



SUDAN STUDIES

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EDITORIAL NOTE

This issue of *Sudan Studies* is somewhat slimmer than usual, for the simple reason that I have not received any more material than that contained herein. I therefore repeat my regular plea for more articles, features and reviews, from wherever the source and whatever the standpoint providing they are relevant to the Sudan. Articles from both members and non-members of the society are equally welcome.

What I have received over the last few months, and in considerable quantity, is a series of bulletins from the various human rights monitoring groups, and others, who have been attempting to keep track of the current situation in the Sudan. These include Amnesty International, Sudan Update, Africa Watch and African Rights. Their publications all make sobering and depressing reading. Members who might be interested in this material, or in subscribing to any of these groups and receiving their bulletins should contact me for details.

St. Antony's College, Oxford, played host to a "Workshop on the Sudanese Civil War", held at the newly-opened Nissan Building on Saturday 20th March. This was the second of two workshops convened by Wendy James and Douglas H. Johnson, the first of which had been held at the same college in December. A summary of the proceedings of the latter has been provided by Douglas Johnson, and published in Volume 17, number 2 of *Disasters* in June 1993.

The second workshop was sub-titled "The Wider War" and the papers presented, and discussion which followed them, looked principally at the impact of the war on the borderland areas of the Sudan and into the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya. Papers included 'The Crisis in the Nuba Hills' by Suleiman Musa Rahhal, 'Uganda and the Sudanese Civil Wars' by Gérard Prunier, 'The Mursi of Ethiopia and the War in the Sudan' by David Turton, '"The Dergue brought the Dinka and Nuer on us": Effects of the Sudanese Civil War on the Ethiopian Anuak' by Eisei Kurimoto, 'The Mundari and the War' by Douglas H. Johnson, 'The Toposa-Nyangatom and the War on the Border' by Serge Tornay and 'The Islamization of the War' by Peter Nyot Kok.

The convenors provided for the benefit of participants a "Chronology of the War 1983-93", which usefully summarizes the events of the past decade. This is reprinted later in this issue.

Our Honorary Secretary, Simon Bush, has left to take up a British Council post in Eritrea, and this will be the final issue containing his valuable contributions, at least until his return! It remains for me to thank Simon, on behalf of all members, for his hard work for the Society over the past few years. Included in this issue is Simon's parting letter, which also introduces to members his successor, the current Acting Secretary Alan Kunna.

Paul Wilson



SOCIETY NEWS JULY 1993

By Simon Bush, Honorary Secretary, SSSUK.

Since my last Society News many new members have joined the Society. It is my great pleasure on behalf of the SSSUK Committee to welcome you to the Society. I hope that you enjoy this issue of "Sudan Studies" and will be willing and able to contribute to the Society. I would like to thank long-term members of the Society for their renewal of their membership. It is greatly appreciated.

1994 THIRD INTERNATIONAL SUDAN STUDIES CONFERENCE

The Third International Sudan Conference in 1994. The conference will be held in Boston from Thursday 21st-Sunday 24th April 1994.

Please find enclosed the conference booking form. This should be returned as soon as possible to the Conference Organisers.

The conference will be based at the Mid-Town Hotel, 220 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts, 02115, USA. **All conference participants should make their own reservation, with the hotel.**

The rates for a single, twin or double room will be about \$82.00. To save money members may wish to share rooms. The hotel has free-parking and full conference facilities. The hotel rates were quoted for a block booking of 60 rooms. The hotel will be the Conference information centre, but with additional events scheduled at the Museum of Fine Arts, the Northeastern University and Boston University. Other costs are estimated to be:

Conference Registration Fee \$25.00-\$35.00;

Conference Proceedings \$12.00;

Conference Banquet \$20.00; Luncheon Buffet \$12.00.

There may be some assistance available for Sudanese nationals currently living in the United Kingdom who wish to present a paper at the Conference. Please submit your paper and after it being accepted please contact me for information and guidance.

I do not plan to arrange group airline fares as prices to the USA are very competitive at present. Both Virgin Atlantic and British Airways have been offering some very reasonable



fares from London (Heathrow and Gatwick) to Boston. Northwest and Continental both offer good fares. I suggest you contact your travel agent in good time as flights usually get rather busy around April. If you are having difficulty contact Trailfinders (in London, Manchester and Glasgow) or STA Travel (offices throughout the UK) who offer some of the best air-fares to the USA.

1993 ONE DAY SYMPOSIUM AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our one day meeting and AGM is scheduled for Saturday 11th September 1993. I have booked the Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London. I am pleased to enclose a draft programme along with a booking form. I urge you to return your booking form promptly as space at the Friends Meeting House is limited.

Following the September 1992 AGM the SSSUK committee is now formed of the following members:

Dr David Lindley (Chairman), Dr Peter Woodward (Deputy Chairman), Mr Simon Bush (Secretary), Miss Lesley Forbes (Treasurer), Mr Paul Wilson (Editor *Sudan Studies*), Dr Anthony Trilsbach, Mr John Wright, Mr John Udal, Prof G.N. Sanderson (Co-opted), Dr Ahmed El Bushra (Co-opted), Sudan Cultural Counsellor (Ex- officio).

Miss Joan Hall was co-opted to the Committee at the Executive Committee meeting held on 8th March 1993

NOMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In accordance with paragraph four of the constitution I am pleased to invite nominations to the Executive Committee. These should be in writing to be received at the following address at least twenty-eight days before the AGM: Simon Bush, 6 Ambrose Gardens, Manchester, M20 8YF.



SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SSSUK HELD AT FRIENDS MOUSE ON 26th SEPTEMBER 1992 AT 1.30pm.

1) Welcome:

Miss Hall acting as Chairman of the Society welcomed all those present to the sixth Annual General Meeting of the Society. Miss Hall signed the minutes of the fifth Annual General Meeting as a correct

2) Matters Arising

- 2.1. Miss Hall informed the meeting that the Kably tape could not be produced as the sound quality was not good enough.
- 2.2. It was beyond the capabilities of the Society to embark on a fund-raising campaign.

3) Chairman's Report

- 3.1 Miss Hall informed the meeting that the Anglo-Sudanese Association, formed in 1960, has been dormant for eight or nine years. Miss Hall asked Mr Peter Kilner (Anglo-Sudanese Association) to address the meeting.
Mr Kilner reported that by the end of 1992 it will be likely that the Association will be dissolved. The work of the Association has really been taken over by SSSUK. £5,000 was in a building society account (with some tax to pay). Mr Kilner informed the meeting that funds would be divided between the Sudan Archive in Durham and SSSUK. Mr Kilner thought that his donation would be in the form of a "gift aid". Miss Hall, on behalf of the Society, thanked Mr Kilner for his kind contribution and informed the meeting that the gift may contribute to the publication of Volume III of the 1991 conference proceedings.
- 3.2 Miss Hall thanked all those who had contributed to the organisation of the AGM and the Symposium.

4) Secretary's Report.

- 4.1 Mr Bush outlined the falling of existing membership and the slow down in the numbers of new members. He reminded members that membership forms were always available from the Secretary and other members of the committee. Mr Bush thought there was a need to encourage membership.
- 4.2 Mr Bush reminded those members present to renew their subscriptions promptly and that he would issue reminders in January 1993. The new Society year will start in January 1993 and Mr Bush commented that it would be easier to keep track of subscriptions.
- 4.3 Information on the 1994 Third International Sudan Studies Conference in the USA was not available at present. Both dates and venue were still to be confirmed but it was thought that the University of Boston may be the chosen venue. Details would be printed in the January 1993 issue of "Sudan Studies"



- 4.4 Mr Bush corrected an entry in “Sudan Studies” 12 (July 1992) which indicated that Prof. G.N. Sanderson and Dr Ahmed el Bushra were both ex-officio. Both committee members are, in fact, co-opted.

5) Treasurers Report

- 5.1. Miss Forbes presented the 1990/91 audited accounts, 1991/92 preliminary accounts and the accounts of the 1991/92 Second International conference accounts. Copies of these documents are available from the Secretary and the Treasurer. The conference account would be finalised by the end of 1992
- 5.2. Miss Forbes indicated that the Society was currently overspent on the conference account. The sale of conference proceedings should cover the debt and ultimately add to the funds of the Society.
- 5.3. 1990/91 individual membership dues were down as were institutional dues. Miss Forbes stressed the need to encourage membership.

6) Editor's Report

- 6.1 Mr Wilson commented that there was a problem in getting enough contributions for “Sudan Studies”. Mr Wilson again requested for further contributions.
- 6.2 The next “Sudan Studies” will be mailed in December. Copy date is early December.
- 6.3 There was a request from the floor for illustrations.

7. Constitutional Changes

The proposed constitutional changes were accepted by those members present at the AGM.

8. Committee Nominations/Elections

- 8.1. Mr Bush informed the meeting that the following members of the committee would resign and seek re-election. They were re-elected un-opposed:

Mr Simon Bush	Secretary
Miss Lesley Forbes	Treasurer
Dr Peter Woodward	Deputy Chairman
Mr Paul Wilson	Editor “Sudan Studies”

- 8.2 The following nomination, was received for election and elected un-opposed:
Mr John Udal (Nominated by Mr Brian Carlisle)
- 8.3 The following member of the committee resigned at the AGM:
Dr Mike Hulme
Miss Hall thanked Mike Hulme for his contributions to the Committee and his involvement in the 1991 International Conference.



- 8.4. Mr Bush announced that Miss Hall was resigning as Chairman of the Society. SSSUK President, Sir Gawain Bell, took over as Chairman of the meeting and thanked both Miss Hall and Dr Hulme for their contributions to the Society.
- 8.5. Dr David Lindley was elected as the new Chairman of SSSUK for the next three years.

Dr Lindley closed the meeting at 2.05pm thanking all those present for their attendance and contributions.

Simon Bush

Honorary Secretary



SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

From Simon Bush

Dear Colleagues

I will be leaving for a British Council posting to Eritrea at the end of June. Alan Kunna (a SSSUK member) has agreed to be Acting Secretary until the AGM. Alan will stand for the post of Secretary at the AGM.

Alan has taught in the Sudan. His father is Sudanese has family in Northern Sudan. He has an MA in Area Studies (majoring in the Sudan) as is a lecturer in a FE college. His wife, Jane, has also taught in Sudan and has written on Sudanese affairs.

Alan's address is:

59 Southfield Road
Chiswick
London
W4 1BB
Telephone: 081-994-5767

Alan will be in contact about the next committee meeting in the next few months and will take over the arrangements for the AGM and One Day Symposium.

My address in Asmara will be:

The British Council
Lorenzo Tuacizag Street No 23
P0 Box 997
Asmara
Eritrea
Telephone: 113415

I have enjoyed my time as Secretary of SSSUK and when I return to the UK I hope to resume my active involvement with the Society. Meanwhile I will be looking forward to reading "Sudan Studies" !

With best wishes

Simon Bush



CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR 1983-93

1983

January – May Battalion 105 stationed at Bor, composed of some 200 ex-Anyanya troops, is ordered to hand in their arms prior to being transferred North. They refuse. 1000 Northern troops sent to reinforce the Southern Command. Defections from police and army to the ‘Anyanya 2’ in the bush increase. 16 May units of battalion 105 are attacked at Bor and Pibor. Those at Bor repel the army advance, On 17th the battalion units at Bor, Pibor and Pochalla withdraw into the bush or head for Ethiopia. On 24 May Nimeiri announces the Southern Region is to be abolished and replaced by 3 smaller regions. Nimeiri’s Republican Order 1 on 5 June dissolves the Southern Regional government, repeals specific clauses of the Regional Self-Government Act, 1972, sets up three regional governments in Bahr al-Ghazal, Upper Nile and Equatoria. Battalion 104 at Ayod under William Nyuon Bany repels an attack from Malakal 6 June and escapes to Ethiopia. Formation of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement and Sudan People’s Liberation Army in Ethiopia in July.

1984

Small scale engagements throughout many parts of Upper Nile and Bahr al-Ghazal; SPLA confines itself to ambushes or overrunning and then withdrawing from small police and army outposts. Conflict between SPLA and Anyanya 2 in Upper Nile grows. Both Samuel Gai Tut and Akuot Atem are killed by their own men people. By the end of the year the government has made overtures to the Nuer in the Anyanya 2, through the governor of Upper Nile, D.K. Matthews, brings the Anyanya 2 over to the government side.

1985

SPLA sends two columns of troops into Eastern Equatoria in January: one clashes with the Mandari at Terekeka and is repulsed by army and Mandari; the other attacks civilians in Torit and Acholi areas and is defeated and chased into Uganda in February. Nimeiri is overthrown by demonstrations in Khartoum on 6 April. SPLA takes Boma in April and SPLA occupies Yirol in December.

1986

Murahilin raids in northern Bahr al-Ghazal are at their peak this year. Clashes between NIF supporters and Nuba from Southern Kordofan in Port Sudan in February. SPLA attacks Halouf area in Kordofan; fighting between the SPLA and Fartit in Western Bahr al-Ghazal. SPLA briefly take Rumbek town and Malou army garrison in March, take and hold Pochalla in April, and are joined by the Mandari at Tali in May.

1987

SPLA takes Pibor, Ayod, Jokau in March-May. The army massacre inhabitants of ‘Dinka Quarter’ in Wau and fighting breaks out between army and police in August-September. November-December the SPLA take and briefly holds border towns of Kurmuk and Qessan in Blue Nile Province.

1988

January, the majority of Anyanya 2 troops join SPLA; SPLA takes Kapoeta.



1989

SPLA takes Nasir, Torit, Nimule, Clemmaiza, Mongalla. Bor and Wat in January-May. Sadiq al-Mahdi's government overthrown by Brigadier Omar al-Bashir on 30 June. Fighting reported between local Anuak militia, Sudanese refugees and SPLA around Funyido and Itang refugee camps in September.

Chadian troops fight Chad rebels inside Darfur; SPLA take Kurmuk, Deim Mansur, Ora, Chal el-Fil and Khor Yabus (OLF camp) in southern Blue Nile: Sudanese army retakes these places by end of year Misiriya Murahilin massacre Daju and Nuba in the al-Lagowa area of S. Kordofan; Sudan airforce bombs Moyo, Uganda; massacre of Southern Sudanese agricultural workers in Jebelain.

1990

January, the OLF, supported by TPLF, with reported Sudan army units in reserve, attack and destroy Assosa; Sudanese refugees (mainly from Blue Nile) in Tsore refugee camp flee and the refugee camp is destroyed. The refugees spend several months in the wilderness before the majority arrive in Itang. SPLA takes Kajo-Kaji, Kaya, Morobo and briefly overrun Yei. February the 'Jundi al-Watan al-Wahid' [Soldiers of the United Homeland] column sets out from Malakal for Juba; fighting reported around Ayod (which the army burns); column is diverted to region between Want and Duk Fadiat; is ambushed near Mongalla before reaching Juba. Sudanese airforce bombs Moyo, Uganda and SPLA take Amadi. Fighting between Fur and Zaghawa reported in Darfur in March. In May-August Chadian forces enter Darfur. Between November 1990 and March 1991 the SPLA take all of Western Equatoria.

1991

In May Mengistu flees, the SPLA are forced to leave Ethiopia and Sudanese refugee camps are evacuated. On 28 August three Nasir commanders (Riek Mashar, Lam Akol, Gordon Kong) announce the overthrow of John Garang. Fighting between the two SPLA factions around Kuacdeng, Kongor, Adok and Bor. October-December SPLA begins military operations in Darfur, November; these fail by January.

1992

March-July Sudan army retakes Pochalla ,Bor, Yirol, Pibor, Shambe, Kapoeta. Torit. SPLA attack Juba June-July. Split between Garang and William Nyuon Bany, September. E-Anyanya 2 and SPLA-Nasir attack Malakal October-November. November William Nyuon, with some Latuka support, attacks Magwe.

1993

1 January-20 March William Nyuons forces scattered by Garang's troops; William Nyuon reported to have surrendered to Sudan government; Sudan government contacts Arok Thon and Kerubino Kuanyen in Kampala. Sudan army continues to use Yirol as base to raid Dinka; Sudan army convoy to Yei suffers heavy casualties; expected government dry season offensive has yet to begin.



ARCADIA LOST - RELIEF WORK IN SOUTH SUDAN

BY P.E. WINTER

Regular flights into Southern Sudan authorised under "Operation Lifeline Sudan" mean that in May I was able to spend four days in Toposa land and a day each in Bahr al Ghazal and Upper Nile. When I lived in Equatoria in the 1970's, this sort of mobility was out of the question. Today it is the hallmark of the international relief operation, in which busy foreigners pay short visits to villages to assess the nature and extent of their food, medical and other needs. South Sudan is accessible as never before - if you happen to be a relief worker.

So I drove to Toposa land with a UN vet, to identify and train cattle vaccinators in the Moru Akippi Hills, where rinderpest had recently been observed. I knew the chief who came with us from our work last year with the "unaccompanied minors", who walked with the world's press from Pochala to Kapoeta and then into exile in Kenya. Here at Kakuma, in a well-run refugee camp, these boys are growing up without cows - something that has never happened to Dinka or Nuer boys before, outside this war.

We arrived at the ruins of the British fort in Loelli, which I had wanted to visit since I first heard of it in 1980. A neighbour of mine in Kenya was one of the last "bimbashis" to live there. I photographed the ruins of his house, on a bluff with glorious views to the mountains of four countries - Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan. We slept by collapsing stone walls, surprised by the number of mosquitoes, and pushed on the next morning along what had once been a military track toward the Ethiopian border. This involved considerable battering for our two vehicles, as they crawled over boulder fields and demolished thorn bushes which had grown in the "road".

Insecurity has driven the Toposa to stay far away with their cattle in certain grazing grounds, remote from SPLA or government activity. But they have not abandoned their fields, which were extensive around Narus and Kapoeta, cleared and waiting for the rains. By comparison with the Dinka and the Nuer, the Toposa are surviving this war relatively well. They are heavily armed with Kalashnikovs and G3 rifles, which started to be widely available with the opening of Idi Amin's armoury at Moroto in 1979. Obtaining arms from the surrounding countries since the beginning of this century, the Toposa have always raided their neighbours the Turkana, the Boya and the Didinga. They seem to get on better with the Murle and the Nyangatom.

We camped near a new settlement and explained to the chiefs the purpose of our visit. Trainees were selected and much excitement generated as they learned to strip and re-assemble the syringe that was to protect their cattle. In the evening, fresh milk was brought to us, with a goat. This was eaten mostly by our companions, since few 'khawajas' relish half roast chunks of meat with the charred skin and coat still in place. In the evening, the women joined in the conversation around the fire. Their role in society is clear, but they have a freedom to make known their views more evident in pastoral than agricultural societies in East Africa, or so it seemed to me. People told us we were the first foreigners to visit that area since the British left, which seems very likely, though I do know two who made it to Loelli before this war.

Wildlife was strikingly absent, presumably because of the proliferation of weapons. Lochebe, one of the elders, acknowledged but did not seem to regret this. The people had eaten the antelopes, and the predators they were happy to be rid of. The chief assured me that in two areas at least lots of animals remained, but their attitude demonstrated how great the gap is between westerners who place aesthetic value on wildlife and tribesmen who have to live with it. Later, another flight enable me to see that the great cob and tiang migrations still take place,



but automatic weapons and the impact of the half-dug Jonglei Canal have probably reduced the numbers.

I left Toposa land reluctantly, anxious to get out before the rains marooned us, but pleased by the certainties of pastoral life, as urban westerners have so often been. These certainties no longer apply to all Dinka and Nuer. The same automatic weapons which have preserved Toposa independence have destroyed sections of society along the Dinka-Nuer borders in Upper Nile. Since the Nuer raided them in 1991, the Dinka of Bor and Kongor districts have no cattle - an extraordinary state of affairs for those who remember their cattle camps before the war. In retaliation, Nuer villages have been burnt and civilians slaughtered. Now many Nilotics have no cows; the key to their lives has been taken.

I flew to Waat, where last November I had watched people die under bushes at the edge of the village. The food brought in and the feeding centre we set up saved lives, but the people ran into the bush when the other faction of the SPLA launched lightning raids on nearby Ayod and Yuei. Waat was looted and we had to start all over again. As I write, the only good news from South Sudan is that the American ambassador has persuaded John Garang and Riak Machar to withdraw their forces from the area of desolation they have created between Kongor, Ayod and Waat. We have been pushing for "demilitarized zones" for months: let us hope they hold.

The next day I flew, with the same ambassador, to Thiet, north of Tonj, in Bahr al Ghazal. The children chanted " U.S.A. - rescue South". Last year we distributed a large number of hand tools in the area, funded by the British government, but no representatives had yet visited. This year, we saw many herds of cattle returning from the *toich* as we flew in. Survival was not as much a concern as it is in the devastation of Upper Nile, rather the need for medicine, education, tools and seeds. There are however people without cows in Bahr al Ghazal too. Their patience and stoicism in harvesting wild grass seeds and eating tamarind and balanites fruit are striking. As they are scattered across a wide area, they die without benefit of press coverage and feeding centres.

In one week, I saw pastoral peoples in Equatoria, Bahr al Ghazal and Upper Nile. Their lives are irrevocably altered by this conflict. Some, like the Toposa, have done better than others. Not every group is destitute. even among the Nuer and Dinka. The Zande and the Didinga seem to have escaped the worst - so far. The people of Lafon saw their village reduced to ashes last month. The degree of violence, the destruction of livestock, the breakdown of administration and the use of automatic weapons are producing a scarred generation. The Sudanese themselves recognize it. The outlines of traditional life are visible still: can they ever restore it?

May 1993



SOUNDS OF SUDAN

Reviews of Sudanese Music Available in the United Kingdom

A number of SSSUK members have written to me to enquire if they can obtain recordings of Sudanese music in the United Kingdom. In the “World Music” section of any good record shop you will find a small but excellent sample of Sudanese music that was mostly released in the late 1980s.

It is unfortunate that recordings by Mohammed Wardi and Kabli are currently not available in the UK. I was informed that they were available from EMI Greece but could not be ordered from the UK, at least from the mainstream high street record shops. They may be available from specialist African record shops such as Sterns in London.

With political problems, war and famine looming in the Sudan, Sudan’s Northern musicians with their rich, traditional Arabic ‘oud-playing and singing is a serene and reassuring reminder of the long periods of cultural potency which preceded the country’s current dilemmas

Sudanese popular music has developed rapidly in the last 50 years or so: from unaccompanied singing, then singing to the riqq tambourine - to using the violin and ‘oud and the full scale band, introduced by the pioneer musician and singer Khalil Farrah and by Ibrahim El Kashif, a musician from Wad Medani, having seen music performed this way in Egypt during a visit there in the 1930s. Additions are constantly being made: the triple bongos were brought into Sudanese music in 1954 by Hamis Jowhar of the Radio Omdurman band; and now we have the accordion, saxophone, electric and bass guitar. Reggae, as popularised by Bob Marley, has influenced the rhythmic content of the music.

Some of the easily obtainable recordings (mainly on CD or cassette) are:

ABDEL GADIR SALIM “SOUNDS OF SUDAN VOLUME 1 - SONGS FROM KORDOFAN” (World Circuit WCB002)

-----“STARS OF THE NIGHT” (GLOSE STYLE CDORB 039)

-----“THE MERDOUM KINGS PLAY SONGS OF LOVE” (WORLD CIRCUIT W024)

The songs of Kordofan owe much to Arabic musical traditions but are sung in the colloquial dialect with melodies and rhythms that are distinctive to Kordofan. Although the penatonic



scale dominates Sudanese music there is a tendency in Kordofan to introduce half and quarter tones that bring the music closer to classical Arabic traditions. And there is the distinctive 6/8 rhythm of the ‘mardoum’ wedding dance which has inspired songs throughout the region.

Abdel Gadir Salim was born in El-Obeid and trained at the Institute of Music and Drama in Khartoum. Today, between giving concerts in Sudan, Africa, the Middle East and Europe, Abdel Gadir Salim is the headmaster of a school in Chad.

Abdel Gadir first came to the UK in 1986 as part of the “Sounds of Sudan” tour sponsored by Arts Worldwide. A reviewer in the Sunday Times was “heartened just by the style”

ABDEL AZIZ EL MUBARAK “SOUNDS OF SUDAN VOLUME 2 -SONGS FROM THE CITY” (World Circuit WCB004)

-----“STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART”(World Circuit WCB010)

-----“ABDEL AZIZ EL MUBARAK” (Globe Style CDORD23)

Abdel Aziz el Mubarak was born in 1951 in Wad Medani and his music combines elements of Arabic, African and Western influences. In the 1980s he was one of the Sudan’s most popular singers. Like many of the country’s great artists he has taken asylum outside his homeland.

His modern “city style” music has gained him recognition throughout the Gulf, Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Nigeria.

Abdel Aziz’s music is modern and urban with a pan-Sudanese appeal. Of the current instruments used by Abdel Aziz only the singers ‘oud is of Arabic origin. His ‘oud is tuned a half or a full tone higher than in other Arab countries. Abdel Aziz’s band comprises electric guitars, organ, saxophone, violins, accordion, bass and drums

HAMZA EL DIN “ECLIPSE” (RYKODISC RCD10103)

Hamza El Din is the pioneering ‘oud master from the Sudan and is a native of Sudanese Nubia. Although Nubians, whose language is as richly poetic as Arabic and much like what was spoken in ancient Egypt at the time of the Pharaohs, have always used music to express themselves, the only indigenous instrument among the people of the upper Nile is a drum



called the tar, prized for its three- dimensional resonance. Recognising that a new medium was required to express the changing traditions of the Nubians, Hamza went to what is now the Arab Institute of Music in Cairo to study the ‘oud, which was not used in Nubia until he introduced it. Hamza has developed its use as a solo instruments by elegantly combining Arabic music with his own traditions.

MUHAMMED GUBARA “SOUNDS OF SUDAN VOLUME 3” (World Circuit WCB005)

Mohammed Gubara is considered to be one of Sudan’s finest players of the tambur (lyre), an instrument that has changed little for over 5,000 years. He sings songs of social commentary, political protest and love in a completely original voice.

His spine-tingling high pitched delivery won him immediate favour and his voice graced the first Sudanese film “Hopes and Dreams”.

Most of Mohamed Gubara’s songs are given to him by poets of the Shaigyya who also compose the melody. Most of Gubara’s songs are written by the poet Elsir Osman.

As many of Sudan’s great artists and academics have left Sudan to seek asylum overseas it seems apt to quote from Mohamed Gubara’s song “Guroosh Edjin” (‘Devil’s Money’) - a term in Sudanese Arabic for a thing which is precious but is no value or benefit. The song tells of people who leave Sudan to be workers in the Gulf or who are forced into exile where they loose their dignity and self respect. He talks of Sudan as if it is a lost love:

“Oh my country your memory is always in my heart,

You, planter of the rose in my path.

I am your son but I came overseas and became isolated

I cried so long that my tears became stones.”

Another of Gubara’s song “Noora” talks about Sudan in a symbolic way, like a father talks about his daughter. Noora is a girls name. The song talks about how beautiful she is, in her soul; how she is always helping other people and will feed others before she feeds herself. She became ill and the traditional medicine men treated her with such cruelty, by burning her with fire, but she survived that. Once she had a dream and in this dream she saw a bird eating it’s baby; she saw a wall that grew hands and threw stones at the very man who built it; she saw a



thief who had become worshipped as a god. And when she told people of the dream, they said she had lost her mind.

The song was written to symbolise the suffering of the Sudan during the Numeiri era. But it is still played today to show protest to the current government.

Credits: With thanks to World Circuit, Globe Style and RYKO Disc for allowing me to use their sleeve notes in these reviews.

Simon Bush is Honorary Secretary of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom and is Country Officer for the Sudan at the British Council.



Abdel Gadir Salim



CIVIL WAR IN THE SUDAN

M W Daly and Ahmed Alawad Sikainga

(British Academic Press, London, 1993) x+220, £39.50.

This book has finally been published just when there is an attempt once more to make peace in Sudan. While such talk is a cause for hope, it has also arisen at a time when the publicity arising from American and United Nations' intervention in Somalia has spilled over into some media coverage for the situation in the southern Sudan and even speculation of a comparable operation there as well. While peace may once more be just around the corner, it will take place, if at all, against the background of what seems to be the worst devastation the south can ever have experienced, even including the slaving era of the nineteenth century.

The civil war discussed here is far more the second conflict than the first. As Daly rightly points out in his introductory chapter the second war is not simply a resumption of the first, and yet that is never very fully developed in this or any other chapter. The fact that it developed in a different area of the south, involved initially different ethnic and social groups and for different objectives could have been more clearly spelled out. While still difficult to research, there is nevertheless sufficient material available to develop the contrasts and comparisons in ways which could deepen understanding of both the periods of civil war. (I recommend particularly John Howell *Political Leadership and Organisation in the Southern Sudan*, PhD Reading 1978).

Elias Wakoson and B Yongo Bure contribute separate but related chapters on the politics of the decade of 'peace' between the wars, and the regional economy since independence. Wakoson's piece appears to have been written before Abel Alier's book *Southern Sudan: too many agreements dishonoured* appeared and tends to be rather 'institutional' in discussing politics within the region, but also points to the lack of control in the south of key issues of the region's economy, such as the questions of oil and water. Yongo-Bure spells out the economic weakness and exploitation in more detail, including some graphic statistics.

It is appropriate that the next two chapters are by northerners: Ahmed Sikainga on political parties and the civil war; and Abdullahi An-Naim on (mainly northern) 'constitutional discourse'. Sikainga surveys the parties broadly, bringing out the range and flexibility of positions amongst them. The fundamental issue, however, has been less the positions of political parties (which have all too often been opportunistic) than their existence at the heart of liberal-democratic politics in the past. In contrast the south has lacked the social and



economic structures around which enduring parties could develop, and this as much as 'majoritarianism' has contributed to its manifest weakness in periods of liberal democracy. An-Naim points to the central problem of sharia and is very gloomy about the prospects for an alternative that would permit agreement with the south. Predictably, he refers to the ideas of the Republican Brothers, but it is of course their politically far stronger opponents in the National Islamic Front who hold sway in Khartoum at present. It appears to be a combination of exhaustion and international pressure rather than a meeting of minds that propel the present efforts towards peace, and the issues discussed here will remain as difficult as ever in the longer term.

Douglas Johnson and Gerard Prunier join forces to consider the rise of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA). This is rather a piece for the cognoscenti. Johnson has always been at home amongst the personalities, ethnic fragments and factions that comprise so much of southern politics; while Prunier is a kind of academic Foreign Legionnaire, researching to the sound of the guns across north-east Africa. Personally I would have liked more on the role of outside influences in the SPLA, especially that of Ethiopia, and I understand that the papers of Mengistu's regime's involvement were found intact after his unlamented regime collapsed. (It is my reluctant suspicion that an outside patron - Israel in the first war, Ethiopia in the second - has been important for unity within the south, and that its absence has contributed to the factionalism of both wars.)

Alex de Waal contributes two chapters, the first on militias, and the second entitled 'starving out the south, 1984-9'. Both show that over and beyond simplified visions of 'north' versus 'south' and the 'formal' wars there has been a great social upheaval, with the militarisation of ethnicity on the one hand, and the indication of a hidden social and economic agenda on the other, especially along the 'frontiers' of Bahr al-Ghazal and Upper Nile. The picture of suffering and death of many thousands in this process is probably only the tip of an iceberg of human misery as bad as any imaginable.

The book ends with a typically allusive piece from Francis Deng on 'Hidden agendas in the peace process'. In a chapter that combined personal observation and analysis, the agenda proved so well hidden, that I was still not clear what Deng thought it was at the end. His own agenda - that of confronting the 'Sudanese identity crisis' - is one he has pursued for years, and the difficulty of achieving that is built up throughout this collection.



The search for a solution will continue to reflect the search for cause, which is also a part of this book. In terms of Sudan the jury is still out. Is this a pre-imperial, imperial, or post-imperial problem, or something of all three, indicating its age as well as its depth? Is there a 'region' of the south at all, or are the questions fundamentally 'national', as the SPLA claimed for many years! Why have 'party politics' proven so durable in the north, but war seemed the only effective discourse in the south? The list of still unanswered questions seems almost endless. But perhaps behind them all lurks an even more fundamental question that links the south and Somalia. Northern Sudan, like highland Ethiopia, has a tradition of state formation, but the south like Somalia, has an equally strong tradition in which many of the indigenous population have practised the politics of statelessness (not to be confused with anarchy). Perhaps it is in part that experience, coupled with access to modern armaments, that has contributed to the violence in both. If there is something in this thought then it bodes ill not only for Sudan, Somalia and some other African states, but the international community that has fostered a world of states, but appears at a loss to frame a policy to ameliorate the suffering of modern state collapse, especially for peoples who are themselves little adjusted to life in states.

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