



Announcement and Invitation

Thursday, 10. July 2008

Venue

Zentrum Moderner Orient
Kirchweg 33
14129 Berlin

4.30 pm: Swahili Poetry by Ustadh Ahmad Nassir

6:15 pm: "Kenyan Muslims and the Righting of Historical Injustices: the Case of Mwambao" Lecture by Sheikh Abdilahi Nassir

From 30th June until 11th July Sheikh Abdilahi Nassir and Ustadh Ahmad Nassir from Mombasa, Kenya, will be guests at the ZMO.

Sheikh Abdilahi Nassir was a Member of Parliament in Colonial Kenya, and during the early 1960s also a leader of the coastal Independence movement 'Mwambao' who participated in the negotiation processes for Independence at Lancaster House in London. He worked as Editor and Managing Director for Oxford University Press East Africa in the 1970s, and later founded his own publishing house, Shungwaya Publishers. He was educated as a teacher and Islamic scholar, and turned to Shiism in the 1980s. He has published a variety of Islamic pamphlets and booklets in Swahili, and many audio- and video-recordings of his lectures are circulating widely in East Africa and beyond, and can also be found on the internet.

Ustadh Ahmad Nassir is one of the most highly recognised living Swahili poets. His collection of poems 'Malenga wa Mvita' (Oxford UP, 1971) is a modern classic, and his other collections, 'Poems from Kenya: Gnostic Verses in Swahili' (University of Wisconsin Press, 1966) and 'Taa ya Umalenga' (edited by Abdilatif Abdalla, Kenya Literature Bureau 1978) are also well-known in the field of Swahili poetry. His epic poem 'Utenzi wa Mtu ni Utu' (MacMillan, 1979) elaborates upon 'utu', the Swahili term for humanity and goodness, and presents a theory of morality in poetic form. Many of his poems have been popularised as songs by the Swahili taarab musician, Juma Bhalo. Ahmad Nassir also works as a healer.

On **10th July**, both will talk in public at the ZMO:

At 4:30pm, Ustadh Ahmad Nassir will recite selections from his poetry in Swahili, and afterwards respond to questions in an open baraza discussion (in Swahili).

At 6:15pm, Sheikh Abdilahi Nassir will give a lecture.

On **3rd July**, 4pm, both will be available for questions and discussion at an open baraza meeting (in Swahili and English).

GEFÖRDERT VOM



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