SUDAN STUDIES

for South Sudan and Sudan

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SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UK

The Sudan Studies Society of the UK was founded in 1986 to encourage and promote Sudanese studies in the United Kingdom and abroad, at all levels and in all disciplines. SSSUK is a registered charity (no. 328272).

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Membership:
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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; the right to attend the joint Annual General Meeting and Symposium and other occasional meetings organized by the Society.

EDITORIAL

Readers will have noticed that the front of **Sudan Studies** has a new format with a map showing Sudan and South Sudan and that both names are included in the new sub-title. Your Committee has thought hard about the best response for the SSSUK and the title of this Journal under the changed political circumstances. We have decided to retain the name SSSUK and the title **Sudan Studies**. We would like both parts of the 'old' Sudan to continue to see the Society as 'theirs' irrespective of which part the author or reader may come from. Our website contains an explanation of our thinking and it seems appropriate at this juncture to quote the statement issued by the SSSUK Committee in 2011:

'The Sudan Studies Society of the UK was founded 25 years ago to encourage the study of all aspects of Sudan: its peoples, languages and environments; its past and its present. Our founding was a reflection of the long association between the Sudanese and British people and a continuation of the very personal engagement many individuals in Britain and Europe have had with Sudan. At the time of our founding Sudan was just emerging from many years of dictatorship but was suffering from the aftermath of a severe famine and was in the early years of what became a prolonged civil war. These events had an inevitable impact on how we studied Sudan and the topics most often studied, but throughout the years the Society was open to all who had an interest in Sudan and the Sudanese, anywhere, at any time. The year 2011 was the most momentous year for Sudan since its independence and marks a significant change for all its peoples. With whatever mixed feelings one might have of regret for the division of the country and excitement at the emergence of the new nation of South Sudan, the Sudanese peoples retain a common history, share much socially and culturally, and remain interconnected in many ways as they face a new future. The SSSUK will continue to foster the study of all Sudanese regions and peoples, remain open to anyone interested in any aspect of the study of Sudan, and welcome members from Sudan's two independent nations'.

We trust that 2013 will be a year in which many of the sources of dispute between the two new countries will be settled and that many of the conflicts within the new countries will be solved.

From 23rd to 25th July 2012 the **9th International Sudan and South Sudan Studies Conference** was held in Bonn, Germany. A report on the meeting is followed by our own **Douglas Johnson's** timely, and very thoughtful, plenary paper relating **South Sudan and its history** in the context of this part of Africa. In turn, this is followed by four articles. The first is about **sand** blowing, which has been the bane of **Sudan Railways**, by **Hashim M Ahmed**, a former General Manager of Sudan Railways who suggests some possible solutions. The second, about the current crisis in the **Nuba Monutains** is by **Omer Shurkian** who has a particular interest in this area. The third by **Alhaj Salim Mustafa** discusses **public libraries** in the Sudan during the Condominium. Finally, **Dana Wilkins** writes from Juba about progress over **oil negotiations**.

This issue also contains two book reviews. The first, by **Mohamed B Ahmed** (Alsawi), is concerned with the situation in **Darfur**; whilst the second by a German postgraduate student at Oxford University, **Moritz Mihatsch,** discusses a German publication about **the future of the two new countries**.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Yes, it is the time of year! Subscriptions are due from 1st January. For *subscribers outside UK the rates are slightly reduced!* These new rates are given on the inside of the front cover. Rates for UK remain unchanged. UK members who pay UK tax are encouraged to Gift Aid their subscriptions at no cost to themselves. Remember that for the Society, and the individual, payment by standing order is the preferable way. Payment may also be made by cheque to the Treasurer or Pay Pal. Please see our website for further details.

REPORT ON
NINTH INTERNATIONAL SUDAN & SOUTH SUDAN STUDIES CONFERENCE
Bonn, Germany
23-25 July 2012

The International Sudan Studies Conference, sponsored by the Sudan Studies Association (USA) and the Sudan Studies Society of the UK has taken place every three years, hosted by different universities. In the past it has been held in Khartoum, Boston, Washington, Durham (twice), Cairo, Bergen, and Pretoria.

This year the conference was generously funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the German Research Foundation, and the Foundation for International Dialogue of the Savings Bank in Bonn. Because of this support no conference registration fees were charged, funds were available to bring Sudanese participants from abroad, and no exhibition fee was charged for the (admittedly modest) book exhibition. The SSSUK was able to provide travel grants to two student members who presented papers. The first day was rounded off by a bountiful reception at the Deutsche Welle Radio and TV offices.

Over 150 persons attended the conference. The majority were based in Germany, revealing how widespread current research on the two Sudans is in German universities, with participants coming from institutions in Bayreuth, Berlin, Bonn, Frankfurt, Augsburg, Leipzig, Cologne, Halle, Bremen, and Munich. But participants also came from the UK, USA, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Cameroon, South Africa and Thailand. Many were Sudanese working abroad. Some sixty-four academic institutions, twenty-four NGOs, seven governmental and international agencies, and three companies were represented.

The programme included four keynote/plenary addresses and twenty-two panels, demonstrating a very strong research focus on current issues and events. Whereas past international conferences have been dominated by papers on the central Nile Basin, with the disciplines of archaeology, history, literature and language strongly represented, this year there were only a few papers on Sudan's old heartland. The majority of presentations were on identity and citizenship, peace building, economic development, international relations of the two Sudans, and relations between the two Sudans, with a strong interest in the new international border region.

The keynote presenters were *Magdi El-Gizouli* from Ahfad University for Women, Omdurman, *Luka Biong Deng Kuol* from Kush Inc., Juba, South Sudan, *Karl Wohlmuth* of the University of Bremen, Germany, and *Douglas H. Johnson* from the SSSUK.

SSSUK members who presented papers were *Cherry Leonardi* ('Interpreters, interlocutors and an intermediary language: chiefs, the state and colloquial Arabic in South Sudanese history'); *Naomi Pendle,* who presented a paper co-authored with *Zoe Cormack* ('Acts of defiance as an expression of obedience: relations of power and questions of identity amongst university students and youth associations in South Sudan'); *Nicki Kindersley* ('Making and marking citizenship in South Sudan'); *Michael Medley* ('International aid to the Republic of South Sudan: commitments, rhetoric and evidence'); and *Pieter Tesch* ('Sudan and Mauritania: The experience of new Sahelian nations of Arabic identity but homes of ancient African civilizations').

Other UK-based presenters included journalist *Nel Hodge* ('South Sudan's place in the neighbourhood'), and *Carol Berger* ('Stagecraft and nation-building: creating a heroic narrative for an independent South Sudan').

The programme included the showing of videos, including the Granada TV Disappearing World documentary 'Orphans of Passage' by *Wendy James*, and 'Our Beloved Sudan', a new film by London-based film-maker *Taghreed Elsanhouri*.

Douglas Johnson

A NEW HISTORY FOR A NEW NATION
The Search for South Sudan's Usable Past

Douglas Johnson

In February last year I attended an event put on by South Sudanese in London celebrating the recently conducted independence referendum. Part of the celebration included a recitation of the history of South Sudan's liberation struggle by school children aged six to sixteen. Their joy at the impending birth of their new nation was understandable, even if some of their historical claims could (and did) make a professional historian wince. Later that year, on 9 July, I found myself sitting next to a Kenyan and a Ugandan watching the formal independence celebrations in Juba. This in itself marked a departure for Africa. Most African countries became independent on a negotiated 'transfer of power' from a colonial authority to a new national elite. South Sudan's independence had come from the directly expressed will of its people. There was a shared sense of the historical importance of the event beyond the exercise of self-determination by Africa's newest nation. *'This is where we came from'*, one of my companions commented, *'this is our home'*.

Certainly watching the arrival of several African heads of state – including Kenneth Kaunda, the last surviving member of the first generation of Africa's nationalist leaders – one sensed a change in Africa as well. When the Organization of African Union was founded in the early 1960s, Sudan was already locked in its first civil war, and South Sudan's exiled leaders, fighting what they called their own anti-colonial struggle, were shunned by the new African governments bound in solidarity to each other. South Sudanese warnings against the nascent OAU becoming a club for dictators proved all too prescient, but as John Garang, South Sudan's leader in the second civil war, later commented, *'we were the pariahs of Africa'*, and the warnings were ignored. Yet here Africa's leaders now were lining up to watch the flag of one African Union member go down, as that of a future member went up.

These two events made me reflect not only on how nations fashion and present their history, but how the historiography of South Sudan has been both shadowing and trailing African historiography more generally. The recitation by South Sudan's diaspora schoolchildren, scripted, no doubt, by

their parents, emphasizing the differences between the Arab and African Sudans and celebrating the liberation of the latter from the former, was not so different from the way the birth of the American nation was presented to my generation at a similar age. We were constantly reminded of the English tyranny from which we had liberated ourselves, especially when learning the words of our national anthem, a song that commemorated a minor incident in the war of 1812, fought some three decades after our independence; a war that – despite our capital being burned, our government nearly bankrupted, and parts of our territory under foreign occupation – we were taught we had won. And this emphasis on past hostility was strange for by the 1950s Britain had been our ally in two world wars, was then our strongest ally in NATO, and not only the current British prime minister but his most popular predecessor had been born to American mothers.

Nationalist and anti-colonial narratives were a familiar refrain some years later when I was introduced to the study of both modern African history and South Sudan as a student at Makerere University College. It was a pivotal period in East Africa's historiography as it shifted away from the study of colonial states to the study of indigenous kingdoms and societies. Our reading included both Sir Reginald Coupland's *East Africa and its Invaders,* where the emphasis was on the invaders, and *Zamani*, a new collaborative effort by African, British and American historians teaching at East African universities. By this time both resistance history and nation-building were displacing empire building as dominant themes.

What follows here is a personal reflection based on over forty years of research and writing on South Sudan's pre-colonial, colonial and contemporary history. Such reflection is timely as South Sudan is in the process of creating its own nationalist history, just as all other African nations did on achieving independence. But there is a wider history to think of as well, of South Sudan as a missing piece in the jigsaw of Africa's past. It has been common to think of South Sudan as isolated from the great centres of power and historical trends of the continent. But, nearly every major African language family is found within its borders, and as Sudan's colonial administrators found to their frustration, South Sudanese peoples were too engaged with, too much a part of, the surrounding region to be neatly disentangled. That same engagement later would contribute to the success of their liberation struggle. A new history

for a new nation, then, must see South Sudan's involvement with the wider region as part of the story of its engagement with, and then disengagement from the old Sudan.

At the time I began a serious study of South Sudan very little had been written about the history of its indigenous communities. There was nothing comparable to P.M. Holt's *The Mahdist State in the Sudan*, based as it was on the internal documents of the Mahdiyya. Books on the same period in South Sudanese history, restricted as they were to contemporary sources by outsiders, were more in the vein of Reginald Coupland, an examination of the invaders rather than the invaded. By contrast, it was the ethnographers, rather than the historians, who offered insights into the internal history of South Sudanese societies, their institutions, and the impact external events had on them. My reading became grounded in the ethnography of both professional and amateur anthropologists, a necessary step towards becoming a field-working historian.

The questions I wanted to ask were still influenced by prevailing trends in African history, and resistance was an obvious topic. But what seemed obvious outside the field became less so in the field, and the testimony I began gathering re-directed my research. Direct engagement with the societies I was studying made me look for different things in the written sources and led me to question not only the nature of anti-colonial resistance but the anthropological certainties of segmentary opposition. Rather than assume a timelessness about the way peoples were when first described in the 20th century ethnographies, I became interested in the processes of their becoming, in the trajectories and continuities between the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial pasts. I wrote about prophets and the nature of prophecy, environmental history and political ecology, the social networks of slavery and the social history of armies, and colonial administration as viewed by both the colonizer and the colonized.[1]

Over thirty years ago I wrote about the future of southern Sudan's past in a journal commemorating twenty-five years of Sudan's independence. At that time I was critical of a southern Sudanese historiography that lagged

[1] See for instance Douglas H. Johnson: *Nuer Prophets. A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994; (with David M. Anderson, eds) *The Ecology of Survival: Case Studies from Northeast African History*, London/Boulder CO: Lester Crook Academic Publishing/Westview Press, 1988; 'The structure of a legacy: military slavery in northeast Africa', *Ethnohistory*, 36/1, pp. 72-88; (ed.) *Governing the Nuer. Documents in Nuer History and Ethnography, 1922-31*, Oxford: JASO, 1993; and (ed.) *Sudan. British Documents on the End of Empire*, Series B, Volume 5, London: The Stationery Office, 1998.

far behind developments in the historiography of the rest of Africa with its fixed focus on the colonial period, its over-reliance on colonial administrative records, and its almost total exclusion of southern Sudanese from their own history. This focus on the colonial period, I wrote, *'obscured some of the broader trends in Southern Sudanese history, trends which are of great significance to the history of the rest of the Sudan'*. Southern Sudanese had been presented as atavistic or inert in response to externally initiated change. *'The old interpretation of the Southern Sudan's past'*, I concluded, *'supported the assumption that the Southern Sudanese were incapable of meeting the challenges of the modern world.'*[2] At that time (1981) I hoped that a new period of historical research, grounded on sources within southern Sudan and southern Sudanese communities, would produce a history more engaged with the internal dynamics of South Sudanese societies, and more in tune with the type of history being written about the rest of Africa.

The war intervened to derail such an advance. Not only did it prevent extended field work among South Sudan's many societies, but it involved the destruction of many of the local archival sources on which a new historiography could be partly based. The writing of Africa's history has continued to develop along with debates and arguments about the writing of that history, without much reference to or input from South Sudan. As South Sudan tries to catch up with the rest of the continent, it seems to be repeating many of the earlier stages in the development of African history.

John Lonsdale, in a celebration of the work of Terry Ranger, summarized some of the challenges Africanist historians have faced in their search for a usable past, and how these challenges have been met. In the 1960s nationalism encouraged a focus on the *'history of self-government'*, African agency and African initiative. This often promoted a *'vainglorious cultural nationalism'* that was increasingly criticized as *'intellectually flabby and methodologically complacent'*, particularly by 'radical pessimists' who saw African agency as irrelevant, producing no real change in power relations in a neo-colonial world. Scepticism about the value of African history was reinforced from a different angle at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, this time from the new humanitarians of the international aid agencies who *'felt that each new African emergency constituted yet another reason for ignoring the continent's*

[2] Douglas H. Johnson, 'The future of the southern Sudan's past', *Africa Today*, 28/2 (1981), pp. 40-41.

history.' Ranger had been one of the early promoters of both resistance and nationalist history, seeing continuities between early struggles of African societies to maintain their independence and their later struggles to regain independence, but he was not one to stand still and met the challenges of the critics of African history head on. He was among those Africanists who reasserted that *'human initiative in thought and action was the vital stuff of any history worthy of the name.'* The study of the African past is not just a parochial matter, for fine grained local African case studies *'can show how "the big why questions" of world history actually manifest themselves to human actors in real life, and how in real lives they can, if always provisionally, be answered."*[3]

Where does the history of South Sudan now fit into this broader picture of African history? In many ways it resembles where African history was in the 1960s: still dominated by themes established by an older literature on colonial administration and colonial administrators, or narratives of migration history of often doubtful methodology, but beginning to be re-directed by an emerging celebratory nationalism. Unlike the 1960s, South Sudanese history is already confronted and opposed by a well-developed Afro-pessimism, now informed by donor and NGO preoccupations with 'failed states', which is particularly sceptical and dismissive of South Sudanese attempts to forge a new nation. And while much more is now being published about South Sudan in academic writing and NGO grey literature than there ever was in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, the work that offers the greatest insights into South Sudan's recent and more distant past is still to be found mainly in the writings of anthropologists such as Simon Simonse, Sharon Hutchinson, Eisei Kurimoto, Jok Madut Jok, Conradin ('Kuacakuoro') Perner, and Wendy James: most of it based on field-work undertaken before the war.[4]

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[3] John Lonsdale, 'Agency in tight corners: narrative and initiative in African history', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 13/1 (2000), pp. 5-16.

[4] See for instance Simon Simonse, *Kings of Disaster: Dualism, Centralism and the Scapegoat King in Southeastern Sudan*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992; Sharon Hutchinson, *The Nuer in Crisis: Coping with Money, War, and the State, 1930-1992*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995; Eisei Kurimoto and Simon Simonse (eds), *Conflict, Age and Power in North East Africa: Age Systems in Transition*, Oxford: James Currey, 1998; Conradin Perner's multi-volume 'Living on Earth in the Sky' work-in-progress on the Anuak; Jok Madut Jok, *War and Slavery in Sudan*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001, and *Sudan: Race, Religion, and Violence*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2007; Wendy James, *'Kwanim Pa: The Making of the Uduk People. An Ethnographic Study of Survival in the Sudan-Ethiopian Borderlands*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, and *War and Survival in Sudan's Frontierlands: Voices from the Blue Nile*, 2006, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This highlights one of the main differences between the research context before the war and today. In the absence of well-established research institutions in South Sudan most research today is donor funded and initiated and supported by NGOs, who set the research agenda and provide the back-up and support for researchers in the field. NGOs being increasingly security-conscious and security-minded, entrenched within what Mark Duffield has termed 'fortified compounds', there are frequent formal and informal restrictions placed on researchers' movements and contacts with the communities with which they are supposed to engage. In some ways we are returning to the days of the early 20th century, with the constricted research of the steamer-bound Seligmans from which later anthropologists only with difficulty extracted themselves in order to engage more directly with South Sudanese peoples. Few ex-patriate researchers these days are familiar with the background work of earlier ethnographers and historians. Even fewer work through the medium of vernacular languages, for the reason that they have little opportunity to learn a local language. Research in South Sudan is in danger of being captured by the methods of fly-in-fly-out journalism and the hit-and-run rapid rural appraisals of NGOs. These can produce little more than snapshots, rather than extended and nuanced analyses. And there is little opportunity to change one's research questions and priorities, as I had to do, when confronted with a different set of perspectives in the field.

There is a hunger in South Sudan for a type of history that returns to a serious engagement with South Sudanese societies, peoples and individuals, as I have found out from the reception of my occasional 'Past Notes and Records' column in the Juba weekly newspaper, *The Pioneer*. There is also dissatisfaction with, even embarrassment at the type of national history rapidly manufactured in time for Independence Day, 2011. Rather than dwell on the regressive tendencies of such history I want to highlight some recent research which, I hope, will help to set more positive trends in South Sudanese historiography.

The study of the Condominium past in South Sudan has normally focused on the personalities and idiosyncrasies of colonial administrators, with timelines for the development of policy and local government institutions. It has been much less concerned with the personalities of local actors, or the impact of local institutions on South Sudanese societies. Cherry Leonardi's forthcoming study of the trajectory of chiefs' courts in South

Sudan is a departure from that norm. Begun as a document-based doctoral dissertation, and carried forward in field-based research funded by NGOs, whose assumptions about 'traditional' authority and 'traditional' leaders I hope she has subverted, it is solidly based on an ethnographic understanding of the communities covered by its case studies, and shows how custom and authority were transformed by interaction with a succession of invaders and governments. The themes of mobility (rather than migration), the accumulation of special knowledge, and chiefship being constructed between the town and the rural areas is a new perspective on the history of South Sudan where towns have normally been seen only as part of the history of the colonial rulers and not as part of the history of South Sudanese societies.[5]

There are similar themes overlapping the 19th and 20th centuries where investigation could question some of our remaining assumptions about South Sudan's past. What was the impact of trade and the *zariba* network on South Sudanese communities? Was there a wholesale depopulation of the region through slave-raiding, or did whole communities become invisible from external observation by moving away from the caravan routes? What are the links and continuities between the armies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the old *zariba* sites, and the urban civilian populations of both South Sudan's *malakiyas* and northern Sudan's towns? How far did the Southern Policy of the 1930s really isolate South Sudanese societies, and has anyone examined the record of the permits to trade to calculate the continuing involvement of Muslim traders in South Sudan's economy at that time?

The history of South Sudan's national independence struggle is equally problematic. The fact that it is already being contested is an indication that a single party line is unlikely to dominate. At various independence celebrations both inside and outside the country, in the billboards in Juba commemorating 'Martyrs Day', many of the persons killed in the SPLA's internecine fighting are hailed as both liberators and martyrs. They are not being air-brushed out of history, though perhaps this is evidence that a seamless thread of 'liberation' is being woven into the national historical consciousness, and the sharper edges of that struggle are being smoothed over. There is already a common consensus of the length and ultimate

[5] Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan: Making Histories of Chiefship, Community and State*, Woodbridge, James Currey, forthcoming.

intention of that struggle: leaving aside claims that it began in 1821 with Muhammad Ali's invasion of Nubia and Sennar, it is almost universally asserted that Sudan's first civil war began in 1955 and lasted seventeen years, and the eleven years of the Addis Ababa peace are rapidly fading into a mere blip on the screen of history.

Recent research by Øystein Rolandsen shows why we should question that narrative.[6] He is not the first to draw attention to the intervening period between the brief spasm of violence in August 1955 and the beginning of a more sustained military struggle in the early 1960s, but he raises three important questions: what was the conducive environment that led to the outbreak of civil war, what were the motives of the instigators of civil war, and how did the civil war begin? However tentative, or incomplete, his answers, these questions were not raised by Sudan's nationalist historians. The attempt to answer them now throws new light on the nationalist struggles in both Sudans, and calls into question the assumption that independence for South Sudan was the only and inevitable outcome. It opens up the possibility of a more detailed examination of the political history of the 1950s, when South Sudanese themselves offered alternatives to secession. It invites us to pose further questions. What led Fr. Saturnino Lohure, a parliamentarian committed to federalism in the 1950s, to become a separatist in the 1960s? How was Gordon Muortat transformed from a police inspector who saw his duty as preventing the 1955 disturbances from engulfing Wau to the civilian leader of a secessionist guerrilla movement?

These are welcome advances to our knowledge of South Sudanese as actors in their own history, but we ought not to neglect the broader picture of where South Sudan fits into world history. Migration histories have proven problematic, not only for their time depth and chronologies but in their master narratives. I never found a Nuer informant whose own ancestors had participated in the migration stories they had just told me. Examination of individual family histories, marriage ties and age-set links told a much more complex story of the construction of the Nuer-speaking communities east of the Nile in the 19th and 20th centuries. An even more complex picture of social, cultural and economic exchanges and

[6] Øystein Rolandsen, *Civil War Society? Political Processes, Social Groups and Conflict Intensity in the Southern Sudan, 1955-2005,* dissertation submitted for the degree of Philsophiae Doctor, Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo, 2010.

borrowings is revealed by historical linguistics. The work of Chris Ehret has done much to complicate the old migration theories of African history, revealing a movement of languages and ideas not necessarily confined to or dependent on the movement of whole peoples.[7] Building on the broader context already supplied by the linguistic historians of Africa, applying similar research methods to the peoples of South Sudan will reveal a depth of commonality they have with each other, as well as with the wider region of North East Africa.

It has been the complaint of many South Sudanese that South Sudan was excluded in the writing of Sudanese history. What was lost by this exclusion? If we re-examine aspects of 'northern' Sudanese history we often find that 'southern' Sudanese were also there. John Garang was fascinated by the many Nilotic-sounding place names he found listed in the chapters on the ancient Nile valley in the second volume of the UNESCO General History of Africa. He was not alone. Shilluk, Dinka and Nuer all have an expression, *'kar tuom'* which translates as the juncture where a branch meets a trunk: a more accurate description of the confluence of the Blue and White Niles than an elephant's trunk. Archaeological evidence has revealed the pre-historic presence in old Khartoum of peoples of a physical type now closely associated with the Western Nilotic-speakers. While I believe it is naive, and probably unprovable, that the early inhabitants of the Khartoum region were a people who called themselves Collo, Jieng or Naath, it is certainly reasonable to conclude that ancestral Western Nilotic speakers lived far beyond the present disputed borders of South Sudan, and that not all of them left in the grand migrations now told to explain the peopling of South Sudan. A more rigorous application of historical linguistics to the analysis of place names could reveal more about the ethnic and linguistic bedrock on which Sudan's northern populations rest.

Three of the most dramatic events of the 19th century – the death of General Gordon, the Battle of Omdurman, and the Fashoda Incident – also involved southern Sudanese. Gordon is usually depicted as being speared by a fanatic Muslim Arab. Yet the only eye-witness accounts that corroborate each other identify the killer as a tall black rifleman of the *jihadiyya* – the slave riflemen of the Mahdist army recruited from the

[7] See for instance Christopher Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1800*, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2002.

southern Sudan, Nuba Mountains, Dar Funj and Dar Fur – many of the same regions that later supplied recruits to the SPLA.[8] The Mahdiyya might have derived its ideological strength from a jihadist theology, but its military success rested in large part on its recruitment of these riflemen into its army, as one recent history of Western Bahr al-Ghazal suggests.[9] These slave soldiers later played a decisive part in the overthrow of the Mahdist state as the frontline troops in the Egyptian Army on Karrari plain in 1898, and the Shilluk soldiers among them were instrumental in convincing the king of the Shilluk not to commit to a French alliance at Fashoda soon afterwards.[10]

A more inclusive history of Sudan would not by itself have prevented the break-up of the country, but just as I end on this reminder of what Sudan lost by the exclusion of South Sudan from its national narrative, so South Sudan will be all the poorer if its history were to be written in parochial, essentialist terms. South Sudan might no longer be part of Sudan, but both countries still are part of the Nile Basin, the region of North East Africa, and the African continent, and their histories can and should reflect those connections.

[8] Douglas H. Johnson, 'The Death of Gordon: a Victorian myth', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 10/2 (1982), pp. 285-310.

[9] Edward Thomas, *The Kafia Kingi Enclave: People, Politics and History in the North-South Boundary Zone of Western Sudan*, London/Nairobi: the Rift Valley Institute, 2010.

[10] Ronald M. Lamothe, *Slaves of Fortune: Sudanese Soldiers in the River War, 1896-1898*, Woodbridge: James Currey, 2011.

THE EFFECT OF DRIFTING SAND AND SAND DUNES ON SUDAN RAILWAYS:

A Sustainable Solution

Hashim M Ahmed

INTRODUCTION

Sand drift and movement of sand dunes, unavoidable natural hazards, are a continuous headache for the railways. Although a relatively minor problem compared to the many issues concerning the complicated work of the railways, sand has a direct impact on the railway track and poses a serious threat to the safe running of trains. The sand dunes accumulating near the track also cause a lot of trouble for the track staff. Sand is an on-going problem which needs a sustainable solution.

The effect of drifting sand and sand dunes on Sudan Railways has been a serious concern of mine from my work in the railways until now. As such I aim to find a sustainable solution which can be adopted for rail and road, and equally for the other institutions which may suffer from the effect of such hazards.

DRIFTING SAND AND SAND DUNES

Wind and storms occur very frequently in Sudan causing movement of sand and loess, resulting in sand dunes and sand accumulation in many areas. In some parts of Sudan it is seasonal, varying according to the nature of the area; in other parts it is year round. Up to now what has been done is, to some extent, an efficient response to minimise the effect of sandstorms on the track, but it is not resolved completely.

Drifting sand is a source of considerable trouble and expense to railways, highways, irrigation and other infrastructures. Unfortunately, successive governments have neglected the issue and left it for the departments that are affected by it; for each to solve in its own way. No support has been provided, and no co-ordination between the various departments has been initiated, or need for it has

been acknowledged. It is a major problem which needs major co-ordinated action by all the sectors concerned at all levels and with the central government's full financial support; from a central government which can also call for international assistance.

Drifting sand or dunes formed by wind action occur universally. Therefore, we should make use of the experience of other railways and road departments. Many countries face drifting sand and sand dune problems similar to Sudan, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, parts of North and South America, and China. Indeed, they exist in nearly every country where deserts and infrastructure meet. Whilst some countries have remedial measures which can be implemented elsewhere, an effective solution depends upon the local conditions, and local experience of each country.

This paper will consider these sand problems, their effect on rail and road traffic, and the safety of the running of the trains. Based on my background as a railway man I will suggest a permanent solution supported by other temporary arrangements. The experience of previous supervisors and engineers also guide any solutions offered. Furthermore, I will give some recommendations for consideration and, ultimately, if approved, adoption by the Civil Engineering Department of SRC (Sudan Railways Corporation)

SAND: ITS BEHAVIOUR AND SOME OF ITS EFFECTS ON THE RAIL TRACK

Sand particles are carried in suspension by the wind whose current moves the particles around and over obstacles. At a definite velocity, they will continue hanging in the air until the velocity falls below the rate necessary to overcome the pull of gravity or the lifting force of the wind current or swirl.

The fall in velocity occurs when part of the air currents strike an obstacle such as a bush, structure, or dead air pocket, like those caused by a rail cutting, and the sand is deposited. The quantity deposited varies according to size, shape and height of the obstacle. Moving sand or loose soft sand blown by the wind will deposit on the

track where it will build up on the encountered embankment as the wind progresses.

The track being an obstruction, particles will have no alternative but to settle on the bank (subject to its height) and on the side of and between the rails, filling the gap between the sleepers first then building up to cover the whole area up to the top of the rails, if not stopped by immediate removal. It would result in jamming of the switches, points and crossings and signalling connections etc. Frequent disturbances such as delays, imposed reduction of traffic speed, safety issues, blockages and derailments would be encountered. In view of this it is not only possible for derailment of trains to result (in fact this has happened on a number of occasions) but there have also been many traffic delays due to the accumulation of sand on the rails. The severity of the problem is demonstrated by the number of accidents, especially when human casualties are involved. Also, considerable maintenance cost can be incurred if frequent removal of material is required or if the accident results in damage to track or rolling stock.

In trying to prevent these accidents, the Civil Engineering Department of Sudan Railways tried multiple methods for the "prevention of accumulation", reducing the impact, and the "removal of sand"- which is a source of headache for various locations along the network. Of course, some trials of collecting, impounding or stopping the sand before reaching the track and enhancing its deposition could be adopted.

However, it is mainly the responsibility of the Civil Engineering Department, which is why they produced a systematic procedure. This stems from previous local experience and extends from making use of meteorological forecasts and evaluation procedure through to producing regular "orders" and "instructions". They involve the severity of winds, their velocity, duration and expected effects on the line up to the necessary action required for reversal.

Instructions are available for both winds and rains which cause washouts on the track. They are a supplement of leaflet No. 10. They are based on the experience of the railwaymen working on track construction and maintenance, and serve as the railway rule book to those in the Civil Engineering Department. It has to be committed to memory and applied to the letter. However, it should be subject to updating and continuous improvement; dictated by environmental changes or conditions of running, building and operating the railways.

In remote areas, to avoid the sand dunes, people follow the track whilst either crossing or moving along the track. It defines the direction and, more importantly, the railway embankment and its vicinity is more stable as a walkway. Most frequently, pedestrians use the area between the rails, even when on animal back, as it is like an all-weather road and well drained. This poses a great risk to them and to the railway. I remember very well when I was on the train returning from a duty trip to Nyala and heading towards Babanousa. I heard a continuous whistle, a 'horn blow', coming from the locomotive when the train was in the section between the Sharif and Tibon stations, so I looked out through the saloon-car window to see what was happening. There was somebody riding a donkey moving between the rails. After the three warning whistles the driver continued to blow the horn, and still the person did not dismount or leave the track. The driver of our passenger train was unable to brake, and after a few moments I could hear the crushing of meat and bones under the wheels of my saloon-car. The train stopped after the safe braking distance and we reported the incident and carried out the usual formalities for such cases before we had to walk back to collect the remains of the man and his donkey in a bag to take to Babanousa. This was a hard lesson for both the railways and pedestrians.

Nevertheless, this risk will still prevail if our network is not protected by a rail boundary. The risk of a train being derailed by a cow also still exists. This actually happened in 1969 when I was in charge in the Babanousa District, and reminds me of an ancient anecdote:

"It was mentioned that George Stephenson had been asked at a House of Commons Select Committee what would happen if one of his steam locomotives hit a cow. He replied: 'So much the worse for the cow'".

I think in our case we cannot say this as we must, at least, have an adequate type of fencing or protection to the railway boundary first!

In most cases, the sand residue on the top and sides of the rails restricts the speed of trains. It also creates a noisy-crunchy ride by wheel on rail thus affecting the running quality of the track.

Vehicles cross the track at illegal crossings. They block the track with loads of sand that become a serious hazard. This leads to accidents and derailments. The railway has designated "legal crossings" in defined areas where the track is protected by check rails placed on the sides of the main rails. These are frequently checked and cleared of any sand, as part of the sand clearing practice carried on by our permanent way inspectors and track supervisors. Any vehicle that crosses the rail at points other than those designated commits an offence.

Our track is un-ballasted because the rails and sleepers are laid on the embankment of natural soil in the area, whether clay, sand or conglomerate. Therefore in sandy soil, specifically in the dry season, it has been noticed that the loose dry sand is easily vibrated out of position thus resulting in low joints and misalignment, particularly at rail joints. The drift also causes considerable wear to the rails and the wheels of rolling stock.

Drift sand accumulates on the track in cross-drains, bridge openings, pipe culverts, retaining walls, ramps and platforms, station buildings and other buildings (workshops, depots, signal-boxes, staff quarters and houses). This requires immediate removal to allow for the passage of trains. In bridge openings, this requires removal just before and during the rainy season, from the middle of July to the end of September. Against houses and buildings the accumulation requires

removal monthly or annually according to the rate of accumulation and within the maintenance programme of the Civil Engineering Department.

EFFORTS OF SOME OF THE FIRST ENGINEERS TO COPE WITH THE SAND PROBLEM

Mr. H. Duncombe Bindley, the chief Civil Engineer of Sudan Railways (1934-1940), has gained some very interesting experience in combating the sand problem. He mentioned in some of his office notes in the 1920s, commenting on its behavior and effects, that:

"Sand dunes where they exist, are more troublesome to deal with as their movements are spasmodic, depending upon the frequency of wind storms or upon wind of sufficient velocity to cause movement of the sand particles"

Mr. Bindley discussed the way the C.E. Department was dealing with the changes in the sand movement and its behaviour, its effects and the effort exerted in dealing with it, in only one of the affected areas:

"Between 1920 and 1927 considerable movement of the sand dunes occurred at times of strong windstorms and train delays were not uncommon. The length [of track] affected was divided into the following sections:

a) Covered with sand with slightest wind
b) Covered with sand with very strong or continuous wind
c) Clear of sand

(Sand clearing parties with telephone communication were & still are established at kilometres 415 & 445)"

"At the end of 1927 the patrol orders were revised to allow for more latitude in the dispatch of trains under conditions of:

1) Wind of less than 4 hours duration
2) Wind of more than 4 hours duration."

Similar regulations also apply to the rainfall and washouts as mentioned before, according to the Appendix of regulations of

"leaflet number 10", a famous appendix known to railway men who are responsible for the rail track.

He reflects upon the problems of his department in his notes. He observes that the lack of continuity in follow up delayed any results of the solutions that were tested, thus impeding and enormously affecting the arrival at a permanent or effective solution:

"Both drift sand and sand dunes have been the subject of correspondence and theories and experiments but the large construction programmes and discontinuity in District Officials during the last 10 years has resulted in a lack of definite results of any value from such experiments as have been carried out".

But this is not only the problem for combating the effects or after-effects of drifting sand.

Cost Incurred in Solving the Problem:
Cost effectiveness has also been an issue. Giving an example of one of the track sections affected, Mr. Bindley pointed out in his report that:

"Apart from clearances of sand from the track carried out by the section maintenance gangs there have been parties employed in Abu Hamad district for the removal of sand from houses and buildings and from places where the track is in cuttings, amounting to a sum of £E350 per annum on average".

It is important to point out that 1 Egyptian pound was equivalent to 2.89 US Dollars in the 1930s. To my mind this was a relatively big sum for dealing with only one small area of the track, and spent on solving a problem not caused by the railway staff or the running of trains, i.e. Sudan Railways is not to blame!

Solving the problem of sand accumulation on the tracks constitutes a high percentage of the budget of track maintenance despite its low importance. However, the justification of the railway department is

that it is one of those jobs that has to be done irrespective of the cost, no matter how high it may be. This is just like the floods and washouts of the track and embankments in the rain affected areas where the railways have an open budget for this; it being a natural disaster ("Act of God"- contractually it is considered as *force majeure*).

Cost effectiveness could be applied through the method adopted for dealing with it. This is why we are looking for an economically feasible and sustainable permanent solution.

HOW DID WE SOLVE OR RESPOND TO THE PROBLEM?

At present, after 85 years of the Bindley Report, it looks as if we are resigned to the *status quo;* accepting the reality of dealing with the accumulation as it happens or watching sand dunes as they cross the track, and not taking (any) preventive measures or trying any effective solutions. However, this is not the case because this is a responsibility and duty that has to be shouldered by the SRC. As a matter of fact, all the successive engineers and track supervisors who worked after Bindley in those sections have made a lot of effort. They have gone through parts of experiments carried out to keep away sand dunes from approaching the track, and improved them. Also, they have been trying various methods within the facilities available to them to protect the track and observe the safe running of trains as well as the safety of the people and railway employees. But unfortunately all of them were temporary or finite solutions, save the introduction of some modern techniques. So, although Sudan Railways has taken considerable and appreciable efforts, a practical, permanent or sustainable solution has yet to be applied.

Even in the case of washouts, where the streams or channels of running or flooding storm waters change their course, we used to insert pipe culverts at the washout location temporarily. It was then put under observation and masonry; facing and bank protection is built on the upstream and downstream side. If the amount of discharged water in the coming season needed a bridge it would be recommended by the concerned district and budgeted for. And a

similar attitude has been followed in facing drifting sand and sand dunes, as far as temporary or immediate measures are taken to keep the continuity and safe running of trains. This of course is not a proper permanent solution. It is most appropriate to channelling the floodwater, training those streams, *khors* or *wadis,* and directing them to lead to our existing bridges. Thus changes of course are prevented, making use of bridges and avoiding washout of a new area adjacent to the bridge; making it an idle one. In fact, there are quite a number of bridge spans which have become unused due to changes in the hydrological regime and uncontrolled flow behaviour, particularly in the Eastern Sudan, as in Khor Mog.

Evidently there is an analogy in behaviour, a similarity in prevention methods and the temporary traditional way for treatment of the effects of drifting sand, floods and washouts through the years in Sudan Railways. In this respect, it was mentioned by Mr. Bindley that

"The results of experiments made in this country [Sudan] are meagre and it would appear that, before we can come to any satisfactory solution of the problem of how to cope with the drift sand and sand dunes, and thereby eliminate the annual cost of sand clearing and patrolling parties, we shall have to carry out some extensive and varied trials of different methods."

Sand Movement and track maintenance:
In winter or summer, the general direction of the wind in Sudan is from north-west or north, with variable speeds. During the rainy season it blows mostly from south to southeast.

Of course there are often sandstorms (*haboobs*) right across from the eastern to the western margins of Sudan. This can be noticed from the sequence of movement of sand dunes which take a typical half-moon shape and proceed across the desert or open space till redirected by an obstruction like the track embankment, bridges or other structures.

It is those winds coming from north and south that drift the sand or sand dunes towards track running east and west. The sand

accumulates on the track which is running nearly at right angles to the direction of the wind. This is the track that faces the worst effect of wind.

For that part of the track network running north and south or in the direction of the wind, it is less affected as the sand is carried in suspension along the track, and is deposited between rails, leaving less precipitates, if any, than in the other direction. The head of the rail is often clear of sand.

This is so with the exception of the Wadi Halfa-Abu Hamed line as it lies in the desert, runs in north/west - south/east direction, and has zero embankments and is located in an almost flat desert area. The same can be said of most sections of the Kassala-Haiya line with the exception, of course, of the Tokar and Aroma areas which are well known for having the worst sand drifts in Sudan.

In the Wadi Halfa-Atbara and the Port Sudan lines the problem is further complicated by the lack of vegetation and the ferocity of the sand storms, lack of water, the desert weather and the difficult living conditions, not overlooking the lack of staff and their reluctance to work in the desert. The Wadi Halfa-Abu Hamad railway section is reputed for being the worst hardship area in Sudan Railways.

So the worst areas for the influence of drifting sand and sand dunes to be considered are the line sections Atbara-Port Sudan, Wadi Halfa-Abu Hamed, Abu Hamad-Karima, Haiya-Kassala, Kosti-El Obeid, and El Rahad-Nyala. Those western extensions exclude some stretches of soil such as the line west of Um Rawaba, which is known as the *"Baggara repeated pattern"* (i.e. land stripes of sand soil- clay soil- sand soil, etc.)

The danger and effect of moving sand and sand dunes is now increasing due to drought and desertification caused mainly by overgrazing, particularly in North Kordofan and Darfur. The DECARP Study pointed out that the Sudan deserts are moving at the rate of 5-6km per annum and that this is man induced; highlighting

the findings that the desert encroachment in Sudan is a man-made phenomenon, caused by such land misuse pressures as overgrazing, irrational cultivation, wood cutting, and deforestation. This is even endangering the Gezira agricultural scheme in central Sudan, according to some studies!

Other related matters

The effect of drifting sand does not only threaten the track and the livelihood of the people and our workers, but its effect also extends to other structures which lie in the way of drifts; to mention but a few:

Signal cabins where the building itself (which contains the leverage and interlock system) stops the sand particles, resulting in its precipitation and accumulation behind the building walls. Not only this, but the moving sand particles precipitate on the pulleys, wires and signaling rods, switches and the points and crossings thereby obstructing their movement. This leads to accidents if not well observed and cleaned regularly especially after *haboobs*. Moreover, obstructions in the station act as temporary piling areas where, with the slightest wind, the sand particles from those piles move to cover the track and signal equipment.

Station buildings, staff quarters and other houses. If the accumulating sand is not removed regularly, then over time the houses get covered up to window level or even roof level. On many occasions, due to negligence or meagre removal facilities, some houses have been covered to the extent that when moving on a gentle gradient of a sand dune you found yourself on the top edge of the boundary wall of the staff houses, with some of the spilt sand inside the house. For some of the inhabitants they are just living with it! However, in other circumstances channels have been dug in the sand opposite doors and ventilators, in order to prevent it from getting inside as reported by supervisors in some stations like Ogrine on the Port Sudan line.

Workshop buildings that also have track sidings which lead to the main line.

Ground water tanks in stations. Placed adjacent to the track they are used by the staff for work and daily household uses.

Bridge openings and pipe culverts under the track. The accumulation of sand blocks them, annulling their functions.

Construction works. If there is a strong *haboob* it causes stoppage of work or delays to any construction or maintenance works, especially the work of our plate-layers and track-workers.

RECCOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

It is practically impossible to establish hard and fast rules for combating the effects of sand dunes or drifting sand accumulation; each must be treated according to form, height, behaviour etc. Also, there are many methods of protection against drifting sand and several means of dealing with its accumulation on track and structures. All these depend greatly on home conditions and experience, which vary from country to country and locality to locality.

Nevertheless, with the previous experience of SRC and other railways in mind, the application of the following solutions would be recommended for solving the sand problems. They constitute temporary and immediate effect solutions as well as a more permanent one.

Immediate and Temporary solutions:

Removal by using hand shovelling which should be done frequently and immediately after storms to remove any accumulated sand, in order to avoid train delays and accidents. Sudan Railways has been, and still is, trying to cope with the problem by following this method.

Fencing is used to obstruct the movement of sand and accumulation away from the track. Solid Fencing as wind breakers, flyers or check boards have been known and applied as obstructions by SRC in some of the most suffering areas along the Atbara-Port Sudan Line. They could be of local scrap steel material or old used wooden sleepers. If

sleepers are used they could be fitted by placing on the ground to a depth of 1½ to 2 feet, and adding additional rows on top if more height is needed. Mr. David Sperring, who was responsible for track maintenance and had good experience (he was recruited in 1964, the same year I joined the Civil Engineering Department at railway headquarters, in Atbara), postulates that the use of flexible lightweight materials is:

"an advantage so that the fences can be stored and transported easily, that cheap and expendable local materials are best. For initial installation the base of the fence should be above ground for about 300mm."

He also states that open fencing is better than solid fencing. However, as Mr. Sperring adds in a paper presented at a symposium at the Institution of Civil Engineers on 25-26 June 1992 in Westminster, London:

"impounding fences eventually fill solid with deposited material which becomes smooth and streamlined, no longer acting as a trap. The only solution is to successively raise the fence to its practical limits".

As for fencing material, however, wooden fences are to be avoided as the nomads appropriate every bit of wood, for daily use as firewood for cooking or other domestic purposes. Consequently, flattened old steel drums or any similar cheap material could be used in the absence of surveillance for any wooden structures. With regard to using steel as an alternative, the chief Engineer of the A.T. and S.F. Railways in America reflects that:

"We are experimenting with steel cement casks and oil drums filled with sand, and spaced a few feet apart in a line paralleling our tracks a few hundred feet to windward. These rows of obstructions we hope will cause sufficient eddy currents to precipitate deposit before reaching our tracks. What we are going to do eventually to rid ourselves of this accumulation of sand remains to be seen!"

For us bulldozing is applied to dissipate the accumulated sand in structures on the leeward side. For the windward side precautionary measures have to be taken so as not to allow the wind-blown loose sand back to the track after removing it.

Locating Fences. Fencing could be one single row or a number of parallel rows, space permitting. For the effectiveness of such a solution considerable space or acquisition of land is essential. So far there is no shortage of space along the railway routes in Sudan's desert areas!

Bulldozing. This is the most direct method for dealing with the accumulation that results from obstructions, whether natural or artificial features. Bulldozing is very essential in cuttings where the deposited sand is trapped in big quantities, as cuttings are often fouled with the sand blown in from one or the other side of the line. If it is not removed on a regular basis it will be blown to cover the rails by the slightest wind in either direction. This poses a risk to the safe running of trains. To reduce the risk and protect the cutting from sand accumulation, they can be widened as much as means allow. We used to have an item (Job) in the track maintenance budget under the heading "Widening of Cuttings", in the respective districts along the railway network. As far as allowable, one would recommend a minimum distance of ten metres from the centre of the track besides restoring the slopes and making them as less steep as possible.

Sand Ploughing. As bulldozing cannot be carried out between the track rails, earlier in the 1970s, the use of a sand plough (a similar device to the snow plough) was suggested. It is the most efficient method of removal available. This was first introduced by Plasser and Theurer of Austria. With the SRC accepting the proposal of the Civil Engineering Department, we introduced a sand plough to work in the East as a trial. This was to be followed by another one for the Western Railway Extensions, and as a backup. This was very successful as an immediate and temporary solution for sand removal.

Nevertheless, the sand plough still has to be followed by manual shovelling for refined clearing in the areas between the rails which are out of reach of the plough, as well as brushing off those sand particles covering the rail surface. Nonetheless, there is less manual shovelling work.

The other problem is that the bulk of the removed sand is left on the sides of the track and runs the risk of returning back to the rails soon after any slight wind. Subsequently, we consulted with Plasser and Theurer and we came to know that they had considered this problem before and proposed a shoot to be attached to the plough in order to pump the sand and throw it as far as 7-10 metres from the centre of the track. It could then be removed further by bulldozers. A similar arrangement, it was mentioned, has been used in Saudi Arabia.

So far, a sand plough with a pump and a shoot is the only suitable alternative but, although it reduces and replaces manual labour, the initial cost is high. In spite of this it must still be used in the absence of a more permanent solution, as it pays back in the long run. It is essential, as part of the mechanization of track maintenance policy which we plan to be adopted by SRC, because it reserves the effort of the scarce railway workers for the main technical work of track maintenance.

Stabilization by Placing Clay Layers. In some places where the bank is low and the sand is causing a lot of trouble, we could try placing a layer of hard clay about six inches thick and smoothing it down. It could be placed over a distance of ten feet on each side of the track to the top of the sleepers. This should permit the sand to blow over and away from the track and not to lodge or drift as it otherwise does. A trial strip would have to be done first and its effects monitored. Of course the clay to be used should be of hard non-expansive soil.

Ironically enough, while we are recommending the surfacing of the bank with clay soil to avoid deposition of sand particles, Sudan Railways is facing a problem with the clay soil in other areas with expansive clay soils. The track suffers from rail sinking which takes

place in most of the wet areas of expansive soil (cotton soil), especially in the central region (Gezira area,), South Blue Nile (Sennar-Damazin line) and Eastern Region (Gedaref area).

In the Gedaref rainy area where the track is laid on the expansive soils of the Butana we are obliged to stabilize the soil by dumping ballast under the track, brought from a nearby quarry owned by SRC; a similar problem that faced the Chinese when constructing the Wad Medani-Gedaref road. They had, I understand, to use huge amounts of cement and limestone to stabilize the sub-base.

Oil Surfacing. This is analogous to clay surfacing whereby we can get a smooth hard surface on each side of the track, including the embankment surface between the sleepers and rails, by using oil (or just the shoulders and slopes as a start). A reasonable amount can be placed to form a sort of crust, which will harness the sand bed and allow it to blow away without having the time to form a drift, thus preventing accumulation on the track.

This idea was suggested during the 1970s, in one of SRCs conferences, as a method of overcoming the raveling of slopes and the movement of dunes. However, it was not tried maybe because the oil or asphalt was not adequate, or because of its use as furnace oil. But now following recent discoveries and oil production in Sudan this idea is worth trying, using crude oil or waste oil with a specified percentage of asphalt content, and considering its cost effectiveness beside any other technical issues.

According to Mr. R. H. Baldock, state highway Engineer of Oregon, they tried the oiling method. The following note of his experience could be made use of as a guideline:

On the quality of oil:
"Our experience indicates that a light grade fuel, having an asphalt content of not over 50% with a viscosity below 35 (saybolt furol at 122 degrees F) should be used. It should be applied at the rate of 0.12 to 0.20 gals per sqr yd."

On the equipment:
"The equipment used consisted of a steam boiler to heat the oil, an ordinary pressure road distributor equipped with hose 300 ft, a 2½ inch old fire hose having a V-shaped nozzle, a small truck and ladder for climbing cut banks. The oil was heated to 175 degrees F"

And finally on its application:
"It is not desirable to apply too heavy a coating of oil as the principle advantage of oiling is that it enables weed and grass to start in the cracks of the crust so that in many instances a dune is completely restrained by natural vegetation within a few years"

A similar experience in use of oil is reflected by Mr. Smart's report (Mr. G. C. Smart is one of the road masters working with J. R. Davis of great western railway, lower Colombia in the state of Washington – Roadway report, page 399) on facing sand dunes:

"Where oil is used it should be of a very heavy asphalt base, and should be heated before applying and the surface of sand dunes given a heavy coating. This is fairly permanent, but has to be gone over occasionally. This is only practical where the area covered with sand is not too extensive".

As for the cost-effectiveness and application:

"They figure that one gallon of oil will cover one square yard in good shape. The cost of applying varies as oil is sprayed on with pressure, a work train equipped with pump, tank cars and facilities for heating being necessary".

However, this solution depends on local environmental and weather conditions in Sudan. Thus the location and its suitability for application must be considered. For this the experience of road engineers could be called for.

During the British days, and some good days after independence, Sudan Railways was responsible for its own roads in big cities and the

harbour grounds. It had its own works unit and equipment, which has since been dismantled, and in its last days used to co-operate with the municipality. The work was ultimately transferred to the municipality in Khartoum.

It should also be noted that our rail track is not protected by a boundary and is open to the movement of livestock. So, one of the setbacks of this method is that if the livestock are allowed to run at large over the oiled spots they can soon destroy the entire crust. Therefore, if adopted, this has to be catered for when thinking of precautionary measures to be taken.

Cutting Channels. Channels are cut through and across the direction of the sand dunes to stop any forward movement of the dunes. Of course, the disadvantage of this method is that those channels, through time, will eventually be filled. Therefore arrangements have to be made for the continuity of this solution if found effective, either by removal of sand or digging new channels in a suitable location.

Permanent or Long Term Solution

Plant Fences. A sustainable solution, which I would strongly support, is the use of plant fences as a means of impounding the material before it reaches the track. While preparing for this, by planting some appropriate plants, particularly those that do not need a lot of water as most of the sand problems lie in desert-like areas (the most important one is the Atbara-Port Sudan line), all the suitable temporary other means of sand removal and track protection can be carried out until this solution bears fruit.

So far it could be the best long term solution to the problem of deposition of wind-blown particles that is generally affecting rail as well as roads, such as that prevailing in Eastern Sudan. This solution also meets environmental needs as well as being visually acceptable, just like the green belt south of Khartoum. The only disadvantage is that it may be expensive in the short term.

However this is counter-balanced by the numerous advantages and long-term benefits which more than compensate for the initial cost:

1) Permanence
2) Visual acceptance
3) Facilitation of service reliability
4) Offsetting emergency
5) Saving of maintenance costs and efforts, and cost of removing sand

PRACTICAL STEPS

Location and Bodies Involved.

For success, it is recommended that the concerned bodies have good land use management and contribute to an effective programme of vegetation development, so as to avoid the occurrence of drifting sand. As such, additional land will be needed beyond the existing Sudan Railways borders, as the extent of planting will go well beyond the land required for the railway alone. Also, a tree line or hedge for this belt may be useful in replacing the need for a boundary fence, if feasible. If it is government land, permission has to be obtained and this solution could well be part of the government plans for those ministries like the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Forestry and Natural Plants.

The Ministry of Transport will be an interested party as it is responsible for the roads and railways. Even the Oil Pipe Line Authority is concerned as they have two booster stations; one at Atbara, and the other North of El Rojal railway station which are highly susceptible to sand drifting.

Programme.

Planting shall be treated as long term, with those sections most at risk treated first. The records of the Civil Engineering Department of SRC are the best guide for prioritising. It is important for the proper implementation of this project that this department cooperates with other concerned departments and interested bodies; with a vision of joint action and exchange of views. These may include in addition to the above, government meteorologists, botanical specialists, rural

water department, Ministry of Irrigation (river and water supply authority), local authorities in the areas affected, and other related international bodies represented in Sudan.

Suitable Types of Plant.

As for the type of plant, its cultivation and land type requirements, agronomists should be consulted on the best vegetation to use in those areas. The main specification should be that it requires minimum attention to become established and no further attention after establishment. Vegetative cover is provided either by seed sowing or by planting established vegetation. Preference should be studied, and water problem as a factor should be considered.

Benefits are obtained from planting grasses as well as shrubs. The methods and type of plants used will depend on local conditions. As an example of successful treatment in East Sudan to control sand deposition, and emphasizing the suitability, Mr. D. Sperring in his paper on cost-effective track maintenance referred to the following:

"the forestry department planted seedlings of mesquite alongside the tarmac all weather road in some sections between Port Sudan and Khartoum on the southern fringes of the Sahara Desert. Within three years many trees flourished. The ability of the roots of plants to bind sand is well known but the conditions must be suitable for them to become established".

The success of mesquite was because:-

a) It requires very little water, just a few days of rain each year is sufficient;
b) Seeds are readily available locally;
c) When young the plants are not eaten by local livestock;
d) When established, goats and camels eat the crop of the tree - a seed pod-and the seeds are spread around the area of vegetation in the droppings of the animals, thus providing further propagation of the mesquite and extending the area of stabilization.

As precedence, as early as the forties, before the expansion of Khartoum North Town (then known as Halfaya) there was a large empty space between the town and old Shambat Village. A belt of mesquite was grown in a west-east layout which was very successful. It served in protecting the town until finally being removed when the space was bridged by the building development of Khartoum North to join Shambat, where a new area popped up named Al-Safya.

When I was in office as a General Manager, we had been considering the adoption of this technique alongside the critical areas of the railway. I am still adamant about trying this solution, as I can see it as the future long term solution not only for the railways but also for the desertification problem and sand drift all over Sudan, if not all world countries affected by, or facing, such hazards.

SUMMARY OF RECOMENDATIONS

Immediate and Temporary Solutions.

Some if not all these solutions need to be implemented, while the quest for a permanent solution is going on; until a final sustainable solution is agreed upon and achieved:

1) Manual removal (e.g. shovelling)
2) Sand fencing and impounding
3) Bulldozing
4) Sand ploughing
5) Stabilization of sand banks
6) Oil surfacing
7) Cutting channels (trapping sand)

Permanent or Long Term (Sustainable) Solutions

Plant Fences is recommended as potentially a permanent solution and meets the environmental challenges, as well as the needs of Sudan railways, highways and the country at large.

This solution is not meant to stop the search for better alternatives, or undermine, or abolish, the implementation of the other temporary

measures which, from time to time, may be needed. However, it can be considered the most advantageous solution, if well managed. The success of this method of control depends, also, on using the *most suitable plants in the appropriate areas*.

CONCLUSION

The prospective solution for sand problems lies within three control methods:

a) Prevention: Stopping the drift & sand dunes before they reach the protected area (the ideal case of course is to eliminate the sand source!)
b) Removal of accumulated sand from the track.
c) Detention and collection, or dissipation, of sand before it accumulates on the track.

These solutions and control methods are demonstrated by the following:

1) With reference to the recommended solutions of prevention and treatment, and wherever the source of the blowing sand can be controlled by planting of vegetation, such treatment may be the most economical means of protection. This should be considered seriously, with a vision to implement it with the full co-operation of all concerned organizations and individuals; it should be considered a national question, not just a railway problem.

2) For protecting the existing line, where sand dunes or drifts prevail, any of the aforementioned recommendations for remedial practices should be used where applicable and suited to the situation.

3) It is desirable to protect against drifting sand alongside the construction of any railway line in those areas where drifting sand is expected to occur. This also applies to both new works within the existing network or the intended railway connections with neighbouring countries, especially those in the northern part of the country neighbouring the Sahara Desert. A wise step taken was the call for *"Studies for the Impact and Mitigation of Dunes"*, by the

Abu Dhabi Freight and Passenger Railway Committee, before the construction of the "Union Railway".

4) When constructing new lines that have to run through cuttings, we should try to construct the cuts with flat, smooth slopes. As for the existing cuttings, every possible effort should be made to flatten, smooth and widen them in a way that challenges the risk of sand accumulation and its effects.

5) For unstable sandy soil embankments where trouble is experienced, the appropriate treatment could be covering the affected surfaces with a layer of clay as explained.

6) Similar to stabilization with clay and as one of the most economically feasible solutions, ***oil surfacing*** should be considered, with test areas to be defined, and applied to all affected areas if successful.

7) As Sudan Railways is planning to have a ballasted track, instead of the existing earth embankment, it is imperative to be prepared for the following:-
   a) When laying the ballast in areas where sand drifts occur between the rails, due allowance should be made for the wind to pass under the rails, clearing the sand away.
   b) The sand particles that find their way deep into the ballast layer (which have a negative effect on the elasticity of the ballast) should be dealt with during the ballast cleaning process, which must be carried out at a certain stage as part of the essential track maintenance and up-keeping programmes.

8) Advanced smart removal methods, and methods for minimizing the effect of accumulated sand in the absence of preventive methods, have to be adopted.

9) The 'Permanent Way Manual' at the Department of Civil Engineering could be updated to include any of the above

recommendations, if approved by the department for action & implementation.

SRC has to start considering implementation, as the danger which is now concealed behind its diminishing capacity, will be exaggerated with an increase in railway traffic, if it is expected to develop. The line capacity had been predicted by the ADAR Report (1970s) to reach up to 48 trains per day - up & down! Until the end of the 1980s, it did not exceed 12 trains per day - up & down. After 1991, this deterioration, which was steadily increasing, had turned the railway into a shambles. This has to be halted, and a genuine comprehensive programme of rehabilitation, upgrading and development has to be undertaken to save our railways. It is possible; young generation: IT IS YOUR TURN!

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THE NUBA CRISIS IN SOUTH KORDOFAN STATE

Omer M Shurkian

INTRODUCTION

It has been hypothesised that the Nuba people in South Kordofan State, the Sudan, besides other populations of what used to be referred to as 'Closed Districts' in 1922, have been subjected to both 'historical and contemporary injustices'. The epoch of this 'historic marginalisation and injustices' has so long a range, covering both pre- and post-independent Sudan. The 'contemporary injustices', on the other hand, started with the ushering in of nationalist regimes; it is still continuing inescapably to this very day, and generating open expressions of dissent. Against this backdrop, various attempts were made by Nuba activists to change the situation, but these efforts have gone unheeded due to the stubbornness of the authorities. It is worth noting that race has been a determining factor in politics and policies of Sudan, as elsewhere, when ethnicity plays a great role in political conflicts. In the Sudan, politics can be a highly sensitive or emotive issue; and the peculiar problem of it is that it gives people a warped image of themselves as being sorted by race. This is a compelling starting point for the study of some of the events accumulated – and defined by race - to force the Nuba to take to armed struggle after exhausting all peaceful means, including political campaigning by their own pressure groups.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The Nuba tribes are scattered all over what is known today as the Nuba Mountains in Southern Kordofan, the Sudan. K M Barbour in his book, *The Republic of the Sudan* (1961) presented a detailed physical description of the Nuba Mountains. Although the main concentration of Nuba communities is in Southern Kordofan, there are colonies of people of related and cognate origin inhabiting rocky hills in Northern Kordofan – namely, Jebel Haraza, Katul and Kaja hills, Um Durraq and Abu Hadid. But these are aborigines with a difference. They had assimilated the surrounding Arab culture; had long been Islamised and clothed; and to the

casual eye were not very markedly different from communities of sedentary Arabs. Meidob and Birgid in Dar Fur are also linked to Nuba ethnicity. Given the affinities between the riparian Nubians in Northern Sudan, Nubian elements in Dar Fur and the hill people of the Nuba Mountains, this linkage forms Robin Thelwall's 'Nubian Triangle' with corners at Wadi Halfa, the Nuba Mountains and Dar Fur within the Sudan.

The name Kordofan itself has a Nuba origin. It is believed to have evolved from the name of a certain Nuba king whose name was Kalad; when he was increasingly irritated, his subjects would say: *'Kalad far,'* meaning in Arabic Kalad was boiling or fuming with anger. The phrase was corrupted through years to become Kordofan. South Kordofan State used to be called the Nuba Mountains Province during part of the Condominium period in the Sudan with its capital at Talodi, but due to a number of reasons, it was merged with Kordofan Province in 1927. During the tenure of ex-President Ja'afar Mohamed Nimeiri (1969-1985), it was restored under the name of South Kordofan Province with its capital at Kadugli, but when the current Bashir's regime increased the number of states in the Sudan to 26, West Kordofan State was created out of South Kordofan State. In the ever-changing process of demarcation, South Kordofan lost a number of territories to North Kordofan – such as, Jebel al-Da'ir and Hugeirat, as it was made to cede Kaka trading outpost on the White Nile. These territories were at the centre of peace talks between the SPLM and the Sudan Government in Kenya in 2004, and were settled by restoring West Kordofan State to South Kordofan as a compromise. These issues, among other things, would have been raised by the Nuba during the never-happened 'Popular Consultation'.

THE ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT

As it has been widely publicised, land tenure has been recognised as a major source of conflict in the Nuba Mountains. This had all started in the 1960s when Mechanised Farming was introduced in the area, infringing on the local delicately balanced economic and social situation. In 1968, Mechanised Farming was established as a result of funding from the International Monetary Fund to oversee this scheme in the

different parts of the Nuba Mountains. Numbering nearly 650 schemes and with an average area of 422 hectares, these plots were licensed to absentee landlords after forcibly confiscating them from their local owners. Established in 1970, the Nuba Mountains Development Corporation was meant to modernise the traditional methods of cultivation in the Nuba Mountains. This policy had earmarked 37% of agrarian land to the Nuba, 45% to Arab tribes and 18 % to Fellata Hausa and Bergo. At Habila alone, there are 200 projects which were distributed as follows: 191 for individuals outside the Nuba Mountains region, including traders, civil servants, retired army officers from Northern Sudan and Gezira; 4 co-operative projects for native residents. Some of the provocations generated by the policies of the authorities included the imprisonment of Mek Hussein al-Iheimer of Dalami Rural District in 1978, because he refused to surrender the natives' lands to the Mechanised Farming Schemes, which belonged to *Jellaba* (petty Arab merchant) traders. In 1981, the village of Fayo in Dalami Rural District was encircled by Mechanised Farming Schemes, which were owned by a certain, *Jellaba* trader, who never bothered himself to visit the area. By 1984, all the villagers' lands became his dominion, but when the natives protested, law and force were used to chase them away from the zone of agricultural schemes. The Nuba were outraged to see their kith and kin being flogged in controversial courts favouring Arabs, the authorities and bureaucrats.

In early 1992, the authorities in South Kordofan State announced that they had discovered serious corruption regarding land leases in the state, and, consequently, 712 agricultural schemes were confiscated at Kurtala, Habila, Rashad and Abu Jibeiha. These confiscations were carried out on allegations that the lands were leased to under-age owners, and others were either illegally sold or rented. But in fact, these lands were redistributed to militia leaders and Arab chiefs as a reward for their participation in military operations against the rebel SPLA. Perhaps the most hopeful aspect of all is that the South Kordofan State Protocol of 2004 includes the creation of a Land Commission to arbitrate in disputes, with power to reverse illegal acquisitions.

The conflict was also exacerbated by the farmers-cum-herders dispute. This was seen as another major root cause of conflict in the Nuba Mountains. The dwindling of the average annual rainfall in Western Sudan since 1967 and the movement of nomadic Arab herdsmen into the rich pastures of the Nuba Mountains have all added to the crisis. Later on, these Arabs formed the backbone of Government-aided militia – namely, *Murahaleen* – which were transformed into Popular Defence Forces (PDF). They were trained, armed and supported by successive governments in Khartoum since the outbreak of civil strife in the Sudan in 1983, leaving the Nuba extremely victimised. All these policies gave the Arabs in the area both political and military leverage at the expense of the Nuba, thus tilting the balance of power.

As the main beneficiaries from oil production appear to be the Sudanese Government and the Chinese investors, the oil industry in the Sudan is not a sustainable development project, since it has not created the much-needed jobs for the local inhabitants. No investments are made in social programmes, healthcare, education, basic services and the enhancement of cultural heritage, among others. The consequences and the socio-environmental impacts of oil investment have never been identified nor carefully evaluated, as the consultation of indigenous peoples on issues that affect them, as a result of oil production, should have been faithfully conducted. A proposal to include a set of mitigating and compensatory measures deemed necessary, especially for those whose lands or houses were destroyed in the process of constructing the oil pipeline, has not materialised.

Chief among these root causes of the bloody dispute in the Nuba Mountains lie the questions of power- and wealth-sharing in which the Nuba perceive themselves as being marginalised in key Government positions, denied access to economic development, deprived of opportunities to promote their indigenous culture and nurture their vernacular languages, and forced to adopt the *de facto* Arabo-Islamic identity. These volatile issues led to intense civil war, grave human

rights violations by central regimes and recurring famines until the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Agreement was signed between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the Sudan Government in Switzerland in January 2002. It was a humanitarian agreement to allow relief supplies to reach the war-stricken Nuba people, who had been denied access to humanitarian relief since the start of civil war in the area in the mid-1980s. However, the agreement paved the way for serious peace talks between the two warring parties – that is, the SPLM/A and the Sudan Government. Based on the Declaration of Principles, which was signed in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, in May 1994, the Naivasha Protocol was signed in Kenya in July 2002, giving hope for peace and stability in a country shattered by over two decades of a protracted conflict.

On January 9, 2005, the SPLM/A signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with the Sudan Government in Nairobi, Kenya, ending the 22-year-old hostilities between the two parties. The CPA included, as part and parcel, a South Kordofan and Blue Nile Protocol to solve the conflict in these two areas. Among its articles, there existed what was called the 'Popular Consultation', which was, in fact, a diluted form of 'self-determination', whereby the political, administrative and constitutional future of these two states could be determined. From the outset, the Khartoum Government, worked very hard to derail the Protocol, creating an insecure situation in South Kordofan State in order to impede the return of internally displaced persons, failed to remove landmines from fields, including agrarian lands, scuttled the Land Commission, refused to return the confiscated fertile lands to its Nuba owners, armed Arab militia, rigged the gubernatorial elections[1] and finally attempted to disarm the SPLA soldiers by force in an infringement of the CPA modalities, which stated that the disarmament

[1] *Southern Kordofan elections: a developing crisis under the CPA*, Southern Sudan Monitor, June 2011; and Aly Verjee, *Disputed Votes, Deficient Observation: The 2011 Election in South Kordofan, Sudan*, The Rift Valley Institute, African Elections Project, Research Paper, August 2011.

of ex-fighters should be carried out after 90 days from the end of the Transitional Period.[2]

As a war-affected region, South Kordofan State has hardly seen any development projects in terms of health care, education, infrastructure, rehabilitation and training of former SPLA fighters. For electioneering purposes, the Khartoum Government embarked on building some roads, but the Nuba were not fooled by this too little too late effort. Thus, the Khartoum Government used all recourses at its disposal – that is, human and economic – to sabotage the Protocol, rendering it functionless at the end of the day. More importantly, South Kordofan State contains ¼ of Sudan's oil production, and the Sudanese authorities, under the ruling NCP, are unwilling to let it be administered by its rival, the SPLM, especially after the secession of the South in July 2011. This was the real cause of forging the state elections in May 2011 in favour of the NCP candidate as a state Governor – that is, Ahmed Mohamed Haroun, who is indicted by the International Criminal Court.

THE CURRENT CRISIS

On June 6, 2011, heavy fighting broke out between the SPLA and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) in Kadugli, the state capital of South Kordofan, as well as in some outlying towns and villages. Since then the area has seen a worrying escalation of violence where the civilian population are currently subjected to a systematic campaign of aerial bombardment, artillery shelling, extra-judicial executions, arbitrary detention and forcible expulsion from their homeland. The Sudan Government is openly planning, implementing and sustaining this campaign, resulting in immense human suffering, wide displacement, large-scale looting and the destruction of lives and material properties. On June 11, 2011, the Southern Kordofan Conflict and Displaced Persons Map showed that 40,000 people were estimated to have fled Kadugli, 6,000 were

[2] Statement of Roger P Winter, former Special Representative on Sudan, before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Sub-committee on Africa, Global Health and Human Rights, 16 June 2011.

internally displaced in and near Kadugli, 3,000 in Dalami, 2,500 in Abu Kershola, 10,000 in Abu Jibeiha, 3,000 in Kurchi and 5,000 in Talodi.[3]

The population of Um Dorein, Dilling town and a number of villages in areas surrounding Kadugli have also fled their homes. Many people are forced to leave their homes so rapidly that they have little in the way of food, shelter or basic provisions. Access to food, water and medical treatment even for those injured in the clashes is impossible. The internally displaced persons who have taken shelter at the UN compound in the vicinity of Kadugli Airport are not safe either. Some of them have been snatched by security personnel and killed. The UN should be able to protect civilians and provide humanitarian support. The same security forces are spreading rumours that some of the displaced may be carrying weapons. Under such a pretext, the security forces in Darfur launched an attack against Kalma refugee camp in August 2010, killing innocent civilians and wreaking havoc on survivors. In fact, a Nuba wielding a weapon cannot run away; they will stand their ground and fight, be they a man or woman. An eyewitness is quoted as saying:

We are still in the UN compound at Kadugli. Be informed that the situation is worse here. That everyone has no access to water or food. My contacts with our brothers in the battlefield are zero due to lack of power in their cell phones, maybe. Several of our comrades are killed randomly, particularly those who are civilians. The PDF [Popular Defence Forces] are controlling the road from the front of [Kadugli] Airport along the way to Dilling. All Nuba are wanted, no investigation, only kill[ing] on the roadside; you can see several dead bodies along the roadside only of Nuba people. The PDF are given [a free] hand on this matter. Please, forward [it] to as many as possible; let them know about this.[4]

[3] United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Sudan: South Kordofan*, Situation Report No 3, 11 June 2011.

[4] A statement taken by an eyewitness who managed to escape and arrived in el-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan; his name was not disclosed for security reasons.

There is a litany of events which has driven both parties – that is, the SPLM and the National Congress Party (NCP) – to the current crisis, including fiddling with the population census in 2008, gerrymandering and the irregularities of electoral register books. On April 13, 2011, between 300 and 500 houses in the town of al-Feid Um Abdalla – the hometown of 'Abd al-'Aziz Adam al-Hilu, Deputy Governor of South Kordofan State – were razed to the ground by the PDF, killing more than 20 people, including women and children.[5] Some of the victims were gruesomely burnt. The state elections for electing a gubernatorial Legislative Council and a Governor of South Kordofan State have been rigged by the National Elections Commission in order to deprive the Nuba people of their right to exercise the Popular Consultation, which is an inextricable part of South Kordofan/Blue Nile State Protocol, signed in May 2004. On June 1, 2011, the Sudan Government took a unilateral decision to increase the number of troops in South Kordofan State, replenished their logistics and attempted to disarm the SPLA without co-ordination with the Joint Defence Board: a move which was an infringement on the Security Arrangements Agreement, as signed in September 2003 between the two parties. This sounded the death-knell of the fragile relations, which existed between the two parties. Against this backdrop, fighting started in Um Dorein and spread to include Kadugli and other parts of the Nuba Mountains.

WHAT IS REQUIRED NOW?

The two sides of the conflict need to sit down and reach a peaceful solution after which the Government could concentrate on the promotion of the welfare of its population in terms of education, health care and socio-economic development. The continuation of war will consume Sudanese efforts and resources which are desperately needed elsewhere for the betterment of the country. A peaceful Sudan will put an end to further disintegration of the country.

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[5] Satellite Sentinel Project, *The Razing: Intentional Burning Confirmed at el-Feid, Nuba Mountains*, Human Security Incident prepared by Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, 19 April 2011.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE CONDOMINIUM

Alhaj Salim Mustafa

In the colonial Sudan as indeed in other parts of the colonized African countries, the concept of introducing public library services to the local inhabitants was not a priority for the colonial administration. Until the turn of the 20th century, public libraries in their modern sense were probably non-existent. However, in some parts of pre-colonial Africa, including the Sudan, rudimentary public library services were in existence in the *khalwas* (Qu'ranic schools). Jack Goody (1968), writing about the literacy tradition and the existence of both books and libraries in pre-colonial western Sudan described these *Qu'ranic* schools as:

"...untidy clusters of huts which although attracted little or no attention from contemporary travellers, nevertheless, contained and still do libraries of books, some of local origin but mostly emanating from north Africa and beyond"

The influence of *fugra* or religious teachers working voluntarily in these schools was noticed and commended by the writings of the traveller Burckhardt (1822), who visited the Sudan in 1814 and left a vivid description of the *fugra* and *ulama* (scholars) in El- Damer. He recorded for example the tidiness, regularity and good conditions of these *Khalwas* which attracted pupils from as far as western Africa. He also reported that the *fugra* had many books on theology and law brought from Cairo. The importance of *fugra* was not derived solely from their abilities to teach and memorize the holy *Qur'an*, but also from the use made of their storage capabilities of books. For the latter every *fagir* was "a living library" or as described by Amadi (1981) *"a veritable living encyclopedia and a proto-mobile library"*.

There is no evidence so far to support the existence of any type of organized libraries in their current modern forms in the Sudan during that period. However,

"Most of the past religious chiefs used to own small collections of books and manuscripts for their own reference and for their followers and students...They used to contact these books to seek relevant verdicts for solving social, economic and other problems on a religious basis" (Mazmoun, 1972).

As for the modern westernized schooling, it started during Turco-Egyptian rule (1820-1884). In 1853 the first primary school was established in Khartoum. This school, which became known as the Khartoum Primary School, was basically intended for the children of Turkish and Egyptian officials working in Sudan. The school did not exist for very long as it was closed shortly after its third year. However, by 1867 and 1868 primary schools were set up in Khartoum, Berber and Dongola. The pupils went into government services. The further history of these schools and one or two others which were started is obscure (Holt and Daly, 1979: 33).

Formal education did not resume until the coming of the Mahdist state when it opened its *Mahdia* School in the late 1880s in Omdurman. We do not have much information about this school except for scattered references to it in Abu Salim's *History of Khartoum* (Abu Salim, 1981). From this source it appears that the school offered slightly more than a *khalwa* since its curriculum included mathematics and advanced Arabic language studies in addition to the teaching of *Qur'an* and classical Islamic studies.

With such limited educational facilities and massive illiteracy, one can hardly expect to find a library service to support the educational system or for the general public.

The real development of formal education and the impact of western ideas and western education upon Sudan, hence the establishment of libraries, did not come until the establishment of the Gordon Memorial College (GMC) in 1902. The aims and objectives of education in the colonial period were best described by Sir James Currie, who was appointed as first director of education for the Sudan in 1900:

"...to enable the masses to understand the element of the system of government, to train a small class of competent artisans and to provide a small administrative class for entry to the government service." (Holt and Daly, 1979: 123).

That policy was enhanced further by the feeling of some British officials in the Sudan that, "*Over education poses a greater threat to the country than did no education at all"* (Beshir, 1969: 41).

Clearly, in such a policy education has never been considered as being of value in itself. Rather it was a reflection of the needs of government departments for graduates under the prevailing administrative policy. In following such a policy it was not surprising that the Sudan's literacy rate when it gained its independence in 1956 was less than 10% and that only one in eight children of school age were enrolled. Nevertheless, there was a clear tendency to train an elite core of administrators and civil servants.

R.F. Flood, a British Council Librarian, writing in 1951 observed that:

"The Gold Coast, Jamaica and East Africa – Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika – have public library schemes adequately financed, planned and developed by experienced librarians".

All these territories were previously British colonies with more or less similar socio-economic and educational backgrounds. The public libraries development mentioned by Flood was a result of long campaigns by individuals and institutions. Dedicated British librarians, interested British administrators, educational institutions such as the British Council, and Christian missionaries had all played a prominent role in setting up public libraries in these territories. In the Sudan this was not the case, as with the exception of the British Council, none of the above mentioned organizations or individuals was able or willing to establish public libraries in the country. For these reasons public library services were non-existent in the Sudan until the second half of the 1930s.

The first mention of the necessity of establishing a public library service in the Sudan was a letter from the Civil Secretary to the Grand Mufti of the Sudan (1924) to inform him that the Sudan Government had an intention to establish a public library service in commemoration of the Governor General Sir Lee Stack who was assassinated in Cairo in that year. The Civil Secretary urged the Grand Mufti to write to the *ulemas* (learned men) to suggest book titles for the proposed library. Unfortunately nothing materialized and no public library was established. (Al-Tayeb, 1999: 115).

In 1935, a prominent Sudanese intellectual wrote an article in the only periodical at the time, calling for the necessity of establishing a public library from the money left from the will of the assassinated Governor General to be used for charity purposes such as a public library and a museum. Plans for the public library were made but at the last minute the government decided to establish a medical laboratory (Stack Medical Laboratory) instead (Al-Tayeb, 1999: 115).

It appears that the educated Sudanese were aware of the importance of libraries in enlightening citizens. The Graduate Congress pressed hard to establish public libraries in the country.

This is evident from the demands presented to the then Prime Minister of Egypt, Ali Maher Pasha, when he visited the Sudan in 1940.

"The Egyptian government should undertake to establish an Arabic public library in Khartoum and furnish it with a good collection of Arabic books in order to strengthen the cultural ties between the two sisterly countries" (Saeed, 1986: 45).

It was reported also that the Sudan Delegate, from the all party representatives who visited Cairo in 1946 to discuss the Sudan question with the Egyptian government had mentioned in his memorandum to the Egyptian government that there was no public library in the Sudan and that a prominent Sudanese gentleman had applied to establish a public library on Omdurman at his own expense but the government had refused to grant him permission (Plumbe, 1950: 52).

The first public library in the Sudan was established in Wad-Medani in 1947 by some educated Sudanese as a *"Purely Reference Collection used for private studies"* (Plumbe, 1950: 54). However, by 1950 a borrowing service had been introduced. Another public library was established at about the same time in Omdurman by the British Council. That library, in the words of Wilfred Plumbe, was:

"an excellent small public library housed in an attractive room, gay with pictures, carpets and with comfortable chairs...with a collection of 4000 books, 300 pamphlets and 35 current periodicals" (Plumbe, 1950: 55).

There has been a mention too of public libraries being established in the Graduates Clubs of Port Sudan and El-Obeid.

Some Europeans working in the Sudan had also set up their own small subscription libraries in Khartoum and Wad Medani. Such libraries, of course, were not open to the public, as they were exclusive libraries to those who subscribed and as such cannot be considered public libraries *per se.*

The colonial Education Department had established in 1951 a public library in Omdurman to serve both the general public and schools in the area. The Omdurman Central Library, as it was known, played a significant role in public library development in the colonial and post-colonial eras, until its eventual and sad decline in the 1970s and 1980s.

The most serious attempt to establish a public library service in the Sudan during the colonial period was perhaps initiated by Douglas Newbold, the then Civil Secretary, who died prematurely in Khartoum in 1945. K D D Henderson (1954) gave a detailed description of these efforts in his book, *The Making of the Modern Sudan.*

The idea of establishing a cultural centre in Khartoum goes back to 1937 when a group of British administrators and some Sudanese *effendia* (government employees) looked into the possibilities of such a project. The idea found acceptance with Newbold, the Civil Secretary at the time. He suggested that the cultural centre should

"consist of a social club with library, lecture room, and other amenities where Sudanese and British and members of the other segregated communities of Khartoum ... could meet and mix and exchange views" (Henderson, 1954: 108).

Eventually, the centre's constitution and regulations were agreed and the Sudan Cultural Centre was officially opened on 25 April 1940 with a collection of around 1125 English books and 280

Arabic books and an invaluable collection of the renowned *Sudan Notes and Records* volumes donated by the Editorial committee.

Newbold delivered the inaugural lecture to the Sudan Cultural Centre on 30 May1940 titled, *The Human Side of Culture* in which he summed up the goals of the Centre in these words:

" .... This cultural Centre ... is a place, an out- of school and out-of college and out-of office place where educated people cannot only polish up their minds... but humanize their minds,.. the apparatus, the equipment which they have at hand consists of a library, books and journals, of lectures and debate..." (Henderson. 1954: 408).

In 1948, Dr A.H. Marshall, Treasurer of Coventry City Council, visited the Sudan to advise the Sudan Government on the organization of local government. His report and recommendations granted a wide range of powers to the local councils that go along similar lines with the British local authority's duties and responsibilities. These duties and responsibilities included *interalia*, general and technical education, adult education, clubs, reading rooms and libraries (Marshall, 1949: 18).The Wad Medani public library mentioned above was probably the first library to be established as a direct result of the Marshal Recommendations. In Blue Nile Province Governor Bredin suggested to the local council that a public library should be set up, an idea which was passed by the council and the library was established in 1947. El-Obeid Municipality established a public library in 1953 followed by the Atbara public library in 1955.

The libraries mentioned above represent the sum total of public library services in the country during the colonial period. Up to the end of that period they remained,*"...small units, self contained and unable to draw upon book resources and professional skills other than that they possess themselves"* (Plumbe, 1950: 55). The whole

library development in colonial Sudan, as indeed in the rest of Africa, was best summed up by Holdsworth (1961: 252),

"In Africa the pattern of library growth shows a progression from what one might call 'bread and butter' libraries, that is from libraries indispensable for the proper exercise of the functions of a state [the Colonialist Government] and the work of industry, trade and professional classes...through libraries of institutions for higher education to finally public libraries. One striking feature in Africa...is the preponderance of special, university and college libraries and the meagreness of public library provision".

From this narration of public library development during the Condominium, it would be safe to argue that any public library development during the colonial period was a mere accident as there was no policy to develop them on a nation-wide basis as was the case in Ghana (Evans, 1964) and East Africa. The emergence of strong indigenous political leaders in these countries such as Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana who supported the role of library services in development, the presence of dedicated ex-patriate librarians such as Miss Evelyn J. A. Evans in Ghana as well as the same emergence of indigenous local librarians had all contributed considerably to the development of libraries in these countries. None of these factors appear to have been in evidence in the Sudan. Moreover, there was no comprehensive library legislation, a national library or any other statutory body to co-ordinate library development in the country.

This failure can be attributed to a number of reasons: Firstly, the British Government was not really interested in the Sudan as a part of the British Empire, being very big and very poor. Their main objective of keeping the Sudan under the crown was to control Egypt, and most importantly to stop other colonial powers from expansion in East Africa. As such no real interest in developing educational and social services, including libraries was shown by

British administrators in the Sudan or at the Foreign Office in London which was in charge of Sudan Government administration. Moreover, the inhabitants were often sick, thirsty, undernourished, illiterate and savage. Under these circumstances such things as water, food, security, medicine and shelter were of primary importance rather than establishing public libraries.

Secondly, the Sudanese people, even the illiterate ones, were very conscious of their own culture and tradition. Islam and the Arabic language remained dominant despite the attempt to impose English as a second language and the discouragement of religious education. As most library materials were in the English language and with a dearth of Arabic reading materials, the establishment of public libraries was viewed by colonial administration as unnecessary.

Thirdly, the Christian and other benevolent institutions failed to set up libraries in the Northern Sudan because the majority of people were Muslims. Any attempt to set up a missionary public library would have been met with suspicion and hostility. It is true that church missionaries were able to set up their own private libraries but establishing public libraries was not attempted.

Fourthly there were many ethnic groups and many spoken languages (over 100), and as such the lack of reading materials in vernacular languages was a hindrance to establishing public libraries. Even Arabic, the language of the majority lacked such relevant materials.

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SOUTH SUDAN'S NEW OIL LAWS
A Blueprint for Prosperity?

Dana Wilkins[1]

The Republic of South Sudan became both the newest and the most oil-dependent country in the world when it gained independence on 9 July 2011.

South Sudan has been blessed with oil wealth that, if managed responsibly, could provide for the long-term development and prosperity that its citizens deserve. There are encouraging signs that the South Sudan Government is committed to ensuring this outcome. Indeed, the country's emerging legal framework includes wide-ranging public reporting, contract allocation, and revenue management standards that draw from international best practice.

Implementation of these transparency and accountability measures will require a concerted effort across the government. It will also demand a genuine commitment to move beyond the legacy of closed-door oil sector management left by the country's former rulers in Khartoum.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

The Oil in Numbers

In the **7 years** since the end of the civil war (when the semi-autonomous government of South Sudan first started receiving oil revenues), the oil sector has accounted for an average of **98.4%** of total government income.[2]

According to financial records published by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the government has received more than **38.6 billion South Sudan Pounds** (applying the South Sudan government's official exchange rate, this amounts to roughly **13.1 billion US Dollars**).[3]

[1] Ms. Wilkins is the lead analyst on oil in South Sudan for Global Witness. Nominated for the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize, Global Witness is an international NGO campaigning to prevent natural resource-related conflict and corruption.
[2] Republic of South Sudan, 'Approved Budget 2012/13,' p. 17, available at http://www.goss-online.org/magnoliaPublic/en/ministries/Finance/Annual-Budgets/mainColumnParagraphs/0/content_files/file19/Approved%20Budget%202012-13.pdf, last accessed 6 November 2012.
[3] Republic of South Sudan, 'Approved Budget 2012/13,' p. 17. Note- USD calculations according to South Sudan's current official exchange rate of 2.95.

In the current budget, foreign borrowing and new oil and mining concessions are expected to bring in more than **54% of South Sudan's total financial resources** for the fiscal year.[4] In the absence of any guarantees that oil exports would resume, the budget did not take into account any oil revenues.

Prior to the production shutdown, South Sudan was the **3rd biggest producer of crude oil in Sub-Saharan Africa**.[5]

South Sudan has **3 producing oil consortia**, in blocks 3&7, 1, and 5a. Production in these blocks peaked at just over **360,000 barrels per day** in **2009**.[6]

Remaining oil reserves are estimated by the government to be about **1.7 billion barrels**. Without significant new discoveries and investment in more efficient oil recovery techniques, production is expected to fall below **100,000 barrels per day** within **10 years**.[7]

The importance of oil to development in South Sudan was brought into sharp focus in January 2012, when the government halted all crude production following a major export dispute with Sudan. Up to that point, South Sudan had derived more than 98% of its income from oil, so the shutdown resulted in a sudden and near-total loss of revenues which had a huge impact across the country. The government was forced to make cuts to crucial public services and institution-building projects, while citizens had to contend with fast-rising food and fuel prices.[8]

A deal has now been agreed for the use of Sudan's processing facilities, pipelines, and export terminal, and South Sudan's oil exports are expected

[4] Republic of South Sudan, 'Approved Budget 2012/13,' p. 22. Note- knowing there were no guarantees oil would be back up and running, the Ministry of Finance did not include any oil revenues in the total revenues expected; so foreign borrowing and new extractives concessions may not actually make up that percentage by the end of the fiscal year.

[5] United States Energy Information Agency, 'International Energy Statistics: Africa,' available at http://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/iedindex3.cfm?tid=5&pid=53&aid=1&cid=r6,&syid=2010&eyid=2011&unit=TBPD, last accessed 6 November 2012.

[6] Republic of South Sudan, Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, report: 'MPM Marketing Report for July, 2011-January 2012, Volume 1,' July 2012, p. 10 and 12.

[7] Republic of South Sudan, Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, report: 'MPM Marketing Report for July, 2011-January 2012, Volume 1,' July 2012, p. 11 and 12.

[8] Republic of South Sudan, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, speech: '2011/2012 Budget Speech to the National Legislative Assembly,' March 2012, available at http://www.goss-online.org/magnoliaPublic/en/ministries/Finance/Annual-Budgets/mainColumnParagraphs/0/content_files/file15/Austerity%20budget%20speech%202011-2012_Final.pdf, last accessed 6 November 2012; United Nations World Food Programme, 'South Sudan Food Security Monitoring,' 7 July 2012, available at http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp251468.pdf, last accessed 6 November 2012; Sudan Tribune, 'South Sudan inflation rate record 74% high,' 24 July 2012, available at http://www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-inflation-still-a,43355, last accessed 6 November 2012.

to restart within the next few months.[9] It is critical that while this is happening, the South Sudan government prioritises the implementation of transparency and accountability measures across the oil sector, so that adequate standards and safeguards are in place by the time regular revenues resume.

Aside from its over-reliance on oil, one of South Sudan's biggest challenges is corruption, which is widely acknowledged to be endemic. President Salva Kiir recently estimated that high-level theft has cost the government more than US$4 billion over the last six years.[10] Such allegations make it all the more important that the oil sector is managed responsibly and opened up for genuine scrutiny by citizens, the ultimate owners of the resources.

RED FLAGS

Regrettably, there is still a long way to go before South Sudan citizens have access to the information needed to see exactly how their oil is being managed and where the money is going. Since independence, there have been several reports of new oil sector deals being negotiated and possibly already awarded, apparently without open and competitive bidding processes. No contracts or production data have been made public, and there is a concerning lack of support for oversight institutions like the Audit Chamber and the National Legislative Assembly.

South Sudan remains at risk of seeing bad practices become entrenched. If this is allowed to happen, it will be even more difficult to put robust checks and balances in place. Global Witness has repeatedly documented the consequences of opaque resource management; cases where despite significant natural resource wealth, countries suffer from odious public debt, political instability, and even large-scale internal conflict.[11]

[9] Republic of South Sudan, Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, press release: 'South Sudan prepares to restart oil production,' 5 October 2012; Sudan Tribune, 'Exportation of South Sudanese oil to restart within two weeks - Khartoum,' 1 November 2012, available at http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article44402, last accessed 6 November 2012.

[10] Republic of South Sudan, Office of the President, sample letter to 75 officials regarding US$4 billion unaccounted for, 3 May 2012; Africa Confidential, 'South Sudan, the grand corruption trap,' 5 October 2012, Vol. 53, No. 20.

[11] Note- For more information see Global Witness reports 'Rigged: The Scramble for Africa's Oil, Gas and Minerals,' 'Undue Diligence: How banks do business with corrupt regimes,' and 'Lessons UNlearned: How the UN and Member States must do more to end resource-fuelled conflict,' all available at www.globalwitness.org.

GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM

The good news is that the foundations for sound oil management are being put in place. South Sudan's Petroleum Act and draft Petroleum Revenue Management Bill build on the transparency commitments enshrined in the Transitional Constitution and set out a clear blueprint for how oil operations, contracts, and revenues should be managed.

The Petroleum Act, passed earlier this year, includes many important requirements aimed at preventing corruption and mismanagement of revenues. In addition to general commitments to publish contracts and regular production and revenue data, the law requires that all oil deals be awarded through a competitive, public process. Contract allocation is the starting point for the government's generation of oil revenues, and as such, it is critical that citizens are able to trust that these deals are awarded to the best possible companies on the best possible terms. This allocation standard, complemented by the now-compulsory publication of information on beneficial ownership of contractors (the individuals behind the companies), can help build that trust.

The government has also drafted a Petroleum Revenue Management Bill that includes important requirements for how revenues will be collected, managed, audited, and reported. These requirements include the establishment of a Petroleum Revenue Account as a single destination for all oil sector revenues, and quarterly and annual reports from the Ministry of Finance and Planning on the state of the Petroleum Revenue Account and reserve funds. To ensure South Sudan's oil income is independently verified and subject to consistent public scrutiny, the bill must be passed with these key provisions intact. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the institution responsible for managing all oil revenues and accounts, must also be provided with the training, technology, and administrative capacity needed to implement the requirements effectively.

IMPLEMENTATION IS EVERYTHING

The laws are only as good as their implementation. South Sudan's oil sector will not be transparent until the government complies with the standards it is now legally bound to meet. At a minimum, this means:

- Publishing regular, detailed production and financial data, and all oil sector contracts.
- Ensuring that no new oil sector deals are negotiated or signed outside of an open and competitive process.
- Establishing a single petroleum revenue account and the two reserve funds, managing them tightly, and reporting on them regularly.
- Ensuring oversight bodies like the Audit Chamber, National Legislative Assembly, and local civil society have enough technical and political support to provide a robust check on how oil contracts and revenues are being managed.

With independence, South Sudan has got a fresh start. Progress is being made to develop better governance and reporting systems. A fairly detailed report on crude oil marketing and sales since independence was published recently and is available on the new website of the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining.[12] The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is also working hard to improve the government's budgeting and accounting systems to prepare to receive regular oil revenues again.

There are many individuals within and outside of the government who remain committed to seeing South Sudan's oil sector managed responsibly. But following this through will require significant capacity building and focused, consistent implementation of the blueprint set out in the new legislation.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

When constantly bombarded with development rhetoric, it can be difficult to see through catchwords like 'transparency' and 'accountability' to what these principles mean in practice and why they are important. But there is a reason these terms are used so much when it comes to South Sudan, particularly in relation to its oil sector.

Transparency in this context refers to the information that a government and companies make available to the public. A country's oil sector can be described as truly transparent if detailed information on revenues, accounts, production, operations, contracts, and companies are published. Accountability refers to the government's obligation to take full

[12] Republic of South Sudan, Ministry of Petroleum and Mining, report: 'MPM Marketing Report for July, 2011-January 2012, Volume I,' July 2012, available at http://www.mpmrss.org/docs/MPM%20Magazine_20120620_vFinal.pdf, last accessed 6 November 2012.

responsibility for, and to report, explain, and be answerable to stakeholders about the management of the sector, both internally (e.g., audits and parliamentary oversight) and externally (e.g., citizens, civil society, and the press).

Transparent and accountable management of the country's oil sector is the single best way for South Sudan to demonstrate its commitment to establishing strong democratic systems, tackling corruption, and ensuring oil benefits the country as much as possible.

Oil is a public resource ultimately owned by citizens, managed on their behalf by the government. This is a principle enshrined in South Sudan's own Transitional Constitution and echoed in statements by South Sudanese officials across the government. Arguments against public disclosure of oil sector information must be weighed against these commitments and any decision to withhold information will need to be publicly justified by the government and very carefully scrutinised by South Sudan's National Legislative Assembly, citizens, press, and aid donors.

THE EMERGING MINING SECTOR

Governance failures common to the oil sector are equally prevalent in the mining business worldwide. It is critical that the government of South Sudan applies the same standards of transparency and accountability described in this paper to the country's nascent mining sector.

South Sudan is rumoured to have significant mineral wealth.[13] Gold, diamonds, copper, iron ore, and uranium are among the many minerals reportedly discovered across the country. The government is currently finalising a new mining law to govern licence allocation, exploration, and extraction. The country's mining sector is still five to ten years away from generating significant revenues.[14] However, with oil production set to decline rapidly over the next decade, minerals may soon replace oil as South Sudan's most important source of revenue.

[13] Reuters, Gold fever sweeps South Sudan ahead of new mining law, 9 November 2012, available at http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/09/uk-sudan-south-gold-idUKBRE8A80LZ20121109?feedType=RSS&feedName=GCA-Digest (accessed 12 November 2012).

[14] Global Witness consultation with mining sector analyst familiar with South Sudan's geological map, December 2010.

BOOK REVIEW

Johan Broche and Daniel Rothbart, **Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding: the continuing crisis in Darfur,** Routledge, 2013

It was the outbreak of the Darfur conflict in 2003, shortly before the tenth anniversary of the Rwanda genocide in 1994, which catapulted it to the centre of world attention. Everybody who was anybody, including Hollywood stars, had to be seen, even on the ground among the IDPS, doing something to stop another Rwanda taking place. Sadly, the conflict rages on until today so that any study which sheds new light on it is most welcome, particularly also because so much has been written about the conflict rendering this a difficult task. With a somewhat qualified success this book does that.

It has long been recognized that the Darfur conflict cannot be explained in the simple terms of Arab Muslim Sudanese against Africans of the same religion and nationality. The book manages to avoid this pitfall in an admirable fashion presenting an intricate multifaceted analysis of the causes, thus, also, helping to chart a clear way out for the peace building efforts underway.

According to the authors Broche and Rothbart, four actors are involved in precipitating the conflict and its continuation: the Darfurian communities, their local leaders, the central government and finally non Sudanese external factors. Manipulation by the centre, or by the neighbouring countries, is made possible by the existence of ethnic differences in the communities and their competition on dwindling natural resources. The quest of local leaders for all kinds of influence, political, economic etc.. injects another variable into the equation. The central government is able, for example, to play these leaders against each other by making concessions suited to one side and not the other. Thirdly, the changing policies of neighbouring countries, especially Chad and Libya under Gaddafi, had impacted positively or negatively at certain points in the history of the conflict. This is more clearly illustrated by the Chadian policies which alternated between supporting the rebels, a large part of whom belong

to the same ruling tribe in Chad, the Zaghawa, and the government of Sudan. Last but not least, the historically inherited skewed structure of power and resources-sharing between the central areas of Sudan and the peripheries, West and East, and previously South, has come to the forefront as an important factor.

Comprehensive and illuminating as it is, the book's exploration of the causes exhibits the short fall of almost completely ignoring the Sudan government's view in this regard. It gets only a very brief mention. A more elaborate coverage of the official view on this matter was necessary for the sake of academic impartiality and balance. Its absence cannot be explained by official refusal to co-operate, as is indeed the case in many instances, because it could have been gleaned from reliable unofficial sources.

However, the more serious qualification is that the book does not set the conflict within the wider context of the Sudanese crisis. Chapter 5 titled, *Centre-Periphery Conflicts* does present an adequate analysis of the unequal distribution of wealth and political power between these two protagonists, but it does not proceed to dig deeper into the roots of this inequality. This aspect is of vital importance as far as the permanent resolution of the problem is concerned.

In a nutshell the underlying cause of what can be termed the Sudanese Crisis is the failure of the Sudanese elite to establish a viable, democratic system. The demise of the non-democratic regimes worldwide since the mid eighties of the last century has proved beyond doubt that equal development opportunities, as well as fair political representation, can only be guaranteed by a system of government responsive to public opinion and scrutiny. For historical reasons, main among which is the fact that Sudan was not the scene of an Age of Enlightenment which had opened up Europe's way to democracy, the country has never witnessed a democratic experience. All efforts made to set it in the right direction have so far been fruitless. Thus, although the connection between the micro Darfurian crisis, and the macro Sudanese crisis is generally acknowledged the fundamental cause of the latter is still to be identified and tackled.

The book's authors are hardly to blame for this shortfall if the Sudanese intellectuals themselves have not been able to accomplish this task.

Mohamed B.Ahmed (Alsawi)

BOOK REVIEW

Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region. Available in print from the Heinrich Böll Stiftung and for free as download from http://www.boell.de/publications/.

The *Heinrich Böll Stiftung* has teamed up again with Toni Weis, now Doctoral Candidate at Oxford University, to produce an edited volume about Sudan, or indeed now the Sudans, at this point in time and the scenarios for the future. The last volume *Sudan – No Easy Way Ahead* went into print in the first half of 2010 when considerable international focus was given to the Sudanese elections and the following referendum, which was still expected to be the most important development in the Arab world that year. Since, attention has shifted and when South Sudan eventually became independent in a surprisingly smooth fashion, it was nearly a non-event for everyone but the Sudanese and Sudanists.

The new volume *Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region* follows up on these events and attempts to encourage a renewed focus on Sudanese affairs. The Böll Foundation does of course not produce these volumes for academic merit alone. The foundation is one of the German party foundation, aligned with *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*. Therefore the foundation plays a direct political role and aims to contribute to a "democratic and peaceful Sudan." The book, especially its German version, is addressed to German policy makers, which might explain its slightly odd structure. While the first six papers discuss general issues regarding Sudan and South Sudan, the seventh paper discusses the German role on the road ahead and the following three papers touch very briefly on specific issues, such as debt relief and hydropolitics. For a non-German audience however, what does this volume have to offer? As Wolfram Lacher points out in his paper, the German debate about Sudan "has been more balanced" than elsewhere, especially from the United States. This is also the

potential contribution of this volume; a more balanced perspective on Sudanese issues, written in a language which is understandable not only to die-hard Sudanists.

The book's main six papers attempt to disentangle the many interconnected challenges facing the two Sudans today. The first two papers by Francis Deng and Eddie Thomas look at both Sudans after independence comparatively, Deng from the perspective of society and especially in regards to the identity question, Thomas from the perspective of the government, power and resistance. The third and the fourth papers by Aly Verjee and Magdi el-Gizouli discuss the developments in the remaining Sudan. While Verjee focusses on the question of how Sudan has changed as a result of South Sudan independence, Gizouli looks at resistance to the regime and why it so far has remained unsuccessful. The last two papers by Jok Madut Jok and Paula Christina Roque discuss the new South Sudan. While Jok focusses on the practical challenges of nation building, Roque wonders if the SPLM has been, or can be, successful at party formation.

The structure of the book is interesting, as it enables a look at both new countries within the context of the former united Sudan, and as separate units. In regard to the second, it would have been interesting to add a perspective on how the two countries are, or are not, orienting themselves away from each other by integrating with different geographical units; North and East Africa. I actually wonder whether, the next time the Böll Foundation starts such an undertaking, they would still include both Sudans in one volume, or, if by then, the two countries will have grown apart completely. The selection of authors has however one drawback when taking Lacher's suggestion of being more balanced as measurement. While both the Sudan and the South Sudan are covered with one article by a foreign observer and a local national, the piece on South Sudan is written by the Undersecretary of Culture and Heritage, the piece on Sudan however is written by a staunch

member of the opposition. Both papers have their place, but it would have been equally interesting if the views of the South Sudan opposition and the Sudan government could have been included.

Francis Deng starts his paper with his memory of the Independence Day celebration in Juba. He explores how this day was achieved and connects this with a plea to allow for a certain ambiguity within the framework of independence, where, now that the south is independent, co-operation between the two new states should be aimed for. For that to happen, Deng believes both sides need to come to a more inclusive model of identity than hitherto adhered to, and need to be constructive in their dealings with the peoples living lives along and across the borders. Eddie Thomas in the following paper questions if this indeed is a possibility. Thomas describes how southern independence has transformed a power duopoly into two power monopolies, dominated each by one-party systems and he wonders how within this framework resistance to power is possible. He shows how Sudanese in Khartoum are wary of instability and therefore mass protests are unlikely, especially since the government tries to co-opt the traditional parties. Thomas convincingly shows that military opposition from the peripheries has only succeeded once, with the Mahdi in 1885, and therefore renewed success is unlikely. Lastly, he wonders about a coup from within and points out that "*the biggest influence on the NCP comes from the populist right.*" Thomas goes on to describe the situation in South Sudan, where the main form of resistance is peripheral mutiny, which is answered by the SPLM by accommodation, which however does not change the underlying structure causing the problems.

Aly Verjee outlines how the "New North" is not only a smaller and poorer country, but also more urban – an aspect I read about for the first time and would like to hear more about. These changes have led to a reaction in the political centre, where the regime

simultaneously has attempted to re-include the old elites, and has seen an internal transformation with the army regaining influence. Verjee believes that this militarisation is behind the uncompromising attitude of the government towards the peripheries. Therefore, the government served as a catalyst for the formation of the Sudan Revolutionary Front. But as Verjee rightly points out, for Sudan's problems – he characterises the country as *"the same old predatory, dysfunctional polity it has been for decades"*– to be solved, military success of either side is not enough. One might add that, as Thomas also points out, considering that the SPLM has always failed to force a military victory, it is unclear why the SRF should be more successful.

Accordingly, Magdi el-Gizouli focusses on the political resistance in Khartoum. Gizouli's article shows his extensive knowledge of Sudanese history, as well as social and political developments today. The most convincing element of the paper is where Gizouli demonstrates how new movements like *Girifna* emerged as reaction to the rigid structures of the traditional parties and the inability of younger members to rise to more influential positions. When analysing the failure of street protests, Gizouli points to the disadvantages of leaderless structures and Facebook. However, similar critiques were voiced in Egypt when first attempts to organise protests via the internet failed two or three years before the revolution. Gizouli comes to the conclusion that a transformation in Sudan can only take place if "*the fractured nas is healed*". I would argue, on the other hand, that the inverse is true: the fractured *nas* can only be healed, if a transformation takes place.

While the new north is also a changed nation, it is not a new nation in the same way as South Sudan. Understandably, South Sudan, as a new nation, receives a lot of goodwill from observers and the international community. It also faces a number of unique challenges. One of those, possibly the most central one, is the

challenge of nation building, since borders alone do not make a nation. This is the focus of Jok Madut Jok's paper. Besides pointing to the need for a true and free civil society and an inclusive notion of citizenship, he also makes a number of concrete suggestions how nation building could be catalysed, such as the development of the national archives and the building of a museum of national heritage. Considering Jok's position in government, it would have been also interesting to hear what challenges are currently impeding the realisation of these projects. Paula Christina Roque on the other hand focusses on the role of the SPLM. Roque wonders if the SPLM can transform into a political party and makes a very interesting point when she says that the dilemma is that the SPLM cannot be simultaneously *"the mouthpiece of the people and one of many political contenders."* Based on this, Roque argues convincingly that the SPLM both needs to strengthen its structures as party and at the same time stop political accommodation with the opposition and instead allow for political opposition outside the SPLM.

Overall the book gives an excellent review with a rich diversity of views and opinions of the situation in the two Sudans and the challenges facing this new region. However, due to the very fast development of events, the much bigger demonstrations in Khartoum during this summer and the recent agreements between Sudan and South Sudan were all after this volume went into print, the book quickly becomes a historical document showing the understanding and perception of the two Sudans at one given moment in time. Nevertheless, for the time being it is a good starting point for anyone trying to get a first look at current Sudanese affairs and it might even be recommended as an update about Sudan for Sudanists working on the south, and an update about South Sudan, for Sudanists working on the north.

Moritz Mihatsch

SSSUK

NOTICES

Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24 September 2011 in the Khalili Theatre, SOAS, London W.C.1.

The SSSUK Chairperson, Dr. Douglas Johnson, opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests.

1. **Apologies** were received from:
   Committee Members:- Michael Medley, Jack Davies, John Ryle, Cherry Leonardi, Jane Hogan.
   SSSUK Members: Alan Goulty, Anita Fábos, Benedetta de Alessi, Diana Harkness, Diana Rosenberg, Gaby Warburg, Garth Glentworth, Lilian Craig Harris, Mark Duffield, Peter Everington, Philip Winter, Pieter Tesch.

2. **Minutes** of the 24th AGM of 2 October 2010: the AGM approved the minutes.

3. **Matters arising.** There were no matters arising.

4. Chairperson's report.
Douglas Johnson underlined what an important year it had been for the Sudans, with South Sudan's Independence and the attacks on Abyei and in Blue Nile and South Kordofan. He therefore felt it important to restate that the aim of the Society was the study of the Sudan in all its aspects and forms. 'We have done it since we started 25 years ago and we will continue'.
We had considered SSSUK joining Facebook, as a member had suggested, but had found it complicated in certain aspects and would not do so for the time being.

The International Sudan Conference scheduled for Bonn, Germany, in September 2012: plans had been finalised. SSSUK was organising panels to look at proposals for papers with SSA and details were on the website and in Sudan Studies. Douglas urged members to look at the SSSUK Website to find out about the Conference and other meetings.

He thanked the Editor, Dr. John Davies, for producing Sudan Studies and the Website Editor, Michael Medley, for extending the site. The first 30 issues of Sudan Studies were now on the website for free.

He also asked the Secretary to convey his thanks to the Caterer, Deya Ahmed, for her continuing and much appreciated contribution of Sudanese lunch.

5. Secretary's Report.

Gill Lusk said that Sudan specialist Wendy Levy wished to draw Members' attention to the African Studies Association for Australasia and the Pacific's Annual Conference in Adelaide in 2012 (www.afsaap.org), which was to have a Sudan component.

Many SSSUK Members had asked for papers from its Annual Symposium and she urged speakers to write up at least a summary of their talk for Sudan Studies.

Her main task was the Symposium and she thanked the excellent speakers and encouraged people to suggest topics and speakers. We are also having a membership drive and encourage Members to spread the word.

It was a critical juncture for the Sudans: many South Sudanese have gone home, many

Sudanese have lost heart. So we want to spread interest in what are now two states.

6. Treasurer's Report.

Adrian Thomas distributed the draft accounts.
He said that membership had risen 'quite a bit'. SSSUK would be a bit more rigorous with non-payers. People could join or renew membership on the Website, he noted.
We had changed printers and spent more on printing in 2010-11 but we had a bigger and better quality Sudan Studies.
The AGM had become more expensive in the last couple of years. Thanks to Daniel Large and the Royal African Society, we had a good deal with SOAS.

We now use PayPal, since half the people don't know what a cheque is any more. PP has been quite well used and it really helps for people to use it to pay in advance.

We want more members: 'If you go to functions, encourage them!' If we get up to 200, that will be a healthy situation.

Lastly, he thanked Dr. David Lindley again for his work on the accounts. He had very kindly worked on getting back payments from Gift Aid and that had brought in £700.00, a very useful boost.

There would be a fundraising reception at Lambeth Palace on 11 October for the charity Together for Sudan.

7. Editor's Report.
Sudan Studies Editor Jack Davies, who was unable to be present, had asked for more contributions, including from Symposium speakers.

8. Discussion

Roy Nelson asked about costs for Bonn, Douglas said these were not yet known. We wouldn't make a contribution as such but could provide some travel assistance for students presenting papers.

Mansour el Agab asked about a new name for SSSUK after South Sudanese Independence. Douglas said it was a complex thing to do, including in terms of registering as a charity. We had looked at what others did: for example, the British Association for Korean Studies made no reference to the fact that there were two countries. Some China bodies used 'Greater China' but we weren't keen on 'Greater Sudan'.

Jacob Akol, a Committee member, said there was a danger that South Sudanese might think it was 'business as usual' for SSSUK and they weren't involved. A lot more homework was needed to bring South Sudanese in, including by publicising the work of the Society.
Douglas said that he didn't agree that the South was neglected at the Symposium but agreed it needs more publicity to students in the UK.
Joanna Oyediran said that students might help attract their friends.

9. Any Other Business.
There was no other business. The AGM closed.

Sudan Studies Society of the UK (Charity No. 328272)
Accounts for 2011

INCOME	2011 £	2010 £
Membership dues	1,993.01	2,023.73
Sale of Publications and CDs	38.00	43.00
Interest on Bank Accounts	1.72	2.12
Donations & Misc. Revenue	62.29	34.00
Gift Aid Refund	737.72	
AGM/Symposium	751.00	843.00
Grand Total	**3,583.74**	**2,945.85**

EXPENDITURE	2011 £	2010 £
Printing & Editorial	1,069.29	994.76
Secretarial Expenses	0.00	33.64
Committee Room Hire Committee Travel	0.00	39.40
Website	108.00	105.75
Other (refund)	36.00	
AGM/Symposium	931.60	861.98
Total	**2,144.89**	**2,035.53**
Surplus for the Year	1,438.85	910.32
Grand Total	**3,583.74**	**2,945.85**

ASSETS	2011	2010
Bank Balance on 1st January	7,093.05	6,182.73
Bank Balance at 31st December	8,531.90	7.093.05
Surplus	**1,438.85**	**910.32**

Adrian P. Thomas

Prepared by Adrian Thomas
Honorary Treasurer, SSSUK

JK Lindley

Checked on behalf of members by
Dr David Lindley, SSSUK Committee

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Notes for Contributors

SSSUK welcomes notes and articles intended for publication, which will be assessed by the Editorial Board. The normal maximum length of an article is 5,000 words including footnotes; longer articles may be accepted for publication in two or more parts. Notes and articles should be typed and double spaced and should normally be submitted as paper copy and as word processed files (in PC format) on diskette or preferably as an e-mail attachment, if at all possible. SSSUK retains the right to edit articles for reasons of space and consistency of style and spelling. *Sudan Studies* aims to follow the editorial style of *African Affairs*, the Journal of the Royal African Society.

Manuscripts are not normally returned to authors, but original material such as photographs will be returned.

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

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