

Tourism and Peace: With Special Reference to Nuba Wrestling and Stick Fighting

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Introduction:

Africa has made her greatest and finest contribution to World civilization through festivals, ceremonies associated with popular performing arts, such as popular music, dance, popular drama, mask art ext.

Ceremonies, festivals and rituals in Africa historically was an art and expressions of belief. In this respect Tourism which is an industry whose products are consumed on the spot forming an invisible exports is a purposeful human activity that serves as a link between people either within one same country or beyond the geographical limits of states. Festivals are considered Tourism attraction since families or individuals while touring, they observe cultural events and encounter new insights, they gain knowledge and discover new norms. These cultural dialogues and interactions are intangible communications leading to understanding and appreciation. It was through Tourism that globalization started in its very beginning paving the way for intercultural dialogue. In line with a widely shared opinion on culture and cultural Tourism in particular the challenge lay in ensuring that globalization is of benefit for all. It should not be seen as a new form of colonialism which might lead to the sense of inferiority. There is always a room for the rainbow river of cultures which is playing a crucial role in harmonizing and resolving conflicts and raising pluralism.

It is worth mentioning that there are within societies class, gender and age hierarchies. There are also ethnically defined hierarchies implying domination and discrimination, racial superiority. The challenge is how to deal with conflict domination and cultural injustice? Here also Tourism has the answer through cultural interactions in festival's gatherings. On the other hand a complexed question arise as what type of cultural heritage should be saved and at what cost and what should be sacrificed in the name of progress?!

This question is left unanswered particularly in the case of Sudan which is a treasure for traditional human establishment and ecosystems, methods of land and space occupation and none material heritage of great cultural and spiritual significance which deserve inclusion. These intangible heritage includes the philosophy which the individual shares not with his community but also with the tourists. Such ceremonies, rituals are of the people, by the people and for the people.

Festival's Customary Law in Nuba Mountains

Some definite stages can be traced on the evolution of Nuba traditional legal system as follows:

1. Each clan of Nuba had its own Kujur "spirit" these Kujurs might become experts in some particular branch of culture.
2. Generations set up leaders – age group leaders.
3. The tribe head is a secondary stage.
4. The rain maker.
5. Minor Kujurs and other spirits are specialized in different small aspects of life.
6. Kujurs and tribal chiefs are controlled and advised by the council of elders.

Due to this structure any infringement of the social and cultural norms and standards tends to bring unpleasant consequences to the individual concerned either in the form of social scorn or even ostracism. The observance of other norms is secured by what may be called ritual sanction, any infringement would be followed automatically by evil results without any direct interference on the part of the community unless the offender purifies himself by expiation, confession or the performance of some sacrifice or other rite. The sanction is believed to come to the perpetrator from the supernatural powers direct.

The most outstanding festivals are:

1. Harvesting festivals "Konyigar"
2. Generation set up festivals "Koyidi"
3. Wrestling festival "Baree"
4. Kujurs coronation festivals.

These festivals are controlled by Kujurs of each clan within the tribe or rainmaker or the Kujur of the mountain.

Wrestling and Stick Fighting - Nuba Mountains

At the end of September or October the great tribal stick fighting tournament take place, in which the different age grades are strictly matched and local teams fight for the tribal championship. In October too, the dancing season begins. November and December are the months of all tribal wrestling tournament in which as in the stick fighting tournaments, local teams meet each other. In the years which see the triennial promotion ceremony the calendar of age-grade festivities leads up to the climax of the "NACO" Festival "Tira Tribe" which is celebrated in March and April.

Wrestling and stick fighting tournaments among Nuba Tribes are not merely age-grade events for the tribal youth to display skill and courage, but they also represent occasions on which the whole tribe realizes and affirms its unity. On the appointed day of tournament large crowds assemble to watch the game, men and women, adult and youth. They arrange themselves in two semicircles facing each other, many visitors from other hills also come to witness that day. The boys of the senior grades, who act as referees, carry sticks and twigs to drive the pressing crowd from the arena or threaten the combatants who ignore their orders. The wrestlers are stripped and smeared all over with ashes. There is much more going on than just wrestling. When not engaged in a fight the wrestlers are hopping about, singing and dancing, others are blowing gourd trumpets and beating drums. Every thing seems to happen at once. The age grade prefect pick out the fighters and send them in to the ring, watching every step, shouting encouragement, ready to interrupt the fight if one or other plays foul. When one of the wrestlers has thrown his opponent a delighted shout comes from his people, or appreciative laughter if he did it by a clever trick. When a wrestler has been successful in several fights or defeated a powerful opponent his age group and elders rush in to the arena and form a solid ring around him, yelling and singing. He kneels down, a sheep skin with a slit in the middle, the coveted wrestlers trophy is dropped over his head, he is lifted on the shoulders of one of the senior boys and carried in triumph round the arena.

In the stick fighting tournaments every thing is on a larger scale. The crowds, the visitors from other tribes, old men, too keenly watch the game and the excitement of the audience is more intense. The attention is concentrated on the context and the distractions of drumming and dancing are ruled out, only two opponents each from a different local team are allowed in the ring at the same time. The fighters carry heavy sticks about a yard long. In the left hand the fighter also carry a spare stick in case the other stick breaks or is dropped. Young men of the senior grade

act as referees suddenly the two fighters are hard to each other, aiming heavy blows at each other's head or bodies, blows below the belt are forbidden and considered foul, as soon as blood is drawn the referee stop the fight.

During the thirties of the last century a new custom in connection with the annual wrestling tournament has crept in. It was copied from the Arabs "Hawazima" and started in the Arab – influenced community of Kalkada. It implies the exchange of bulls between the local teams, the home team presenting the visiting team with an animal, which the visitors kill and eat on their way home.

Age-grade – stick fighting – wrestling – are fading today due to different reasons and external influences such as the disastrous civil war and other natural and man made catastrophies.

Recommendations:

1. Reservation and registration of three spaces as rings of wrestling in Nuba Mountains to be constructed.
2. Reservation and registration of wrestling ring in Khartoum State.
3. Documentation of wrestling and stick fighting in Nuba Mountains.
4. Conducting a country wide survey about traditional sports.
5. Establishment of regulation based on traditional laws to promote popular and traditional sports.
6. Marketing of traditional sports through Tourism projects.
7. Strengthening the civil society to help in promoting traditional sports.