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General enquiries about Society matters and membership should be addressed to:

Hon. Secretary
Flat 2/2
56, Ashley St
Glasgow G3 6HW
Email: Sudanssuk@aol.com

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Members receive two issues each year of *Sudan Studies*; the right to a reduced rate on copies of the Society's occasional papers; and the right to attend the joint Annual General Meeting and Symposium and other occasional meetings organized by the Society.

Editorial

This issue owes much to the recent International Conference on Sudan Studies, held in Washington in August. By kind agreement of the Sudan Studies Association of the United States, we include in this number the address which Professor Peter Woodward gave to that conference; and we also carry a description of the conference from David Lindley, our Hon. Treasurer. John Udal was unable to attend the conference, and we publish here the paper which he had intended to present.

This issue also carries an account of a recent visit to Darfur by Jan Coebergh, a medical student from the University of Newcastle. This will be read with interest by those with an interest in medicine, and by those with a more general interest in Darfur.

This editorial has come, almost by tradition, to feature a regular appeal for material; I see no reason to break with that tradition! We are always happy to consider pieces for publication, and I should stress that we intend to carry a range of pieces, serving a general interest as well as an academic audience.

I trust that you will enjoy this issue, and may I take the opportunity of wishing you all the best for 2004!

Justin Willis

Sudan 1968-2003:
Multiple Marginality Multiplied

Address to the International Sudan Studies Conference
Georgetown University, Washington DC
1 August 2003

By Peter Woodward

My thanks to the hosts of this international conference, the Sudan Studies Association of the USA, for the honour of being invited to give this address. My thanks as well to Georgetown University for allowing us the use of these excellent facilities.

The invitation referred to my 'continuous dedication', which was a delicate reminder of just how long it is since I first went to Sudan. Much of the news that we receive from the country, especially during its many years of conflict, makes me wonder why the interest persists, not only for me but the many other *khowajahs* gathered here; some with even more years of involvement than me? Perhaps, as most of us were told, it is because 'if you drink of the waters of the Nile you will return'. Or perhaps it is due to 'Sudanitis': experiences of the warmth and hospitality of the Sudanese, in my case starting at Kosti Boys Secondary School in 1966, playing with the local Meriekh Football Club and sociable warm evenings drinking under the stars. I have an even more personal connection having met my wife in Sudan. She recently gave me a book that included the following line by Samuel Butler on a nineteenth century woman traveller, 'She went up the Nile as far as the first crocodile'. For my wife I was that crocodile! I had more teeth then, and since on a British academic salary I could not afford replacement teeth, still have only one wife.

While I wanted to review the years since I first went to Sudan, the organisers asked that my talk, 'corresponds with the main theme of the conference', which is of course 'Crossing borders: Sudan in a regional context'. Immediately my mind went back to the time I joined the University of Khartoum in July 1968. I found that people were discussing a conference held there in February of that year. Billed as the 'First international conference sponsored by the Sudan Research Unit', later to become the Institute of African and Asian Studies, its title was 'Sudan in Africa'. It is interesting to compare the papers and panels of the two conferences: back in 1968 there were none on 'Refugee Camps', 'Conflicts and Humanitarian Aid', 'Islam and Arabism in Sudan's Conflicts', or 'Darfur: Another Civil War?' all of which are being discussed in 2003. But one paper above all had aroused particular controversy in 1968: it was by Ali Mazrui, then a rising young star at Makerere University in Kampala, and was entitled 'The Multiple Marginality of the Sudan'.[1] What I want to do tonight is to reflect briefly on the themes that Mazrui presented in that paper, and consider how they have developed since. In doing so I hope to be able to reflect both on the past 35 years and Sudan's 'regional context'.

The Arab world

Mazrui was concerned especially with the question of identity, and he began by considering 'Arabs as Afro-Asians'. Much of his discussion relates to issues of race, ethnicity and colour, all themes in relation to which he believed Sudan indicated the range included in the Arab world.

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[1] Ali A Mazrui, 'The Multiple Marginality of the Sudan', in Yusuf Fadl Hasan (ed), *Sudan in Africa*, Khartoum University Press, 1969.

I don't want to pursue those issues tonight, except to say that I suspect that Sudanese views on them are coloured now rather less by theoretical issues of identity, and rather more by intense personal experiences over the past 35 years as many hundreds of thousands of Sudanese have travelled and worked all over the Arab world.

Instead I want to mention the changing political relations between Sudan and its Arab neighbours. Nineteen sixty-eight was in the era of profound Arab nationalism, and Sudan was much concerned with its relationship to it. In the previous year Prime Minister Mohammed Ahmed Mahjoub had chaired the famous Khartoum summit of Arab states following the humiliating defeat in the Six-Day War with Israel: probably the high point of Sudan's post-independence diplomacy. By 1969 and the start of the Nimeiri regime there were moves to join a union with Egypt and Libya. It was an era in which Sudan was trying to play a role in the unfolding Arab world.

Since then I have detected a tendency to seek to draw on the Arab world with regard to Sudan's essentially internal problems: less Sudan's role in the Arab world than the Arab world's involvement in Sudan. It reflects the growing problems of the country, and I sometimes think of it as a kind of 'Arab reflex': when the southern Sudan is sufficiently threatening to northern Sudan, call in the 'Arab cavalry'. I recall hearing it from Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi in the 1980s when Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) victories were directly threatening the north, notably the taking of Kermuk. Perhaps the welcoming of the Egyptian-Libyan initiative in the face of the mainly African Inter Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) peace process is also a call for Arab support. Regionally, I am concerned with the message that this sends to

Sudan's neighbours: the need for successive governments in Khartoum to seek help from the Arab world, in the face of problems that are essentially internal but also of great concern to African neighbours.

Naturally all Sudan's neighbours, African and Arab, have concerns and interests with regard to Sudan, and vice versa. But these should be addressed in Sudanese policy making as the concerns of the various states, rather than as matters in which the neighbours are perceived as 'Arabs' or 'Africans'. The habit of resorting to the 'Arab complex' both influences the policy positions of neighbours, and, at least as importantly, exacerbates divisions within Sudan, especially between south and north.

Sudan as a frontier of the African and Arab worlds

Mazrui was concerned to raise two very different images of Sudan as an Afro-Arab frontier that were sharply contested in 1968 and later. The first was that of Sudan as an Afro-Arab bridge able to show the way in which these two identities could be linked to each other. The second was Sudan as an example of the inability of these identities to live together in one country. He quoted Agrey Jaden, a southern participant at the Round Table conference of 1965, the first of many attempts to negotiate peace between north and south. Jaden had spoken of Sudan as a country that had, 'failed to compose a single community': Mazrui called it a 'dichotomous duality' and he went on to declare Sudan a 'paradigm case of an Afro-Arab dual identity'.

Since that time the 'dichotomous duality' has intensified rather than being bridged, often with the state as a prime actor. Perhaps the clearest example was the state sponsorship in 1991 of the formation of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference (PAIC), based in Khartoum, with

its leading ideologist, Hasan al-Turabi, as its Secretary General. Understandably the promotion of such an identity as a matter of policy produced a sharp backlash amongst southerners in particular. The SPLA's concept of the New Sudan was one of opposing the whole country's exploitation by a riverain northern Arab elite. Indeed the sense of economic exploitation being at the core of Sudan's problems has grown rather than diminished. But alongside it the intensification of Arabism and Islamism has turned many towards separation rather than a New Sudan as the solution.

This is not though a purely Sudan problem: it too links to the regional context. Sudan's conflicts have spilled over into neighbouring states, just as their conflicts have in turn spilled into Sudan. The result has been years of tit-for-tat cross-border support for conflicts in neighbouring countries that have created long running patterns of violence around the region. The specific actors and the intensity of such activities have varied over time, but the patterns are unlikely to be broken until the essentially domestic conflicts that drive them are addressed. The story of IGAD, from its foundation in the wake of region-wide famines in the 1980s, is in large part a reflection of that realisation and attempts to address it, most recently in Sudan and Somalia.

Sudan as a religious frontier

Whatever one may think about the root causes of Sudan's problems, the religious issue of Christian-Muslim relations was raised as much in 1968 as it is in 2003. Briefly put, Mazrui's explanation was the common one of the time: southern spokesmen blamed northerners for promoting Islam in their region; and northerners blamed the British for having promoted Christianity. There was an element of truth in all of that, and probably

more recognisable then than it should be over 30 years later, but Mazrui did not stop there. He described the Sudan army's operations in the south as 'ruthless and devoid of moral restraint', and summed up his remarks by saying that Sudan was 'Africa's most dramatic confrontation between local Islamic authority and expatriate Christianity'.

If that was how it appeared in 1968, how much worse has it looked for most of the time since. Yet much of the worsening has not been only of the Christian-Muslim relations, but of Muslim-Muslim relations: the intensification of the conflict over 'local Islamic authority', sometimes referred to as the long running conflict over Islamic hegemony in northern Sudan, with ever growing implications for the south. Around ever since the constitutional debates of the 1960s, the issue came to the forefront with Nimeiri's introduction of *sharia* in 1983. And its introduction was of course a significant impetus to the re-opening of civil war in the south and the emergence of the SPLA. The coup of 1989 was in turn carried out to advance a minority view of Islamic hegemony as preferable to ending the war via a reduction of *sharia.*

Meanwhile the conduct of the war itself took on more overt religious forms. 'Jihad' and 'martyrdom' were promoted by the new northern rulers: while in the south Mazrui's reference to 'expatriate Christianity' took more indigenous form, and also became more militant, with some SPLA fighters taking Christian symbols onto the battlefield. It has added up to the crescent versus the cross in southern Sudan, with millions dead and displaced.

The religious confrontation also became of growing regional significance, and not just as spill over into neighbouring states. 'Turabi's

revolution' as it has been called had regional implications as the PAIC and the various terrorist groups based in Sudan from 1989 (including Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda) joined in his mission to destabilise the whole of the region from Libya in the north-west to Kenya in the south-east. The aim was the creation of a series of Muslim communities as part of the wider re-awakening of the Muslim world; with the Islamist Sudan a beacon of the process. Little wonder that there was a regional response from Egypt's occupation of Halayeb in the north to wide international support for the SPLA in the south, and, as it developed, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the east.

International support was not confined to neighbours. Here in the USA there has been growing concern in Christian, African-American and human rights circles in particular. It is sometimes referred to as the 'Sudan coalition' and has done much to drive US involvement in recent years, which has now been a vital factor in bringing the country to the brink of peace. Yet central to the peace process is the 'religious frontier', and it may still prove to be the issue on which Sudan breaks in two as is implicit in the acceptance of the right of self- determination for the south.

West Africa

North and south may appear to dominate Sudanese politics, but the west must not be forgotten and Mazrui drew attention to important connections. In the east-west direction was the debate in African history of the Nile as the origin and exporter of ideas of the ancient world, especially the carrying of concepts of kingship along the sahel. But west-east was equally important. Scholars of Islam were discussing the extent to which mahdism in Sudan drew on militant west African experience, especially from northern Nigeria. And there was also the indisputable

movement of central and west Africans en route to Mecca, many to remain and put down roots in Sudan.

However since 1968 the west too has often been a dimension of conflict. Beyond Sudan's western border lies the long contested country of Chad, and for some 30 years Sudan was involved in one way or another in the travails of that unstable state. Libya, Egypt, France and the US all played their parts in the struggle for Chad, but Sudan was important as well. Chad's last two presidents, Hissein Habre and Idris Deby, have both come to power by mounting a challenge from Darfur. And a reverse situation exists as well, with Deby and the cross-border Zaghawa from whom he comes playing a part in the situation arising from the growing conflict in Darfur.

Sudan as a frontier of language

Mazrui saw Sudan also as a frontier of languages, which was far from being simply a practical matter, but had significant cultural implications as well. The Arabic of northern Sudan was of course related to the north and east of the country, and was of broad cultural as well as religious significance. Southern Sudan abutted East Africa where English language and culture were predominant. To the west the colonial influence was that of France with strong linguistic and cultural implications, which France has long wished to see extended eastwards (perhaps with memories of Fashoda?). In 1968 Mazrui detected an uneasy balance on the language question.

In recent years, especially since 1989, we have seen a major push for Arabization of education at all levels. It might be seen as a pragmatic response to the expansion of education in an under-resourced system in

which Arabic was the major language. But it has been much more ideological than that, for Arabization has become part of the attempt to create a new Islamic hegemony on 'authentic' lines (the Islamists appear to have read their Gramsci as well as the views of Lenin on party organisation and tactics that seem to have charted their route to power). The old elite was seen as a product of colonial education, and names such as The Gordon Memorial College and The Kitchener School of Medicine had done little to dispel that in the past. Arabization and Islamization of education throughout the system would promote 'new Sudanese man'.

Perhaps recently we have seen some recognition of the limits of ideological education. There seems little evidence of a new generation of young Sudanese wanting to go further down the road of the Arabization and Islamization; while there have been signs of the government seeking to rehabilitate English language teaching in secondary and higher education. In addition there is a long tradition in the University of Khartoum of the study of Sudan's numerous indigenous languages, whose significance is far from being confined to the academic world. As for French, the predictable effort from France is sustained but it remains on the fringes of Sudanese life.

Sudan's linguistic development is also of interest to its neighbours. English remains the language of education in most of the African neighbours, and increasing educational cooperation and exchanges could contribute much to improved regional relations, especially when contrasted with the effects of 'Turabi's revolution'. Perhaps the cosmopolitanism of the Egyptian elite, with its skill in all three languages, long reflected in the practices of some Egyptian universities, should be the goal?

The limits of integration

In the heady days of modernization theory in the mid 1960s there was much chatter in academic circles about integration, generally associated (including by Mazrui) with the evolution of more homogeneous populations. He (Mazrui) was struck by the degree of consensus at least that he detected in northern Sudan. As an example he referred to the October Revolution of 1964 in which a popular uprising had overthrown the military regime of General Abboud. But it was not only the popular consensus to rise up that struck him, but the response of the military rulers to go along with the popular mood and stand down; as well as with the lack of recrimination shown towards them afterwards. However Mazrui was not just being polite to his hosts, for he contrasted the consensus he saw in the north with the exclusion of the south in particular saying, 'Relations between North and South constitute one of the most acute crises of cleavage in the African continent as a whole'.

The latter of course remains, but also noticeable over the years has been the extent to which the northern consensus has broken down, just about whichever way you look at it. I received recently a proposal for the establishment of a Peace Consolidation Institute written by a senior Sudanese academic which said: 'Conflict is not confined to the on-going civil war, and in addition to the cleavage between the government and the main political forces, it also characterizes inter- and intra- group relations in many regions.'

IGAD's involvement in Sudan's peace process indicates the concern of neighbouring states, and not only because of the cross border implications of conflict. The region has seen efforts to re-structure states in order to seek new forms of integration in the hope of reducing domestic conflict;

including the separation of Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the latter's federal policy. Perhaps Sudan too can contribute its own model, fitted to its particular needs, to show that manageable forms of integration can be achieved, whether within one state or between two?

Conclusion

Has the multiple marginality outlined by Mazrui in 1968 now multiplied to the point of threatening Sudan's survival as a country along one or more of his frontiers? Can Sudanese come together in diversity, with less thought now of homogeneity and more of coexistence in diversity? For instance, have the recent agreements between the SPLM and the Popular Congress (surely the extremes of Sudanese politics) been only cynical factional manoeuvres; or are they the beginnings of a new realisation of the need to work together?

I think of Sudan sometimes as a vast Shakespearean tragedy. Probably the more so because when I started at Kosti I was teaching Macbeth, which was all too recognisable to my students. But at least in the theatre one knows that at some point the curtain will fall and the bodies will all clear the stage. Sudan's tragedy has seemed endless since Mazrui wrote his paper 35 years ago, perhaps now at last an end is in sight? However if it is, then when the curtain finally falls on large-scale conflict and all its implications, the task of reconstruction will be enormous. I'm reminded of a tale from the Durham conference three years ago in which a new student is looking for a school to attend:

Student: I would like to join this school
Head: Delighted, but you will need to bring three things
Student: What are they?

Head: A book.

Student: No problem, I'll get one in the *suq*.

Head: And a desk.

Student: I'll have one made.

Head: Oh, and you'll need to bring a teacher as well!

Review of the Sudan International Conference,

31 July –2 August 2003

Georgetown University, Washington DC

By David Lindley

Georgetown is one of Washington's most fashionable residential districts and it retains much of its 18th century appearance. The conference was centred on Georgetown University, the oldest Roman Catholic College in the United States and founded in 1795. A splendid setting for a conference – even though some of us found it a little humid outside the air-conditioned buildings.

The theme of the conference was "Crossing Borders: Sudan in Regional Contexts". The papers were grouped into 13 panels. You needed to make a choice from time to time as some panels of papers ran in parallel. However, there was an excellent set of abstracts available which helped you make your choice.

I was somewhat concerned – being an environmental scientist – that I would become lost in much of the politics, history and economics of many of the papers. It proved not to be so as I attended panels on Military Conflicts and Borders, Refugee Camps and Border Crossings and Regional and National Integration to name but three. I found the papers to be informative and thought provoking. It was also pleasing to see that there were seven post graduate students from the UK presenting papers.

On the Thursday evening the conference organisers had set up an Art Exhibition 'Sudan through the eyes of the exiles' along with a SSA reception. Later on that evening we had much musical entertainment including an energetic performance by 'a Sudanese Children's Group'.

There was a formal dinner on the Friday night at which Professor Peter Woodward was the Guest Speaker. He spoke about the multiple marginality of the Sudan – updating this theme from 1968 when it was discussed in a paper presented by Ali Mazrui at the first International Sudanese studies conference in Khartoum. His speech was very well received.

A formal lunch was held on the Saturday when Professor Francis Deng of John Hopkins University talked about his work as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons. Again I found his speech inspiring.

In summary, an excellent conference, well organised and in a beautiful setting. About 100 people had registered but more attended on a day to day basis.

No decision was taken about the location of the next international conference in three years time but it was agreed that a working party from SSSUK, SSA and other interested groups should be formed to move things forward.

Again our thanks to SSA for all their hard work for a most enjoyable conference.

Studying Sudan: current research

By Justin Willis

A talk presented to the annual meeting of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom, September 25, 2003

It is a little difficult to know how to address this topic. I must first issue a disclaimer - by the nature of my work and interests, I tend to hear about people working on historical, or anthropological, or political science, projects (or at least, some of them); I also, wearing a different hat, hear quite a lot about archaeology. But I am all too aware that there are other kinds of research, in many fields, which I simply never hear about – I cannot for one moment claim to be in a position to give a comprehensive statement on 'current research' in all fields. But beyond that, another thing caused me some concern, as I considered what to say this morning. I do not wish to give a simple list of current research, of who is doing what, and where – though I will try and mention at least some people and topics. I thought I should take this opportunity to make a more general point – about what is NOT happening, as much as what is happening.

I should first, I think, try and give a brief sense of current research in Sudan – at least, such research as I have recently come across in Khartoum, in history, anthropology and politics. In some ways, there are encouraging indications. The Institute of African and Asian Studies have been very helpful to myself and my students, as well as other visiting researchers, over the last year; the National Records Office, under the direction of Dr Ali Karrari, is really quite full with researchers on some days, and they had visits from 228 researchers between January and September 2003. Most of them were Sudanese, but there were a small number of visitors from Europe – and, interestingly, from Uganda,

Ethiopia and elsewhere in the region. With the exception of a small number of people pursuing land claims or other grievances with the government, most of these users are academic researchers, working on a range of topics: administration under the Mahdia, the role of the military in politics up to 1969, British policy in the Nuba Mountains. And there are others who I met outside the archives, working on thoroughly contemporary issues: a doctoral student writing his thesis on how the NIF shifted its policy after 1989; another working on a rapidly growing Sufi tariqa in south-west Kordofan. But – and this is a big but – most of these archive users were masters students, with a small sprinkling of doctoral students and almost no post-doctoral or professional academic users. And talking to these students, as in talking with staff at local universities, one has a strong sense of the consequence of years of shortage of resources and of the discouragement of intellectual engagement with a wider world. This research not infrequently recurs to old questions, in old ways – because that is the consequence of isolation. And, of course, one must remember that I was talking to the lucky ones – who had the comparative luxury of access to the archive or the Sudan Library or the University of Khartoum library.

And what of wider research on the Sudan? Here, there are again some encouraging indications. The Georgetown conference saw papers on a range of issues, mostly from scholars based in the US, as David has shown. And there are several foci of research on Sudan in Europe: Exeter, Oxford, Leeds and Durham, and Bergen, of course, but also in other places: in Khartoum, I met a group of anthropology students from Munich, going on a three month field seminar to Shendi where they were to study various aspects of cultural change, exploring the idea that Shendi is a point of articulation between a 'national' culture and local cultures.

There is new research going on, then – and some of it is of a very good quality; and there have been some really very good books published recently, which reflect not current research, but recent research, and which have genuinely new approaches and say interesting things: Heather Sharkey's book, and Eve Troutt Powell's discussion of Egyptian attitudes to Sudan, spring to mind.

But again, there are limitations to this research; and these concern me. There are, of course, certain subjects which have long commanded a considerable degree of attention and continue to do so. What might be called the 'high politics' of the Sudan offer an obvious example – we continue to see studies of the ideology and manoeuvrings of a political elite – much of this, of course, investigating what we now routinely call 'Islamism' as a political force at the highest levels of the state. There are other hardy perennials of research, which reflect the tragic conditions of modern Sudan; the circumstances and lives of a refugee population spread across Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia as well as Europe and North America; the particular political and economic dynamics established as a result of the activities of the many humanitarian organizations which operate in both southern and northern Sudan; policy towards slaves under the Condominium; the various forms and manifestations of indirect rule under the Condominium. All of these areas continue to see intelligent and good quality work.

But what are we NOT doing? It is all too easy to find ourselves asking the same questions of the same material, and reaching the same answers. Partly, of course, this is a result of the availability and accessibility of written sources; partly it reflects the extreme difficulty of doing certain kinds of research in the Sudan in the recent past. I can best exemplify

what I mean on this from my own field. Some aspects of Condominium history – and particularly, anything to do with British policy – are not so hard to research, for those based outside the Sudan and with a knowledge of English. There is substantial written record, well kept and accessible; and the files in the NRO add considerably to this; so it is all too easy – and I am guilty of this – to write a kind of 'history' which begins in 1898 and ends in 1956 and sees largely though the eyes of rulers. We can keep on doing any amount of that. But what about other kinds of history, and other periods? If we look at the writing on history elsewhere in Africa, it is striking that the last two decades have seen a move away from this kind of writing – and towards cultural and social history, and to perspectives in which the chronological framework set by grand political debates is not so relevant. But writing of this kind on the Sudan is really quite rare; Ahmed Sikainga's recent book is one of the few examples of this approach. Such research, of course, requires the use of non-official written sources, and the use of oral interviews – and these are problematic. Sudan has long had a lively unofficial press, but the state of preservation of archives of this is appalling; and official hostility and logistical difficulties have made oral research difficult. This has not only hampered research on the Condominium; the same factors have terribly limited research in all disciplines since the 1970s. My impression – and I stand to be corrected on this, if any know better – is that we know terribly little about the ordinary life, the 'deep' politics, and about cultural change, in much of Sudan – north and south. How has local administration really worked in practice in the last twenty years, in, say, Dongola, or eastern Kordofan? What do we really know about cultural and social change in much of the country? In some areas, of course, humanitarian work has provided us with limited, usually rather snapshot, data; but really we know quite little. It is striking that one of the most

substantial pieces of recent field data collection of which I am aware has occurred not through a formal 'academic' research project, but in the course of the work done by Jok Madut and John Ryle on abduction – which has produced a vast array of information on genealogical linkages and political relationships among the Dinka, and which has led some humanitarian agencies to ask questions which academics could have been asking – about the nature of identity in refugee communities in the north, and the existence of extended networks of authority which link these back to the south.

Circumstances have also constrained work on the very distant past. Archaeological work has focused on fairly limited parts of northern Sudan – generally, on the areas where there is some monumental architecture, or at last stone buildings. The current drive for rescue work associated with the fourth cataract dam will only exacerbate this. This is important work, which I would not criticize – but there are other things that might be done too – approaches which have to some extent been pursued in the Mahas survey, but could be taken up more widely. Archaeologists elsewhere in Africa are asking other questions about culture and the use of space which allow them to explore evidence from societies beyond the narrow belt of monumental remains.

As I say, much of this is driven by the very nature of evidence – certain subjects are easier to work on than others. But I fear that the problem has been compounded by something which I mentioned earlier – the degree of isolation of the Sudan, which in turn has been made worse by what one might call 'Sudan exceptionalism' – a besetting vice of those who work on Sudan. All too often people think that the Sudan is simply different – because in some ways, of course, it is. And so they do not look to see

what colleagues are doing in the study of neighbouring countries, and similar societies. And so they do not notice what others are doing – which makes it terribly easy to keep asking the same questions. Sudan may be different in some ways – but not so different that we can afford to ignore the lessons from scholars who work elsewhere. There is much good current research on the Sudan; but there could be much more. The end of major hostilities will certainly help to encourage this, but it will not be enough: there are two further keys. One is the end of the intellectual isolation, and the resource-starvation, which has so drastically affected the research community within Sudan itself; the other is an effort by all of us, Sudanese and scholars of Sudan, to learn from and engage with others – and so to see the questions that we are NOT asking!

Equatoria - an Indian Ocean outlet?

By John Udal

By November 1872 a year had passed since the last dispatch sent by Sir Samuel Baker from Gondokoro, prior to his resuming his expedition for the Khedive Ismail Ibrahim to the Great Lakes of the Equator. Ismail Pasha Ayub, the Khedival general-governor in Khartoum, on the basis of rumours that Baker was now in difficulties near Lake Albert, suggested that a relief force be sent, a proposal endorsed by Fariq Charles Stone Pasha, formerly a federal American general, now appointed chief of staff of the Egyptian army.

Having regard to the current blockage of the White Nile by the *sudd*, Stone recommended the dispatch of a relief force, not via Khartoum but via Mombasa and the Maasai country, to be under the American colonel Erastus Purdy Bey. The Khedive, displeased with Baker's leadership and ambitious for territorial expansion, concurred in drafting secret instructions for Purdy, not only to prepare the new expedition but to supersede Baker and to establish new Khedival territories in east Africa. The reappearance of Baker however arrested the Purdy expedition before it had embarked.

The Khedive's eyes had however been opened to the possible approach to the fertile highlands of Equatorial Africa from the east instead of up the Nile. Two years later Baker's successor, Charles George Gordon, planning a personal reconnaissance of the lacustrine kingdoms of the Upper Nile and the territories to their east, wrote on 21 January 1875 to the Khedive's Privy

Seal urging his opinion that the sole way of opening up these central highlands lay in the establishment of an Indian Ocean port in Formosa Bay, north of Mombasa and scarcely 400 miles from Lake Victoria. Gordon had concluded that Nile steamers from Khartoum to Dufile and, hopefully, beyond would be only able to cover the distance three times a year having regard to the *sudd*, while the availability of riverain wood supplies was diminishing. The concept of an Indian Ocean outlet did not encounter stiff opposition from the Khedive, but he enjoined absolute secrecy while the project was appraised.

Gordon had already dispatched his lieutenant, Ernest Linant, on an embassy to the Kabaka Mutesa of Buganda pending his own departure for Lake Victoria. He embarked meanwhile on a major programme of exploration: of the White Nile south to and beyond Dufile; of Lake Albert itself by Romolo Gessi; and of the Somerset and Victoria Niles by Carlo Piaggia. To his chagrin in October 1875 he would himself find the Makadé falls at Dufile totally unnavigable, and, having not yet (in mid-November) received the letter from the Khedive dated 17 September was now minded to resign his appointment and leave the Sudan. The American Miralai Chaillé Long, hitherto Gordon's chief of staff, had left for Cairo in March after discussions on the project with Gordon and had been recommended by the latter to command the Formosa Bay land forces. However, the Khedive does not appear to have been completely convinced that the opening of the central highlands to European commerce could not be more advantageously pursued, at least from Egypt's point of view, by the "most natural and easiest" Nile route.

What seemingly tipped the scales in favour of Gordon's proposal for the Indian Ocean port was the unexpected arrival in Cairo of the Sultan Barghash bin Sa'id of Zanzibar in August 1875, returning from a state visit to Britain - a reward for his compliance with British pressure to prohibit the transportation of slaves within his boundaries by sea. By then, on reflection, Gordon had suggested the mouth of the Juba river - the southern boundary of Somali country - or Port Durnford, both further from Zanzibar, as alternatives to Formosa Bay which was more obviously Zanzibar territory.

On this visit to Cairo, the Sultan let slip in conversation with the Khedive his intention of hoisting his flag at the Juba river mouth and at Ras Hafoun on the Horn of Africa. In the wake of Egypt's occupation of Zeyla and Berbera and now of Harar, Ismail regarded this indiscretion as a challenge to which he must speedily respond. On 17 September he wrote to Gordon instructing him that a naval expedition would indeed be sent, with the secret destination of the Juba river mouth, under McKillop Pasha; Long Bey to command the land forces. The whole enterprise would be under Gordon's control, who would press east from Lake Victoria with his own force of five companies to establish a new headquarters. This, Gordon now contemplated, would be established near Mount Kenya.

McKillop's expedition of four warships, transporting five companies under Long, raised the Egyptian flag at Ras Hafoun on 7 October before proceeding on towards the Juba river mouth. In the event, on account of bad weather, it would instead land at Kismayu (Chismaio) ten miles further south, where the Zanzibari garrison of 80 was overpowered. The population,

like that of the Juba mouth and the Benadir desert to the north was, however, Somali.

The Khedive was the more confident that his annexation of the Somali coast would prevail in that the Egyptian intended occupation had been broached at an unexpected visit by the Prince of Wales and Sir Bartle Frere on 23-26 October without any apparent dissent on their part - so much so that, on their departure, the Khedive instructed McKillop to establish firm bases at Durnford and Formosa Bay well to the south of the Juba mouth, and planned a reconnaissance across land from Harar to the source of the Juba.

On 7 November 1875 news of McKillop's seizure of Kismayu on 16 October reached the Sultan. Urged on by the British Consul-General at Zanzibar, Dr John Kirk, the Sultan dispatched protests to the Khedive and to the British foreign minister, the Earl of Derby. The latter lodged a protest with Cairo, expressing "the hope" that the Egyptian expedition would be recalled as both impolitic and likely to influence adversely British assistance with the arrangement of Egyptian financial credit. The arrival of this rebuff coincided with the annihilation of the Egyptian force under Arendrup occupying Hamasein on the Abyssinian border. That public disaster could not be revenged simultaneously with a confrontation with Zanzibar. McKillop was ordered to withdraw from the Indian Ocean coast.

Gordon Pasha, the overall commander, would not meanwhile reach Mruli in Bunyoro, about 100 miles short of Lake Victoria until 22 January 1876, by which time McKillop had evacuated Kismayu. Gordon had "already given up the idea of going to the sea . . . with the undisciplined wretched troops I

have here." Seven weeks later he would learn from the arrival of newspapers at Dufile of McKillop's recall. He commented that the Khedive "ought to first have got the matter sorted diplomatically as he was recommended to do." As progenitor of the scheme he nevertheless wrote personally to the Earl of Derby accepting responsibility for his original counsel to the Khedive, but insisting that the purpose was not territorial acquisition but the opening up of communications for European trade with the Equatorial interior.

In search of non-adherers to leprosy treatment in the heart of Africa

By Jan Coebergh

In January and February 2003 I went to Darfur, Western Sudan, to understand non-adherence to leprosy treatment, by tracing and interviewing the people affected. Although I had never really seen leprosy I had always dreamt about visiting the remote Sudan after reading the books of my heroes, the explorers Wilfred Thesiger and Michael Asher. They wrote about the noble and hospitable camel-raiding Bedouin Arabs of Darfur. My supervisor, the country co-ordinator for the Leprosy Mission, had invited me to do this project during my visit to Sudan a year earlier, when I had spent some time in the Department of Child Health at the University of Khartoum, the foremost in the capital and country. A trip to Dongola and into the Eastern Desert had introduced me to life outside the capital. Back in Sudan this year, it was nice to meet my old friends. It was a pity to see that the government did not allow last year's students to graduate after 'communist' riots.

Darfur

It is a three day drive to Darfur. The first 800 kilometres is on a recent Chinese built tarmac road, before the tracks fan out in the sand. Darfur covers 500,000 square kilometres and has a population of 6.1 million. There is desert in the north and (semi-) savannah in the southern part; in the centre is the fertile Jebel Marra mountain range, of up to 3000m.

The desert is rock and sand with attempts to grow barley and millet. Interspersed are wadis, where local subsistence farmers grow tomatoes

and onions. Twenty percent of the population still migrate with herds of camels, cows, sheep and goats. Darfur, abode of the Fur tribe, was independent until 1916. Here, African and Arabic Islam meet and many Southern Sudanese Christians have fled here away from the civil war that has plagued Sudan since 1982. Karin Willemse's 2001 PhD ''One foot in Heaven': Narratives on Gender and Islam in Darfur, West-Sudan' (for the University of Leiden, the Netherlands) introduced me to the recent culture of Darfur.

The literacy rate is only forty percent, and there are chronic food shortages. The World Food Program will distribute food to 230,000 people this year. They have been feeding people since the big famines of 1983-5 and the desert is gaining 6 kilometres every year. Alex de Waal's book, *A Famine that Kills*, is very instructive in describing these famines and the failures of aid. Especially in North Darfur many people walk up to 10 hours to get water. Malaria, TB and diarrhoeal disease have a much greater disease burden than leprosy, but unfortunately no non-governmental organisations are active in Darfur. Furthermore health care in a remote area is not a priority of a government that spends fifty to sixty per cent of its revenue on the army. Until recently it has ignored Darfur.

Leprosy

Leprosy is an infectious bacterial disease, mostly transmitted from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Few people who are exposed actually develop the disease. The Multi Drug Therapy (MDT) is nearly completely effective at eradicating the bacteria.

Until 1996 leprosy care in Darfur was concentrated around colonies. The Leprosy Mission arrived in 1997 and started training health workers and providing medicines for those in need. Leprosy care has improved dramatically since. However, in 2000 still only fifty percent finished their twelve months of MDT. There are 'only' 700 new cases a year in Darfur, which does not compare to the staggering 600,000 a year in India.

In the field

With very experienced Southern Sudanese employees of the Leprosy Mission I travelled by four-wheel-drive to seventeen clinics, many of which were just empty buildings. The health worker, a nurse, supplements his rarely arriving low government income with pharmacy work. From the clinics, we would attempt to find the non-adherers in their village, house or field. We interviewed 23 people fully, with a semi-structured questionnaire, and spoke to many more patients about their disease, its treatment and stigma. We were always received with open arms.

We did not expect that the patients would be this easy to find. The data on non-adherers was not reliable. Some did not have leprosy; some had actually completed, or had re-registered since as a new patient. Patients do not understand the concept of eradicating bacteria. Therefore patients stop prematurely if symptoms improve, or if they don't. Many did not know the duration of the treatment in the first place. Sometimes normal harmless side effects forced people to stop: 'my urine went as red as the backlight of your car'. Self-treatment is common as well. We met one man who injected his fingers with his cow's antibiotics and one woman who had amputated her fingers with a razor.

Stigma is a big problem and means that people cannot marry and they are forced to eat and sleep separately. Happily, expulsion from their communities does not occur anymore. In a recent study in Darfur only ten percent of the general population would be happy to shake hands with a leprosy patient. Because of stigma and to avoid exposure people successfully denied having leprosy. This often led to absence of stigma. Because of its perceived infectiousness people would admit to having a non-infectious but related disease to leprosy. Stigma was often reversible after going on or completing treatment. Those with visible deformities or of low social status (e.g. elderly widows) suffered the worst stigma. Stigma is partly a result of the leprosy colonies where everyone was treated until 1996 and that still exist. Hopefully health education will help to reduce stigma.

Disability

Leprosy puts the patient at risk of disability through nerve damage. Patients with impaired nerve function are at risk of getting wounds during normal daily activities, like cooking on fires. As a result cured patients with nerve damage need to take life-long care to ensure disability prevention through exercises, regular washing and wound care. Therefore health education is very important. The programme also trains health workers in physiotherapy and hands out appliances, mainly for polio, missing limbs and cerebral palsy, but also for leprosy. Just being in the villages we found and referred many cases of cerebral palsy, clubfoot, night blindness, congenital deformations and limb necrosis after snakebites.

As a result of my visit many individuals received much needed health education and several patients have returned for treatment. This will hopefully make them non-infectious and stop progression of their disease. Some will eat with their family again and are convinced they can marry and sleep with their wife. Furthermore the programme now knows that tracing non-adherers is feasible and will undertake this in the future.

Camel trek

One of the patients was a camel dealer in El Fasher of the Rizeygat tribe. With him I arranged a trip for six days trekking from El Fasher to Mellit, practising my Arabic and camel riding and discovering three new cases of leprosy. My companion Ahmed bought young camels, reared them and taught them good manners to sell on. We would turn up at Berti villages in the evening, exchange greetings and be offered stories, tea, *asida* (ground millet) and camel fodder. They would tell about the men who had left for Khartoum, Libya or the Gulf States.

Camels are one of the few sources of wealth in Darfur. 200,000 camels a year are exported to Egypt for use as racing or pack animals or for meat. Hundreds of camels travel in caravans for three weeks through the desert to the Nile, and following it downstream, as described by Michael Asher.

Traditional treatment

Darfur is renowned for its traditional treatments and people travel from afar to receive them. Every child, many adults and the favourite animals wear amulets with koranic verses in little leather pouches. The photocopier and computer has enabled mass production of verses in the

provincial capitals. Every village has a *faki*, who is often the only source of 'medical' attention available. The amulets protect against spells, curses, evil eye and, allegedly, bullets.

A friend of mine in Khartoum, Sa'at, worked in 1978 as director of Yemeni Airways. The president feared for his life and sent Sa'at to Darfur to find these amulets. He travelled in the rainy season, therefore mainly by camel and donkey. The first amulets they tried on cows. They then saved costs by testing with sheep, followed by goats and chicken: all remained vulnerable to bullets. Even trees could not be protected. After forty days Sa'at returned to Khartoum. There news reached him that the president had been assassinated.

Most of our patients had been to the *faki*. They had spent vast sums (up to the equivalent of two hundred and fifty pounds sterling) and delayed going to medical services for years as a consequence. All this was to no avail and even detriment, through progess of the disease. *Fakis* spit on and cauterise skin patches. The *faki* would recite koranic verses and give them *mohajja* (water run over koranic verses) to drink.

Armed conflict

Unfortunately people do need protection against bullets, since tribal conflicts are rife. Several attacks a week are reported on villages, with often 20-30 deaths (see www.sudan.net/news/news). We were not allowed to go outside Geneina, to Kutum and the Jebel Marra. Once we were held up at gunpoint and forced to leave immediately by the army in Nyertete. I saw patients with gun wounds in the hospitals. The conflicts are mostly Arab nomads raiding for livestock, grazing and water against

other nomads and African farmers of Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit, Berti, Daju and other tribes. Revenge attacks are escalating and during my stay a rebel opposition emerged against the government, demanding development. The rebels feel the government supports the Arab militias implicitly and explicitly. I heard of villages that had asked for police protection since an attack was imminent. The police always arrived after the raids. A month after I left, a curfew was imposed and El Fasher was attacked by the rebels, with seventy-five deaths and several military planes destroyed at the very airport from which I had left Darfur. It is estimated 4-500,000 of a total population have fled their homes, with 75,000 crossing the border with Chad, receiving late and much needed support from Medecins Sans Frontieres and UNHCR. Rough estimates come to 3-4,000 casualties. I saw the governments tanks, helicopters and Antonovs and several bombing raids are now reported, despite a temporary truce between the main rebel movement and the government. Amnesty International is trying to raise awareness of the problems in Darfur. They have evidence of many arbitrary arrests and executions. Western governments and media are not allowed to travel to Darfur. The promising peace talks regarding South Sudan ignore the problems in Darfur.

Whilst I will have everlasting memories of amazing hospitality, incredible landscapes and fantastic people, I can only hope that their optimism and faith in God will improve the difficult lives of people in Darfur.

SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
MINUTES OF THE 16th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SOAS
28 SEPTEMBER 2002

Ms Gill Lusk called the meeting to order at 12:45 and welcomed members to the 16th Annual General Meeting of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Justin Willis, Jane Hogan, Paul Wilson and Philip Bowcock.

2. Minutes of the AGM of 29 September 2001

The minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting of 20 September 2001 were read. There being no corrections the Chair signed a copy as a true record of the 2001AGM.

3. Matters arising from the AGM of 29 September 2001

There were no matters arising.

4. Chair's report

Ms Lusk again welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said she was sad to report that two members, Mr J N Lawrence and Mrs Helen Jervis had died since the last AGM. She also noted that the Executive committee had met twice since the 2001 AGM.

She again emphasised that the next Sudan Studies International Conference would be held in GeorgeTown, Washington, DC during August 2003. She hoped the SSSUK would be able to link its Web site to the American site so that members can keep up to date with developments. She also invited new friends to join SSSUK.

5. Secretary's report

The Secretary said that since the last AGM the Executive Committee had met twice. Membership now stood at about 120 paid up members out of a total membership of about 140. A number of subscriptions had not been renewed. Secretary hoped that a number of these subscriptions would be re-instated once the Treasurer had sent out a reminder letter.

The Secretary again thanked SOAS for the use of conference room free of charge. This generous gesture helped the Society keep the cost charged to participants of the AGM/Symposium down to a reasonable level.

6. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer presented the Accounts for 2001. The Society's combined bank balances at 31st December 2001 stood at £1957.33. There was a deficit for the year 2001 of £406.79. The current situation for the two accounts on 11 September, 2002 was £2684.09

The Treasurer pointed out that printing costs rose from £216.10 in 2000 to £1071.58 in 2001. With the transfer of Editorship to Dr Willis at Durham University he managed to publish 3 volumes in 2001 as opposed to one volume in the previous year. Fortunately the printing costs at Durham are

much cheaper so that cost should level to about £500 per year with a regular 2 volumes.

The Treasurer mentioned that a question arose at the 2001 AGM about transferring some of our funds to a higher interest account. This possibility has been looked into but it would have meant moving the reserve account to another bank which was not really practical. At this point, Jack Davies suggested that SSSUK should explore the use of Gift Aid. This scheme would allow SSSUK to claim back the tax paid on subscriptions (equivalent to 28%). The Treasurer agreed to look into this matter.

7. Editor's report

No report was received from the editor but the matters have been covered in other reports. Justin was thanked for all his hard work.

8. Elections & Co-options to the Committee

A vote of thanks to Aliya Mahmoud was proposed by Prof. Peter Woodward for all her hard work during her 3 year term of office as Hon. Secretary. Members thanked her in the usual manner. Ms Lusk had agreed to stay as Chair for another year, David Lindley proposed and Peter Woodward seconded the motion which was carried. For the office of Hon. Secretary, Dr Zaki El Hassan was proposed by
Gill Lusk and seconded by David Lindley. He was appointed.

9. A.O.B

There being no further business Ms Lusk thanked members for their participation and closed the meeting at 13:00.

SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UK

Accounts 1 January - 31 December 2002

INCOME	2002 £	2001 £
Membership dues 2002	1308.48	1100.11
Back Membership dues	115.98	28.00
Future Membership dues	44.00	10.00
Sale of Publications	245.15	53.00
Interest on Bank accounts	2.47	14.85
Donations	6634.27	2.00
2002AGM/Symposium	425.00	401.00
2001 AGM/Symposium	40.00	-
	8815.35	1608.96

EXPENDITURE	2002 £	2001 £
Printing	395.59	1017.58
Reprints	45.00	-
Secretarial expenses	221.46	394.00
Committee Travel	57.00	83.60
Repayment	26.00	8.00
2002 AGM/Symposium	440.00	450.00
2001 AGM/Symposium	94.59	
2000 AGM/Symposium		62.57
Surplus/deficit for year	7535.71	-406.79
	8815.35	1608.96

I have examined the accounting records kept in relation to the above period and certify that this income, expenditure and assets statement is in accordance with them

.....

E. J. M. Inglis., F.C.C.A

Assets		
Bank balance on 1.1.02	1957.33	2364.12
Bank balance on 31-Dec-02	9493.04	1957.33

D. K Lindley
Hon. Treasurer
24-Sep-03

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SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Hon. Secretary	Hon. Editor	Hon. Treasurer
Flat 2/2	Department of History	The Coach House
56 Ashley Street	University of Durham	School Hill, Lindale
Glasgow G3 6HW	43 North Bailey	Grange-over-Sands
United Kingdom	Durham DH1 3EX	Cumbria LA11 6LE
Sudanssuk@aol.com	United Kingdom	United Kingdom

NOTICE OF THE 18th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (SSSUK 18th AGM)

Saturday 25th September 2004

Hereby notice is given that the 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom (SSSUK) is to be held on Saturday the 25th of September 2004 in conjunction with SSSUK annual symposium.

The meeting will be held in London. Details of the venue and time will be circulated later. The annual SSSUK AGM and Symposium normally take place between 09:30 and 16:30.

All proposals for constitutional amendments and/or SSSUK executive committee nominations should reach SSSUK Secretary at the address above by 27th August 2004.

SSSUK Committee

e-mail: Sudanssuk@aol.com . **SSSUK web site:** www.dlindley.dircon.co.uk/sssuk/index.html
President Tayeb Salih; **Hon. Officers: Chair** Gill Lusk; **Vice-Chair** Dr Anisa Dani; **Treasurer** David Lindley; **Secretary** Dr Zaki El-Hassan; ***Sudan Studies'* Editor** Dr Justin Willis.
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ISLAM, SECTARIANISM AND POLITICS IN THE SUDAN SINCE THE MAHDIYYA

Gabriel Warburg

SPECIAL OFFER FOR SSSUK MEMBERS

Buy Professor Gaby Warburg's new book for £15.00 inclusive of postage (r.r.p. £19.95). To order, please email Maria Petalidou (**maria@hurstpub.co.uk**). (Address, phone and fax are given at the end of this article)

' very informative and intensively researched [...] meticulously tackles the issue of Islam and politics during the contemporary era [...] will be well received by all interested in Sudan's affairs and the issue of Islam in politics.'
(Dr Abdel Salam Sidahmed)

Why another book on Islam and politics in Sudan? The unique history of Sudan's Islamic politics suggests the answer. The revolt in 1881 was led by a Mahdi who came to renew and purify Islam. It was in effect an uprising against a corrupt Islamic regime, the largely alien Turco-Egyptian ruling élite. The Mahdiyya was therefore an anti-colonial movement, seeking to liberate Sudan from alien rule and to unify the Muslim Umma, and it later evolved into the first expression of Sudanese nationalism and statehood.

Post-Independence Islamic radicalism, in turn, can be viewed against the background of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, (1899-1956). It also thrived as a result of the resurgence of Islam since the mid-1960s, when Nasserism and other popular ideologies were swept aside. Finally, Sudan has emerged as the centre of militancy

in Sunni Islam since June 1989, when a group of radical Islamic officers, under the guidance of Dr Hassan al-Turabi and the NIF, assumed power.

In Warburg's view, the determination to enforce an Islamic state and an Islamic constitution on a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society has led to prolonged civil war, endless military coups and political, social and economic bankruptcy.

Gabriel Warburg is a former Vice-Chancellor of Haifa University and Director of the Israeli Academic Centre in Cairo. This is his seventh book on the history of the Nile Valley.

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Reviews

Deborah Scroggins, ***Emma's war. Love, betrayal and death in the Sudan***, HarperCollins Publishers, 2003. 389 pp. ISBN: 0002570270, £17.50; ISBN: 0007164998 (paper), £10.99

"Honestly, I am fed up to read about a young rather naïve British aid worker called Emma. What is really so extremely exceptional about her, that her life and – admittedly tragic- death are the subject of one book after the next? She was not the first, the last and definitely not the only white adventurous, bored, middle class women attracted by a tall, tough black man in uniform, romantically called "rebel", while being responsible for the killing of thousands of innocent people."

These were my first thoughts when asked to write a review about the most recent one, *Emma's war*, by the American journalist Deborah Scroggins. But, sub-titled with the catchy *Love, Betrayal and Death in the Sudan*, the book provides on 389 pages a tremendous amount of basic knowledge and detailed insider information about one of the world's longest and most complicated wars, in a way that will allow non-specialists to understand some of the dynamics of the interdependence between war, the humanitarian aid machinery and human feelings. Many books have been written on various aspects of the human tragedy in Sudan, from a more or less scientific point of view. Naturally, this kind of book never reaches a wider audience, or becomes a bestseller. The war in Sudan for a long time belonged to the forgotten ones, not getting much attention beyond the aid scene, human rights and religious groups. It was just too long, too multi-faceted and too difficult to identify with, beyond a limited group of insiders. But by connecting it to a personal (love) story like Scroggins did, it becomes interesting for many people from the northern hemisphere, who would never read anything more sophisticated on this subject. And maybe **this** is why it

is worthwhile to write another story about Emma McCune, who spent the last part of her short life in Sudan: starting as an aid worker, falling in love with some Sudanese, marrying one of them as second wife, staying with him in his military camp amidst the fighting, narrowly escaping death many times and at last getting killed in a mundane car accident in Nairobi, being pregnant and aged only 29.

And Deborah Scroggins has done much more than just telling a love story. She tells the story of Sudan, with a lot of historic, social, cultural, economic and human aspects. She challenges the international community and the NGO scene to think about their own reasoning, their involvement in the prolongation of wars, their role and responsibilities in playing politics, often beyond a strictly humanitarian mandate, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Scroggins is able to communicate what harm can come from the best intentions. She also provides some insight in the role of the media, being herself a journalist who had visited and reported about the country and the region many times. Thereby she also tells a lot about herself.

All this is fascinating to read, and even the so-called "experts" might find some details here they were not aware of before. Still I am not completely convinced that she needed Emma McCune to tell all this – her own experiences might have been more than enough to fill and sell such a book. But I wholeheartedly wish that the book finds many readers – and that it will help to provoke discussions long overdue.

And last but not least: the Sudanese people deserve to have their story told to the world - it is just a tragic part of their struggle for justice that it still needs a white person to get it heard.

Marina Peter

Douglas H. Johnson, ***The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars,*** James Currey, Oxford, 2003. xx, 234. ISBN 0-85255-392-7 (paper); ISBN 0-85255-391-9 (cloth)

Douglas Johnson's new book is not only magisterial; it is also polemical and timely. Towards the end he sketches a type of outsider mentality which, he thinks, blights Sudan's prospects for lasting peace.

> Throughout the West, there were … many professional diplomats, academics and conflict-resolution experts who rejected the 'clash of cultures' theory of international affairs and sought to 'engage with Islam', whether out of political or religious conviction. The specific facts of the war in the Sudan became less important than the Sudan as a symbol of a growing polarity in global politics, replacing the old hostilities of the Cold War. In advocating some form of engagement with the Khartoum regime, they tacitly accepted the NIF's presentation of itself as truly representative of Islam and have overlooked or downplayed the degree to which the NIF regime has used religion as an ideology of repression. The opening up of the Sudan's oilfields increased the audience receptive to these generalized arguments. (pp. 176-7)

A good proportion of his readers will half recognise themselves in this profile, and be irritated by the way Johnson associates a commitment to dialogue with a shallowness of interest in the country and a self-interested moral rehabilitation of the present government in Khartoum. Whether or not such conflation takes place in the minds of individuals, it is certainly a part of the political process currently underway in the name of peace in Sudan. The United States and United Kingdom, among others, have had teams of diplomats doggedly pushing forward the series of peace talks that began in the Kenyan town of Machakos in

June 2002. Engagement with the Khartoum regime is, of course, central to the process; and the structure of the talks panders to the Government's proclivity for speaking in the name of the devout Muslims of the North. Sudan has remained on the US list of state sponsors of terror, but a measure of security cooperation between the two countries is said to have taken place since 9/11. It is widely assumed that American and European commercial and strategic interests stand to benefit in the event of a settlement.

Defenders of the process have privately acknowledged that it depends on motives that are not purely altruistic, and involves compromises with undemocratic authorities. But, they say, what is the alternative? Actively topple the regime? Or let the war drag on for another twenty years? They are under no illusion that signed agreements can only be landmarks on a very long road, if a sustainable peace is to be achieved.

At the core of Johnson's argument is a commitment to the integrity of indigenous moral communities, the peoples which have remained furthest from power and wealth in Sudan. To be sustainable, peace must involve a deep kind of self-determination for those communities. He refuses to countenance the idea, which many in the West and in Sudan's old elites share with the Islamic triumphalists, that a stable state requires the assimilation of the population to a common culture. His book is ample testament to the disastrousness of making this idea into a policy or, indeed, holding on to it as an assumption.

If the book offers a single explanation for Sudan's wars, it is the failure to achieve decentralised government. But the writing does not encourage so simple a reading. The preface provides a list of ten time-bound circumstances that may be considered to have produced the conflict. These may be drastically summarised as: (1) 19th century exploitation, (2) Mahdism, (3) colonial

conservatism, (4) botched decolonisation, (5) narrow nationalist movement, (6) failure to build on the Addis Ababa Agreement, (7) weakened economy in the 1970s, (8) Cold War clientism, (9) modern Islamism, (10) Foreign interests in oil and water. It is not clear if these are meant to be taken as the 'root causes' of the title. They are not flagged up as such in the text, nor is there any theoretical discussion of historical causation. Rather, the reader is left with the impression of a dense mass of roots; many fine lines of historical narrative.

The command of information brought to bear is highly impressive in its depth, range and clarity. Sometimes I found myself wondering how the author could be sure of some particular statement of fact, but nowhere did I feel confident that he was wrong. He has not, for the most part, closely sourced his assertions. To have done so would certainly have clogged up the text, but it reduces the potential of the work to dispel myths and settle controversies. Instead of an alphabetical bibliography there is a Bibliographical Essay. This, by itself, is an invaluable contribution to Sudan studies, though it contains few references to texts in Arabic (or other Sudanese languages), and no explanation of this. Is the Arabic historiography of this subject simply negligible, or do we need more bridges between literatures?

Johnson points out that general histories of the Sudan have until now been mainly concerned with central state institutions and rulers. His book is evidently intended as an antidote. However, it does not itself amount to a general history of the Sudan; it is a work about the war rather than the state. Given that subject, it admirably avoids sliding into the trap of suggesting that the main significance of the conflict is its effect on Khartoum. But this principled self-denial has costs. While the continuance of the war is related largely to the nature of the NIF regime, I gained little insight into it. On the other side, Johnson seems uncertain how far to identify his views with those of the Sudanese People's Liberation

Movement and Army. This results, for instance, in the statement (relating to the chronic conflict between Bor Dinka and Didinga around Chukudum) that: 'The Movement as a whole knows how to do the right thing, but at its highest level it does not have the will to do it' (p.109). The extremely problematic assumptions here, about institutional and personal agency, are not explored.

Although *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* is less definitive and analytical than its title suggests, it is easily the most comprehensive account of the course of conflict that has yet been published. It is salutary in its commitment to understanding and respect for groups whose cultures and lives are inconveniently complicated for those in higher places. It stands as a prophetic warning to those who may seek short cuts to peace.

Michael Medley

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All correspondence, articles and features relating to ***Sudan Studies***, and books for review, should be addressed to

Dr Justin Willis
Hon. Editor
Sudan Studies
43, North Bailey
Durham DH1 3EX

Fax: (0)191 374 4754
Email: Justin.Willis@durham.ac.uk

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It is helpful to have, very briefly (2-3 lines) any relevant details about the author - any post held, or time recently spent in the Sudan.

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