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SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UK

The Sudan Studies Society of the UK was founded in 1987 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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EDITORIAL

Welcome to *Sudan Studies* 40. As editor, I trust that you will find some articles of interest to you. If you have any items you would like to offer I, and the Editorial Committee, would be very pleased to receive them for consideration.

However, first of all, I have to recall that several distinguished Sudanese have passed on since No. 39 appeared. Accordingly, you will find **Appreciations of Tayeb Salih**, a distinguished author who wrote in English as well as Arabic and was formerly the SSSUK President and of **Dr Abdel Halim Mohammed Abdel Halim**, a distinguished doctor who was the first Sudanese to become a Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London (MRCP) and was also notable for his contribution towards the development of sport in the Sudan. A third well-known Sudanese who also died recently is **Jaafar Nimeiri** and a summary of his career is also included.

Unlike issue No.39 which contained several articles of historic interest, this issue includes ones which are more concerned with the contemporary situation. The first is a timely one by **Sara Pantuliano** of the Humanitarian Policy Group of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) based in London and is about the Misseriyya Humr pastoralists whose *Dar* lies within the Western Sector of Southern Kordofan State, and includes the disputed Abyei region. Next, **Anita Fábos**, Associate Professor and Graduate Co-ordinator, International and Social Change, at Clark University in the United States considers the extent to which northern Sudanese can be classed as 'refugees' when they reside in Egypt. **Lillian Craig Harris**, the wife of a former British ambassador to the Sudan, writes about charity work among Sudanese women and our Chairman, **Douglas Johnson** writes about the return of an important artifact to southern Sudan. A

listing of publications relating to the Sudan by the **Small Arms Survey**, centred in Geneva, and a book review are included.

Unfortunately, in *Sudan Studies* 38, some amendments to the text of the paper about the **Shukriya** did not reach the editor. Accordingly, these amendments are included here and arrangements have been made for anyone interested to obtain a revised text from David Lindley who has kindly agreed to deal with this matter.

The 8th International Sudan Studies Conference is being held in South Africa from 25-27 November 2009. This is the first time that it has been held in Africa, away from Sudan and Egypt. Dr Samba Mboup is the Conference co-ordinator responsible for conference arrangements (Mboupsb@unisa.ac.za). Anyone interested in attending, or even at this late stage offering a paper, should contact the SSSUK Chair, Dr Douglas Johnson (douglas@wendoug.free-online.co.uk).

Remember too that we have our **Annual General Meeting and Symposium on 3rd October 2009 at SOAS**. Please see the section on SSSUK Notices. For final details please see the SSSUK web-site (<http://www.sssuk.org>).

We hope to see you all at our AGM/Symposium. It is a great opportunity to greet and meet friends old and new. We trust too that the International Conference in South Africa will be a great success.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Lastly, the Treasurer, Adrian Thomas, will be pleased to receive Subscriptions for 2009 from any member who has not yet paid!! Please see under SSSUK Notices.

Tayeb Salih

An Appreciation

Sudanese and friends of Sudan have learnt with great sorrow of the passing of Tayeb Salih on 18 February 2009, aged 80. He was a past President of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. Tayeb Salih was born on 28 July 1929 in Northern Province into a family of small farmers and religious teachers, and his original intention had been to work in agriculture. Instead, after attending Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum (later to become the University of Khartoum) he spent a short period as a schoolmaster before attending London University. Salih was the Sudan's best known and widely celebrated Sudanese writer. To many folk outside the Arabic-speaking world he is best remembered for two novels, *Season of Migration to the North* (1966) and *The Wedding of Zein* (1969), both of which have been translated from the original Arabic into English and many other foreign languages. To many Arabic speakers he is also well known for his short stories, his weekly column in the London-based Arabic language newspaper *Al-Majalla* and as a broadcaster on the BBC Arabic Service. *Season of Migration to the North* was described in 2001 by the Damascus-based Arab Literary Academy as the most important Arabic novel of the 20th century. Since then it has found its place in English in the Penguin Classics series and is listed as essential reading on many university courses. Tayeb Salih was perhaps unusual among Arab writers of the post-colonial period in that he did not see all western colonial influence as detrimental. He presented a dual perspective, writing about European stereotypes with an often critical eye, but also finding much to censure in prevailing Arab ideologies. His novels and short stories contained many deliberate ambiguities and contradictions and he addressed both the manners of the colonizers and the mores of the colonized in his fiction, questioning both. *The*

Wedding of Zein, a more lighthearted novel than *Season*, was filmed by the Kuwaiti director Khalid Siddiq and was awarded a prize at the Cannes film festival in 1976. Tayeb Salih was appointed Director-General of the Qatari Ministry of Information and lived in Doha. Later, he also worked for UNESCO in Paris. Here he was involved with projects to encourage and disseminate Arab literature and culture. On a personal level he has been described as a modest, wise and brave man who portrayed the essence of northern Sudan culture to the outside world. Tayeb is survived by his wife Julie and three daughters.

Dr Abdel Halim Mohamed An Appreciation



Dr Abdel Halim was born in Omdurman in 1910 and came from a distinguished family of Islamic scholars, writers and lawyers. One of the good things that the new British administration did after 1898 was to set up an education ladder of elementary, intermediate and secondary schools at the head of which was Gordon Memorial College, later to become the University of Khartoum. Abdel Halim began his climb up the educational ladder aged seven and eventually reached the top and graduated from GMC. To become a doctor required a further five years study at Kitchener School of Medicine. Abdel Halim was not willing to spend a further five years of study and decided he wanted to become an accountant, but his father did not want him to become anything but a doctor. So he was forced to join the batch of students that went on to the medical school. After graduation from the medical school as top of the class, the Sudan Government sent him to Britain for further training and in April 1948 he was awarded Membership of the Royal College of Physicians in London (MRCP), becoming the first Sudanese to get this. In 1962 he became the first Sudanese to become a Fellow (FRCP) in recognition of his work in the medical field in Sudan. He was a physician, but also a cardiologist and consultant to the Sudan Ministry of Health. He was Director of Omdurman Civil Hospital (1950-53), then Senior Physician at Khartoum Teaching Hospital from 1953 to 1965. He was Founder President of the Sudan Medical Association from 1949 to 1964.



His wider interests began whilst he was at GMC where he was active in debating and literary activities. It was at this time that he accepted the importance of the Islamic virtues, particularly those relating to self sacrifice and consideration for the needs of others, hallmarks that were to characterize the whole of his life, and not only through the practice of medicine. He became very interested in sports and this became one of his great passions. He was a member of the International Olympic Committee from 1968 to 1988 and served on several of its committees and remained an honorary member until his passing. Dr Halim, as he became generally known, was also President of the Sudan Football Association and a founder member from 1956 of the African Football Association, becoming successively President (1968-72) and Vice-President since 1976. Without his personal financial support in the 1950s it would have been impossible for the first African Nations Cup competition to have been held. He became a member of FIFA's Executive Committee and served as Vice-Chairman of its Medical Committee and was on its Technical Committee from 1972 to 1980. Dr Halim could often be seen at big matches at the Omdurman Football Stadium and if any player was hurt he was always in close attendance. This work made him a well-known physician and person and he became extremely popular. In 2003 Dr Halim was awarded the Golden Sports Medal, Sudan's highest sports laurel for his distinguished achievements and dedication to sport.

Inevitably, Abdel Halim became involved in the campaign for Sudan's independence from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium through the Sudan Graduates' Congress and was one of those who composed the famous memorandum to the British Civil Secretary asking for independence. They were rebuffed, but Abdel Halim, nevertheless, believed that the way used by the Indian Congress led by Nehru, to pursue their aims through negotiation was the right way forward. From 1953 to 1960 he was Mayor of Khartoum. Later, he was to become a member of the Supreme Council of

Later, he was to become a member of the Supreme Council of State of the Republic of Sudan (1964-65). He was also Chairman of the Council of the University of Khartoum from 1956 to 1963, an appointment requiring much political skill.

There is a lovely story about Dr Halim concerning the visit to the Sudan by the late Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, which illustrates the wide range of his public activities. A list of visits were planned for the Emperor, including the University of Khartoum where he was greeted by Dr Halim as President of the University Council. Later he visited Khartoum Hospital where he was met at the gate by Dr Halim as Hospital Director. Haile Selassie's entourage included the Ethiopian football team who were scheduled to play against the Sudan. At the stadium to greet the Emperor was Dr Halim as President of the Sudan Football Association. Next morning a visit to the Khartoum Town Council was arranged where again the Emperor was greeted by Dr Halim as Mayor of Khartoum. Later in the afternoon Haile Selassie was taken to watch the horse racing at the Equestrian Club. To his great amazement he found himself greeted by Dr Halim as President of the Equestrian Club. Before his departure from Sudan the Emperor is reported to have declared that he would like to have a man like Dr Halim, 'A Jack of All Trades, but not Master of None'!

Dr Halim was unashamedly elitist. He was a tall, slim gentleman who was always well turned out in a smart suit unless he was wearing national dress. Nevertheless, whilst he easily consorted with Royalty and Presidents, he had the common touch such that all he came in contact with were made to feel that they mattered and that they had his full attention. Hospital rounds with him were noted for jokes, proverbs and Koranic quotations, as his colleagues would agree, but he had no time for anyone who had not carried out their duties properly and wholeheartedly.

may sometimes be costly to us. He had fine personal qualities which led to his popularity. He died on 16th April 2009 aged 99.



Greeting Queen Elizabeth II and Duke of Edinburgh

Derar Saleh Derar and Yousri Fathalla Daoud

Jaafar Nimeiri

Jaafar Nimeiri was born in Omdurman in 1930, the son of a postman. Nimeiri was attracted, like many other young Sudanese at the time, to join the Sudan Defence Force as a way of escaping poverty and of offering a rather more adventurous life. In 1952, at the age of 22, he graduated from the Sudan Military College. At the College he had been attracted to the radical, Arab nationalistic ideas of Gamal Abd el Nasser. His first involvement with a military campaign was against the southern uprising in 1955. After independence he joined a group of Sudanese military officers committed to Pan-Arab and socialist ideas. It soon became apparent that the army was to be the key arbiter in the future of the Sudan for in 1958 the civilian government was replaced by a military one under Major-General Ibrahim Abboud. It is clear that Nimeiri did not altogether approve of the way Abboud operated and in particular was disappointed at the failure to bring to an end the fighting in the southern Sudan and at Sudan's poor economic performance. Nimeiri's status in the army led to his attendance at the American Army Command College, at Fort Leavenworth from which he graduated in 1966. He returned to an army riven by factions. The shortlived civilian government that succeeded Abboud was accused of similar failures and in particular their policy of repressing the left and of discouraging pan-Arab ideas was disliked by a group of five young army officers with Nimeiri at their head who decided to take matters into their own hands with the May Revolution of 1969. Nimeiri was to continue as Head of State until May 1985 in spite of numerous attempts by groups in the armed forces to replace him. The bloodless coup replacing him, led by Omar al-Bashir, was to occur whilst Nimeiri was on a visit to the United States. Instead of returning to the Sudan he diverted to Egypt where he stayed for the next 14 years. In 1999 he was invited back to the Sudan by President al-Bashir. He died there on 30 May 2009 after a long illness.

Nimeiri was an astute politician who managed to play off one group against another in order to stay in power and was quite capable of complete reversals of policy. Thus to begin with, he supported the policies of the left by a massive programme of nationalisation and of elimination of the power of the traditional tribal rulers. Later, when it was plain that this policy had run its course he denationalised the banks and returned some nationalised industries to private ownership. He managed through all the vicissitudes by some shrewd moves to retain the support of the United States and under him for many years Sudan was the major recipient in Africa, after Egypt, of American aid. By ruthless means he had managed to nullify the left in Sudanese politics. He attempted from the late 1970s to maintain his position by negotiation with the opposition National Front under Sadeq al-Mahdi. Purges of the army were a necessary part of his policy because without its support he could not carry on. In another attempt to retain control he allied himself with some of the more extremist Islamic groups and in 1983 he proclaimed Sharia as the basis of law in the Sudan, but this was already too late for him and was to set off a new 20-year long, bloody, civil war.

His greatest achievement was perhaps the Addis Ababa Agreement of February 1972 which granted the southern Sudan a large degree of internal self-government, but some of his future actions undermined the whole arrangement. In particular, the adjustment of the old south-north boundary so as to include more of the oilfields in northern Sudan and the attempt to divide southern Sudan into three states instead of one were highly unpopular in the South. Sharia law was simply the 'last straw'.

LIVELIHOODS UNDER STRESS: CHRONIC VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTIVE CHANGES AMONGST MISSEIRIYYA HUMR PASTORALISTS¹

Sara Pantuliano

BACKGROUND

The Misseriyya are a pastoralist group occupying the Western Sector of Southern Kordofan State, which was created through the merger of former West Kordofan and South Kordofan states in 2005, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The Western Sector lies between longitudes 27° 10' -29° 58' E and latitudes 09° 00' -12° 00' N.

The Misseriyya belong to the Baggara Arabs and have been living in the area of south-western Kordofan and south-eastern Darfur since the end of the 1700s (Cunnison, 1966). The area is customarily referred to as Dar Misseriyya, and it is internally defined by three long transhumance routes called *murhals* (the Western, Central and Eastern *murhals*). The Misseriyya are divided into two main sub-groups: the Zuruq and the Humr. The Humr sub-tribe has two main sections, the Ajaira and the Fallaita. Each of these is administratively divided into five sub-sections called *omodias*. The Ajaira are divided into Fayarin, Awlad Kamil, Mezaghna, Fadliya, Menama and 'Addal, while the Fallaita are divided into Metanin, Ziyud, Awlad Serur, Jubarat and Salamat. Each of these *omodias* is also divided into lineages called *khashm al-beyt*. Almost every lineage is then subdivided up to three times into further lineages also called *khashm al-beyt*, apart from the smallest unit, which is called a *surra* (Cunnison, 1966: 8–9). The division between the Ajaira and the Fallaita is reported to have been fostered by the British

¹ This article is an extract from a much longer study by Pantuliano, S., O. Egemi, B. Fadlalla and M. Farah with M. E. Abdelgadir (2009) entitled *Put Out to Pasture: War, Oil and the Decline of Misseriyya Pastoralism in Sudan*, London: Overseas Development Institute.



colonial administration and reflected the need for an organisation that could enforce law and order, collect taxes and transmit administrative orders (HTS, 1981 (annex 5): 67–68).

The mainstay of the tribe is cattle, which is devolved between generations in two ways: inheritance after the death of a family member, and by the holder passing the property to his children or others (HTS, 1981 (annex 5): 58).

The ecosystem of the Misseriyya can be defined as a non-equilibrium environment, with no long-term balance between populations, available resources and other elements of the ecosystem. Misseriyya areas are characterised by high rainfall variability, scarce water, low natural biological productivity and extreme temperatures. The climate ranges from desert to semi-humid. It is hot throughout the year, with maximum temperatures from 42°C in May to 31°C in January. Minimum temperatures range from 24°C in May to 13°C in January. Rainfall is highly seasonal and erratic, going from more than 750mm in the south to less than 200mm in the north. Drought is frequent, occurring one year in ten on average in the higher rainfall areas of the south, and in recent times three years out of ten in the north (IFAD, 2004: 27). Soil types vary from stabilised sand dunes (*Qoz* soils) to cracking clay (vertisols) and non-cracking clay soils (*Gardud*).

The availability and distribution of water is a crucial element in the livelihoods of the Misseriyya. Surface and subsurface water vary in their quality and reliability. These sources include surface pools (*butas* and *rahads*), seasonal streams (Wadi Shalengo, el Ghalla and el Hagiz) and perennial water courses. *Butas* and *rahads* are used for livestock watering and domestic needs during the rainy season, when pools are plentiful. They seldom last long, except in some clay soil areas where they can remain until December. The main beneficiaries of the seasonal springs, which have high discharge during the rainy season, are in the Nuba Mountains. Perennial water sources are Bahr al-

Arab (also known as the River Kiir), Lake Keilak and the *rugab* (sing.: *raqaba*, a water course draining into the Bahr al-Arab). Water sources, including *wadis* and *khors*, are predominantly used for livestock and horticulture production, while agriculture is mostly rain-fed (Siddig et al., 2007). While the utilisation of water sources does not seriously affect natural vegetation and soils, the degree of degradation around open water sources is increasing as more and more owners from northern Kordofan, particularly the Hamar, come to spend the dry season in the Humr region (El Sammani, 1985: 79–80). *Hafirs*, water yards and boreholes have also been dug in the area since the late 1920s (HTS, 1981 (annex 2): 89). Boreholes are concentrated along migration routes and near to settlers' locations, particularly the larger urban centres of Muglad and Babanusa.

POPULATION

In what was then the Western district of South Kordofan, the population was estimated to be 154,014 in the mid-1950s (HTS, 1981 (annex 5): 17). There is no reliable data on population since then, though an HTS report put the population at 297,057 in 1980 (*ibid.*: 16). Recent data (National Population Council, 2008) puts the total population of former West Kordofan at one million in 1993, 1.2 million in 2005 and 1.3 million in 2008. Population density differs throughout the region, with the average around 12 persons per square kilometre. Just over half of the Misseriyya population (50.69%) is between 15 and 59 years of age (*ibid.*: 41). Life expectancy at birth is 57.5 years for women and 52.8 years for men (*ibid.*: 68). Three-quarters (76.09%) of the population live in rural areas.

The area inhabited by the Misseriyya is also shared by other groups, including the Um Bororo, nomadic pastoralists of West African origin; West African farmers, mainly settled in the Lake Keilak region; Nuba communities in Lagawa Province (where there is a prevalence of Misseriyya Zuruq); and Dinka groups (Ngok and Malwal) in the south of the region.

MAIN LIVELIHOOD PROFILES IN DAR MISSEIRIYYA

Pastoralism and subsistence farming have traditionally been the two main livelihood systems in Dar Misseriyya. Pastoralist communities in the region include both nomadic and semi-nomadic (transhumant) camel and cattle herders (El Sammani, 1985). Although nomadism was the dominant system prior to the mid-1980s, an increasing trend towards transhumance was registered in 1985 by El Sammani, with pastoralists maintaining a home base and only migrating seasonally. The trend towards transhumance was attributed to a growing tendency to spend the dry season at government-provided water sources in the Muglad area (El Sammani, *ibid.*). Settled communities engaging in farming activities include smallholders, the vast majority of farmers and owners of large mechanised farms. Whilst in most of Southern Kordofan mechanised farms are mainly owned by merchants and civil servants from the North or Khartoum, in the Western Sector almost all scheme owners are local, usually hailing from the main centres (Muglad, Babanousa, al-Fula, Debab, Siteib, Kilo 50, Nama and al Jadeed). It is important to note that there has never been a clear division between the two livelihood systems: many households engage in both, combining pastoralism and farming.

The pastoral system

The pastoralist livelihood system of the Misseriyya has evolved over the years to maximise resources. To cope with a complex ecosystem where climatic crises are recurrent, the Misseriyya Humr, like most pastoralists in the Sudano-Sahelian belt, have adopted a set of dynamic and flexible strategies that facilitate survival by allowing for the managed exploitation of multiple resources. In particular, in order to take more advantage of the rangelands, they rely on opportunistic or 'tracking' strategies where the variable availability of grass is matched with livestock numbers and feed supplies are tracked in time and space. Since rainfall is scattered and scarce, the Misseriyya move herds opportunistically to look for water and grass, relying on fairly

regular transhumant movements to wetter areas south of the Bahr al-Arab. Misseriyya pastoralists migrate along a north-south axis in regular seasonal cycles through the four areas into which Dar Misseriyya is naturally divided (Cunnison, 1966):

- *Babanusa*: a northern sandy area with good grazing, mainly used during the wet season, which starts in April/May (although water is often insufficient until June/July).
- *Muglad*: a 300-square-mile clay soil area, separated from Babanusa by the Hajiz watercourse, used during the northward movement in June/July and the southward movement from September to November. This is a well-watered area with good salty grazing, where many Misseriyya also have their gardens. Families often split up here, with some members staying to tend the gardens and others continuing the migration.
- *Goz*: this is a sandy area south of Muglad, used at the beginning and end of the rains. It is seldom used for camps of long duration as it has less water than other areas and harbours harmful insects.
- *Bahr*: this area is the southerly limit of the Misseriyya migration. The Bahr Al-Arab river and the Keilak and Abyad lakes provide ample water during the dry season. The timing and distance of the migration to the Bahr depend on a variety of factors, including size of the cattle herd, water availability, balance between herding and cultivation, perceived contamination of grazing and presence of disease-carrying insects. Security in this area has been a problem since the 1980s because of the increase in people, herds and areas under cultivation and the resulting confrontations arising from competition over resources (HTS 1981 (Annex 5): 50–53). During the second North–South conflict (1983–2005) the area experienced massive population displacement. Misseriyya herds were able to access water and grazing resources relatively easily, facilitated by government-supported Misseriyya militia. Since the signing of the CPA, however,

access to Bahr al-Arab in particular has become increasingly difficult for Misseriyya pastoralists.

The farming system

Traditional crops in Dar Misseriyya are millet, *dura* (sorghum) and some cash crops, such as groundnuts and *simsim* (sesame). Cash crops and excess millet are usually sold to meet basic household needs, with any additional earnings being used to buy livestock (El Sammani, 1985: 4–5). Three main farming systems can be identified in the area (HTS, *ibid.* (annex 4): 15):

1. Millet-groundnut system: this is used throughout the Goz and the Dibeibat, El Fula and Abu Zabad plains. Millet has traditionally been the staple grain (60% of cultivated land), while groundnuts are usually grown for sale (30%). Other crops include *karkadeh* (hibiscus), *lubia* (cowpeas), watermelons, sesame and gum Arabic.
2. Millet-migratory herding system: centred in Muglad, this system combines the cultivation of millet with livestock production. Rather than a mixed farming system, it focuses on livestock as the main activity, with millet farming occurring when and where possible to provide food for the following year.
3. Clay plains system (Abyei and Keilak plains and Wadi Shalengo): the valleys are the main areas of cultivation. The staple grain crop is predominantly sorghum (80% of the cultivated area). Other crops include sesame, maize, groundnuts, okra and vegetables.

During the 1980s, most farmers cultivated sandy soils under the millet-groundnut system. Indications of excessive cropping were already apparent, with consequent soil erosion and low yields. The area as a whole suffered from regular deficits of grain: while pastoralists were the most affected group, in years of poor rainfall grain deficits also affected sedentary groups (HTS, 1981 (Annex 5): 100).

EXTERNAL SHOCKS

The Misseriyya livelihood system described above has been systematically weakened by a series of external shocks. These include restrictive land policies for pastoralists, agricultural expansion, the weakening of local governance structures and reduced capacity to manage local conflicts over resources, and climatic changes. The two most recent and significant factors are insecurity in the Bahr al-Arab area and the damaging impact of the oil industry. Conflicts sparked by competition among local groups over natural resources have been a long-standing characteristic of the region. In recent decades, however, additional factors such as civil war and, later, oil exploration have exacerbated tensions and weakened livelihood systems. Misseriyya Humr pastoralists have responded to these pressures through a process of adaptation, which for most households has resulted in greater settlement and the cutting short of transhumant movement south of the Bahr al-Arab area.

Adverse land policies

As in other areas of Sudan, the customary tribal homeland is the most important constituent of traditional land tenure in Dar Misseriyya. The collective security of the tribe is constituted within the tribal homeland; individual rights to land are recognised and can be inherited, but land cannot be taken away from the ownership of the tribe. The interlocking relationship between people, land and systems of authority has, however, been undermined over time by policies introduced both by colonial and independent governments.

Tribal stability was first interrupted in the late nineteenth century, when tribal leadership was abolished and a new administration instituted based on army leaders. The British colonial administration issued its first *Titles to Land Ordinance* in 1899, by which it recognised and started registering as private property continuously cultivated lands in northern and central riverain Sudan. The Ordinance excluded from land settlement and registration the wetlands of Sudan, including Dar

Misseriyya, where no individual private ownership was recognised. The 1925 *Land Settlement and Registration Ordinance*, still in force today, strengthened government control over land by stipulating that 'all waste, forest and unoccupied land' was deemed government property unless proven otherwise. Within government ownership, however, customary land rights are recognised and maintained, with the right and sovereignty exercised by the leadership of the native customary institutions in the allocation and administration of land rights and the settlement of disputes. This right was consolidated through the institutionalisation of the Native Administration, a system of indirect rule introduced by the British colonial administration throughout rural Sudan.

In 1970, the *Unregistered Lands Act*, implemented all across Sudan, effectively nationalised all unregistered land, and denied any formal legitimacy or juridical status to customary property rights and denied prior land users the right to compensation for the loss of land. In 1984, however, the *Civil Transaction Act* repealed the *Unregistered Land Act*. This maintains the basic principles of usufruct rights, while recognising that registered usufruct rights are of equal status to registered ownership. The Act also confirms the role of the state as a land owner and manager and stipulates the right of the government to impose temporal and spatial restrictions on grazing, and to allocate grazing land for the benefit of an entire community or for the protection of wildlife.

The legislation introduced in Sudan during the 1970s and the 1980s allowed large-scale land alienation to powerful groups. In Dar Misseriyya, mechanised farming, oil exploration and traditional agriculture all encroached on grazing land and communal forests. The effects of these changes on the Misseriyya pastoral system were compounded by a devastating drought during the 1980s, the most severe recorded in Sudan in the twentieth century. The drought led to massive herd decapitalisation, especially among small and middling herd size

owners. Many pastoralists failed to recover and, impoverished, were forced to settle in the larger villages or on the outskirts of urban centres, where they were reduced to subsistence farming or petty trade.

Erosion of community governance

The system of community governance and land management centred in the Native Administration has been weakened by restructuring measures. These have severely undermined the representative character of the administration and politicised its role to the extent that tribal administrators (who are now appointed by the government) no longer reflect tribal structures and interests. The main changes were produced by the abolition of the Native Administration in the 1970s and its reintroduction and reorganisation in the mid-1990s. The number of Misseriyya Humr *Nazirs* (paramount chiefs) was increased from three (one each for the Fallaita, Ajaira and Zuruq sub-tribes) to 17 Amirs (seven for the Zuruq, eight for the Humr, one for the Daju and one for the Nuba); the number of *omdas* rose from 17 to 60, while the number of *sheikhs* went from 100 to 656. Out of this total, 406 *sheikhs* are Ajaira (62%) and 250 are Fallaita (38%). Native Administrators are today seen as more accountable to the government than to their own people. Most are based in towns, including Khartoum, and many are criticised for '*not being with their people*'. This has created an acute leadership crisis among the Misseriyya, manifested in a lack of trust in traditional and political leaders.

The impact of oil

Oil exploitation since the 1980s has had a detrimental impact both on the environment and on Misseriyya livelihoods. Oil facilities (drilling sites, pipelines and roadbeds) were planned and built without considering the impact on local livelihoods. Pipelines were constructed on farmland and grazing areas, stock routes were blocked, forest areas, farmlands and access to good water sources were all reduced and the flow of water into farm

and pasture areas was obstructed (IFPRI, 2006; Siddig et al., 2007).

The discovery of oil also accelerated a reversal of migration flows. This began in the 1960s, when many young Misseriyya men, driven by high unemployment, joined the Sudanese army or migrated to central Sudan to find work. Two decades later, the discovery of oil caused a boom in the Muglad job market, with oil companies employing around 1,000 workers and oil exploration leading to the creation of jobs in related industries (El Sammani, 1985). In the last few years, the opening of new roads along the pipeline has encouraged more people to move into the area. Demand for building materials and fuel has put further strain on already overused forest resources.

During the study, oil exploration in Dar Misseriyya was repeatedly described as ecologically and socially damaging. The most significant repercussion highlighted in the interviews is the ecological marginalisation of the pastoral sector, with most of the land in the Western Sector earmarked for further oil exploration (Khaleel, 2008). The appropriation of such vast lands is expected to lead to further heavy pressure on pastoral resources and severe restrictions on livestock mobility. An estimated 60% of the total livestock population in the Western Sector (around 10 million head) traditionally spend five months of the year in areas now affected by oil activities. A considerable number of functioning oil wells are already located inside livestock routes, bringing considerable disruption to the annual rhythm of pastoral mobility.

Conflict

Relations between the Misseriyya and the Dinka have always been fragile, with frequent clashes over water and pasture and episodes of abduction and enslavement (Bradbury et al., 2006; El Sammani, 1985). While local groups have developed mechanisms to mediate and prevent conflicts, including annual meetings of tribal leaders, local leaders have increasingly lost

the ability to enforce their authority, in part because of the polarisation created by the civil war and the mobilisation of Misseriyya tribal militia in support of government forces. The civil war also limited access to grazing areas, exacerbating resource competition. During the war, the SPLM occupied rich grazing areas in the southern part of South Kordofan, cutting off important stock routes for Misseriyya pastoralists. As a consequence, pastoralists were compelled to graze on village lands, sparking conflict with farmers (IFPRI, 2006).

Demographic pressure has also led to overgrazing around water points, stock routes and villages (Siddig et al., 2007). In the Lake Keilak area, for example, different pastoralist groups coexisted for years until the 1980s, when increased competition from nomadic groups led to '*ferocious, even fatal*' fighting (El Sammani, 1985: 86).

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement

The political event with the greatest repercussions on the Misseriyya pastoral system has been the signing of the CPA in January 2005. The demarcation of the boundary of Abyei, envisaged by the Abyei Protocol (one of the five protocols which make up the CPA), has proved to be the most intractable issue in the implementation of the CPA to date. Tensions in the area have been high since the signing of the agreement and have culminated in an outbreak of fighting in the town of Abyei between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the SPLM. The fighting lasted for five days and led to the displacement of over 50,000 people, mostly Dinka fleeing towards the south. A small group of Misseriyya was also displaced and sought refuge northwards in Muglad town and surroundings.

The Misseriyya commonly perceive themselves as victims of the CPA, which they believe has had a devastating impact on their pastoral economy, restricting movement to the South. This has resulted in the loss of traditional grazing grounds around Bahr al-Arab and Lake Abyad and the economic opportunities in the

South that complemented livestock keeping, including honey collection, game hunting and the collection and sale of wild fruits and grasses. Insecurity associated with the spread of arms has increased, and there has been a sharp reduction in the availability of Dinka and Nuba livestock and agricultural labour.

CHANGES IN LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

These multiple pressures have spurred a rapid process of transformation in the Misseriyya livelihood system, with an apparent tendency towards sedentarisation. Key indicators include decreased mobility of families, as women and children tend to stay behind in villages; increased engagement in agricultural activities; permanent residence around urban centres; the partial sale of herds for investment in housing and other permanent assets (shops) in towns; a gradual shift from cattle to sheep; and the increased use of crop residues and oilseed cakes as animal feed. A flourishing trade in agricultural by-products for feeding has been observed in local markets.

Although detailed data are lacking, it is clear that urban centres have grown dramatically in the last few decades, principally because of migration from rural areas. Muglad town, described as having a population of approximately 10,000 in the early 1980s, has mushroomed to an estimated 90,000. New residential quarters are emerging to house new arrivals from surrounding rural areas. Mugadama village, in 1968 a tiny nomadic camp of 12 families living around the water yard, currently has an estimated population of 2,000. Debab has grown from around 200 families in 1998 to 2,033 families in 2008, according to Village Development Committee records. Schools have multiplied in parallel and in centres such as Debab a significant increase in the number of girls attending school has also been registered.

Increased engagement in agriculture is generally seen as one of the most important indicators of the transformation in the pastoral economy of the Misseriyya. There is ample evidence



that crop cultivation has become increasingly important in the household economy. Another form of adaptation to external changes in the livelihood system has been decreased mobility among pastoralists with medium-sized and large herds. Field investigations suggest that pastoral movements between wet- and dry-season grazing grounds have been significantly shortened. Traditional migration to dry-season grazing in the South around the Bahr al-Arab/Kiir River has declined greatly since the CPA was signed, with only a few, very rich Misseriyya still moving to the South under special arrangements with Dinka leaders and SPLA forces. Even in these cases, insecurity has forced the adoption of special herding techniques including herd splitting, with nearly half of the herd kept in Dar Misseriyya. Middle-size herders tend to stop in the *ruqab* area, just north of Bahr al-Arab.

Another aspect of changed pastoral mobility is the adoption of family splitting, with women and children often staying in villages (as evidenced by increased school attendance). Families left behind usually keep a few cows to supplement their income with milk sales. Some use donkey-drawn carts for water vending and other casual income-generating activities. Considerable numbers of the women and children left behind in these settlements become engaged in agricultural activities.

According to data on population distribution in the main settlement clusters in the Debab area, nomadic pastoralists are estimated to account for 45% of the total population, compared with approximately 80% in the early 1990s. Sedentary people generally consider themselves better-off than pastoralists, attributing the following characteristics to their nomadic kin:

- their life is in constant danger;
- they suffer stress, fear and exhaustion;
- their women are extremely over-burdened;
- their children are unschooled and adults are illiterate;

- they are much poorer, and run a high risk of losing animals and assets; and
- they are more susceptible to disease.

A key feature of Misseriyya adaptation is the gradual shift in animal species raised, from cattle to the *hamar* sheep of North Kordofan, which are prized in Sudan and the Gulf for the quality of their meat and are more easily sold. The move to sheep-raising is also a result of the restrictions on long migratory movements, as sheep can be reared locally.

Despite sustained attempts to adapt the livelihood system to new conditions, pastoralist families with low livestock holdings have become progressively more impoverished over the last 10–15 years, and many have abandoned pastoralism altogether in favour of farming, charcoal-making and casual labour in towns. This change is especially apparent among young people. As they lack skills outside the pastoral sector, most are unemployed or struggle to engage in the informal economy in towns. Local estimates suggest that as many as half of Misseriyya youth are unemployed. Interviews with 62 young Misseriyya in Sammouaa, Keilak and Khudur Market revealed that only eight (13%) had regular jobs. Violence, facilitated by the wide availability of arms, was identified as an important livelihood source.

At the other end of the spectrum, wealthy livestock owners have seen a significant increase in their holdings, with herds reportedly growing from an average of 150–300 cows ten years ago to 800–1,200 today. This pattern is common in pastoral societies under stress. Wealthy pastoralists have diversified into housing and commercial trade, and increasingly invest in their children's education. This group has also started to buy new cattle breeds (Kenana and Foja, both from Sudan) in order to increase milk output (output is low among the indigenous Baggara breeds). Partial sale of herds for investment in housing and other permanent assets in towns was widely mentioned. As



is the case with middle-size livestock herders, only young men – accompanied usually by one woman for household chores – embark on longer transhumant movements. Whilst middle-size herders can stop in the *Ruqab* area, access to pasture and water resources south of the river is essential for larger livestock herds in the dry season. Some large herd owners reportedly move with their herds to the Central African Republic when access to the Bahr al-Arab cannot be negotiated.

CONCLUSIONS

While the process of livelihood adaptation described above has been under way since the early 1980s, the pace of change has accelerated dramatically since the signing of the CPA. Misseriyya pastoralists continue to consider their mobility of paramount importance, but some of their leaders stress the importance of settlement. It is important to note that such statements seem to prevail among leaders who are furthest removed from the grassroots. The characteristics of the ecosystem in which the Misseriyya live would not make settlement feasible or sustainable without substantial investment in the medium to long term. Experience from other dryland areas in Africa shows that settlement strategies are only successful if they are developed as part of a long-term process involving a gradual shift away from a cattle-based economy and lifestyle brought about by education and the development of other livelihood opportunities for succeeding generations. But time is a luxury the Misseriyya do not have: 2011 gives Southern Sudan the right to secede and the Misseriyya fear that this could deprive them of large areas of land central to their livelihoods. It is essential to put in place, now, a number of interventions to address their immediate concerns, sustain a process of diversification in the medium to long term and lessen the likelihood of conflict.

Urgent action is needed to provide assistance on the scale required to help restore confidence in the peace process, both in Dar Misseriyya and in Abyei. Interventions should focus on

pastoralist livelihoods and on alternative strategies for those who have abandoned the livestock economy, risk dropping out of the sector or willingly pursue alternative livelihood strategies, in an effort to support the transformation and adaptation of Misseriyya livelihoods in a sustainable manner and avoid the risk that frustrated and destitute youth could be further manipulated for political gains.

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'BROTHERS' OF THE NILE: ARE NORTHERN SUDANESE IN EGYPT REFUGEES?

Anita Fábos

INTRODUCTION

This short article is a summary of a talk presented at the 2008 SSSUK Symposium and Annual General Meeting and is based on my recent book, *'Brothers' or Others? Muslim Arab Sudanese in Egypt* (2008, Berghahn). The ethnographic examples are drawn from my research (1994-1997) in Cairo; all names and identifying features of people who shared their stories with me are changed, with the exception of the well-known politician and historical figure Tijani Al-Tayib.

My research with Muslim Arab Sudanese in Egypt started with a puzzle that stimulated my curiosity about the relationship between social policy, 'refugeeness', and how people think about 'belonging'. In 1991, I was appointed principal investigator of a short-term project exploring educational and training opportunities for refugees in Cairo. The main goal of the project was to identify those resources that were available to non-Egyptians, since most publicly funded opportunities were designated for citizens. In the early nineties, the majority of refugees newly arrived in Egypt were from Sudan and included both southern Sudanese who had first been displaced in the IDP camps around Khartoum, and northern Sudanese fleeing the military regime that had taken power in 1989. It soon became clear that, unlike Eritrean, Somali and Ethiopian refugees, Sudanese were not barred from participating in Egyptian educational programmes; indeed, our Egyptian respondents were quite encouraging towards Sudanese participants.

However, I also noticed that, while southern Sudanese crowded into church-based support centres, hoping to be put forward for autonomous refugee resettlement programmes organised through Western embassies, northern Sudanese were adamant

that they were not refugees and would not seek such help. Furthermore, Egyptians considered southern Sudanese to be 'refugees' in Egypt, but they insisted that northern Sudanese were "*just like us*". Many of my Egyptian colleagues pointed out that most northern Sudanese were fellow Muslims and Arabs, and 'brothers' of the Nile Valley.

Until recently, Egyptian government policy has made a clear distinction between 'Citizens' and 'Foreigners' in areas of entry, residence, access to government services and benefits, and even tourist venues—except in the case of Sudanese nationals. Most immigrants in Egypt, even those who are second- or even third-generation residents, pay expensive foreigner-rate school fees, use private health care, and rent flats at extremely high rates. Conditions for property ownership are similarly more restrictive for non-Egyptians. It is virtually impossible to naturalize as an Egyptian citizen except in the case of foreign women marrying Egyptian men and the occasional presidential decree. Similarly, refugee policy in Egypt does not encourage settlement and integration. Egypt has lodged crucial reservations against the 1951 Geneva Convention that restrict employment, education, and health care.

Sudanese nationals, however, had long enjoyed quasi-citizenship rights on the basis of legislation such as the 1982 Integration Agreement between Egypt and Sudan. Thousands of northern Sudanese immigrants, many settling in Egypt before Sudanese independence, had made Cairo their home, sending their children to Egyptian schools and benefiting from unrestricted employment. However, the experience for newly arrived northern Sudanese, mostly urban professionals, in Cairo was rather more like exile. Their professional skills were not in demand and flats in the middle class neighbourhoods they preferred were expensive. Even though Egyptian policy was quite inclusive in theory, in practice northern Sudanese found themselves paying a lot of money for basic services. By the mid-1990s, northern Sudanese in Cairo were increasingly

desperate and marginalised. Furthermore, the Egyptian government and the implementing agency for refugee status determination, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), refused to designate more than a handful of Sudanese as 'refugees'. Officially speaking, Egyptians simply could not recognize their Nile Valley 'brothers' as refugees—as fellow Muslims, Arabs, and anti-colonial fighters, they were not seen as seeking protection but rather as '*coming into the fold*'.

This policy dilemma raised two questions for me: the first was, how do policy makers deal with the case of refugees from national groups which share common religious, cultural or historical identities with receiving nations? And the second was, how can ethnic identity be understood in the absence of clear and distinct ethnic boundaries? I set out to answer these questions in my research in Cairo.

SUPRA-NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN A NATION-STATE WORLD

I wrote my book, '*Brothers' or Others?*' as a sort of detective novel, in which I lead the reader along my own path of discovery about the case of northern Sudanese in Egypt and the challenge Sudanese ethnicity presents to current explanations of how people create belonging and 'otherness'. This short article presents my key observations and relates these to refugee policy as a domestic issue.

First, it is useful to remind ourselves that, in addition to the national identities that many of us find compelling, there are also 'umbrella identities' that include members of nations or even groups of nations. I use the term 'supra-national' in this context as opposed to transnational as a way of indicating the historical complexity of contemporary Muslim Arab Sudanese identity in Egypt—Sudanese are not simply a minority in Egypt with transnational ethnic ties to other Sudanese in the diaspora, but are fellow Muslims, Arabs, and former British colonial subjects in the Nile Valley

Northern Sudanese share a number of supra-national identities with Egyptians. In the first instance, there is the geographical continuity of the Nile River Valley, including the mutual claim to roots in Pharaonic civilization on both sides of the contemporary border. The common phrase in Egyptian discourse, *ashshiqat wadi al-nil* ("siblings of the Nile Valley") refers to the commonalities of blood, kinship, and society for peoples of Egypt and Sudan living along the Nile River. Secondly, though historically mediated by other competing identities (e.g. an Egyptian nationalism referring to Egypt's pre-Arab era), Egyptians and Sudanese share a claim to an Arab heritage, culture and lineage. The role of Gamal Abd al-Nasser in establishing the League of Arab States, and Egyptian and Sudanese popular support for Arab nationalism generally, has further buttressed a shared supra-national Arab identity.

A common religious identity has also bound the peoples of northern Sudan and Egypt together, both through the establishment of Coptic rule along the Nile in the Byzantine period and the spread of Islam throughout the region through trade, scholarship, and the development of religious brotherhoods. As a world religion, Islam already supports identification with other Muslims in a supra-national framework. *Dar al-Islam* has no borders despite the local histories and practices of Muslims across the globe. A more recent connection is the contemporary struggle of Egyptian and Sudanese nationalists against Great Britain, their common colonial ruler. The shared anti-colonial project, which found voice through the Egyptian Wafd Party's Unity of the Nile Valley platform as well as Sudan's Democratic Unionist party, drew inspiration from national movements in other parts of the world but also from pan-Arab Nationalism. These nascent nationalisms competed for the support of Nile Valley peoples, with the eventual configuration—an independent Egypt and an independent Sudan with membership in a League of Arab States—supplanting the dream of a united Egypt and Sudan. Furthermore, Sudan's other peoples did not identify with

overarching Arab and Muslim frameworks, sowing the seeds for a fragmented body politic, the legacy of colonial policies.

From the Egyptian point of view, however, the nations of Egypt and Sudan shared sufficient supra-national allegiances for a blurring of citizenship requirements and national memberships. Politically, regional and even global frameworks have allowed for a significant level of continuity and connection, while individual ties between northern Sudanese and Egyptians through centuries of migration, intermarriage and kin relations, education, religious brotherhoods, and so forth have further solidified a common identity. Perhaps the best example of Egypt's assertion of its claim to a Nile Valley identity is the fact that its first and third presidents, Muhammad Naguib and Anwar Sadat, were both of mixed Egyptian/northern Sudanese parentage. In 1982 President Sadat and Sudanese president Jaafar Nimeiri signed an Integration Agreement re-establishing economic, educational, and travel arrangements, this time within a national framework. A Nile Valley Parliament was established with the idea of facilitating Egyptian-Sudanese integration, while Sudanese and Egyptian nationals were given quasi-national status in each other's countries.

Sudanese from northern Sudan had many different reasons for making their home in Egypt. Many had come as labour migrants and established livelihoods that connected them to formal Egyptian institutions. I met 'Maisa', a lively and engaging woman in her seventies, in Aswan. 'Maisa' had been born in Egypt to parents who immigrated to Aswan from Meroë in northern Sudan in the 1920s during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium period. The British army in Egypt recruited Sudanese men at all levels and specializations—for example, the camel corps which patrolled Egypt's borders, the *hagana*, was largely made up of Sudanese. 'Maisa' married a Sudanese cousin who graduated from the military academy and became an officer in the Anglo-Egyptian armed forces. They raised four sons in Aswan, two of whom acquired Egyptian nationality,

although after Sudan's independence in 1956 both 'Maisa' and her husband chose to reside in Egypt as Sudanese citizens. After her husband's death in the 1970s, 'Maisa' continued to draw an Egyptian pension as the wife of an army officer.

Equally significant for Sudanese in the post-independence period was the role Egypt played as a site of political exile. One prominent example is Tijani al-Tayib, the leader of the Sudan Communist Party, who fled to Cairo in the 1990s. *Ustaz* Tijani had strong personal and political connections to Egypt, where he was a student at Cairo University in the 1940s and became an active member of the Egyptian communist movement. In 1948, he was jailed by the authorities in Egypt for a year as a '*security risk*' and then deported to Sudan, where he was one of the founders and long-time head of Sudan's Communist Party. Decades of activism and persecution in Sudan followed, and *Ustaz* Tijani eventually fled into exile in Cairo. Indeed, Egypt presented a nurturing political environment for Sudan's opposition movements throughout the 1990s, and many exiled political leaders were based in Cairo.

Despite Egypt's official discourse of '*brotherhood*' and '*unity of the Nile valley*', however, aspects of Sudan's political independence posed a challenge to integration policies. At various points during the second half of the twentieth century, Sudanese living in Egypt suffered setbacks to their legal status due to political disagreements between governments. During the decade of the 1990s, Egypt grew increasingly fearful of Sudan's international support of an Islamist project and accused the Islamist government of funding and training militant groups seeking an Islamist state in Egypt. Most worrisome to the large community of Sudanese immigrants—most still holding Sudanese nationality but enjoying permanent residence status in Egypt—was the political crisis that ensued after an assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosny Mubarak in 1995, widely thought to have been authorized by the Sudanese government. In July of that year, the Egyptian government retaliated against

Sudan by turning back planes and ferries originating in Sudan, imposing harsh security measures on Sudanese nationals entering or re-entering Egypt from elsewhere, and revoking (with a 'grandfather' provision for those Sudanese already in the country) the right to permanent residence status. The dramatic shift in the Egyptian attitude towards Sudanese is captured by the words of 'Khadiga', a Sudanese woman born and raised in Ain Shams:

'Egypt and Sudan are the closest that countries can be, because for many years Turkish rule tied them together, and English rule tied them together, and there was a feeling of respect from Egyptians that has continued until the National Islamic Front government... In the past, we used to say we are brothers and cousins, but they have started to say Sudanese are terrorists, and all of this affects us.'

The shift in Egyptian immigration policy towards Sudanese had a number of additional outcomes regarding Sudanese legal status in Egypt. Notably, the international community was now willing to recognize some northern Sudanese as 'refugees' who had crossed a border after experiencing individual persecution. Observations by scholars and practitioners in the field of refugee studies have suggested that forced migrants often undergo a process of solidifying a group boundary – such as national or ethnic identity – in tandem with processes of exclusion and categorisation. One type of categorization is refugee policy itself, through which states recognize the persecution of 'nationals' of other states to whom they might offer asylum. In the case of Sudanese in Egypt, these processes of 'boundary-making' between Sudan and Egypt were most certainly gaining strength in the 1990s as Sudanese nationals continued to lose whatever benefits they enjoyed while integration policies held sway. But whereas the 'differences' of many immigrants and refugees in receiving societies seem self-explanatory—'the' Pakistanis in the UK, 'the' Nigerians in Morocco, 'the' Mexicans in the United States—the religious, historical, and

cultural attributes shared by both Egyptians and Sudanese made drawing a sharp distinction between the two groups more difficult. Even though all Sudanese nationals in the 1990s were labelled as 'non-Egyptians' according to Egyptian bureaucratic categories, the Egyptian regime, nevertheless, maintained its official stance that Sudanese were 'brothers', and ordinary Egyptian citizens continued to express solidarity and brotherhood with Sudanese.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND PROPRIETY

This did not mean, however, that Sudanese and Egyptians did not recognize differences from one another; rather, I assert that they both resisted the interpretation that these differences took the form of 'ethnic identity'. An example of this understanding emerged when I began to share my research interests with potential Sudanese and Egyptian research participants. The comments I received on my proposed research on Sudanese ethnicity in Egypt included observations such as this from an Egyptian colleague:

'Now, Armenians in Egypt—they're an ethnic group—'gamaa irqia'—because they speak a different language, they have a different religion, etc. but it is incorrect to speak of Sudanese as an ethnic group, because they're just like Egyptians!'

and this analysis from a Sudanese colleague:

'The difficulties are between the two governments only and don't involve the brothers of the Nile Valley. These clouds will pass'.

The tensions between governments were nevertheless beginning to take their toll on Sudanese, who were facing increasing difficulties renewing visas, enrolling children in school, accessing training courses, and finding jobs. By the late 1990s, Sudanese in Cairo were beginning to find fault with the official



Egyptian '*brothers of a united Nile Valley*' stance. In light of daily indignities which underlined their unequal legal status in Egypt, Sudanese privately bristled at the ways in which Egyptians seemed oblivious to their situation.

Anthropologists of ethnicity have long recognized that people undergoing change and crisis—who perceive some sort of threat to their well-being or even existence—may express a new or exaggerated sense of ethnic or other group identity. Certainly this has been the case in a number of well-known 'ethnic' and 'national' conflicts whereby peoples who described themselves as living together with their neighbours in a brotherly way found themselves when the conflict got underway making common cause against them. The partition between India and Pakistan comes to mind, as does the more recent conflict which divided the Yugoslavian nation-state into a number of ethno-national enclaves. In the run-up to the Balkan War, the anthropologist Tone Bringa filmed the process through which 'Croats' and 'Muslims' in a mixed village divided along ethnic lines and began to think of each other with a hostility unimaginable in the beginning of the conflict. The documentary portrays friends who drank coffee together for forty years now turning their backs on one another, showing the power of ethno-national pride and fear.

Sudanese in Egypt similarly found their positive feelings towards Egyptian society tempered by their experiences of exclusion and alienation. Some Sudanese, like 'Leila', had spent most of their adult lives in Egypt and counted Egyptians among their closest friends. 'Leila' had moved to Egypt from Sudan to go to Cairo University in the 1980s. Although she returned to Sudan when she finished her degree, she returned together with her entire family when her father, a high-ranking government official, fled the country due to his political views. Despite a good job with an NGO, a comfortable apartment in Cairo and a large circle of friends both Egyptian and Sudanese, 'Leila's' attitude towards her adopted home changed significantly after

1995, and she felt unable to fit in anymore. She complained that the neighbours were rude to her family, and suggested that the behaviour of Egyptians had 'changed'. After the death of her father, 'Leila' and most of her family members emigrated to Canada.

The transformation of Egypt from '*home*' to '*alien nation*' was even more profound for 'Hamdy'. Like 'Leila', 'Hamdy' had attended university in Cairo and had met and married his Egyptian Nubian wife there. He and his young family returned to Sudan, where he found a prestigious job in one of Sudan's government ministries. He was sacked in 1994 for his political views and he and his wife returned to Cairo and moved in with her family while he looked for work. But Egyptian employers were increasingly reluctant to hire Sudanese, who they began to see as 'foreigners' competing with Egyptians for scarce jobs. Unable to persuade his former Egyptian colleagues to provide him with the special dispensation needed to get a work permit, 'Hamdy' nevertheless felt unable to take up one of the informal jobs on offer as these were not 'suitable' for a former government official like himself. His wife ended up supporting the family through odd jobs like *henna* design, towing their small child along with her while 'Hamdy' talked politics and read the newspaper in the cafes. In the evenings, he drowned his sorrows at the homes of wealthier Sudanese friends, returning to his irate wife in the wee hours. Eventually, after an unsuccessful attempt to claim refugee status and facing the possibility of divorce, 'Hamdy' took the dangerous step of returning to Sudan.

'Hamdy's' and 'Leila's' experiences of growing uneasiness with the nature of their 'brotherhood' with Egyptians were shared by dozens of Sudanese who participated in my research and by the cultural, ethnic and welfare organizations that began to spring up in response to Sudanese sense of disenfranchisement. The shared frustration and bewilderment at becoming 'foreigners' despite the official 'brotherhood' discourse, however, did not manifest itself in sharp attacks on Egypt or Egyptians. Instead, I

noticed that my Sudanese research participants were discussing, more and more, the ‘*poor*’ manners of Egyptians. My fieldnotes are full of comments about the ‘*rudeness*’ of Egyptian children, the ‘*presumptuousness*’ of Egyptian men, the ‘*coarseness*’ of Egyptian women—all subjective comments on the behaviour of their erstwhile brethren. Examples of such behaviour abounded, as in comments as to how Egyptians ‘*did not exchange proper greetings with neighbours*’, or how ‘*Egyptian men swore in public*’ and so on. I heard again and again, “*Wallahi, al-masriyeen deil ma mu’addab!*”—(‘*By God, these Egyptians are not proper!*’) This appeared to me as very similar to marking an ethnic boundary!

The particular choice of ‘boundary marker’ used by Sudanese to distinguish themselves from Egyptians—proper behaviour, or *adab*, bears thinking about. While many other immigrant groups have called upon their purported “moral superiority” to distinguish themselves and mark a boundary with receiving societies, Egyptians share the same moral code as Muslim Arab Sudanese do. Both communities recognise that ‘proper’ behaviour for women and for men is drawn from ‘authentic’ Islamic and Arabic values—norms of modesty, hospitality, generosity, dignity, social equality aspired to by Arabs and Muslims across the world. That is, the same morality code promoted ‘back home’ in Sudan is recognizable among fellow Muslims and Arabs in Egypt and other places. Why, then, the use of *adab* as a marker of difference between Sudanese and Egyptians? My research conclusion was that Sudanese, by using propriety as an ethnic boundary marker, could negotiate or reinterpret behaviour norms in a flexible way to include—or differentiate—Egyptians as circumstances demanded.

AMBIGUOUS ETHNICITY

To draw to a conclusion, in Cairo in the 1990s, northern Sudanese chose a more fluid and ambiguous approach to solidifying their group identity. That was to call upon Muslim and Arab characteristics of behaviour and comportment that

they themselves shared with Egyptians, thus finding subtle ways to differentiate themselves while continuing to maintain a public solidarity. In my book, I explored the ways in which Sudanese men and women from migrant communities and exile networks expressed their propriety in gender-specific ways, but drawing on the common concept of *adab* and remaining mindful of the power of the Egyptian state.

It is useful here to bring the focus back to social policy and to repeat the question, '*Are northern Sudanese in Egypt refugees?*' The answer, perhaps predictably, is, '*yes and no*'. Most of the migrant families and many Sudanese who had continued to travel back and forth between Sudan and Egypt for work, education, medical treatment, and tourism, did not consider themselves refugees and continued to survive in a legally precarious but culturally familiar way. A significant number of politically active Sudanese sought a different status. Towards the end of the tumultuous 1990s, Egypt was eventually persuaded by the UNHCR and the international community to offer protection to northern Sudanese who met their requirements for claiming political exile—but resisted a full return to the previous mode of quasi-citizenship. Many received the option of resettlement in a third country, with large numbers of people moving as refugees to Canada, Australia, and the United States.

In 2005, the issue of integration came to the fore with the violent dispersal of a three-month-long peaceful demonstration by Sudanese refugees in front of UNHCR offices in Cairo. Tensions around the possible implementation of the *Four Freedoms Agreement*, signed in 2004 by Egyptian President Hosny Mubarak and his Sudanese counterpart Omar Al-Bashir, especially among those Sudanese who did not feel themselves to have 'brotherly' relations with Egyptians. Refugees argued that the agreement, which purportedly guaranteed the "*freedoms*" of movement, residence, work and property ownership for Sudanese and Egyptian citizens in each other's country, would

not solve their perception that they would continue to be excluded in Egypt and yet would lose the opportunity for resettlement in third countries. Once the refugee genie had been let out of the bottle, the promise of formal integration for a large segment of Sudanese in Egypt was less appealing.



TOGETHER FOR SUDAN: RESPONDING TO WOMEN'S REQUEST FOR EDUCATION

Lillian Craig Harris

“HOLDING UP THE SKY”

We all know that women desperate to help themselves and provide for their children are sometimes able to accomplish what appear to be miracles. During more than a decade of accompanying displaced and impoverished Sudanese women, I have learned that what they need most is someone to listen to them and then provide the necessary emotional and material support to help them move forward. They can take it from there. When someone believes in you and extends a helping hand, little remains impossible. This truth was taught to me by my mother and reinforced by association with courageous Sudanese women. *Together for Sudan* (TfS) has two slogans, ‘*Power to the Powerless through Education*’ and ‘*Building Peace through Service*’ which reflect this reality.

Although a Chinese proverb has it that women hold up half the sky, probably two thirds of the people holding up the Sudanese sky today are women because so many men remain bogged down in political and ethnic rivalry and consequent violence. Although perhaps 75 percent of Sudanese women are illiterate, they are a force to be reckoned with now as well as in the future. Anyone seeking evidence of this should go to see Dr. Gasim Badri, TfS Patron and President of Ahfad University for Women in Omdurman, and his wife Dr. Amna Badri. Ahfad University, in partnership with *Together for Sudan* since our inception in 1996, is one of the most convincing arguments I know that education changes women, their families and, over time, their nation.

‘*Born in 1996 at the request of Sudanese women*’ is how *Together for Sudan* often explains itself. Some 12 years after its inception, TfS is a growing British registered charity which has 284 female scholars at university in Sudan and by the end of 2009 will have sponsored a total of 169 university graduates, all women. Additionally, over 3,000

Sudanese women have learned to read in *TyS* sponsored literacy classes. For a number of years *TyS* has provided teacher training and support to 25 self help basic schools enrolling over 4,000 children in South Kordofan and the settlements for displaced people which surround Khartoum. And these are only three of its eight education and educational support projects.

Everyone, especially the Sudanese, agrees that working in Sudan can be difficult. However, the rewards for trying can be spectacular. The reason for the success of this low profile, low cost educational venture is not at all obscure: all that *TyS* has accomplished has been requested and promoted by Sudanese women, many of them working as volunteers, many of them impoverished and illiterate. Need I point out that illiterate women can be very focused, determined and dynamic? Currently *Together for Sudan* operates its eight educational and education support projects on a yearly budget of just over a quarter of a million pounds sterling. This is possible because *TyS* has no offices outside Sudan and the staff in its Khartoum and Kadugli offices are our only paid employees. As a non-political charity whose work is supported by popular acclaim, *TyS* is seen as non-threatening by authorities in Khartoum and as a godsend by officials in Kadugli.

BEGINNINGS

My interaction with Sudanese women began in 1995-99 while my husband, Alan Goulty, was British Ambassador to Sudan. Diplomats have privileged access and so we set out to learn as much as we could, travelling throughout the country and, while in Khartoum, mixing Sudanese of all groups and persuasions at garden parties. People who had not spoken to one another in years found a place to do so outside the circle of light in the British residence garden. At home or travelling, Alan was expected to talk to the men while I, greatly privileged, was sent to sit with the women. At the invitation of Sudanese and European humanitarians and clerics, I began to venture into the settlements for internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the outskirts of Khartoum. Having spent several years in London and Cairo as a befriender (the

Samaritans abroad) providing emotional support to sorrowing, despairing and suicidal people, I knew something about not giving advice, when to keep quiet and when to probe. Often, the responses were overwhelming.

"Men say not to mind if war takes our children because we can have more children afterwards" a group of southern women explained to me. At this point their faces contorted with pain and anger. *"But we don't want other children! We want these children."* Then, a few months after my arrival in Sudan a group of university-educated northern women invited me to *"Find us some Christian women to talk to about peace."* Carefully they explained to me that *"Men want power but women want peace."*

The **Women's Action Group**, as it came to be known, first met in the British Residence and brought together women from virtually all parts of Sudan -- Muslims, Christians and traditional believers, women who held graduate degrees from foreign universities and women who were illiterate -- to tell of their suffering and their hope. Everyone had a chance to tell her life story and often we wept together. It was not long before *WAG* began to attract both international attention and scrutiny by local security personnel.

I was simply the moderator, controlling traffic, taking no sides, barring men from participating and explaining the values of listening therapy. It was one of the most moving experiences of my life when the women -- using the techniques of befriending -- bonded and began to make forays into the squatter settlements which surround Khartoum in order to listen to the women's stories. They translated the American civil rights anthem, *'We Shall Overcome'* into Arabic and taught it to displaced and rejected women living in the miserable wastelands of Soba Aradi and Jeborona.

"I never knew! I never knew!" a northern woman wept in the bus back to Khartoum after our first foray. Nor had most of the rest of us but we were learning fast. Today, remembering how Sudanese women sometimes greet another woman by placing a hand on her breast, I think

of those early encounters with Sudanese women as the privilege of placing my hand on the heartbeat of Sudan. No one has benefited more than I from educational work in support of sisters.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF *TOGETHER FOR SUDAN*

The first direct hint of what would eventually become *Together for Sudan* occurred some months before the beginning of *WAG*. During a visit to Kadugli, capital of the Nuba Mountains, a woman named Miriam, who had just met me and, apparently had no one else to whom to turn, suggested audaciously that I pay her daughter's university fees in Khartoum. Otherwise, there was no hope for the girl's further education. Poor people around the world often assume that foreigners are wealthy and Miriam was wrong in so supposing. But she had no way of knowing that when my parents were unable to pay for my undergraduate education, others did so. Consequently I had been waiting more than half my life for her appeal.

That first year we had three scholars and called ourselves *The Bishop Mubarak Scholarship Fund for Nuba Women*, an informal group named after a Nuba Anglican Bishop who died in 1996. Until 2002 we provided university scholarships only to Nuba women, some 90 percent of whom were said to be illiterate. Today, many of our graduates are back in their home areas as teachers, health workers and INGO employees. Meanwhile, listening to what women said they needed, I also worked with them to set up a solar lighting project (You cannot learn to read or study at night without light), a mobile library, an English language project and, of course, the *Women's Action Group* which grew out of the longing of Muslim and Christian women to understand and make peace with one another.

CRISIS

On the night of 20 August 1998 I had just returned to the British Residence after dancing away the afternoon as *WAG* opened a women's centre in Khartoum Two, when the building was rattled by a major explosion on the north bank of the Blue Nile. American missiles had hit

the Shifa pharmaceutical factory. Because the British Prime Minister then publicly supported that act of violence, within days Alan and I were obliged to leave Sudan. Alan, who remained British Ambassador to Sudan, spent the following nine months trying to return. But after a month in London, I pointed out that I still had a multi-entry visa, that the wife of the Sudanese Ambassador to the UK remained in England, that my work, my friends and my two dogs were in Khartoum and I was, after all, not a diplomat and definitely did not approve of the Shifa bombing. So back I went. It took Sudanese authorities, pragmatic people as most of them are, three weeks to find a reason to expel me.

That opportunity arose when I was asked to give a eulogy at the funeral of Bari statesman Hilary Logali, a patron of *Befrienders Khartoum* and board member of *The English Language Foundation*, two of the small charities which I helped set up during that hyperactive period 1996-98. At Uncle Hilary's funeral elderly Bari women spat on my hands in traditional blessing. After the funeral, Sudanese government authorities gave me only a few days to leave, but not before Sudanese friends funded and set up a small office in Khartoum to administer the various small projects.

Broken hearted, I went back to London and began fundraising. It was a time of spiritual crisis for me during which I was forced to accept that responsibility – if ever it had been mine – had passed into the hands of others. As we waited in London to return to Sudan to pick up our belongings, rescue our dogs and say farewell, Alan and I set up two British registered charities, *The Bishop Mubarak Scholarship Fund for Nuba Women* and *Together for Sudan* for educational support projects. Most of those early projects eventually failed, including the Mobile Library (few sites wanted to rotate their books but all demanded more!), the *English Language Foundation* (mothballed in 2002 after failure to work significantly), *WAG* (closed in 2004 due in part to a significant emigration of northern women leaders from Sudan in the late 1990s) and *Befrienders Khartoum* (closed in 2002 as the result of financial difficulties and lack of leadership).

In subsequent years several *Together for Sudan projects*, including the school Breakfast Project, Women's Income Generation Project and The Medicine Box, were also discontinued as impossible to monitor or to support adequately due to the enormous needs and the characteristics of broken communities. But the work itself and the projects have increased.

TOGETHER FOR SUDAN TO-DAY

It became evident by 2004 that managing two charities from abroad was to duplicate the effort. At the same time, recurrent and threatening efforts by the family of the late Bishop Mubarak to gain control over funds intended for women's education, helped lead to a decision to fold the two charities into one. In 2004 *The Bishop Mubarak Fund* was mothballed and all work subsumed under *Together for Sudan*. The need to cull the work, even over the protests of the poor, was very difficult but TfS has emerged a stronger, and larger, charity.

TfS currently operates eight projects all concentrated on education with priority to disadvantaged and displaced women and children. These include university scholarships for women in Sudan, women's literacy classes, teacher training and support for basic self-help schools, scholarships for children affected by HIV/AIDS, and, since 2008, vocational training to meet the demand of southerners hoping to return south. Our first venture into adult male education occurred in late 2008 when 10 men were admitted to a group of some 120 community health care trainees.

Three other TfS educational support projects are currently active: the Solar Lighting Project, the very popular HIV/AIDS Awareness Outreach and an internationally acclaimed Eye Care Outreach led by a Sudanese ophthalmologist Dr. Nabila Radi who, in response to my 2003 phone call, said "*If you are going to serve the poor, you are going to suffer! I can start tomorrow*". The TfS hostel for university scholars, a pioneering venture, was closed in 2008 when the government began to operate hostels.

Charity work is never easy but the rewards are as evident to those who give as to those who receive. If there were no need for charity work we should probably have to invent it for the mutual understanding and reconciliation which it brings. *Together for Sudan's* individual donors include Sudanese, Americans, British and other Europeans as well as professional partners, including the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), the British Department for International Development (DfID), Refugees International Japan, Light for the World, Manos Unidas, the Mohamed Ibrahim Fund and the Gordon Memorial Trust Fund. It is our hope to provide educational opportunity to an embattled country whose citizens are both worthy and beloved by those who know them.

"Don't forget us", Sudanese women told me urgently during that fraught week in August 1999 after Alan and I had returned to Khartoum to pack up. *"Tell people how we suffer and what we need."* Theirs has been a heavy charge which I can neither reject nor live up to adequately but in the following decade I have been back to Sudan over 20 times. Today *Together for Sudan* is a growing charity despite present global financial difficulties and we continue to keep faith with Sudanese women.

On a visit to Darfur in 2005 I was reminded that neither the needs nor the determination of Sudanese women have changed much since I first knew them. When I asked newly displaced women what they needed most, they listed water, food for their children and protection in that order. *"Anything else?"*, I inquired and suddenly they were all speaking. *"Teach us to read,"* they cried, *"and we will help ourselves!"* I continue to deliver that message.

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THE RETURN OF NGUNDENG'S *DANG*

Douglas Johnson

Ngundeng Bong, the most famous Nuer prophet, lived between c.1830 and 1906. His father, Bong Can, was a *kuar muon* ('earth-master' or 'leopard-skin chief'), originally from the Bul Nuer in the west, who came to live among the Gaajok in the east. His mother, Nyayiel, was from the Lou Nuer. Ngundeng was initiated into the Thut age-set in about 1855 and sometime in the 1860s he began to have seizures and was considered mad. He left to settle among his mother's people, but initially they were no more welcoming than the Gaajok, often referring to Ngundeng as 'Nyayiel's fool'. Gradually, however, people began to recognize his strange behaviour not as a sign of madness, but of seizure by *Kuoth* (God or Divinity), and specifically of the divinity Deng. Throughout his lifetime Ngundeng established a reputation for having the power of life and death. Speaking with the voice of Deng through his songs and prayers he enunciated a social philosophy of peace which condemned inter-Nuer feuds and raids against the Nuer's neighbours. He constructed a large conical earth mound, or *Bieh* at Weideang, some five miles north of Waat, which attracted many visitors – Nuer, Dinka, Anuak and others.¹

Among the objects Ngundeng used in his rites was a brass pipe (*tony*), made by an Anuak blacksmith, and the *dang*, or ceremonial stick (translated by me as a 'baton', but by scripturally-minded Nuer as a 'rod'). The *dang* was fashioned from the root of a *kot* or tamarind tree, about 110 cm long, and decorated with copper wire. It was said that it was broken at the Battle of Pading in c.1879 – the only battle Ngundeng fought, and one that he fought in self-defence.² Ngundeng subsequently referred to it as his 'broken *dang*' (Figure 1)

¹ Douglas H. Johnson, *Nuer Prophets* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

² Douglas H. Johnson, 'The prophet Ngundeng and the battle of Pading' in David M. Anderson & Douglas H. Johnson (eds), *Revealing Prophets* (London: James Currey, 1995).



After Ngundeng died his son Guek claimed to be seized by Deng and took possession of his father's relics, including the pipe and the *dang*. By this time the Sudan had been conquered by Britain and Egypt (the 'Turuk') and Guek came into conflict with the government. He was killed in battle with the Sudan Defence Force on 8 February 1929. The relics of his father were taken as trophies by the British officers leading the government forces. The brass pipe and a small drum (*bul*) eventually were housed in the Ethnographic Museum in Khartoum, and were restored to the Lou Nuer by presidential order in 1978.

When I first worked among the Lou Nuer in 1975-6 I was told that the *dang* had been lost in the grass on the day Guek was killed. It was only on returning to England that I discovered that it had been taken by Percy Coriat, the District Commissioner among the Lou at the time.³ It was then in the possession of his widow. I reported this find to Peter Gatkuoth, a Lou Nuer and the Commissioner of Upper Nile Province when I began my research, and there was naturally a desire among the Lou that the *dang* be returned to them. Peter reported back to me that when he told Lou elders of this discovery, they claimed they would never be able to live in peace until the *dang* was returned.

When Mrs. Coriat died the *dang* was inherited by her daughter. I mentioned to her the significance of the *dang* to the Lou, and she agreed that it should be returned. But by this time the civil war was in full swing, with the Lou divided among themselves. As much as they needed peace, it was not possible to arrange its return at that time. Coriat's daughter eventually seems to have tired of waiting and put the *dang* up for public auction along with photographs and other mementos of her father in 1999. Alerted to this auction by a former Operation Lifeline Sudan colleague, Alastair Scott-Villiers (who, as a former rare books valuer, kept an eye out for interesting auctions), I bought the

³ Douglas H. Johnson (ed.), *Governing the Nuer: Documents by Percy Coriat on Nuer History and Ethnography 1922-1931* (Oxford: JASO, 1993).



Figure 1: Ngundeng's *Dang*: Left to right: Douglas Johnson; Hussein Mar; Gabriel Gai Riam; Philip Lyon Roussel, last British D.C. in Waat

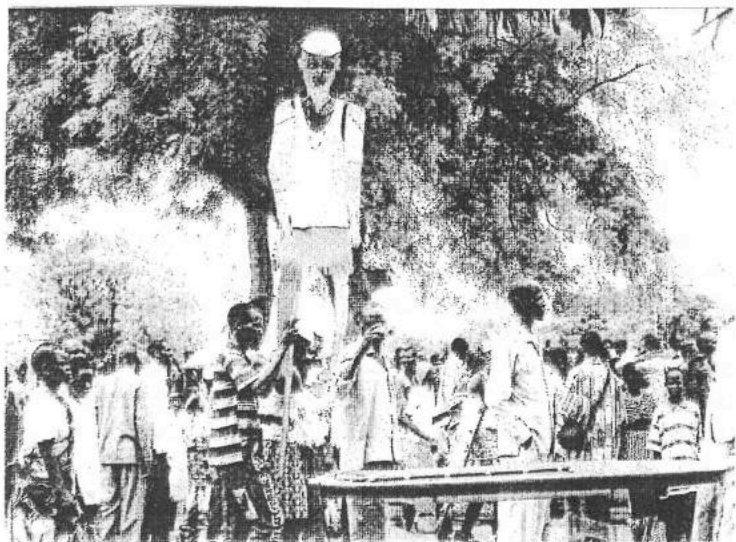


Figure 2: "White Man in the Tropics". Douglas Johnson?

dang, with the intention of returning it to the Ngundeng family and the Lou Nuer, to join the pipe and drum, when circumstances permitted and kept it locked in a safe in my basement for ten years.

The end of the civil war and the creation of the Government of South Sudan finally made the return possible. My former research assistant, Gabriel Gai Riam, had been completing a degree in theology in Edinburgh the year I bought the *dang*, and I discussed with him what would be the right circumstances for its return. By 2008 he was now Minister for Cabinet Affairs in the Jonglei State government, and just before Christmas that year, when he was in the UK visiting his family, he contacted me and arranged a meeting in the New Year with Hussein Mar, Deputy Governor of Jonglei State (and also a Lou Nuer). It was at that meeting that we agreed that I should bring the *dang* with me on my next visit to Juba, on my way to teach at the annual Rift Valley Institute Course in Rumbek in May. I left it with them to arrange this with Riek Machar, the Vice-President of the Government of South Sudan.

That was the last I heard of it for the next few months, until in April internet rumours began to circulate about the return of the *dang*. One report that made it onto the Sudan Tribune website announced that 'UK authorities' had agreed to return the *dang*, after incarcerating it in London for eighty years, and that I would be accompanying its return. This provoked a mild email enquiry to me from the Sudan Unit in the FCO which, if decoded of its polite phrasing, might be translated as asking, '*What the hell is going on?*'

A good question, and one that I needed to answer for myself. After e-mails to various contacts, and trying unanswered (and unanswerable) telephone numbers, I finally made connection with Hussein Mar in Bor and I told him my travel plans. More telephone calls later I finally reached Riek, and we agreed a

schedule. But almost predictably there was a last minute hitch. Two days before I was due to leave for Nairobi Hussein rang to ask if I could change the date of my arrival. A meeting of all the traditional leaders of the South was scheduled to be held in Bentiu that weekend which Riek had to attend, so could I come to Juba later? I couldn't really change my travel arrangements at such short notice, but, I pointed out, I would be in Juba for a week, so couldn't we arrange a hand-over of the *dang* later when Riek had returned? 'No,' Hussein explained, *'there must be a reception at the airport. It can't just come into Juba quietly.'* In the end, we kept to my travel schedule, and Riek re-arranged his own to be in Juba when I arrived.

There was the question of a suitable container in which to carry the *dang* as it was too long to carry on as hand luggage. After trying several possibilities we finally inserted it in two cardboard cylinders, wrapped it in bubble wrap, zipped it up in a padded bag used for carrying a rifle bought from a local surplus store, and bound that in 'Fragile' shipping tape and a pink luggage strap to make it look less dangerous. It worked, because I walked through Oxford and Paddington stations, Heathrow and Jomo Kenyatta airports without anyone raising an alarm or asking to inspect it. Either the disguise was entirely effective, or security worldwide is lax.

I still wasn't sure that there would be a reception at Juba airport, and even if there was, what sort it would be. Would it, for instance, be held decorously inside the VIP Lounge, where visiting dignitaries and heads of state were received? A few short speeches, a formal handing over, some Ngundeng songs, a photo opportunity? There was a crowd outside the VIP lounge as we landed, and some official cars drove up with lights flashing and sirens as we taxied towards it. In fact this was the arrival of former South African President Thabo Mbeki and an AU peace mission. Riek, as VP, was there to greet him, but as our flight arrived uncharacteristically early, he apologised and cut the greeting short: *'Ah, the Nuer Cultural Event'*, Mbeki

remarked, as he was handed on to the GOSS Minister for Cabinet Affairs.

By the time I descended from the plane more pick-up loads of people had arrived, unfurling banners praising Ngundeng and welcoming the *dang*, so I knew that a reception had at least been announced and would be held, if not quite planned, on the tarmac. I at last saw a familiar face as John Luk, GOSS Minister of Energy and Mining, headed an official group to greet me. He proposed to lead me toward the terminal, but I suggested that it might be best if we retrieved the *dang* from the cargo hold of the plane before going ahead with whatever official reception was planned. As we turned around and headed for the other side of the plane where the cargo was being unloaded there was a great shout and the crowd of Nuer who had gathered outside the terminal surged around the back of the plane and surrounded the baggage cart, craning their necks to look into the cargo hold. When one of the luggage handlers shoved out a long thin cardboard box there was another cry and ululation as people excitedly began clambering onto the cart. *'That's not it'*, I shouted, but by this time I had been shoved to the back of the crowd (which was going to be my frequent vantage point for much of the day). SPLA police struggled to form a cordon around the cart, and someone led (and pushed) me to the open cargo hold so that I could retrieve my luggage myself. I found the bag and pulled it out. *'Is that your only bag?'* I was asked. So I pointed out my suitcase (also black, but short and squat, and bound by a maroon luggage strap), and these were both shoved to the front of the cart and I was helped up onto the back.

By now there was a very large crowd of Nuer surrounding the plane. I held on to the bag, not quite knowing what to do with it, when Riek strode through the crowd, in suit and tie, a white ostrich plume pinned to his safari hat, and carrying a short decorative aluminium spear with a blunted point. A little behind him came Gabriel Gai Riam. I handed down the bag to Riek

and shook hands with Gabriel. Riek raised the bag to yet another great shout and strode off. Someone else followed him holding my suitcase aloft. By the time I had got down from the cart the crowd had cleared the plane and was heading, not for the terminal building, but around it, and for the car park in front. It seemed to me that the crowd was in danger of splitting to follow two similarly coloured, but quite different containers: the bag with the *dang*, and my suitcase, with my clothes.

There was a scrum of people and cars in the airport car park – some regular passengers trying to escape and having a hard time of it with the crowd of Nuer blocking the way. Eventually, I was led to where Riek and his wife (and State Minister for Energy and Mining) Angelina were, next to a white ox with spreading horns. The crush of people was such that I was sure someone would get hurt by the thrashing of the ox's death throes if anyone speared it there. I half wondered if Riek would try to repeat Ngundeng's reputed feat of killing an ox by merely shaking the *dang* at it. Fortunately, he didn't try, and merely tapped it symbolically with his aluminium spear.

After that we were separated into different vehicles and I was shoved into a black Land Cruiser along with Riek (still cradling the rifle bag) and Angelina. It was only later, after we had driven away, that I realized that I was now in the Sudan illegally, as no one had examined and stamped my passport and travel permit, not to mention cleared my bags through customs. (I mentioned this to Riek later, and he laughed and said, '*We will take care of it.*')

We were driven to the new VP's 'palace', a one storey building within a compound still under construction, where we then sat in one air conditioned sitting room, with the bag on a table in front of a couch. Two very tall Nuer men, dressed in jallabiyas and wearing civet cat skins (there wasn't a genuine leopard skin to be seen all day), stood in front of the couple singing Ngundeng

songs. They seemed intent on singing the whole Ngundeng canon until Riek called a halt and we were all able to sit.

As we waited for the crowd to reassemble I watched through the windows small boys carrying cartons of water bottles on their heads for the people outside (the arena would be littered with empty plastic water bottles by the end of the day). We could hear drumming, bugles, and cowbells, as more people arrived. Finally, when enough of a crowd had assembled, and the audio and video equipment were in place we processed along concrete paths to another part of the compound, a large square which was really a waste ground of discarded building material. As usual, I trailed behind the main procession led by Riek with the bag. We were then seated in chairs and sofas underneath some shade trees, Riek and Angelina together on a sofa rather like royalty, with the rifle bag on a coffee table in front of them.

What followed was neither choreographed nor entirely scripted, but a visible demonstration of the 'ordered anarchy' about which Evans-Pritchard wrote so evocatively. Without suggesting in any way that there was a religious frenzy in the day's proceedings, I would say that persons and groups performed according to the Quaker phrase, 'as the spirit moved them'. During the speeches if someone was moved to sing or dance, they did so, and others joined in.

Two dance troupes of young men, dressed in football shorts and jerseys, carrying bamboo sticks and painted pointed metal shields competed with each other, dancing in lines the way the Lou do, and holding mock spear fights. One group had black shields with 'Maale' (the Nuer greeting) painted in large white letters, along with an anti-AIDS slogan superimposed on an SPLA flag. These were members of the Maale Heritage Development Foundation. Their founder, a young man named Deng Nhial Chiok, was dressed all in white (shirt, trousers, and shoes) and had draped a leopard-skin print cloth over his

shoulder, 'kuar muon' style. He acted as the MC throughout the day.

Various GOSS dignitaries arrived at different times: Luka Biong, Minister for Presidential Affairs, Martin Elia Lomoro, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Gier Chuang Aluong, the Minister for Telecommunications (whose baptism at Juba Cathedral I attended in 2007), and Dr. Joseph Monyuiel, the Minister for Health. Absent was Salva Kiir, who was in Bentiu, and Albino Akol Akol, the Minister of Culture, who was in India. Those who gave speeches frequently had to speak over spontaneous singing, or compete for attention with the impromptu dancers, both male and female.

The announced entertainment was also interrupted by the unscheduled arrival of new groups. Dinka dancers from Aweil and Warrap States arrived unexpectedly, and the proceedings were interrupted as they were identified and announced. The Aweil troupe carried a life-size cardboard figure of a *khawaja* dressed in undershirt and tattered shorts, with articulated limbs which they made to dance by jiggling it rhythmically (Figure 2). This was a representation of the white man returning the *dang*. ('I think that's supposed to be you', Gabriel laughed, when it was announced). Whether this was supposed to be satirical or not, everyone seemed to enjoy the joke. They danced vigorously, their arms raised to represent widespread horns, and stamping their feet, one ankle of each being tied with rattles. Riek joined them – in fact he frequently joined the dances, and I could just see the ostrich feather on his hat bobbing above the heads of the other dancers as they surrounded him.

There were two scheduled singers and one unscheduled one. The first was an elegantly thin young lady in white high heel sandals who sang a song to East African high-life music, whose refrain was 'Ngundeng Highway' (the name for a proposed highway to Ethiopia). Then Mary Boya, a Murle from Jonglei, sang to similar accompaniment another modern song in Arabic

with the English refrain, '*I'm Crazy for Referendum*'. Both songs were enthusiastically received. The unscheduled singer came towards the end, a Dinka *tiet* (diviner) from Jonglei, who walked up in front of the dignitaries, wearing a crucifix among her beads, shaking a gourd rattle, and addressing Riek by the Dinka title *bany*. She was assisted by two younger women who held the microphone for her and ululated. (Afterwards Mary told Deng Nhial Chiok that later she dreamt that a man was fighting the whole Southern Sudan, and that man was Riek. She started running, but then a voice told her that those who had been at the reception for the *dang* were blessed.)

There were many speeches, by and large in Nuer, with no translation, though many of the speakers slipped in and out of Nuer, English and Arabic, sometimes within the same sentence. Martin Lomoro gave a speech in Arabic about how the *dang* was for all people and for peace in the South (Riek was very enthusiastic, '*That's exactly the tone we want to strike*' he exclaimed). Others spoke, finally Riek spoke, and then it was time to unveil the *dang*.

Riek laid the rifle bag on a table in the arena. A white ox was brought out in front of it – we weren't going to be allowed to escape witnessing this sacrifice. As Riek said, no Nuer had seen the *dang* for eighty years – except for Gabriel and Hussein when they came to see me. I don't think anybody stayed put on the outer rim of the arena, and they crowded around the table and us. First, I unlocked the bag and then took out the cardboard cylinders. Riek and I then removed the *dang* from the cylinders, and I unwrapped the bubble wrap, section by section until the *dang* was fully uncovered. I then handed it to Riek, who raised it in both hands for as many as were able to see.

While there was great excitement, I can't help thinking there must have been a sense of anti-climax as well. The bubble wrap and bag made it look bulkier. With all the build up about the *dang*, in the end it is only a long stick, wrapped in copper wire,

broken at one end. That, of course, is one proof that it is genuine. Another proof was the shipping label, in Coriat's hand, which has been on it ever since Coriat brought it to England eighty years ago.

Anybody nearby with a digital camera or a mobile phone (and there were *a lot* of them) began taking pictures of the *dang*. Those near enough touched it, more out of curiosity than reverence, or came up to take a good look at the label.

The two singers in civet cat skins had been quietly smoking their long pipes during most of the previous proceedings. Removing the pouch of Drum pipe tobacco I had bought to keep the *dang* company for the last ten years, I then called for *tap naath* (Nuer tobacco). When they understood what I wanted both singers came up eagerly, giving me a pinch of tobacco, and sprinkling some of it on the *dang* and on the ox. I placed my pinch on the *dang* next to the Drum tobacco.

A wider circle was cleared as the ox was pulled further away from the table and then pulled down to lie on its right side. They were taking no chances in seeing which way it might fall. Riek had tapped it with his blunt spear, but it was slaughtered in the Muslim way, by slitting its throat with a knife. I have no idea whether this is a new modification of cattle sacrifice, or whether it was done so on this occasion to enable any Muslims present to share in the meat.

There was such a hub-bub I thought there could be no further speeches, but we still had two to go. The microphone was handed to me. I kept it short, saying that I was glad to have played some part in bringing the *dang* closer to home. It wasn't home yet, but it would be brought back to Waat and Weideang (cheers). The *dang* now belonged to the Naath and the Janubiyin (more cheers). The *dang* had been removed in a time of war, but now it was a time of peace, a time for peace and reconciliation. Though peace had come there was still fighting

in the South and I hoped the *dang* would play a role in bringing that fighting to an end, building peace and fostering reconciliation (even more cheers).

Riek's final speech was more nationalistic, claiming that Ngundeng had foretold the emergence of an independent Southern Sudan, the 2011 Referendum, and more along those lines. He then praised me rather extravagantly for all the things I had allegedly done for the South (much exaggerated, but it makes a change from what the government's hired guns said about me during the Abyei Arbitration hearings at The Hague, though in fact I suspect they would think that this all rather proved their accusations). He also pointed out that it was no coincidence that the *dang* was returned on the 16th of May, the anniversary of the beginning of the revolution (though in fact it *was* a coincidence), and that it was sad that Kerubino, William Nyuon and John Garang were not alive to witness it (since all three ended up trying to kill each other, it would have been a real test of the *dang* as an instrument of reconciliation had they all been there). The microphone we had to use was one of the 'roving' types, and with so many people behind us the signal kept on being broken. Riek later complained that he had a lot more to say, but the microphone kept on failing him. Perhaps it is just as well – with a more reliable sound system Riek might have been inspired to declare unilateral independence then and there. He had another chance, and I was told that he expounded on the *dang* for forty-five minutes when he returned to Bentiu and addressed the assembled chiefs there.

Even though they had some months to prepare for this event, in fact they had only spent the last two days mobilizing a reception. Riek told me later that he had argued for incorporating the return of the *dang* in the annual 16 May celebrations, but it had already been decided to postpone the formal celebration until 26 May as many of the SPLM/A's senior people were already in Bentiu for the pan-Southern traditional leaders conference. But community groups would

have already been preparing for some demonstration on the 16th, and it is likely that some of these were primed to show up somewhere and perform on the day anyway (though I can't imagine that the Aweil State's *khawaja* effigy could possibly have been prepared to celebrate the Bor Mutiny and the founding of the SPLA).

The *dang* seems to generate its own stories. 'Is it true what people are saying,' Deng Nhial Chiok asked me later, 'that the family in England who were keeping the *dang* have had a lot of deaths, and this is why they have now released it?' Everyone dies in time, I replied, and those in the family who have died did so at an age when it would be expected.

Not everyone is pleased to see the *dang* brought back in such style. There is already internet chatter (mainly from the diaspora, you can tell from their crude adoption of Black American slang) some quite tribalistic, others religious. Conspiracy theories have been aired that Riek wants to use the *dang* to become GOSS President, because Salva will die if he touches it (and Salva's absence in Bentiu will probably fuel those theories, I suspect, though in fact he also announced and welcomed the return of the *dang* in a speech to assembled traditional leaders that very day, and later in Juba at the delayed SPLA Day celebrations). Some Christians are denouncing it all as witchcraft and idolatry – though Christians were there to greet it, most notably my old research assistant, now Reverend Gabriel Gai Riam. One descendant of Ngundeng's who is Paulino Matip's office manager complained that Riek has politicised the *dang*. His real complaint is that it should have been given to him, and the rest of the Ngundeng family have now firmly sat on him.

It is inevitable that the *dang* will enter the mix of Southern Sudanese politics. But Ngundeng's songs and prophecies are notoriously difficult to tame. The first prophecy I heard, in 1975, was that there would be two civil wars and the second

would be worse, but shorter, than the first. That prophecy turned out to be only half right (and the worse half at that) – so either Ngundeng got it wrong, or those who interpret him got it wrong. When the Reuter's reporter asked me if was true that Ngundeng, who was left-handed, foretold 'a leader' like himself in the future (as many supporters of Riek, who is also left-handed, claim), I pointed out that a number of persons had been identified as that leader in the past, and in fact the left-handed Obama fits the description as well as any. An intriguing thought. Maybe I should spread that around.

Internet Sites:

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31190>

<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/05/16/73017.html>

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31195>

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31212>

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31228>

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31237>

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31292>



**AN UPDATE ON:
AN EARLY HISTORY OF THE SHUKRIYA AND THE ABU
SINNS**

John Udal wrote an important article with this title that appeared in *Sudan Studies* 38. Since publication it has appeared that the editor was not supplied with the final updated text. Accordingly, the necessary corrections are listed below, in page order of the text in that copy of the Journal:

- Page 55: Para 1 line 3: For “Abdel” read “Awad El”
Para 1 line 14: for “south” read “north”
Para 1 last line: Before “established” insert “currently”.
Para 2 line 1: For “son” read “grandson”
- Page 57: Para 1 line 8: For “cattle” read “camels”
- Page 58 Para 1 line 1: Delete “Abdel” and substitute “Awad El”
Para 2 line 13: Amend to “El Sheikh El Salih”
- Page 61 Para 1 line 9: Delete line after “second wife” and replace with, “... who was a cousin of his. This last cousin bore him a....”
- Page 66 Para 2, penultimate line: Delete after “Suez Canal” and insert,
“Before leaving he called together (the family affirm) his sons and senior grandsons to Rufa’a and, in their presence, placed special responsibility during Ahmed Bey’s forthcoming absence on his grandson, Abdallah Awad El Karim – a prescient recognition of an already evident leadership capability. Ahmed Bey died in the course of that visit.”



Page 67 After para 2, insert new para,
“Gordon was not the only noted traveller to the Butana at this time. It is rumoured that the future Mahdi, presently a disciple of El Sheikh El Quraishi Wad El Zein near Messelemya, paid two pastoral visits to Danagla who had earlier been brought by Ahmed Bey Abu Sinn to teach and develop riverain agriculture. Among them was Ahmed Wad Suleiman El Mahasi of the Rufa’a branch. Later the Mahdi married Suleiman’s sister and Suleiman became the Mahdi’s Treasurer.”

Page 68 Para 3 line 1: After “Awad” insert “El”.

As this is such an important paper the Committee has agreed as follows:

- 1. By application to Dr David Lindley you can obtain free of charge by e-mail a copy of the revised paper. His e-mail address is: dlindley@ktdbroadband.com***
- 2. Alternatively, a revised paper version can be supplied from Dr Lindley at a charge of £1-00 including postage. British postage stamps are acceptable for payment. His address is: The Coach House, School Hill, Lindale, Grange-over-Sands, LA11 6LE.***



SMALL ARMS SURVEY: SUDAN

The Small Arms Survey is an independent research project located in the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. Established in 1999, the project is supported by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and by sustained contributions from a wide range of governments and UN institutes and agencies.

Its objectives are: to be the principle source of public information on all aspects of small arms and armed violence; and to serve as a resource for governments, researchers and others interested in the effects of small arms related violence and their mis-use. The Survey also sponsors field research and information gathering efforts in affected states and regions. One of its projects is known as **The Human Security Baseline Assessment** and this has been concerned mainly with events in Sudan and has produced two series of publications.

The first are Sudan Issue Briefs:

'Persistent Threats: widespread human insecurity in Lakes State, South Sudan', No.1, September 2006.

'Armed Groups in Sudan: the South Sudan Defence Forces in the aftermath of the Juba Declaration', No.2, October 2006.

'Anatomy of civilian disarmament in Jonglei State', No.3, November 2006.

'No dialogue, no commitment: the perils of deadline diplomacy for Darfur', No.4, December 2006

'A widening war around Sudan: armed groups in the Central African Republic', No.5, January 2007

'The militarization of Sudan: a preliminary review of arms flows and holdings', No.6, April 2007

'Arms, oil and Darfur: the evolution of relations between China and Sudan', No.7, July 2007.

'Responses to pastoral wars: a review of violence reduction efforts in Sudan, Uganda and Kenya'. No.8, September 2007.

'Echo effects: Chadian instability and the Darfur conflict', No.9, February 2008.

'Neither 'joint' nor 'integrated': the Joint Integrated Units and the future of the CPA', No.10, March 2008.

'Allies and defectors: an update on armed integration and proxy force activity', No.11, May 2008.

'The drift back to war: insecurity and militarization in the Nuba Mountains', No.12, August 2008.

'No standing, few prospects: how peace is failing Southern Sudanese female combatants and WAAFG', No.13 September 2008.

The second series are Working Papers and are presented here in date order:

YOUNG, J (November 2006), *The South Sudan Defence Forces in the Wake of the Juba Declaration*, Working Paper 1.

GARFIELD, R (February 2007) *Violence and victimization in South Sudan Lakes State in the post-CPA period*, Working Paper 2

YOUNG, J (May 2007) *The Eastern Front and the Struggle against Marginalization*, Working Paper 3.

MARKS, J (May 2007) *Border in Name Only: Arms Trafficking and Armed Groups at the DRC-Sudan Border*, Working Paper 4.

YOUNG, J (June 2007) *The White Army: An Introduction and Overview*, Working Paper 5.

TANNER, V and TUBIANA, J (July 2007), *Divided They Fall: The Fragmentation of Darfur's Rebel Groups*, Working Paper 6.

YOUNG, J (July 2007) *Emerging North-South Tensions and Prospects for a Return to War*, Working Paper 7.

SCHOMERUS, M (September 2007) *The Lord's Resistance Army in Sudan: A History and Overview*, Working Paper 8

YOUNG, J (November 2007) *Armed Groups along Sudan's Eastern Frontier: An Overview and Analysis*, Working Paper 9.

SALMON, J (December 2007) *A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces*, Working Paper 10.

GARFIELD, R (December 2007) *Violence and Victimization after Civilian Disarmament: The Case of Jonglei*, Working Paper 11.

TUBIANA, J (April 2008) *The Chad-Sudan Proxy War and the 'Darfurization' of Chad: Myths and Reality*, Working Paper 12.

SCHOMERUS, M (June 2008) *Violent Legacies: Insecurity in Sudan's Central and Eastern Equatoria*, Working Paper 13.

McEVOY, C and MURRAY, R (July 2008) *Gauging Fear and Insecurity: Perspectives on Armed Violence in Eastern Equatoria and Turkana North*, Working Paper 14.

KAHN, C (September 2008) *Conflict, Arms and Militarization: The Dynamics of Darfur's IDP Camps*, Working Paper 15.

O'BRIEN, A (January 2009) *Shots in the Dark: The 2008 South Sudan Civilian Disarmament Campaign*, Working Paper 16.

Full details about the Small Arms Survey and availability of copies can be found on their web-site: www.smallarmssurvey.org

Their e-mail address is: sas@smallarmssurvey.org

Their postal address is: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 47 Avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland.

Durham University has a full set of their publications relating to Sudan.

BOOK REVIEW

David Keen: **Benefits of Famine - A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-9.** James Currey, Oxford, 2008, 289 pp.
ISBN 978-1-84701-314-9, pbk £18.95.

It is almost counter intuitive to think that there can be benefits from large scale famines. However, in this excellent and valuable book, David Keen describes the roles and actions of the numerous players who were involved in famine and relief in southwestern Sudan over a 7 year period from 1983 and 1989. The author is Professor of Complex Emergencies at the London School of Economics.

At the centre of the book is a chapter entitled '*Victims and Beneficiaries: A Case Study of Famine as a Combination of Exploitative Processes*'. In this chapter he examines the complex processes of famine and suggests that there are four stages:

1. A sharp decline in assets and production arose from military raiding. Drought and natural adversities played a secondary role.
2. Failure of the victims' strategies in the grain, labour and transport markets.
3. Failure of non-market strategies e.g. secondary access to non-market foods.
4. The "failure" of famine relief to reach particular groups.

The author devotes one chapter to the '*Inadequacy of Relief through the role of the International Donors*'. He suggests that the donors were constrained by the Sudanese government's definition of the relief programme, that once the programmes were started the donors lost interest, and that the donors were unwilling to address the conflict underpinning the conflict. He also suggests that the famine involved a major transfer of resources from the south to the north, while offering the prospect of future economic transfers in



the form of oil and other natural resources.

There are detailed notes, an extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources and a detailed index.

Anyone who has to deal with famine relief or has an academic or personal interest in this subject should read this book. Depending upon your background you may have to read it a number of times as it is densely packed with information but you will be richly rewarded for your effort.

David Lindley



SSSUK

NOTICES



SSSUK NOTICES:

Sudan Studies Society of the UK 23rd AGM and ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

**Will be held:
(in Association with the Centre of African Studies, University
of London)**

On

Saturday, 3rd October 2009

In

Khalili Lecture Theatre, 09.45 to 16.50

**School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
(off Russell Square)**

***Symposium & Lunch: £15 (Student with ID £8); Symposium
only: £5.***

Further details on papers enclosed

Further, final details on our web-site: <http://www.sssuk.org>



SSSUK COMMITTEE: FOR 2009

As the Annual General Meeting is due to take place on October 3rd 2009, it seems appropriate to inform members of the make-up of the current committee:

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These are due on 1st January of each year: so, if you have not paid for 2009 please do so now. May we remind you that the rates were changed from January 2009, and even though the information is provided on the inside of the front cover, for your convenience it is repeated here:

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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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