

Lt. Gen. Zoltán Orosz:

REVIEW OF "DARFÚR, A LÁNGOLÓ TARTOMÁNY" (DARFUR, THE FLAMING PROVINCE)

Publikon Publisher has recently issued a new monograph on the history of the Sudanese mission of the African Union from a very unique viewpoint with the title "Darfur, the flaming province" ("Darfúr, a lángoló tartomány"). The author, Colonel János Besenyő, who is the head of the HDF General Staff Scientific Research Centre, has written several books concerning Africa's conflict zones in the past years (e.g. "Western Sahara" from the same publisher in 2009). This time the author analysed the emergence of the Darfur genocide, its progress and the attempts of crisis management.

This niche work is not only unique for being a late follower of Rudolf Anton Carl von Slatin's (commonly Slatin Pasha) book in 1896 on this topic, which was the last study about Darfur in Hungarian for more than a century.

The head of the General Staff's Research Centre does not only present us a simple description of the crisis that determines the political life in Sudan and the Darfur region, but his work is also based on personal experience, using and publishing hardly available primary sources (parts of diaries, reports etc.). As a soldier, serving a long time in the region, his personal notices (his diary is partly published in the book) and perceptions make the text more expressive and joyful. The peculiarity of this work hails from the author's first hand experience and his personal thoughts about the crisis he lived through.

Colonel Besenyő's work aims being more than a knowledge basis for the regional history, geography and economy. It brings the facts into causal relationship, comprehensively showing the territorial, ethnic and political problems that led to the development and escalation of the crisis. Besides general information, the author reveals the attempts of the regional and international communities for solving the Sudanese crisis. We can also find reasons for the failure of these efforts in the book. The author's notices are noteworthy, not only for being very readable, but also because they indicate the growing interest of the international power factors and the increasing geopolitical role of Africa in our globalized world, where the traditional definition of borders is significantly transformed.

Crisis processes analysed in this book highlight the weaknesses of the African state building processes, the specific interpretation of the concept of nation that is very different from the European viewpoint – and, of course, their security policy challenges. The insecurity of tribal and ethnic-based political entities can generate crises not only at a regional level as their effects can reach Europe and within that, Hungary, too. The Sudanese genocide and the incomplete crisis management may be a good local starting point for migration processes that should challenge European states. Handling the dilemmas generated by the linguistic and cultural differences is not a simple task, especially if it is pervaded by violence.

This monograph's real value is its universality: personal thoughts and memories make this text very pleasantly readable, even it declares serious conclusions and proposals for the European Union and Hungary, too.

This book will definitely be very useful as a university textbook, moreover, the monograph is highly recommended to anyone who are dedicated to the improvement of the Hungarian-African relations, or those, who are interested in Africa's contemporary history and security policy. I highly recommend the translation of this book into English in order to make the international research community familiar with it soon.