cut the ways, not to enter the big towns, and they achieved very good results in this.[136]

The fact that police activity was focused on preventing drugs reaching Sudan's principal towns again reflects the extent of the urban-rural dichotomy in the country and it is questionable to what extent the police achieved 'good results' even in this regard. In Khartoum itself it was estimated in 1980 that 50 Kantars of *hashish* entered the city annually, of which only ten per cent was seized by the police, which would seem to support Da'ud's observation (cited above) with regard to the inefficacy of most of the border checks.[137] Smugglers devised increasingly ingenious methods for concealing drugs, including smuggling them past customs police in camels' stomachs.[138]

Nevertheless, in the 1980s the police launched a particularly determined campaign to block the entrance of drugs into the northern towns. [139] In 1988 the

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[135] *Al-Ayyam*, 29 Nov. 1985.
[136] Senior police officer D, former commissioner-general of police and minister of interior, Khartoum, 27 Dec. 2009.
[137] *Sudanow*, Aug. 1980.
[138] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 1 Sep. 1967.
[139] 'Crime: Police and thieves' *Sudanow*, Feb. 1983, p. 34; Babiker, 'Law and order', *Sudanow*, July 1984; *Modern Daily Sudan Times*, 8 Nov. 1987, 10 May 1988; *al-Ayyam*, 21 Nov. 1985, 29 Nov. 1985.

drugs police impounded 600,000 Sudanese Pounds worth of hashish after establishing an ambush for drug smugglers in the hills to the west of Omdurman, thus to some extent answering Da'ud's assertion that the police were unable to cut off these entry routes.[140] However, this was an isolated success and the inability of the police to establish a country-wide presence inevitably impacted on their ability to control the spread of drugs throughout Sudan. This limited focus of the police on preventing the entry of drugs into the major cities, rather than dealing with drugs networks at source, indicated the extent to which police policy was affected by the rural-urban dichotomy and desire to protect the main urban centres.

'The violence of the wilderness': breaching the centre-periphery divide

Although, as demonstrated above, the state has usually employed its police force to enforce the divide between centre and periphery, factions within the state have often been willing to use the police against competing factions in ways that cut across this same divide. For example, in the 1960s, the Umma party used its *Ansar* followers, most of whom hailed from the rural periphery, to substitute for the regular police in clashes with the Communist movement. In a similar although largely unrelated context, the rank and file of the police in the 1970s and 1980s were 'peripheralized' as members of affluent riverain families moved into the SSO and other more attractive professions and began to be replaced by recent migrants from the countryside – which was evidence of the paradoxical nature of the police's role in enforcing the urban-rural divide. The 'peripheralization' of the police led to an increasing gulf between the police and the educated and affluent classes of the riverain centre, which in itself revealed the specificity of the notions of civil policing that had obtained in the 1960s.

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[140] *Al-Siyasa*, 19 May 1988.

Umma use of Ansar 'police'

While the majority of the riverain elite in Sudan have possessed only limited links to the peripheral regions, the Mahdist movement has a history of using its followers to 'police' the riverain centre. The Khalifa Abdullahi set the precedent for this strategy in 1889 when he brought members of the Ta'isha section of the Baggara from Darfur to police Omdurman, the capital of the Mahdist state. As Thomas observes, this was evidence of the capacity of 'people from a violent periphery' to challenge an 'older order'.[141] During the 1960s, the Umma party increasingly encouraged its *Ansar* supporters from the west and the White and Blue Nile regions to settle in Omdurman to provide it with a political power base.[142] As seen in Chapter 4, the Umma party at this time used the *Ansar* to substitute for the regular police against its political opponents, particularly the Communist Party, which Sadiq al-Mahdi banned during his first period as Umma prime minister. One ex-Communist recalled that they acted as 'demonstration breakers' wearing 'Mahdi military uniforms'.[143] The tactics of the Umma party during this period recalled colonial tactics of using the *Ansar* to police protest movements begun by the urban elites during the 1920s (see Chapter 1).

The state police were often unable to challenge these shows of force by the *Ansar*. This was the case in the aftermath of the 1964 October Revolution when such displays both prevented a Communist takeover during the 'day of the barricades' in November 1964 and forced the transitional government to step down in the following February.[144] However, at other times there were violent clashes between police and *Ansaris*, as during the Neguib Riots of 1954 (see Chapter 2). Another such clash occurred during the 'Mulid Incidents' of 1961 when Siddiq al-Mahdi, the then Imam of the *Ansar*, had been strengthening the presence of the *Ansar* in Khartoum in preparation for a potential conflict between the banned political parties and the military regime of Ibrahim Abboud. Umma politicians claimed that the government deliberately staged the attack, in which 14 *Ansar* were slain.[145] The Khartoum police, alongside the army, clashed bloodily with the *Ansar* once more in Wad Nubawi in Omdurman in 1970 when the supporters of the Imam al-Hadi al-

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[141] Daly, *A History*, p. 106. Thomas, *Kafai Kingi*, p. 46
[142] Munzoul Assal, 'Urbanization and the future of Sudan', *Making Sense of Sudan*, posted 29. Jan 2008.
[143] Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.
[144] O'Ballance, *Sudan: Civil wars and terrorism*, p. 25.
[145] Al-Mahdi, *Jihad fi Sabil Dimuratiyya* [Jihad in the path of democracy], p. 85; APD, 26 Aug. 1961.

Mahdi, who was at that time engaging Numayri's army at Aba Island, rose up against the regime.[146]

Clashes between the police and *Ansar* provided their opponents amongst Khartoum's elite with an opportunity to 'otherize' the latter and direct attention to the threat they posed to urban values. For instance, the judges who tried the Umma politicians accused of inciting the 1954 riots accused Abd al-Rahman Nugdalla of stirring up a mob of 'fanatical, unsophisticated and excited westerners ... liable to lose control if they became excited and were opposed by the police'.[147] This mirrored the general portrayal of the *Ansar* in *al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, where they were described as issuing battle cries like those of 'Red Indians'.[148] Thus, the educated Sudanese elite were using colonial tropes to establish their superiority over the *Ansar*. The events of 1 March have been used by one modernizing anti-Mahdist Sudanese historian to state that it was impossible for a 'tribal, regional backward society' to settle its disputes within the boundaries of an industrial, democratic society.[149] The Communist movement and other members of the educated elite developed the concept of *unf al-badiya* (lit. 'the violence of the wilderness') to express their disdain for the use of people from Sudan's peripheries to police the sophisticated classes of the city.[150] Communist historian Hasan Jizouli described the *Ansaris* who were deployed against his party by the Umma party in 1965 as wielding 'barbaric spears and axes' (*fu'us wa harrab hamajiyya*).[151] However, while these colonial tropes were usually used by members of the riverain elite simply to impose a distance between themselves and the inhabitants of peripheral Sudan, here they were being deployed within the context of a specific conflict between factions in the centre.

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[146] Mu'tader, *Kitab*, p. 139.
[147] HC/Maj.Ct/14/1954 AC/CP/181/1954, 8 Aug. 1954, NRO, 2.D.1. Fasher (A) 32/1/1.
[148] *Al-Ra'i al-'Aam*, 2 March 1954.
[149] Hamad, *al-Sudan*, pp. 482-3.
[150] Hasan Jizouli, *Unf al-Badiya* [The Violence of the Wilderness] (Khartoum 2006), p. 23. The term was coined in by 'Abd al-Khaliq Mahgoub in 1965, and came to be used throughout the party's various political struggles to describe the use of violence against the movement.
[151] Ibid.

'A big problem': the incorporation of the marginalized peoples into the police force

It was not just *Ansar* 'police' that breached and complicated the divide between city and countryside. One of the ironies of the police's attempts forcibly to define the boundary between centre and periphery was that the force itself increasingly began to recruit from the marginalized populations of the shanty towns, partially due to its own marginalization within the government. The anxieties that this phenomenon provoked among both the senior police establishment and their anti-government opponents reflected the ambiguities and confusion caused by the porosity of the centre-periphery divide.

As the Shayqiyya began to use the benefits that accrued to members of the police force to acquire a decent education for their sons, later generations would reject police employment in favour of business or work in Numayri's other security agencies, which attracted better salaries and increasingly came to be seen as the guardians of 'Arab' security.[152] This also reflected more widespread patterns in the Sudanese economy in which affluent riverain Sudanese were migrating *en masse* to reap higher salaries in the Gulf States and thus opening up urban jobs for migrants from the peripheries.[153] Northern Sudanese police professionals, who proudly claim that they were the ones who established the modern police systems of the Gulf States when they acquired their independence in the 1970s, were a part of this migration.[154] Thus, although the higher echelons of the force have continued to be officered by men born in the region to the north of Khartoum,[155] from the late 1970s rank and file policing increasingly became a job that only the marginalized migrants from the shanty towns would perform. One officer interviewee observed that from this period onwards 'most, but not all' the rank and file policemen came from the shanty towns.[156] The ethnic balance within the police force has thus come more and more to resemble that which has historically obtained within the army, where officers have

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[152] Sudanese academic, Interview, Durham, 6 Oct. 2009; Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009;
Anti-Numayri activist and former Ba'athist politician, Interview, Khartoum, 20 Dec. 2009; Retired schoolteacher, Interview, Khartoum, 26 Dec. 2009; For instance, while interviewing two officers, I was introduced to their sons both of whom were businessmen.
[153] Elnur, *Contested Sudan*, pp. 99-100.
[154] Senior police officer H, Interview, Khartoum, 21 Dec. 2011.
[155] For instance, the last three Director Generals have come from Metemma, Hoshe Bannaga and Shendi. See Sudan Police Force HQ Website, 'Director Generals', http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/enportal/modara-3.php.
[156] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Khartoum, 6 Jan. 2010.

been drawn from the riverain elite and soldiers from ex-slave populations from Sudan's rural peripheries.[157] This could further explain why the police force became more heavily militarized in the 1980s (see Chapter 5), since the social distance between the rank and file and officer corps has increased. The police officer corps clearly saw this 'peripheralization' of the rank and file as 'a big problem',[158] which would provide a further explanation to that of the previous chapter as to why the disciplinary laws were tightened in this period.

The 'peripheralization' of the police is seen now by aging Khartoumers as a negative phenomenon, as the new recruits were not trusted by Khartoum's historic population, who rapidly began to associate them with corruption, brutality and theft.[159] Khartoumers recall nostalgically that in the 1950s and 1960s, the time when 'civil' policing in Sudan was at its peak, the police in the Nile Valley were made up of 'Arabs', usually Shayqiyya with 'strong traditions'; this is contrasted favourably with the era in which the marginalized peoples entered the force.[160] This reminds us that discourses about 'civil' or 'popular' policing were based upon a fundamentally exclusive notion of who 'the people' were supposed to be (see Chapter 4). However, in another sense the 'peripheralization' of the force warns us against a simplistic understanding of the centre-periphery relationship. A number of students who fell afoul of the Sudanese police argue that it was their comparatively privileged background that made policemen treat them with bitterness and fierceness as they suppressed demonstrations.[161] In this sense the Sudanese police had become 'oppressed oppressors'. Thus whilst the educated classes of Khartoum continued to stigmatize and stereotype the marginalized peoples who had entered the police force, their incorporation within the state apparatus represented a new breach within the centre-periphery boundary that provoked fundamental anxieties in the riverain elite.

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[157] Sikainga, Ahmad Alawad, *Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labour in Colonial Sudan* (Austin, 1996), p. 61.
[158] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Khartoum, 6 Jan. 2010.
[159] Retired schoolteacher, Interview, Khartoum, 26 Dec. 2009.
[160] Retired schoolteacher, Interview, Khartoum, 26 Dec. 2009.
[161] Sudanese ex-student, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010.

Conclusion

There are many explanations for the limited spatial presence of the police outside the most affluent urban areas of Sudan. Often it was a result of neglect following internal wrangling within the government and Ministry of Interior, as was the case during the 'Black Sunday' riots of 1964 and in the period after the dissolution of the Ministry of Interior in 1979 (see Chapter 4 and 5). It can also be explained by the limited logistical capacity of the police, which indicated not just the poor resources of the post-colonial state but also the biased manner in which it distributed them. But this chapter has also shown that the perceptions, ideologies and cultures of the senior police officers themselves also reflected their northern riverain elite origins; the police themselves thus contributed to the perpetuation of a bifurcated and dichotomized system of policing in Sudan, that acted to establish barriers within the country more than it did to unite it.

Thus the police force in the riverain towns in effect acted to prevent the kind of social integration that the process of urbanization was capable of creating. The police not only continued to reproduce within the countryside the same militaristic and collective forms of policing that had been applied during the colonial era but also allowed them to feed back into urban systems of law enforcement. They resorted to crude methods such as mass arrests and demolitions of 'shanty' housing which suspected criminals were held to inhabit, as well as the use of stigmatizing corporal punishments during Numayri's Islamization of the law-books. Members of the riverain elite who dominated the police force and government justified this collective action by otherizing and defining as 'tribal' vast chunks of Sudanese society from which these peri-urban populations were drawn. Westerners, southerners, Nuba, and *Ansaris* were stigmatized with a variety of tropes that were supposedly held to make them collectively pre-disposed to criminal behaviour. However, the stigmatization of the latter group, which was at times a target of the state police and at other times incorporated within the government's security apparatus, reminds us that the brutalization of peripheral peoples by groups at the centre was sometimes as indicative of conflicts at the centre as it was of the overall centre-periphery paradigm.

The state's inability to police the peri-urban areas and the limited sovereignty of the state and its police force in the countryside both resulted from the prioritization of the capital and urban nodes of the government and economy, as was reflected in the fact that Khartoum's borders were policed almost like an international border. Nevertheless, this border remained porous and the police were unable to control the influx of people, weapons and drugs from Sudan's vast countryside in spite of their arbitrary efforts to do so. That the centre-periphery divide remained breachable was seen in the incorporation of the marginalized peoples into the lower ranks of urban police forces, a phenomenon that reflected wider social and demographic changes caused by post-colonial urban migration. However, since the higher echelons of the force remained closely linked to the riverain elite this simply made the force itself a mirror for the prevailing contradictions, divisions and tensions within state and society at large.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to explore the uneasy position of Sudanese policemen who found themselves at the nexus of a complex relationship between state and society, asking whether the police in Sudan can be understood purely as the henchmen of the various unrepresentative governments that have ruled over the country in the twentieth century. It has responded to this question by arguing that to understand whether or not policemen were pliant collaborators with the state, we must first establish whether there was indeed a strong and united state apparatus capable of mobilizing a unified police force for the purpose of pursuing specific economic, political and ideological objectives. It has thus explored contrasting academic discourses about colonial governance. These include those that emphasize the institutional capacity of colonial states and their capacity to transform society on a European legal model together with those that stress the limited ambitions of governments focused purely on preserving the security of principal strategic points. Employing Homi Bhabha's notion of colonial ambivalence, it has contended that the colonial state itself was extremely divided over which mode of governance to apply. Understanding this point is crucial, since analysts of Sudan's various developmental crises have tended to focus on the divisions between the centre and periphery of the country, rather than those schisms existing at the centre itself. Although the thesis acknowledges arguments that the state's limited material resources and the considerable geographical size of the country have impeded the growth of a strong governmental apparatus, it has also demonstrated that these rifts at the centre of the state have played a vital role in limiting its capacity to govern. In fact, the colonial administration pursued a fundamentally different strategy towards its police force than that preferred by the colonial Legal Department and professional police officers. Whilst the latter took a developmentalist and technocratic approach to the police force, preferring to see it as a tool for crime fighting and social intervention, the colonial administration consistently used relativistic discourses to insist that Sudanese society was not fit for a modern and professional police system. Although the administration accepted the need for such a system within the key urban 'nodes' of colonial economic power, it preferred to employ policemen as political agents or

administrative dogsbodies, whilst delegating local notables and their retainers – the so-called Native Administration – to solve crimes on a local level. The administration also cited regional diversity as a justification for preventing the emergence of a police force that was united on a national level, although the practical effect of this was to leave power over the police concentrated within the hands of the administration. The administration effectively retained the upper hand in this conflict of outlooks, even during the more developmentalist phase of colonial governance that occurred in the 1940s and 1950s. This was demonstrated by its ability to scapegoat Leslie James, the modernizing commandant of the Khartoum Police, for the 1951 Police Strike. Thus by clinging tenaciously to its own prerogatives in policing, the British administration sapped the overall governmental capacity of the colonial state.

The thesis has also argued that the divisions at the centre of the post-colonial Sudanese state have played just as important a role in limiting its capacity to impose law and order as was the case during the Condominium. Just like the colonial administration, post-colonial governments, whether military or party-based, often tended to see the central legal institutions less as a means to expand the presence of the government in the lives of citizens than as a potential threat to themselves. Although the professional police system acquired a far greater degree of institutional power during the early nationalist period, regimes in this period frequently adopted old colonial techniques for bypassing and enfeebling it. When Numayri decentralized the police force in 1979 and delegated police authority to the army, intelligence services, and vigilante groups in the following years, his actions were typical of a post-colonial dictator mimicking old colonial tactics.

Having established these questions, the thesis has been able to return to the 'collaborator' problematic. It has asked, if both colonial and post-colonial administrations feared the emergence of a modern and professionalized police system, can the police be seen as the straightforward collaborators of either? Thus instead of simply analyzing the police as agents of the government it has sought to explore the other forms of agency that they exercised, whether in the service of institutional agendas, individual agendas, or those of the various social, religious and political groups to which they were affiliated. It has argued that they exploited the

frailties and schisms within the state in order to pursue these agendas. Firstly, a number of the educated generation of professional Sudanese policemen began to identify with the demands of British professionals and members of the Legal Department for a centralized, modern, and apolitical system of crime-fighting in Sudan – the same objectives that the administration was attempting to obstruct. Although the introduction of a modern legal system to Sudan was represented by the Islamist movement in the 1980s as a colonial assault on Sudanese culture, Sudanese policemen pursued the supposedly 'British' values of civil policing most actively during the early nationalist period, before the assault Numayri launched on the police as an institution in the late 1970s. Thus the thesis has maintained that understanding the Sudanese police force as a colonial relic is problematic, since Sudanese policemen actively attempted to develop a strong police system in Sudan as a means of pursuing independence from the British colonial administration.

Whilst Sudanese policemen did make attempts to improve their status as a professional body, the thesis has also demonstrated that the eagerness of both colonial and post-colonial administrations to de-institutionalize the force allowed a variety of actors to subvert it to pursue their own agendas. The practical effect of this was that the police often exercised violence on behalf of particular groups, especially the Shayqiyya and the political and religious movements to which they were affiliated. Similarly, on a more atomistic level the resigned attitude of local administrators towards corruption within the force and the willingness of the Political Service to distribute arms and police authority to local proxies facilitated the manipulation of police authority by a variety of local actors. In this respect, colonialism was responsible for spreading a great deal of state violence in Sudan, although this violence was not so much a part of the system as a result of the lack of system. The frequent impersonation and abuse of plain-clothes powers was further evidence of the manner in which individual actors could exploit the state's weak integrity. The mimicry and abuse of police powers by other branches of the security establishment, ethnic militias, party militias, criminal gangs, and vigilantes was also a phenomenon during the post-colonial era – as was particularly the case after Numayri's manipulation of the police force during the later years of the May Regime.

However, one positive effect of the social porosity within the police was that it limited the extent to which colonial and post-colonial governments could use them against their own people, at least in the riverain areas. By recruiting its police force in the central urban areas principally from the Shayqiyya and other riverain ethnic groups, the colonial state failed in playing 'divide and rule', since it was these groups that also provided the impetus behind the Sudanese labour and nationalist movements. The refusal of the police to suppress a number of demonstrations, and their imitation of the tactics practiced by the labour movement, was proof of the fact that they were far from the pliant tools of the state. Further evidence of the influence that Sudanese society, along with the media, judiciary and professional organizations, could exercise to restrain abuse of the police by the state occurred during the post-colonial era, particularly during the October Revolution of 1964 and the April *intifada* of 1985. Moreover, during the parliamentary periods that these uprisings ushered in, local councils, professional organizations, lawyers' bodies, the media and the judiciary all scored moderate successes in preventing political abuse of the police and turning them into a more publicly-orientated body.

The thesis has also sought to assess the manner in which the various twentieth-century governments have allowed the classic divide between 'centre' and 'periphery' identified by analysts of Sudan's social and political history to affect the development of the police. It has argued that rather than passively adapting their police forces to pre-existing social and political divides, both colonial and post-colonial states actively pursued a policy towards the police that exacerbated the disparities between the central and marginalized regions of Sudan. Being unable to play 'divide and rule' effectively among the police force at the riverain centre because of their reliance on the Shayqiyya to man it, the colonial state did so on the national level instead by isolating these officers from the provincial administrations. By keeping police forces in the provinces subject to immediate administrative control and delegating a great deal of the criminal work to the Native Administration, the administration hindered the development of a unified and national police force applying a central code of law. The success that the British had in divorcing the professional cadre of police officers from the provinces was demonstrated by the limited geographical extent of the 1951 Police Strike, as the participants were unable to spread their demands for a national police department

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beyond principle urban centres such as Atbara, Khartoum and Port Sudan. The net result was that the bifurcated system of policing established by the British increased the level of social disparity within the country. Whilst relatively affluent urban dwellers were policed in accordance with the central legal code, the Sudan Political Service subjected inhabitants of the rural peripheries to administrative forms of policing which failed to individualize guilt and thus treated whole communities as collective entities.

Post-colonial administrators reproduced the old colonial beliefs concerning the merits of localized and collective systems of policing on the periphery, sticking to these policies even in the midst of rapid urbanization and migration from periphery to centre. In this context, post-colonial regimes not only structured the police force around the centre-periphery schism but also increasingly began to use it as a physical tool for the enforcement of the divide. That the senior police officers themselves largely fell in with the various post-colonial governments in playing this role reflected not just the enduring legacy of the dichotomized system of policing established by the British but also the importance of the northern riverain origins that they shared with other members of the indigenous colonial elite. Whilst the social connections of the police to other branches of northern riverain society had served to prevent the force being used against the public in the riverain towns during events such as the 1964 October, in a wider context it caused the police to perpetuate to some extent the divisions within Sudanese society. Nevertheless, the centre-periphery divide was never impermeable and, ironically, members of the rank and file increasingly started to hail from the marginalized populations of the peri-urban areas. However, the negative reaction to this phenomenon of older members of riverain society and the senior police officers themselves, was a reminder that the force was still serving to reproduce the divisions within Sudanese society.

The analysis of a police force that was a part of the state, and yet often at odds with it, offers useful parallels with the present regime in Sudan, which was ushered in by Umar al-Bashir's pro-NIF coup of 1989. The current rulers of Sudan have created a variety of units parallel to the police, such as the *Shurta Sha'abiyya* (Popular Police), the *Amn al-Mujtama* (Security of Society), and the *Shurta Nizam al-'Aam* (Public Order Police) in Khartoum, all of which serve the purpose of

enforcing the regime's interpretation of Islamic morality.[1] The powers given to these units were clearly resented by a number of regular police officers and up until today these units effectively issue edicts on matters such as inappropriate dress independently of police command;[2] they also conduct arrests under the aegis of separate bodies such as the Committee for the Commanding of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (*Hi'a 'Amr bi'l Ma'arouf wa'l Nahy al-Munkar*).[3] A continuing indicator of how shadowy and ambiguous police authority has become is the frequency of the crimes committed by 'police impersonators', from theft to abduction and rape.[4] Thus in the current era police authority has been subverted both on a macrocosmic level by the state and a microcosmic level by individual criminals, continuing a pattern identified in the thesis.

Nevertheless, the thesis has also demonstrated that the Sudanese police have continued to survive and at times prospered as an institution due to two factors. First, colonial and post-colonial regimes in Sudan have, in spite of their fear of police institutionalization, always been reliant on the professional capacity of policemen to preserve a basic level of order – if only in the regions in which the regime has strong material interests. This historical trend of uneasy dependence has continued under the present regime, which has been compelled to abandon its efforts to manipulate the state bureaucracy from top to bottom by its dependence on the knowledge and skills of the latter.[5] Thus the plan of the 'Salvation' government to substitute completely its own parallel units for the regular police force by 2005 was abandoned in 1999. At this point the regime's chief ideologue, Hasan al-Turabi, split from the

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[1] Lesch, *Sudan*, p. 137. Human Rights Watch, *Behind the Red Line*, p. 137. Sudan Police News Office, 'Na'ib al-Mufattish al-Aam yashhad ihtifalat al-Shurta al-Sha'abiyya wa'l mujtama'iyya bi'l Wilaya' ['The Deputy Commissioner-General witnesses celebrations of the Popular Police and Society Police in [Khartoum] State'], 27 Oct. 2010, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/news.php, visited 23 Nov. 2010.

[2] Zoheir Siraj, 'Quwwa thalathiyya li-ibada', *al-Sudani*, 11 Dec. 2010.

[3] For example, see a report on the Committee for the Commanding of Virtue and Prevention of Vice ordering the arrest of a nurse who performed abortions, in *al-Dar*, 5 Jan. 2011.

[4] Rania Bashir, 'Fi qadiyya 'isaba al-ikhtitaf' ['In the case of the kidnapping gang'] *al-Ahram*, 9 Dec. 2010. Zeid Bakheit 'al-sijn (7) sanawat ala shabaan ikhtatafuu 'aamilan wa nahhabuuhuu' ['Prison for six years for the youths who abducted a worker and robbed him'], *al-Ahram*, 21. Dec. 2010. *al-Watan*, 30 Oct. 2010. Hasbou al-Tayyib, 'Darrrajat wa arrabat bidun lowhat' ['Motorbikes and cars without numberplates'], *al-Alwan*, 23 Dec. 2010. Ali, *Suqut*, p. 105.

[5] Gallab, *First Islamist Republic*, p. 143.

government and a series of more pragmatic politicians began to allocate the country's newfound oil wealth to developing the mainstream security forces.[6]

Second, Sudanese policemen have exploited modern education and notions of civil policing to press for more independence and autonomy as an institution. Professional officers in the riverain centre have sought to make life in the police profession akin to a 'family' life, providing for the material needs of officers at times when weak colonial and post-colonial states had little capacity to make welfare provision for them. This was seen in the establishment of clubs, as well as co-operative societies and benevolent funds that would care for the educational and health needs of police families. Again, this ethos of institutional economic independence has continued to grow in modern Sudan, as the police, now with some level of support from the state, have turned the force into a business enterprise running hospitals, hotels and sporting clubs.[7] In 2000 the police established al-Ribat university on 'police land' to serve 'police purposes', guaranteeing eight per cent of university seats for police children[8] – thus indicating the strength of the notion of institutional solidarity and self-help.

In some respects, this resurgence of the regular police force has encouraged a re-emergence of 'governmentalist' attitudes towards the regulation of crime in Sudan. Ever since the invitation of Plumbridge to be Sudan's first police advisor in 1910, specialist professionals and members of the judiciary have sought to expand the capacity of the force to practice a wider regulation of Sudanese society, in spite of the unwillingness of the colonial administration and Sudan's post-colonial rulers to expend resources in this direction. In particular, these professionals have demanded a strongly centralized police force with the technical resources to deal with violations of state law in Sudan's provinces. This remains an aspiration of contemporary policemen. In 2007, the chief of Sudan's CID proudly talked of a

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[6] Elnur, *Contested Sudan*, p. 40. de Waal, "Sudan: What kind of state?", p. 12.
[7] Ali Osman Yassin, minister of justice, interview with Francis Deng, Khartoum, Aug. 2005. in Francis M. Deng, *Customary Law in the Modern World: The crossfire of Sudan's war of identities*, (New York 2010), p. 289.
[8] Dr Muhammad Ahmad Mahgoub, 'al-'amal al-akadami yatasaddar al-hamm al-'ilmi bi'l-ja'amia' ['Academic work spreads intellectual interest at the university'], *Majalla al-Shurta*, Sep. 2007, pp. 29-30.

'police empire' which would ensure security for all citizens.[9] Technological expansion has been a part of this – in recent years, the Sudanese police have sought German technical assistance to develop an Automated Fingerprint Identification System and strengthen the 'identity card regime', deployed speed-cameras in Khartoum, and established new forensic laboratories in al-Ubayyid and Port Sudan.[10] They have even begun their own media empire, establishing a radio station and media office which serves the purpose of training police and media students to 'enlighten and culture' Sudanese citizens.[11]

Nevertheless the project for a 'police empire' has been limited in the present, as it was in the twentieth century, by Sudan's classic 'centre-periphery' divide. In the relatively well integrated northern, central and – to some extent – the eastern areas of the country modern communications technology is slowly bridging the gap between police and public. Due to the recent expansion of mobile phone networks, members of the public can report offences quickly even in the hinterland areas of major towns such as Khartoum, Kassala, Port Sudan and Wad Medani and the jeeps of the Emergency Police, the unit established in the 1960s, are able to make a relatively swift appearance.[12] However, in the regions of the west and south affected by conflict the gap between police and society has remained comparatively much greater and policing has remained a quasi-military activity focusing on the protection of the principal urban areas and transport networks. The most active unit of the police in Darfur is the quasi-military Central Reserve Police, which incorporates a number of the pro-government ethnic militias and serves to guard trade convoys and government-held towns against rebel attacks.[13] The regular police, whether as a

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[9] al-Liwa 'Abdin al-Tahir, 'Imbraturiyya al-Shurta ta'ani salama al-dawla' ['The Police empire means the security of the state'], *Majalla al-Shurta*, Sep. 2007, p. 9.

[10] Sudan Police News Office, 'I'atamad al-tasmiim al-niha'iyyi li'l-bitaqa al-shakhsiyya al-qawmiyya' ['Supporting the final design of the new national identity card'], 21 June 2010, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/news.php, visited 25 July 2010. Police officer F, forensic specialist, Interview, Port Sudan, 17 Nov. 2010. Ex-police NCO, Interview, Karima, 19 Jan. 2011.

[11] Sudan Police News Office, 'Mudir al-idara al-aama li'l i'alaam wa al-alaqat al-aama yu'akkad haras idarathu bi-tadriib wa ta'hiil at-tullab' ['The Director of the Headquarters for Public Relations confirms the eagerness of his administration to train and qualify students'], 28 Nov. 2010, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/news.php, Sudan Police Headquarters Website, visited 5 Dec. 2010.

[12] Police officer G, Interview, Kassala, 6 Dec. 2010. University student, Interview, Kassala, 5 Dec. 2010.

[13] Sudan Police News Office, 'Quwwat al-Shurta tasudd hujuum musallah bi-Mintaqa Abu Hamra' ['The Police Force wards off an armed attack in the region of Abu Hamra'], 8 Aug. 2008, http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/news.php, visited 12 Dec. 2010. International Crisis Group Report, 'Darfur's New Security Reality', 26 Nov. 2007, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/horn-

deliberate part of government policy or not, do little to prevent the escalation of robbery, assault and rape cases within the rural areas and the refugee camps.[14]

A similar pattern occurred in the areas of the south and Nuba Mountains affected by the Second Civil War, where the government relied heavily on the Central Reserve Police and armed militias, from the predatory activities of which the regular police did little to protect civilians.[15] Similarly, the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement rarely established any effective police force in the 'liberated' areas, although since the end of the conflict in 2005 the United Nations has assisted the SPLM-dominated Government of South Sudan in developing the infrastructure of the police in the south.[16] Although the current government has rightly been criticized for its neglect of the police in these regions, this neglect in itself represents a continuation of the logic of previous colonial and post-colonial states which have seen little merit in using resources to provide for anything other than regime security outside the urban core.

Meanwhile the Darfur conflict has also brought to the fore another key theme of the thesis, specifically the inability of the state to regulate the violence of its own policemen. Although police officers have most often been criticized for failing to respond to reports of crimes, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a report in 2006 stating that the police in the region had themselves been responsible for a number of rapes and assaults.[17] Although the government's unwillingness to regulate criminality amongst the Darfur police is related to the politics of the conflict, it also reflects the wider history of the state's

of-africa/sudan/Darfurs%20New%20Security%20Reality.ashx, visited 24 Jan. 2011, p. 9. Also see Ali, *Suqut*, p. 86 – although interestingly the author claims that the reason the Central Reserve Police were deployed in areas such as Darfur was because the regime could not dominate them in the same way as the army and thus wanted to keep them distant from the political centre.

[14] Marc Lacey, 'In Darfur, tiny steps towards policing a lawless land', *New York Times*. 5 Feb. 2006, http://www.sangam.org/taraki/articles/2006/02-05_Police_in_Darfur.php?uid=1499, visited 19 Sep. 2010. International Crisis Group Report, 'To Save Darfur', 17 March 2006, phttp://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/sudan/To%20Save%20Darfur.ashx, visited 24 Jan. 2011, p. 2. International Crisis Group Report, 'Darfur's New Security Reality', p. 6.

[15] Senior Police Officer E, former Commissioner-General of Police, 17 Dec. 2009. M. A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, 'Tribal militias: The genesis of national disintegration', in Sharif Harir & Terje Tvedt (eds.), *Short-cut to Decay: the Case of Sudan* (Uppsala, 1994), pp.185-202 at pp. 185-186.

[16] MEDU 17/3/GEN/38 *Justice in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan: Challenges and Prospects* (African Rights, August 1997). MEDU 17/3/GEN/42 Fund for Peace Human Rights Program, *The New Sudan Human Rights and Governance Report*, (New York 2000). *Sudan Tribune*, 9 Aug. 2008.

[17] Lacey, 'Tiny Steps'.

anti-governance outlook. Even in the colonial era administrators – and some judges and police officers – took a resigned attitude towards police violence. The immunity of policemen from criminal prosecution increased as separate police courts were established in 1970; these have remained to the present. The judiciary have been further prevented from regulating police criminality by the expansion of the system of attorney-general's offices (*niyabat*), which first appeared in 1983 and effectively began to replace the role of the judiciary in supervising police investigations.[18] Since the role of the attorney-general has often overlapped with that of the minister of justice, and his office effectively remains a branch of the government executive,[19] this offers little chance for independent regulation of police investigations. However, recently a few cases of policemen killing members of the public in the course of their duties, or abducting and raping girls have been successfully tried in civilian courts, although lawyers and journalists claim that prosecutors often choose not to launch investigations against policemen and that it is still common for members of the public who apply for an external prosecution to be refused.[20]

The relationship between state absence and violent forms of policing has been marked not just in the countryside but in the peripheral regions of the capital filled with migrants and refugees fleeing war and famine in the peripheral regions. The post-colonial tendency of Sudanese governments to use the police force to enforce the urban-rural dichotomy has continued until today, as the contemporary security organs employ collective methods that often target specific ethnic groups, attributing guilt on a racial basis. The decision of the police and National Intelligence and Security Services to arrest between 200 and 3,000 Zaghawi Darfuris after the 2008 raid into Khartoum by the Zaghawa-backed Justice and Equality Movement serves as a reminder of this,[21] recalling similar collective reprisals against westerners conducted by the police in the wake of the Neguib Riots of 1954.

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[18] Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009.

[19] Deng, *Customary Law*, p. 296.

[20] Lawyer, Interview, Khartoum, 13 Jan. 2010. Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2009. For example, see The African Centre for Peace and Justice Studies, *Sudan Human Right Monitor December 2009-May 2010*, p. 12. *al-Watan*, 30 Oct. 2010. Bakheita Zeid, 'Al-hukm bi'l sijn li-(3) sanawat wa dafa' dia 'ala Nizami atlaqa rasas 'ala muwatin' ['A policeman who opened fire on a citizen is sentence to three years in prison and made to pay dia'], *al-Ahram*, 4 April 2011.

[21] Human Rights Watch, 'Crackdown in Khartoum', June 16 2008, http://www.hrw.org/en/node/62163/section/7, visited 22 Sep. 2010.

The policy of the current regime is indicative of its struggle to use the police to enforce the 'centre-periphery' divide at a time when the force is becoming increasingly 'peripheralized' itself. The new security groups such as the Public Order Police have also become one of the regime's agents of choice for the continuation of the *kasha* campaigns, rounding up, arresting and exiling to the countryside deprived migrants from Sudan's peripheries.[22] Nevertheless, in spite of the regime's strategy of using the police to enforce the urban/rural divide, it seems that it may have fostered the 'peripheralization' of a number of its police security units during the 1990s. A number of educated Khartoumers have the impression that these units were being recruited from members of the peripheral population, in particular Darfuris, so as to create a social divide between the security forces, including the police, and the 'sophisticated' population of the urban riverain areas.[23] For the riverain elite, the arbitrary and aggressive behaviour of these new security men showed their inability to 'pay attention to the decorum of things'.[24]

Whilst the current regime has evidently seen some advantages in using recruits from the marginalized populations within the force, the police officer class, which continues to be drawn from amongst the elite, evidently remains fearful of this phenomenon.[25] The social divide between the officer class and the NCOs and rank and file may be one reason that discipline remains so strict. The 2008 Police Law stipulates that a policeman may be imprisoned for one year for disobeying a legal order, or for going absent without leave for more than three days.[26] The social gulf between the ranks may also be the reason that the higher police authorities have been willing to tackle low-scale corruption amongst the rank and file. For instance, the Ministry of Interior recently fired tens of traffic policemen from the force for taking bribes and abusing their authority.[27] Thus, as seen earlier in the thesis (see Chapter 6), the state has developed an ambivalent attitude towards the employment of

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[22] Human Rights Watch, *Behind the Red Line*, p. 130. Maktab Sahafi, 'Tanfidh hukm al-i'adam 'ala al-madaniyyin fi ahdath al-'iti'ada' 'ala Shurta bi-qism Soba' ['Carrying out of death sentence on the citizens involved in the aggression against the police in Soba section']. The African Centre for Peace and Justice Studies, *Sudan Human Right Monitor December 2009-May 2010*, p. 15.
[23] Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2000.
[24] Sudanese academic, Interview, Khartoum, 17 Dec. 2000.
[25] Senior police officer C, former head of CID, Khartoum, 6 Jan. 2010.
[26] 'Qanun al-Shurta li-aam 2008' ['The 2008 Police Act'], http://sudanpolice.gov.sd/pdf/law2.pdf, articles 61 and 62, visited 10 Dec. 2010.
[27] Miyada Salih 'ad-Dakhiklyya: Fasl al-asharat min mansoubi shurta muruur' [At the Ministry of Interior: Tens of traffic policemen fired'], *al-Sudani*, 30 Nov. 2010.

marginal groups within the lower ranks of the police. Whilst such groups have at times offered factions within the state a potential tool to use against their political opponents, simultaneously they have feared the threat that the appearance of marginal groups within the police force poses to the dominant riverain culture and riverain values.

Overall, this thesis has provided some evidence to support the stereotype of African and Middle Eastern policemen as a microcosmic example of the parasitic relationship between a distant state and a vulnerable society. Throughout the twentieth century policemen have abused members of the public for both the benefit of politicians and themselves and the government has often failed to curtail this abuse. More importantly, however, the thesis has contested this view as over-simplified. It has demonstrated that the state is far from monolithic and that progressive judges and police officers have frequently challenged the anti-governance and anti-legal orientation of politicians and administrators who have seen a well regulated police force as a threat to their political control. Furthermore the thesis has undermined the notion of a divorce between police and society. Even during the colonial era, policemen amongst the northern riverain population sympathized with and mimicked the tactics of the nationalist and labour movements; later revolutions against oppressive regimes demonstrated the effect that legal organizations, journalists and professional bodies could have on the police through moral and legal stigmatization of their actions. It remains to be seen whether the re-emergence of journalistic freedoms in contemporary Sudan and the rapid proliferation of electronic media will make the police more socially accountable. The enormous public reaction to the recent Youtube video of a women being whipped by members of the Public Order Police offers some hope that it could.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming challenge facing the police force in Sudan remains the country's enduring centre-periphery dichotomy. Unfortunately, the insecurity and ineffectiveness of policing in Sudan's peripheries are just as indicative of long term trends as they are of the destructive policies of the current regime. Throughout the colonial era, for pragmatic, political and ideological reasons the colonial administration chose to restrict the expansion into the peripheries of the professional systems of policing that were developing in the riverain centre. As the

central police system has expanded in the post-colonial era it has been used by the state to enforce this divide rather than bridge it, physically demarcating the boundary between city and countryside. Nevertheless, a novel development since the last quarter of the twentieth century has been the influence of the peripheries on the lower ranks of the police in the centre itself, which have increasingly begun to recruit from the peri-urban settlements established by impoverished rural migrants to the riverain heartland of the state. This phenomenon complicates the notion of a simplistic centre-periphery divide, as inhabitants of the peripheries have become agents of the state even at the riverain core, although these urban police forces have continued to remain socially stratified following common patterns of discrimination within Sudanese society. However, it will be interesting to see what effect this phenomenon has on the police force as the marginalized populations of Sudan continue to contest the domination of the central state.

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