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## CONTENTS

<b>Editorial</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Sudan, Europe and Globalization</b> <i>Richard Gray</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>Workshop Review: the Sudan Research Group</b> <i>Michael Medley</i>	<b>12</b>
<b>Talking Their Language</b> <i>Douglas Johnson</i>	<b>17</b>
<b>Sudanese Studies in Italy</b> <i>Massimo Zaccaria</i>	<b>25</b>
<b>SSSUK Notices</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Other notices</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Book reviews: <i>Islamism and its Enemies</i>; Luigi Messedaglia; <i>The Sword of the Prophet</i></b>	<b>56</b>

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## Editorial

Once again, I must apologize for the delay in producing this issue of *Sudan Studies*. It has taken some time to assemble the material which appears here, but I hope that members will find that the wait has been worthwhile. This number contains papers on a range of subjects: recent discussions on the future of the Sudan, language exams in the Condominium, and some thoughts on historical patterns of relationship between Sudan and the wider world. I am also pleased to say that we have been able to include one of the papers from this year's annual symposium, Massimo Zaccaria's very useful survey of Sudan studies in Italy. It is hoped that others papers from this very successful meeting will appear in the next issue. I should like to express my thanks to all contributors, and to the other members of the editorial advisory group who have helped to produce this issue. And I would like to reiterate the appeal for articles made at the symposium: *Sudan Studies* depends on your contributions!

Justin Willis

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## The Sudan, Europe and globalization

By Richard Gray

*On 14-16 November 2003 a conference on 'Giovanni Miani (1810-72) and the Venetian contribution to the knowledge of Africa' was held in Rovigo, Miani's birthplace. The conference brought together some twenty-five Italian scholars interested in Sudanese history, and its proceedings will be published in Italian. We print below an abbreviated version of Richard Gray's address which opened the conference.*

For a brief period, corresponding roughly with the adult life of Miani, the Nilotic Sudan occupied a position of critical significance in African history. It was the arena for an initial, dramatic and in many ways ruthless sequence in the opening-up of tropical Africa: a stage in the process of globalization, the distinguishing theme of our contemporary world.

In 1839-1841 Muhammad Ali sent two expeditions to explore the White Nile. The boats, built in Khartoum, successfully sailed through the swamps and reached Gondokoro near modern Juba. Their enterprise revealed a navigable waterway stretching deep into the heart of tropical Africa, at a time when European commercial contacts with West Africa were still restricted to the coastal fringe, and when the Omani Sultan of Zanzibar had only just established his capital on the East African coast. For the next three decades the White Nile was a critical, focal point in Europe's contact with Africa. The French Consul-General in Cairo reported that Muhammad Ali was "deeply-preoccupied" with the reports of wealth in the south and the fact that the area possessed "ivory in great abundance". Britain and other

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European powers were not, however, prepared to let him establish a monopoly and by 1850 European merchants and missionaries in Khartoum had wrested the right to send independent expeditions to Equatoria.

For a fleeting moment, ivory dominated the development of the vast southern hinterland of Khartoum. Indeed it could be said to have then played a role terribly similar to that of the armed and forceful exploitation of oil in Sudan today. During the nineteenth century there was an insatiable demand for ivory as a result of industrialization and the rising standard of living among the middle-classes in Europe and North America. Nothing else at that time could supply them satisfactorily with piano-keys, billiard balls, combs and elegant handles for their cutlery. Between the 1840s and 1870s the price of ivory and the quantity imported into London more than doubled. Before the opening up of the Congo, the White Nile was the only area open to European traders, as opposed to Arab traders from Zanzibar, for gaining direct access to much the best area in the world for ivory. Even as late as the First World War, ivory still contributed ten per cent of Sudan's exports.

European merchants and missionaries, led by Knoblecher, Vinco and the Verona Fathers, had what seemed to be a great and unique opportunity. Yet Europe's contact with the southern Sudan has been one of almost unrelieved tragedy, and as an Englishman I hasten to include in that category the legacy of British rule over the area. In a conference dealing largely with the more glorious aspects of European contributions to the area's history, with European initiatives, adventures and sacrifices, it is perhaps salutary to dwell right at the beginning of our discussions on the responsibility of Europeans

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for pioneering the spiral of violence which so quickly engulfed the southern Sudan and left behind such a terrible legacy.

The rulers of Egypt are inevitably concerned with that extraordinary natural phenomenon of the Nile waters. Imperial Rome was no exception. Nero's centurions set out in A.D.61 to explore the sources of the Nile. Assisted by the rulers of Meroe, they managed to proceed far to the south until progress up-river was stopped by thick vegetation. The Nile, with its series of cataracts and the vast bends in the river, never provided a means of easy access to the interior of Africa. The peoples of the Sudan were able to accept on their own terms cultural and other influences from the north, adapting ideas and commercial contacts to suit their own customs and societies. The rulers and educated elites of the Nubian kingdoms which succeeded Meroe became Christian, but they preserved a tolerant and distinctive way of adapting or inculturating this religion. For some six centuries while Egypt was ruled by Muslims, the Nubian kingdoms, although increasingly isolated, retained their Christian identity, until by the end of the fifteenth century Islam had become the dominant influence in the Nilotic Sudan. Again this influence was accepted gradually. The religious leaders, mainly Sufi, were often influenced by indigenous rituals and social practices. Only very slowly did the Arabic-speaking, Islamic Sudanese nucleus, concentrated along the Nile and in the Sultanates of Sennar and Darfur, begin to impinge on their immediate neighbours. Between the Nuba and Sennar, the Shilluk in their canoes raided down the White Nile for hundreds of miles north of their densely populated homeland. On both sides of the Shilluk, stretched the Dinka and Nuer pastoralists, the powerful and proudly independent masters of the vast swamps which encompassed the water of the Nile. Here at the

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end of the eighteenth century was a world still virtually untouched by cultural influences from the north.

This relative isolation, this very gradual assimilation of ideas and forces from the Mediterranean world, was shattered by Napoleon's expedition. This brought into Ottoman Egypt not only European military technology and strategy, but also something of the Enlightenment, modernity and commercial capitalism. This Napoleonic legacy was to some extent taken over by Muhammad Ali who was recognized by the Sultan at Constantinople as the effective ruler of Egypt. In 1820-1 he conquered Sennar, then founded Khartoum.

The initial contact of Europe and the Nilotic Sudan developed through two main phases. The crucial part of the first stage was the Europeans' contacts with the Bari and related peoples in the area around Gondokoro. This is the area where the southern banks of the Nile are no longer fringed with shifting swamp, beloved by the Nilotic pastoralists. Instead the Nile here flows through an open park-like country of relatively settled agriculturalists. Here the European traders and the Bari faced each other with roughly equal forces. In their boats, protected by firearms and even artillery, the traders had an unchallenged superiority, but on land they and the missionaries were completely dependent on indigenous co-operation. On the West African coast an equilibrium on this basis had been established for centuries and was not destroyed until the power of African middlemen who developed and controlled trade with the interior was eventually broken by European conquest in the late nineteenth century.



In an analysis of why local middlemen did not develop in the southern Sudan, one must take into account the cultural divide that separated the Bari from all intruders from the north were they Arabs, "Turks" or Europeans. Unlike the very gradual assimilation of ideas, technologies and commercial practices which had enabled the northern Sudanese to become, largely on their own terms, a remote part of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern worlds, the Bari and other southerners were suddenly confronted with the competing traditions of two world religions and with the unbridled greed of commercial capitalism in an area where the European powers, expressed through their consular agents, had ensured that the government's authority was virtually non-existent.

There was no single political leader among the Bari. The most prominent individual, ready on his own terms to co-operate, was Nyigilo, nephew of Lagonu a ritual expert on whom some of the Bari relied for supernatural help in dealing with drought and other misfortunes. Nyigilo had connections with the Luo-speaking Pari, who were the immediate source of the glass beads, copper rings and the long cotton shirt which distinguished Lagonu. Vinco's evidence suggests that these rare trade goods may have been obtained from the Ethiopian highlands or even from Zanzibar via the Lacustrine kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro. Given time and opportunity these tenuous trading links with remote areas might have developed into a flourishing hinterland; but time was not available.

Really spectacular profits from the ivory trade were dependent on obtaining rapid access to areas where elephants had previously been hunted with spears for their meat. In a few areas ivory tusks had been used for

ornamental purposes or even as cattle-pegs, but generally ivory had been left on the ground and much of it was still of excellent quality. So in these early years some people in Khartoum had made “almost a fortune in ivory” and reports of “very good profits” were fairly common. In the 1850s the number of boats leaving Khartoum for the White Nile increased from a dozen to more than eighty.

The easily-gathered supplies of ivory were soon exhausted, however, and Nyigilo and the Bari failed to become effective middlemen. The tensions between government officials on the one side, and the European traders and missionaries on the other, were part of the reason for this failure. Yet it was also due to the many jealousies among the Bari and the endemic hostilities dividing other southern peoples. These problems frustrated the missionaries, and together with the many deaths caused by malaria and other diseases forced them to withdraw from the south. The European traders, however, soon resorted to force. At least one was killed in a pitched battle with the Bari, and during a time of famine Nyigilo attempted to escape to Khartoum. Hunted by numerous gangs of youths, he was killed in June 1859. The hopes for an equitable, co-operative development of contacts between the south and the outside world were rapidly disappearing. Instead European traders began to undertake direct expeditions into the interior and there established, with the help of large numbers of northern Sudanese, permanent stations protected by firearms and thick, thorn bushes. The trading frontier began to create a plural society, as the northerners obtained wives and young recruits from neighbouring tribes. The search for ivory continued to be the dominant purpose of the traders but it became bound to violence and the seizure of cattle and slaves.

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This process was pioneered among the Dinka by Alphonse de Malzac, who in January 1857 told Ferdinand de Lesseps that he already owned a flourishing station eight days into the interior. He employed interpreters for five different languages and required five hundred tribesmen to transport his ivory to his port on the river. Miani and others reported that he was known as the King of the White Nile, and his profits were dependent on exploiting rivalries among the Dinka. He died in April 1860 and his successor, Franz Binder, needed nine hundred porters to carry the ivory to the river. Binder describes how at Rumbek the leaders of four Dinka tribes sought his support against other hostile Dinka groups. Raids on 'hostile' tribes became a crucial component of the ivory trade. They produced cattle to pay for the portage of ivory and slaves with which the trader paid his northern attendants and accomplices. Binder's own career reveals the indispensable role of this endemic violence, and its principal beneficiaries. Right through the 1850s the main profits had been gained by the creditors in Khartoum or in Egypt who supplied the traders with capital. Binder had been one of de Malzac's principal creditors, and in 1860 he obtained the station and trading rights for five hundred pounds; two years later he was considered to be the richest European in Khartoum with a capital of at least eight thousand pounds.

Mjani and Morlang, the last missionary to be stationed among the Bari in the nineteenth century, were key witnesses to the way in which the ivory traders employed force to expand beyond the Bari both westwards to the Congo watershed and southwards towards the great lakes. To the west, beyond the River Yei contact was made with the Makaraka or Idio, a group of the Zande-speaking peoples who were to prove invaluable allies in this



expansion deep into the western interior. Expansion southwards was dependent from the beginning on a frequent direct use of force in exploiting tribal divisions. Accompanying one of these expeditions, Miani thought that the use of force was often justified by provocations from tribesmen. By 1862 Gondokoro had become a sprawling settlement of about seven hundred armed Arabs, most of whom had collected numerous wives and servants from the local tribes. Less than a decade earlier, Vinco's isolated missionary outpost had struggled to survive confronted with demands and threats from the Bari; now this armed settlement was becoming a conquering force, imposing a new plural society on the area and its raiding expeditions were reaching deep into modern Uganda and nearing the sources of the Nile. The ivory trade on the White Nile had brought violence and the capture of slaves in its train, but the export of slaves on boats returning northwards was seldom, if ever, more than about two thousand per year. This was completely dwarfed by developments in the north-western area of the Bahr el Ghazal.

The ancient Sultanate of Darfur had long-standing contacts with the peoples to the south. Here were the copper-mines of Hofrat en Nahas, a site of considerable historical significance which has still to be given a thorough archaeological survey. Most of the copper passed into the extensive network of Sudanic trade, and Heinrich Barth found that the site was still exporting "a considerable supply" to Kano in northern Nigeria as late as the mid-nineteenth century. Some of the copper was traded southwards (could it even have been the source for the famous, ritual copper swords of the Lacustrine kingdoms?), and Darfur also obtained slaves from among the peoples to the south. Occasionally there were large scale raids for slaves, and the ruler of Darfur was reputed to possess a thousand eunuchs.

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Generally, however, slaves were obtained by petty itinerant traders who exchanged a small supply of trade goods with the Kreish and the northernmost Azande, outriders of powerful kingdoms. Sudanese from Kordofan and elsewhere joined in these overland contacts, but again they were small-scale traders and their trade did not depend on armed force.

During the 1850s these overland contacts were completely transformed when these petty traders made close contact with the northern settlers in the stations established by the riverain traders among the Dinka and other peoples. This drastically altered the balance of power. When Schweinfurth visited these stations in 1870, he estimated that already two thousand of these overland traders were permanently resident in the stations, and he reported that two thousand seven hundred more had arrived that year. Schweinfurth thought that between twelve and fifteen thousand slaves were exported northwards annually by these overland routes, a figure which far surpassed the numbers conveyed northwards by boat. The overland trade provided the major economic support for the power centre created by Zubair whose alliance with the cattle-owning Rizeiqat secured the Kordofan route for his caravans. Later the attempts by Gordon and Romolo Gessi to suppress this trade aroused widespread resentment, which contributed significantly to the strength of the Mahdist revolt.

The campaign against the slave trade and the subsequent death of Gordon in Khartoum formed part of the rationale used to justify the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest. British strategic interest in the Sudan, however, was strictly limited to preventing any other power from gaining control of the Nile waters and hence be in a position to threaten the security of the route to

India. Expenditure on the Sudan was kept to a minimum, and there was virtually no attempt to develop economically the south or to prepare the country as a whole for independence. The memories of violence suffered in the nineteenth century may have been a contributing factor to the Southern mutiny in 1955 and the subsequent first civil war. The roots of violence in the south, however, went back to the 1850s, and were the direct result of European impatience to exploit rapidly and destructively the first major natural resource in the south to be brought to the attention of the outside world.

Like ivory, the exploitation of oil has resulted in widespread violence and destruction. Its discovery and attempts to develop it are, surely, the main key to understanding the basic dynamics of the second civil war. So far the profits obtained from it have been mainly used to intensify the power struggle. Like ivory, oil is a natural asset which will also diminish relatively rapidly, compared with the other two great resources of the area. The Sudanese do not own the Nile waters; they are, however, its guardians, and the future long-term peace of the whole of north-east Africa including Egypt may well depend on that guardianship. More immediately peace within Sudan itself depends very largely on whether the profits from oil development will be used to develop the long term natural wealth of the area. Will the West, together with India and China, who provide the market for oil be able to see the importance of using the profits of this resource to develop the land and its peoples? Or will all concerned be blinded like the ivory traders by the hopes of immediate profits? This is the critical question posed to us today by the history of the Nilotic Sudan and its opening to the outside world.

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## Workshop Review: The Sudan Research Group and Post-Conflict Sudan

By Michael Medley

The inauguration of a new force in Sudan Studies – the Sudan Research Group (or SRG for short) – took place with a workshop, *Towards a Post-Conflict Sudan: Economic Challenges and Prospects*, held at Imperial College, London, on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> August 2004. The proceedings of this workshop are likely to be published later. The following is a reflective unofficial report.

SRG is composed of liberal Sudanese academics from a rising generation, mostly based in the UK. They include Professor Ali Abdelgadir Ali of the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait, Dr Mohamed Mahmoud of Tufts University, Dr Abdel-Salam Sidahmed of Amnesty International, and Dr Gamal Ibrahim of Nottingham Trent University. It is tempting to see them as the inheritors of the senior participants at their workshop, figures like Dr Fareed Atabani, Dr Ibrahim Elbadawi of the World Bank, Dr Mohamed Suliman of the Institute for African Alternatives, and Dr Nahid Toubia of RAINBO. They are northern Sudanese intellectuals who have found it hard to work within Sudan, who flourish in global organisations; who still hold their homeland very much at heart, and yet, one senses, are becoming naturalised in a society that is far less geographically-constrained: the world of the international elite.

I hope I will be forgiven for this sociological introduction. It seems important, not only as a way of describing this new – and hopefully enduring – organisation, but also of situating the discussions and problems of the workshop.

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It is also relevant to note that the event was funded mainly by the World Bank<sup>1</sup>. The Bank, having closed its Khartoum offices in 1993, is currently gearing up for a large-scale re-engagement with Sudan, in view of the Naivasha peace process. As one of the presentations<sup>2</sup> suggested, it is angling for the role of coordinator of the large quantities of international aid for reconstruction that are expected to materialise following a major donor conference to be held in Oslo towards the end of this year, or early in 2005.

These circumstances gave the workshop a markedly different tone from many I have attended during the years of war. Analyses of Sudan's difficulties can now refreshingly be related not only to the outline of a peace settlement (setting aside the questions of Darfur, the Beja and so on), but also the real prospect of big aid money. The meaning of money to its highest priests – the macro-economists – was impressively flashed before our eyes as lists of formulae linking aid to income growth rates, in the powerpoint slides of Dr Ibrahim<sup>3</sup> and Professor Ali<sup>4</sup>. The audience's response to these presentations acknowledged a sense of excitement and esteem, but, in several cases, also caution. What does the Bank's 'good policy' variable mean in practice? Is the 'growth elasticity of poverty' a meaningful constant? Should reconstruction be viewed primarily through the lens of foreign assistance? Is there another way in which an audience in London – and largely unsympathetic to the regime in Khartoum – can view it?

A more grounded perspective was offered by another of the conference speakers, Dr Luka Biong Deng, head of the New Sudan Centre for Statistical

<sup>1</sup> Other donors included the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA) and the members of SRG personally.

<sup>2</sup> 'World Bank Experiences in Post-Conflict Reconstruction' by Dr Fareed M. A. Hassan, presented in his absence by Dr Ibrahim Elbedawi.

<sup>3</sup> 'Sudan's Post-Conflict Growth Policy' by Dr Ibrahim Elbedawi.

<sup>4</sup> 'Financing Requirements for Post-Conflict Development' by Prof. Ali Abdelgadir Ali.



Evaluation, which has been set up for Southern Sudan by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Dr Luka, too, had been preparing the way for the coming aid programme, as a counterpart in the recent Joint Assessment Mission initiated by the World Bank and UNDP in the south. As a producer of household surveys, he saw poverty reduction less as a statistical product of economic growth, than as an qualitative policy problem<sup>5</sup>. He reported recent commitments by the SPLM/A to continue occupying the moral high ground it had claimed at the start of its struggle, in fighting for the marginalised members of society. Of course, it has set aside much of the communist rhetoric that accompanied this commitment in the 1980s. Instead of this, the UN's Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) are to be guiding lights within a mixed economy, in which values of entrepreneurship are also encouraged. One of the pledges is for universal, free and compulsory primary education.

Dr Nahid's presentation<sup>6</sup> brought questions of social policy into still sharper focus, from a feminist point of view. Sudan, she pointed out, is one of only 17 states that have not signed and ratified CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Implementation of CEDAW would mean legal and constitutional changes to enable, amongst other things, women to own land, inherit property from deceased husbands, and travel independently. Longer-term programmes are needed for equal levels of education, and dismantling traditions of polygamy and female genital mutilation.

But justice and poverty reduction are expensive (from the point of view of those who control big money). How can the cost be borne? The members of the

<sup>5</sup> 'Violence and Poverty: The Challenge for Development in the Post-Conflict Southern Sudan' by Dr Luka Biong Deng

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workshop were under no illusion that aid and oil revenues would solve the problem by themselves. Widespread productive development is needed, but what forms should this take? Different models and ideologies of development lurked in the lecture room, revealing themselves in flashes, but never quite coming to grips with each other. Dr Mohamed Suliman recalled that the famine of the mid-1980s resulted largely from the pursuit of large-scale agriculture oriented to export markets<sup>7</sup>. Professor Ali, on the other hand, reported that growth returns are much greater for investment in higher education than primary schooling. Nevertheless, he felt that a consensus had emerged on targeting the MDGs, and even that these could be used as a tool for 'holding the international community to account' in its deployment of aid. Experience shows that the rich world easily shrugs off any commitment to underwriting economic and social rights in poor countries, by citing misgovernance and poor policy, but in some cases – the right political circumstances – donors can show robust commitment. Dr Ibrahim cited the case of Uganda, where the UK and others simply provide the government with a large proportion of its central revenues, rather than picking and choosing projects. He might have added that this has enabled Uganda to abandon a previously-fashionable policy of 'cost-recovery' or charging poor people something for basic treatment in primary health facilities. It might also be noted that the budgetary support has continued despite serious concerns over the behaviour of the Ugandan army in the northern part of the country and in Congo. This relatively stable relationship depends, however, on a certain level of political sympathy. In the case of Sudan, such a bond perhaps remains to be established with the SPLM/A. The problem of how donors or technocrats relate to what many consider to be a deeply vicious regime in Khartoum is one that was politely bypassed in most of the workshop discussions. The result of this was a very civilised and constructive exchange of ideas; but there is still a hard question to be addressed here.

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Dr Eltigani Seisi Ateem (a former governor of Darfur) and Dr Fareed Atabani, both stressed the problem of regional imbalance and the need for devolution in northern Sudan as well as the South. From 1996 to 2001, Dr Eltigani said, 75% of Sudan's regional development expenditure was devoted to Khartoum<sup>8</sup>. Unequal development has clearly been a major cause of the conflicts which have devastated Sudan for decades. Much blame has been heaped on governments – colonial and post-colonial – for this neglect. But geography is a real problem for politically neutral economists. For the foreseeable future – and aside from oil extraction – the money returns on capital investment are likely to remain highest in an area around Khartoum. A suggestion was heard that efficient fair development would mean providing equal economic opportunities within that area for migrants from all parts of the country. But this can hardly be enough, even in the unlikely case that entrenched interests would allow the idea to become a reality. Rural poverty reduction may be made less unattractive by using more humanistic economic tools and assumptions. Improving people's health is of intrinsic value and helps them be more productive, even though neither of these benefits may be easily measured in a remote subsistence economy. The 'functionings and capabilities' approach of Amartya Sen and others has, as Professor Ali mentioned, tried to grapple intellectually with such matters, but much more will need to be done in the Sudan context. The workshop did well in helping draw out these questions; there is surely a vitally important agenda here for the future work of the SRG.

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# Talking their Language: A Rare Language Exam from the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

By D.H. Johnson

Native Administration in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan required a working knowledge of local languages. All officers in the army and civil administration had to pass an examination in Arabic, but an inducement of a £50 bonus was offered to government officials who could pass an examination in one of the Sudan's many vernacular languages. The setting of Arabic exams posed no difficulty, but examinations – and examiners – were more problematic for the vernacular languages, when so few in the administration spoke them. Sir James Robertson recalled a three-way oral examination between himself, his sub-mamur and his governor when he sat – and passed – an examination in Ingessana. And though he passed, he never claimed to be able to do more than 'make a little small talk'.<sup>1</sup>

We know very little about the content of these exams, as the examination papers were not kept. Quite by chance, however, one exam report was preserved in the Yambio District headquarters. I found them there when transferring records to the Southern Records Office in Juba in 1982, and made a typescript copy. The original was catalogued in Juba as SRO ZD 18.E.1.

The examination was set by Major P.M. Larken (SPS 1910-32), the retired District Commissioner of Yambio. Larken had joined the Sudan

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Political Service from the Egyptian army in 1910, and served exclusively in Bahr al-Ghazal, among the Azande until 1932. He was given the unusual permission to retire to the district he had formerly administered, and lived in the village of Diawo briefly, until he was invalided out of the Sudan. Larken was the first British official to learn to speak Zande, and in 1933 he was asked to examine his successor, Major J.W.G. Wyld (SPS 1925-51), and another Assistant District Commissioner, E.D. Arbuthnot (SPS 1927-53). A third candidate, Dr. H.M. Woodman of the Sudan Medical Service, was also examined.

Because Larken had left his instructions behind when he returned to Yambio, he had to improvise the exam, with the help of his co-examiner, a Northern Sudanese army doctor, Kamel Abou Seoud (Sudanese, and before them, Egyptian, staff often were far in advance of their British superiors in conversing in a range of vernaculars).

This brief report is revealing, not so much about the linguistic competence of the administrators, but of the practical use to which the language was put. We hear the tone of daily interaction. And, in fact, the Yambio files of the period confirm that road repair, Sleeping Sickness regulations, tax collection, adultery cases, reluctant chiefs, and the porous border with the Congo were daily administrative preoccupations. This is a far cry from the nuanced investigation into religious beliefs or the complexities of political and kinship systems to which anthropologists used the language. There is no consulting the poison oracle here. It also tends to confirm the aloofness and social distance between ruler and



subject that Southern Sudanese recalled about British administrators after independence.<sup>2</sup>

Major Wyld remained in the Zande District until his retirement in 1951. Arbuthnot transferred to Kassala in 1935, and returned to Equatoria, briefly, as District Commissioner in Juba, after the war. Dr. Woodman also left Li Rangu and served with the Sudan Defence Force in Ethiopia during the war.

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[SRO ZD/18.E.1]

No: B.G.P./ 18.E.21.

WAU, 13th JANUARY, 1933

Major P.M. Larken, O.B.E.

Diawo.

Reference above copy of telegrams, I trust you will not mind carrying out these examinations.

You will of course fix the venue of the examination as is most convenient to you. If you decide not to hold it at Diawo the District Commissioner, Southern District will supply you with Government petrol for the journey to and from the place of examination.

The Medical Officer appointed as Member is Yuzbashi Kamel Eff. Abu Seoud.

I understand from Dr. Woodman that he would not be ready for examination till towards the end of March. I must therefore leave to local arrangement whether you conduct all three examinations at the same time or Major Wyld's and Mr. Arbuthnot's before Dr. Woodman's.

I attach a copy of a previous Board of Examination as a guide to the form in which the proceedings should be submitted to me. Separate proceedings for each candidate are necessary.

Sd. R.G.C. Brock

Governor,

Subject :- Examination of Major Wyld, Mr. Arbuthnot and Dr.  
Woodman in Zande language.

No. S.D./18.E.2

Yambio, 6th, March, 1933.

Governor  
Bahr el Ghazal Province,  
W a u

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In accordance with your instructions I beg to report that I presided over a Board held to examine Major Wyld D.S.O., M.C., Mr Arbuthnot and Dr. Woodman in Zande.

The proceedings are attached.

I greatly regret that your letter containing the type of questions to be asked was left behind at Diawo, as I counted on finding a copy of it at Yambio. Unfortunately they had [not got] one there and I was compelled to rely on my memory (and to use the discretion of Dr. Kamel and myself) in the questions asked, which I much regret but trust they will appear to you to have been searching enough.

Major.

Yambio, 6/3/1933.

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PROCEEDINGS OF A BOARD OF EXAMINATION IN ZANDE  
HELD IN YAMBIO ON 6TH. MARCH 1933

Candidates.

Major J.W.G. Wyld, D.S.O., M.C.

Mr. Arbuthnot

Dr. Woodman

President of Board

Major P.M. Larken

Member.

A Yzb. Kame1 Rff. [sic] Abu Seoud

Examination of Major Wyld and Mr. Arvuthnot [sic].

- 1 The candidates questioned prisoners on the reason for their imprisonment and translated their replies.
- 2 Each candidate conducted a criminal case.

3 Each candidate wrote a letter to a Chief in Zande, one complaining of the state of the roads in his country and ordering their immediate repair, and one complaining that there was too much intercourse going on between his subjects and the Congo and ordering it to cease.

4 Each candidate read (separately) a letter reporting that a man had stabbed his wife, caught in adultery, and had fled to the Congo and returned, and had been arrested.

5 Each candidate sent verbal messages to Chiefs the one to the effect that the taxes had not been paid and that if there was much more delay the Chief['s salary would be cut, and the other to the effect that the roads and bridges in a Chief['s country had been found to be in a bad state and threatening punishment if their repair was not hastened.

Each candidate translated a case in the case books.

#### Examination of Dr. Woodman.

The candidate interviewed a headman with regard to the cleaning of water points, the attendance at S[leeping]. S[sickness]. Inspections and the dispatch of absentee lepers to Rangu.

The [candidate] diagnosed a case of hernia from the description of symptoms by a patient.

He inspected Yambio hospital and questioned patients on their ailments and gave directions to the orderly.

He wrote a letter as to a Dispenser ordering him to be present on a certain date for an inspection.

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He read a letter reporting an outbreak [sic] of smallpox and requesting medical help.

Opinion.

The board is of [the] opinion that the candidates all have a satisfactory knowledge of Zande and are competent to conduct their duties in that language.

President:-

Member :-

Yambio, 6/3/1933.



# Sudanese Studies in Italy: a General Overview\*

By Massimo Zaccaria

(University of Pavia)

A concise historical note about the Italian presence in the Sudan is necessary in order to understand what happened and is still happening among Italian scholars in this field. A good starting point for understanding the historical relation between Italy and the Sudan can be the *Biographical dictionary of the Sudan* by Richard Hill. Among the many profiles presented, 85 names can be traced as Italians, although of course the calculation is not easy because Italy was a geographical entity in progress, and a quite volatile concept, in the 19th century.

Some of those names are quite famous. Recently, for example, attention has been devoted to Daniele Comboni (1831-1881),<sup>1</sup> the first Catholic Bishop of Central Africa and the founder, in 1867 and 1872 respectively, of two missionary Institutes for men and women (the Comboni Missionaries and the Comboni Missionary Sisters, i.e. the Verona Fathers and Sisters). Some others will also remember Fr. Giovanni Beltrame, in Sudan from 1853 to 1862, who wrote extensively on the Sudan and particularly on the Dinka language. Fr. Stanislao Carcereri (1840-1899) was another missionary who left a valuable series of notes on the Jabal Nuba. The list of missionaries might continue, but the presence of Italians was not exclusively made of priests and nuns; a large number of travellers, employees, explorers visited the country and in many cases left us a record of their experience. Names like that of the excavator of antiquities Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778-1823), or the naturalist Giovanni Battista Brocchi (1772-1826), or the doctor who turned into an archeologist,

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\* This paper offers a brief outline of Sudanese studies in Italy; past, present and future. It

describes broad tendencies, avoiding the detailed discussion of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. SSSUK now makes it freely available subject to licence and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).

St. Daniele Comboni was canonised on 5 October 2003.

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with dubious and devastating results, Giuseppe Ferlini (1800-1876) are well known. Approaching the Mahdist period names like Carlo Piaggia, Romolo Gessi, Messedaglia Bey and Gaetano Casati are similarly well known.

Hill's biographical dictionary is an outstanding reference work but like all reference works it is open to improvements; so when I first approached Sudanese studies I set as my priority the updating of the profiles of Italians in the dictionary, and the inclusion of new profiles where needed. The fact that I never accomplished that task gave me a hint of the difficulties entailed in such a project and showed me once more the incomparable ability of Richard Hill. In my favour I can only claim that before giving up I was able to track down other names, setting up a new list of some 350 names, all of them in the Sudan in the 19th century. It was an exacting job. I intentionally limited my research to that period because I soon realised that the inclusion of profiles from the twentieth century would have extended my task beyond control.

One of the main feature of the Italian presence in the Sudan was its continuity, a peculiarity that other foreign communities seem not to have enjoyed. From the inception of the Turco-Egyptian period up to the present an Italian presence has always been recorded in the country. In the 19th century the Italian influence in Egypt, based on a large community made of thousands of immigrants, was mirrored in the Sudan where, especially in the first phase of the Turco-Egyptian period, the Italian language played the role of *lingua franca* among Westerners living in the Sudan.

Some services that were monopolised by Italians in Egypt ended up under the same influence in the Sudan as well. The postal service is probably the most striking example. In 1873 the Egyptian Government delegated Casimiro Adda to extend postal facilities to the Sudan. He then appointed another Italian, Giacomo

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Lumbroso, as postal officer and in 1878 Lumbroso acquired the position of director of the mail service in Upper Egypt and Nubia. The appointment was made by Licurgo Santoni, then director of the mail service in Upper Egypt and Nubia.<sup>2</sup> Santoni published a book about his experience in Egypt and the Sudan, in 1905. In 1980, Santi and Hill noticed that the original journal by Santoni was more spontaneous than the printed book and decided to publish it.<sup>3</sup>

Also in the Mahdist period, during which the Sudan pursued a policy of radical isolation from the Western world, a tiny group of around a dozen Italians was forced to stay in the country, adding their names to the list of the famous “Prisoners of the Mahdi”. Compared to the number of other Western captives the Italian group was exceptionally large, but failed in giving a proportionate contribution to the literature of the “Prisoners of the Mahdi”. While the other Western captives were strongly encouraged to put down their memoirs the Italians remained unusually silent and, apart from Fr. P. Rosignoli,<sup>4</sup> showing a surprising restraint.<sup>5</sup>

More or less in the same period in which Muhammad Ahmad ibn Abdallah captured Khartoum, the Italian presence in North-East Africa took a more definite shape with the landing of the Italian army at Massawa (1885). For the next 56 years Italy and the Sudan shared common borders and a series of mutual interests but, especially in the beginning, this relation was turbulent. The drive of Khalifa Abdullahi toward Massawa and the plans of the Italians to control the

<sup>2</sup> R.L. Hill, *Egypt and the Sudan 1820-1881* (London and New York, 1959), pp. 129-131; 157-158.

<sup>3</sup> P. Santi and R.L. Hill (eds.), *The Europeans in the Sudan, 1834-1878. Some manuscripts, mostly unpublished, written by traders, Christian missionaries, officials, and others* (Oxford and New York, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> Paolo Rosignoli, *I miei dodici anni di prigionia in mezzo ai Dervisci del Sudan* (Mondovi, 1898).

<sup>5</sup> In Santoni I investigate the primary reasons for this silence in my doctoral thesis *Midza Studies* (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)), which I feel is a valuable subject to discuss and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).

Università di Siena, coordinatore Marco Mozzati, tutore Marica Milanese, a.a. 1993-1994

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trade routes of eastern Sudan were clashing and generated a climate of tension that culminated in a series of military confrontations marking the last ten years of the nineteenth century. The Italian army confronted the Khalifa's troops successfully, and on one occasion it inflicted on them a heavy defeat: in December 1893 a force of some 10,000 Mahdists was routed during the battle of Agordat. Seven months later the Italian army took Kassala and maintained that position for the following three years. The defeat of Adwa twisted Italian plans, forcing them to hand back Kassala to the British whom, for their part, had to authorize the advance of Egyptian forces into Dongola.

The Anglo-Egyptian condominium represented a period of intense activities for the Italian community as well. Verona Fathers and Sisters went back to their missionary activities that were mainly focused in the Southern area. Nevertheless a strong missionary presence was also based in Khartoum and a small number of other northern towns. In this phase the Verona Fathers Institute had successfully overcome the difficulties marking the period following the death of Comboni and a growing number of missionaries reached the Sudan. This growth was paralleled by that in the number of other Italians employed in many of the public works that were promoted by the government. In this phase the Italian presence in the Sudan amounted to a several hundred.

After Independence, when the economy of the country weakened, most Italians left, following a pattern that was common also to other foreign communities. Of course the missionaries did not share this destiny,<sup>6</sup> yet the passing from colonial to independent government required a complete reshaping of the relationship between them and the state. The Sudanese authorities interpreted the Christian presence in the country as a left over of the colonial period and a major hindrance to national unity. This simplistic view offered an effective scapegoat





*Sahara esistenti in Italia* edited by Carlo Giglio and Elio Lodolini,<sup>11</sup> a useful resource for locating African documents stored in hundreds of archives and libraries in Italy. The scope of the second guide is much more limited but it does provide a precise insight into one of the most precious archives containing material about the Sudan located in Italy. In the 1980s Fr. Leonzio Bano concluded the reorganization of the archive of the Missionari Comboniani (Verona Fathers) in Rome. Fr. Bano carefully annotated the thousands of documents that were entrusted to him and arranged a card index organized by name and subject. He then prepared a detailed inventory based on which the two volumes of *Fonti comboniane per la storia dell'Africa nord-orientale* edited by Silvia Luciani and Irma Taddia<sup>12</sup> were written. The “archivio centrale” of the Comboniani is a first class research source for scholars and, in my opinion, it has so far partially been neglected and underutilized.

The first generation of Italian scholars that started to take an interest in Sudanese affairs was characterized by two attitudes. The first, as already mentioned, was an almost exclusive interest in Italians living in the Sudan. Confusing the history of Africa with the history of the Europeans in Africa was a quite frequent shortcoming among scholars of that period, but the insistence of Italians on their “heroes” deserves some explanation. Much of this insistence had to do with the inferiority complex that Italy felt towards other European states and that also invested the colonial sphere. For the Sudan the British could celebrate the glories of Bruce, Browne, Baker, and Gordon; the Germans Nachtigal, Junker and Schweinfurth; and even the French could claim Marchand. To the Italians the fact that the international arena was extremely cautious in paying attention to

<sup>11</sup> *Guida delle fonti per la storia dell'Africa a sud del Sahara esistenti in Italia*, a cura di Carlo Giglio e Elio Lodolini (Zug, c. 1974). The books are volume 5 and 6 of the *Guide des sources de l'histoire de l'Afrique*.

<sup>12</sup> *Fonti comboniane per la storia dell'Africa nord-orientale*, a cura di Silvia Luciani e Irma Taddia, 2 vols. (Bologna: Università degli studi di Bologna, Dipartimento di Lettere e Filosofia, 1986).





the Italian contribution sounded like a conspiracy, and this prompted a stream of publications that glorified the first-rate contribution of a plethora of Italian explorers, missionaries, philanthropists and slave redeemers.

During the Fascist period this attitude assumed a more articulated form and led to the appearance of what seems today a literary genre, made of the biographical dictionaries of the "Pionieri dell'Impero" (Pioneers of the Empire) and of the biographies of the most famous among them. Emphasizing this contribution was instrumental to the Fascist project of building an African Empire, and the stress laid on Italians was intended to prove the legitimacy of the Italian claims on Ethiopia. The civilizing mission promoted by Italians since the beginning of the colonization of Africa was the most striking evidence in favour of the Italian candidature.

The "Pioneer syndrome" affected both scholars and missionaries and up to the end of the Second World War studies devoted to the Sudan took the form of a series of biographies and biographical dictionaries. Only a few of these works actually add something new to our knowledge and deserve being mentioned: Carlo Zaghi is probably the scholar that contributed most in this direction. His impressive production includes his biography of Romolo Gessi<sup>13</sup> and a later contribution on the same period consisting of a bulky collection of reports written almost daily by Gessi and addressed to Gordon during the campaign against Sulayman ibn Zubayr.<sup>14</sup> Zaghi then turned his attention to the diplomatic and military activity that led to the occupation of Kassala. This topic has attracted a lot of attention, partially because the Italian army had successfully

<sup>13</sup> Carlo Zaghi, *Vita di Romolo Gessi* (Milano, 1939).

<sup>14</sup> C. Zaghi, *Gordon Gessi e la riconquista del Sudan, con documenti inediti e sconosciuti degli archivi italiani e stranieri, raccolti e illustrati con introduzioni, note ed appendici* (Firenze, 1947).

This rare volume has been reviewed by Richard Hill in *Sudan Notes and Records* (vol. XXX

1949, pp. 288-290). It is now available in a new edition, published by the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom, which has made it freely available to all users on the Internet. The Sudan Studies Society (see [www.sudan-studies.org](http://www.sudan-studies.org)) draws attention to the fact that such a collection of documents, written in French is a

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confronted the same army that had inflicted so many humiliations on the Egyptian and British ones. Detailed descriptions of the military campaign on the Eastern border are easily available, but a study of the reasons that forced the Mahdists to push toward Massawa has never been attempted. In a more general way, Italian scholars have shown limited interest in the history of the Sudanese people, and in many cases the impression is that they perceived with great difficulty the existence of a Sudanese historical perspective. They were also very respectful toward colonial borders and rarely took into consideration the fact that some subjects demanded a regional approach rather than a national one. Perhaps this is the reason why many subjects were never dealt with. This is the case, for example, of the Khatmiyya in Eritrea, a topic which requires a definite regional approach. However Italian scholars dealing with Eritrean affairs never ventured further than Kassala, an attitude warmly reciprocated by the Italians who wrote about the Sudan.

Another important feature of this early phase of Sudanese studies in Italy is the fact that no matter what the abundance of literature available, both missionaries and lay scholars carried out their respective researches in what appears as a perfect seclusion from each other. The history of the Catholic Mission was the exclusive domain of missionary scholars that never ventured outside this field. The same pattern was followed by lay scholars, who never encompassed the history of the Catholic Mission in their works. The final result was that of two non-communicating worlds and the consequent appearance of two distinct historiographies. A few years ago I had the privilege to interview Prof. Carlo Zaghi: we had a very long and pleasant chat, and I had the chance to ask him why he never used in his works any document related to the Catholic Mission. He told me that he had a personal dislike for everything that was related to the Church, and throughout his life carefully avoided any mixing with the “pretacci”

(assumed priests). To the recollection of Prof. Zaghi's might I add that, up to this edition of the *Sudan Studies*, no missionary scholar had ever contributed to the United Kingdom. SSSUK now makes it freely available subject to licence and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).

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the 1980s, access to the missionary archives was restricted and almost impossible for independent scholars.

In my opinion there is only one field that represents a sort of exception to the rule that we have just identified: archaeology. In this field the legacy of the “Pioneer of the Empire” or the “Great tradition of the Italian presence in the Sudan”, was, for obvious reasons, nonexistent. This particular situation has favoured the appearance of a series of contributions that are far more in contact with the international scholarly research and a group of Italian scholars has long taken part in the lively debate about the archaeological past of the Sudan<sup>15</sup>. At the moment four universities (Cassino, Lecce, Napoli and Roma) are working in the country.

The Second World War heavily affected the great tradition of Italian historical research on the Horn of Africa, and the effects inevitably extended to the Sudan. Worthy of note is that the two historiographies that we have just sketched reacted differently to the many challenges of the post-colonial era. The lay scholars simply disappeared; in Italy the new historiography concerned with African Studies focused on the many new states and various other themes, displaying an evident lack of interest in the former Italian colonies. Sudanese studies in Italy, being the periphery of colonial studies, reached a standstill that lasted until recently. Among the missionaries the post-colonial period was an equally painful phase that resulted in a radical revision of many of their previous positions. This rethinking involved also historical studies, but instead of assisting in the virtual collapse of research, the new atmosphere contributed to the overcoming of many of the downsides that had made their production unpalatable to many in the past. The archives of the Congregation were moved

<sup>15</sup> Oman Giovanni, Vincenza Grassi, Augusto Trombetta, *The book of Khor Nubt. Epigraphic*

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from Verona to Rome; in Rome, a new library was created under the supervision of Fr. Stefano Santandrea, and in a few years it became the most important research library on the Sudan in Italy.<sup>16</sup> It has kept this role till now, and to have a quick idea about ongoing research about the Sudan in Italy, it is sufficient to pick up the phone and talk to Fr. Cisternino, the current librarian. Comboni's library in Rome holds the most important Italian historical collection about the Sudan, while for contemporary and political subjects the best collection is held by another Comboni library, the Biblioteca Africana in Verona. In 1961 the first number of *Archivio Comboniano* appeared, a semi-annual journal dedicated to the history of the Congregation, still published to date but which remains one of the best kept secrets of the missionaries. The majority of articles published are of interest for Sudanese studies, but the fact that the journal was intended for internal circulation has concealed its existence to most scholars.<sup>17</sup> New structures and a new mentality paved the way for a radical change.

Beside the traditional hagiographic works concerning the "father of the Mission in the Sudan",<sup>18</sup> the missionaries started publishing more scholarly works devoted to the languages and the peoples of the Sudan. In 1970 Giovanni Vantini started publishing a series of works in English on Christian Nubia,

<sup>16</sup> A few years ago I published the catalogue of the Sudanese collection of the library: M. Zaccaria (ed.), *Il fondo Sudan nella biblioteca della Curia generalizia dei missionari comboniani del Cuore di Gesù. Omaggio a mons. Daniele Comboni in occasione della sua beatificazione*, Roma 17 marzo 1996 (Roma, 1996).

The rich and carefully curated Sudanese collection is almost devoid of materials in Arabic language or published by Protestant scholars; an omission disclosing past, and sometime present, limits of the missionary approach to the history of the country.

<sup>17</sup> For example, the only library in Italy that possesses a collection of *Archivio Comboniano* is the library of the Pontificia Università Urbaniana (Rome).

<sup>18</sup> A genre that Fr. Lorenzo Gaiga kept alive with the composition of almost 100 hagiographies. One of the latest is dedicated to the life of Mons. Agostino Baroni, Archbishop of Khartoum from 1953 to 1981: L. Gaiga, *Il vescovo del dialogo. Agostino Baroni arcivescovo di Khartoum*, Bologna, EMI, [2002]. See also the recent works: F. Pieli, M.T. Ratti, A.C. Wheeler, *Gateway to the heart of Africa. Missionary pioneers in Sudan* (Nairobi, 1998); and A.C. Wheeler, *Uncovering the past. Sudanese missionary history* (Nairobi, 1998).

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gaining him recognition as one of the major experts in the field.<sup>19</sup> In 1973 the diary of Francesco Morlang was jointly edited by a team of missionaries including: O. Huber, V. Dellagiacoma, G. Vantini, A. Nebel and L. Bano.<sup>20</sup> Leonzio Bano published *Mezzo secolo di storia sudanese*, a work influenced by the French "Nouvelle histoire" four years later. It consisted in the editing of the birth, marriage and death registers of the catholic parish of Khartum from 1842 to 1898<sup>21</sup>, a quite innovative work that deserves mention and praise.

The missionaries also fostered their relations with foreign scholars, partially ending the self-imposed isolation that had curtailed their works for many years. Taking advantage of their improved linguistic skills, some missionaries also started working with some of the most prominent scholars of the Sudan. In 1974, Elias Toniolo, one of the first Roman Catholic missionaries to go through the Colonial Education Course in London (1939), published with Richard Hill *The opening of the Nile Basin*,<sup>22</sup> other documents by Catholic missionaries were published in 1981 by Richard Hill and Paul Santi.<sup>23</sup> The former, in the same year, wrote an article for a special edition of *Nigrizia*,<sup>24</sup> the monthly magazine of the Comboniani, commemorating Bishop D. Comboni. In the same period Richard Gray wrote the foreword of the *Ethno-geography of the Bahr el Ghazal*, by Fr. Stefano Santandrea.<sup>25</sup> More or less in the same period Dorothea McEwan

<sup>19</sup> G. Vantini, *The excavations at Faras. A contribution to the history of Christian Nubia* (Bologna, 1970); *Oriental Sources Concerning Nubia*, collected and transl. by Giovanni Vantini (Heidelberg and Warsaw, 1975); *Christianity in the Sudan* (Bologna, 1981).

<sup>20</sup> F. Morlang, *Missione in Africa centrale. Diario 1855-1863* (Bologna, 1973).

<sup>21</sup> L. Bano, *Mezzo secolo di storia sudanese, 1842-1898. Dall'archivio parrocchiale di Khartum* (Bologna, 1976).

<sup>22</sup> R.L. Hill and Elias Toniolo, *The opening of the Nile basin. Writings by members of the Catholic Missions to Central Africa on the geography and ethnography of the Sudan, 1842-1881* (London, 1974).

<sup>23</sup> See note nr. 3. In 1976 R. Hill translated into English the book by C. Conte, *Il Sudan come nazione* (Milano, 1970).

<sup>24</sup> R.L. Hill, "Risalendo il Nilo", *Nigrizia*, Mar. 1981. First published in 1883, *Nigrizia* traces the history of Sudan's churches and religious institutions from the time of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. SSSUK now makes it freely available subject to licence and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).

<sup>25</sup> Santandrea, *Ethno-geography of the Bahr el Ghazal (Sudan). An attempt at a historical reconstruction*, with a foreword by Richard Gray (Bologna, 1981).



was granted access to some of the archived materials of the Congregation which helped her in writing her stimulating book about the relationship between the Roman Catholic Mission and the Hapsburg empire.<sup>26</sup> This intense period of activity and creativity culminated in an international conference on “Africa at the time of Daniele Comboni”. This conference, held in Rome in 1981, fostered the meeting of a broad group of scholars representing many countries, branches of learning and approaches. It was the first, and unfortunately last, meeting of such significance to the Sudan to be held in Italy, and its proceedings were published two years later.<sup>27</sup>

This, however, was not the beginning of a new era, nor the happy end of a troubled relation, because, in the same years, the top hierarchy of Comboniani Congregation decided that it was time to finalize the beatification process of the founder of the Congregation: Daniele Comboni. That decision had an immediate impact on studies of the Sudan. Although more energies were devoted to research and the best scholars of the Congregation were involved in this long term project, for the following 20 years almost all resources were focused on a single subject, Daniele Comboni, and the goal of research was not the history of the Sudan but a specific phase of a missionary congregation and the virtues of its founder. From then onward the already rich bibliography on Daniele Comboni<sup>28</sup> flourished further, with major contributions on his life and spirituality. The writings of Comboni were published in 1991,<sup>29</sup> including some 1,200 of his letters, an astonishing mine of information about the Sudan.

<sup>26</sup> In 1982 Dorothea McEwan published in Cairo a work on which five year later was based the book *Catholic Sudan: dream, mission, reality. A study of the Roman Catholic mission to Central Africa and its protection by the Hapsburg empire from 1846 to 1900 (1914). As revealed in the correspondence of the imperial and royal Austro-Hungarian consulate Khartoum* (Rome, [s. n.], 1987).

<sup>27</sup> M. Caravaglios (edited by), *L'Africa ai tempi di Daniele Comboni. Atti del congresso internazionale di studi africani, Roma 19-21 novembre 1981*, [S.l. : s.n.], (1983).

<sup>28</sup> L. Franceschini, *Mon. Daniele Comboni (1831-1981). Bibliografia* (Boma, Sudan, 1984).

<sup>29</sup> *Daniele Comboni, Opere complete, prefazione del card. Carlo Maria Martini* (Bologna, 1991), 2207 p.



The first reward for this collective and breath-taking operation came on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 1996, with the beatification of Daniele Comboni by Pope John Paul II<sup>30</sup>. The important recognition was also the end of much of the historical work devoted to that goal. For the following phase, canonization, Vatican procedures require the analysis of miracles that took place through the intercession of D. Comboni; a task that requires a limited contribution from historians.

In the middle of the 1990s the driving force behind Sudanese Studies in Italy had to reformulate its direction, having achieved its main goal after some 20 years of intense work. It is now too early to predict the future course of missionary studies on the Sudan. Some of the energies will be unquestionably absorbed by the new process of beatification of Bishop Antonio Maria Roveggio (1858-1902).<sup>31</sup> It is also clear that a natural development will be the history of the Catholic Mission after the death of Daniele Comboni, as shown by a first group of books published after 1996<sup>32</sup>. A certain attention has been drawn to the plight of the Italian prisoners of the Mahdi, a topic that I explored in my doctoral thesis and in editing the Italian edition of the journal of the captivity of Father Josef Ohrwalder.<sup>33</sup> Some of my conclusions were disputed by Camillo Ballin in

<sup>30</sup> The phases that led to the beatification of Comboni are dealt in a book edited by P. Chiocchetta, *La causa di beatificazione di Daniele Comboni* (Roma, 1996?).

<sup>31</sup> A first series of publications have already appeared on this subject: *Sulle antiche orme, Mons. Antonio Roveggio*, Roma, 2002; L. Gaiga, *Missione senza sconto. Mons. Antonio Roveggio missionario comboniano vicario Apostolico dell'Africa Centrale* (Roma, 2004).

<sup>32</sup> Tarciso Agostoni, *The Comboni missionaries. An outline history 1867-1997* (Roma, 2004); A. Bertolotti mcej, *Il vicariato apostolico dell'Africa Centrale e l'istituto dei missionari Figli del Sacro Cuore di Gesù (1898-1919)*, tesi presso la Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Facoltà di Storia Ecclesiastica, sotto la direzione di F. Gonzàles Fernández, mcej (Roma, 1999); M. Cisternino, *Passione per l'Africa. Carte missionarie ed imperiali sulla prima evangelizzazione in Uganda e Sudan, 1848-1923* (Citta del Vaticano, 2001), 571 p. (an English edition of this text will soon appear with Fountain Press, Kampala).

On the relation between the early history of the Catholic Mission and its Tyrolese priests I would like to signal: G. Seccia, *La missione cattolica in Sudan e i protagonisti tirolesi* (Roma, 2001), 170 p.

<sup>33</sup> M. Zaccaria, *I prigionieri del Mahdi*, op. cit.; J. Ohrwalder, *I miei dieci anni di prigionia*.

his *Il Cristo e il Mahdi*,<sup>34</sup> a work based on extensive Arabic sources. Linguistic and anthropological studies, the main area of activity for generations of missionaries, continue to attract attention, and some linguistic works done by missionaries in the field are still published by the University of Trieste (*Dipartimento di Scienze del linguaggio, dell'interpretazione e traduzione*, or 'Department of linguistic sciences, interpreting and translation').<sup>35</sup>

In the same period there was some recovery of lay scholarship. After the end of the Second World War Africanist scholars neglected research on the former Italian colonies in general and the Sudan in particular. As a consequence, most literature has been the work of geographers, experts in exploration history and local historians who continued their work recovering and editing nineteenth century travel literature.<sup>36</sup> In doing so they displayed a great expertise in

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*sapevano che ero stata suora*, edited by Daniela Maccari (Bologna, 1996), 207 p. Recently the memoirs of another nun "prisoner of the Mahdi", Elisabetta Venturini, were published. A biography of Ohrwalder was written by Simone Paganini, *Il movimento mahdista e p. Josef Ohrwalder. Il movimento mahdista e l'esperienza di missione e di prigionia di un prete sudtirolese nel Sudan della fine del 1800* (Roma, 2001), 170 p.

<sup>34</sup> C. Ballin, *Il Cristo e il Mahdi. La comunità cristiana in Sudan nel suo contesto islamico, con particolare riguardo al periodo della rivoluzione mahdista, 1881-1898* (Bologna, 2001). See also: C. Ballin, "The dimmis in the Sudanese Mahdiyyah (1881-1898)", *Islamochristiana*, 27 (2001), pp. 101-129.

<sup>35</sup> See: A. Pozzati, *Vocabolario ndogo-italiano-ndogo*, a cura di Vera Carnielli con la collaborazione di Stefano Santandrea M.C.C.J (Trieste, 1987); B. Kohnen, *Dizionario Shilluk*, a cura di Manuela Brovarone (Trieste, 1994); A. Pozzati, *Dizionario Giur.*, [Trieste], Università di Trieste, Scuola superiore di lingue moderne per interpreti e traduttori; P. De Angelis, *Vocabolario Zande*, edited by Franco Crevatin (Trieste, 2002).

<sup>36</sup> The list of such works will be too long, but some of them deserve a mention. G. Ferlini, *Nell'interno dell'Africa, 1829-1835*, edited by Walter Boldrini (Bologna, 1981); G. Rossi Osmida published the papers of Giovanni Miani, *Diari e carteggi, 1858-1872* (Milano, 1973); and then a book about Giovanni Battista Benzoni, *Il gigante e le piramidi. Nella Valle del Nilo con Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778-1823) fondatore dell'egittologia moderna* (Torino, 1992).

An Italian translation of Angelo Castelbolognesi's journal appeared in 1988: Angelo Castelbolognesi, *Viaggio al fiume delle gazzelle (Nilo Bianco), 1856-1857*, con illustrazioni dell'autore, traduzione dal francese, ricerche, introduzione a cura di Giacomo Savioli, (Ferrara, 1988).

F. Surdich has been one of the most active Italian scholars in publishing and commenting on

travel literature. His biography was originally in a book of fortune in Egypt and the Sudan 1856-1858, in the United Kingdom, *Essays and lectures on the history of the Sudan and the Nile*, edited by the Society (see [www.sssn.it](http://www.sssn.it)).

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managing biographical data but some difficulties in placing the object of their research in the Sudanese context. I tried to highlight this limit when I decided to tackle the biography of one of the most famous "Pioneers of the empire": Romolo Gessi.<sup>37</sup> Also the coverage of the political situation has shown a modest improvement. In the past the missionaries carefully avoided openly addressing this subject fearing retaliations from the Government. The only moment in which this policy was not respected was in the months immediately following the expulsion of the missionaries from the South, a dramatic move that provoked an outburst of publications very critical of the government's action.<sup>38</sup> Lay scholars showed an even more rooted distrust for the Sudanese civil war and avoided commenting on this conflict. Recently a new "modern history of the Sudan" has been published,<sup>39</sup> and a series of articles took into consideration the Turabi years.<sup>40</sup>

In general it is clear that the climate of mistrust between missionary and lay scholars has almost ended. The prevailing atmosphere is one of cooperation and the missionary's archives are now open to scholars. A few years ago G. Romanato decided to write a biography of Daniele Comboni and his period, a subject that has for many years been of exclusive competence of the

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A collection of previously published works of nineteenth-century missionaries was edited in 1996 by Luigi Gaffuri under the title *Africa o morte. Viaggi di missionari italiani verso le sorgenti del Nilo, 1851-1873* (Milano, 1996).

<sup>37</sup> M. Zaccaria, *Il flagello degli schiavisti. Romolo Gessi in Sudan, 1874-1881* (Ravenna, 1999).

<sup>38</sup> A. Bonfanti, *Espulsi dal Sudan* (Bologna, Nigrizia, 1964); *The black book of the Sudan. On the expulsion of the missionaries from Southern Sudan, an answer*, [s.l.] (SAGA, 1964); Yusef el Amin, *Così va il mondo nel Sudan* (Urbania, 1965). And the Italian translation of the book by J. Oduho and W. Deng, *The problem of the Southern Sudan* (Milano, 1964). For the role played by missionaries in the political turmoil of Southern Sudan see the paper by R. Gray in Yusuf Fadl Hasan and Richard Gray (eds.), *Religion and conflict in Sudan. Papers from an international conference at Yale, May 1999*, (Nairobi, 2002).

<sup>39</sup> I. Panozzo, *Il dramma del Sudan specchio dell'Africa* (Bologna, 2000).

<sup>40</sup> This edition of *Sudan, Sudan and Democracy* (Bologna, 1999) by the members of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom, ES5005, [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org) is available on the subject, to licence and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).





Congregation. But instead of the past diffidence, Romanato experienced a great deal of collaboration.<sup>41</sup>

What still remains to be done is implementing a tighter cooperation within a wider international context. Sudanese studies in Italy will certainly improve their appeal whenever scholars will be able to link their work to what their colleagues in Khartoum, Bergen, Durham, London and elsewhere are debating.

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<sup>41</sup> G. Romanato, *L' Africa Nera fra Cristianesimo e Islam. L'esperienza di Daniele Comboni* (1834-1881), with a foreword by R. Gray (Milano, 2003). This book is slightly different



# **Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom**

## **Minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

BGLT, SOAS, 27 September 2003

Ms Gill Lusk called the meeting to order at 13:09 and welcomed members to the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom

### **Apologies:**

Apologies were received from SSSUK President Mr T. Salih, Dr J. Alexander, Ms Batoul Elbashir Elrayah, Mr P. Bowcock, Mr H. R. J. Davies, Mr Norman Jackson, Mr W. Kenrick, Prof Frank Rhodes, Mr J. Udal and Rev A Wheeler.

### **Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> AGM of 28 September 2003:**

The minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of 28 September were adopted as a true record of the 2002 AGM.

### **Matters Arising from the 16<sup>th</sup> AGM:**

#### **Gift Aid:**

Dr David K Lindley informed the meeting that the suggestion made by Mr H R J Davies had been acted upon and the SSSUK now had a reference number for Gift Aid from the Inland Revenue.

#### **Chair's Report:**

The SSSUK Chairperson, Ms Gill Lusk, expressed her sadness in reporting to the AGM the passing away of Mr G A Booth, Mr Robin Hodgkin, Mrs Helen Jervis and Mr J N Lawrence. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

Gill Lusk informed the meeting that the previous 12 months had been

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a busy period for SSSUK, with the final preparations for the Sudan Studies International Conference.

She also informed the meeting that the conference had been successful and there had been a sizeable presence from SSSUK. Also she pointed out that the conference's honoured guest had been our esteemed member of the SSSUK founding team, Prof Peter Woodward.

Ms Lusk also informed the meeting that the SSSUK committee had held its two statutory meetings for the year and of the committee's decision to co-opt Mr Michael Medley, Dr Abdelsalam Sidahmed, Mr Adrian Thomas and Rev Andrew Wheeler to the committee.

### **Secretary's Report:**

The Secretary thanked SSSUK members for trusting him with this position and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Dr David Lindley and Mr Richard Brook, as well as other committee members, for the continuous help and support they had provided to enable him to start his job and for advice and mentoring without which he could have never managed to get to grips with his tasks. He also recorded his appreciation to Dr Joanna Lindley for her understanding and encouragement.

The Secretary reported that there had been two substantial mailings to the membership, with the first one including the invitation for applications to SSSUK postgraduate student awards to attend the Sudan Studies International Conference.

The Secretary also reported that he had coordinated the business of the group tasked with administering the scholarships and details were discussed later under agenda item 8.

Also the Secretary coordinated the production of a Sudan Studies CD

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and informed the meeting of the enormous efforts of our current Editor Dr J Willis and our previous Editor Mr P Wilson in bringing the material together and making the project a reality.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Dr David K Lindley provided a comprehensive summary of SSSUK accounts with explanations of the different entries in the balance sheet.

Dr Lindley detailed the donations made to SSSUK during the course of the year by the Anglo-Sudanese Association and the Girdlers' Company (Jock French Charitable Fund).

He informed the meeting of the enormous role played by Mr P Bowcock and Mr J Udal in making these donations possible and thanked them for their efforts.

Dr Lindley also pointed out that although the Anglo-Sudanese Association donation had been paid into SSSUK accounts, the donation was actually split between SSSUK and the Sudan Archive at Durham University.

Dr Lindley informed the membership of the total expenditure incurred by SSSUK in supporting postgraduate students to attend the International Conference.

In response to a question from Mr A Goulty about the SSSUK account balance at the end of 2002, Dr Lindley explained that at that point in time, the balance included the whole of the donation made by the Anglo-Sudanese Association, which is shared by SSSUK and Sudan Archive at Durham. He explained that SSSUK had issued a cheque to Durham University and this would be reflected in the accounts for 2003.

The motion to adopt the accounts was approved by the AGM.

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### **Editor's Report:**

Dr Justin Willis informed the meeting that one issue of the publication had been produced during the year (Number 30). He also appealed to the membership to provide articles in order to enable him to be able to produce two issues per year, as the lack of articles was the main reason why a second issue had not been produced.

In response to a question from the floor about the use of the papers delivered at the International Conference Dr Willis explained that there were copyright issues that needed to be addressed.

### **Sudan International Conference – Georgetown University, Washington DC, 31/8-02/9/03:**

Both the Treasurer and the Secretary discussed this issue.

The conference had been a success with a good attendance by SSSUK members. Prof P Woodward had been the guest of honour and his speech, which had provided a pertinent analysis of the problems in Sudan, had been well received by the audience.

SSSUK offered support to five postgraduate students in British universities (Durham, Leeds, Nottingham, Oxford, Reading) to enable them to attend the conference but due to delays in visa processing by the American Embassy in London, only four students were able to take up the offer.

Financial support came from SSSUK funds, the donation by the Girdlers' Company and the Gordon Memorial Trust Fund that was facilitated by Prof P Woodward.

The grants were publicised by mailing to members as well as various Sudanese discussion lists and websites.

Concern was expressed that very few applications were received from Sudanese and no Southern Sudanese or female Sudanese had applied.

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### **Elections & Co-options to the Committee:**

Ms Gill Lusk had served her term as Chairperson but there were no nominations for the position. Ms Lusk kindly agreed to continue as SSSUK Chairperson for another year.

### **AOB:**

Dr Abdelsalam Sidahmed reminded the meeting of the sad news of the passing away of Mr Robin Hodgkin. He spoke about Mr Hodgkin's lasting legacy in the field of education in Sudan and suggested that his memory should be honoured by SSSUK. He suggested either having a special issue of Sudan Studies or a special SSSUK meeting to celebrate Mr Hodgkin's work.

Dr Willis expressed his hopes that members would come forward with enough papers to make this commendable project possible.

The Secretary appealed to members to participate in an SSSUK membership drive and hoped all existing members would help in recruiting new members.

Ms Lusk brought the AGM to a close at 14:10.

## SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UK

Accounts 1 January -31 December 2003

	2003	2002
INCOME	£	£
Membership dues 2003	1,187.96	1308.48
Back Membership dues	63.00	115.98
Future Membership dues	60.00	44.00
Sale of Publications & CDs	394.00	245.15
Interest on Bank accounts	21.86	2.47
Donations	1,000.00	6634.27
2003 AGM/Symposium	464.00	
2002 AGM/Symposium		425.00
2001 AGM/Symposium		40.00
	3190.82	8815.35

	2003	2002
EXPENDITURE	£	£
Printing	135.55	395.59
Reprints		45.00
Secretarial expenses	165.23	461.67
Committee Travel	56.00	57.00
Repayment of fees etc	67.00	26.00
Donation to Durham Univ	3301.14	
2003 AGM/Symposium	748.37	
2002 AGM/Symposium		440.00
2001 AGM/Symposium		94.59
Support International conference	1992.75	
Surplus/deficit for year	-3275.22	7295.5
	3190.82	8815.35

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

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

## Assets

Bank balance on 1.1.03	9252.83	1957.33
Bank balance on 31-Dec-03	5977.61	9252.83

D. K. Lindley

Hon. Treasurer

24/11/2004



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## SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UK

## Accounts 1 January - 31 December 2002

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

	2002 £	2001 £
EXPENDITURE		
Printing	395.59	1017.58
Reprints	45.00	-
Secretarial expenses	461.67	394.00
Committee Travel	57.00	83.60
Repayment	26.00	8.00
2002 AGM/Symposium	440.00	450.00
2001 AGM/Symposium	94.59	
2000 AGM/Symposium		62.57
Surplus/deficit for year	7295.50	-406.79
	8815.35	1608.96

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

*E. J. M. Ingalls*  
E. J. M. Ingalls

FCCA

## Assets

Bank balance on 1.1.02	1957.33	2364.12
Bank balance on 31-Dec-02	9252.83	1957.33

D. K Lindley  
Hon. Treasurer

*D. K. Lindley*

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NOTICE OF THE 19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE  
SUDAN STUDIES SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM  
(SSSUK 19<sup>th</sup> AGM)

Khalili Lecture Theatre  
SOAS, University of London  
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG  
(Nearest Tube: Russell Square – Piccadilly Line)

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

Notice is hereby given that the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom (SSSUK) will take place on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2005 in conjunction with SSSUK annual symposium.

The annual SSSUK AGM and Symposium normally take place between 09:30 and 16:30.

The AGM will be scheduled between 11:30 and 15:00.

The exact time will be circulated later.

All proposals for constitutional amendments and/or SSSUK executive committee nominations should reach SSSUK Secretary by Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2005.

SSSUK Committee

All correspondence concerning the 19<sup>th</sup> AGM should be addressed to SSSUK Secretary at:

Zaki El Hassan  
SSSUK Secretary  
Flat 2/2  
56 Ashley Street  
Glasgow G3 6HW  
UK  
Email: [secretary@sssuk.org](mailto:secretary@sssuk.org)

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## SSSUK COMMITTEE

Following elections at SSSUK 18<sup>th</sup> AGM, the current composition of the committee is as follows:

**President:** Mr Tayeb Salih

**Chairperson:** Dr Anisa Dani

**Vice-Chair:** Dr Douglas Johnson

**Hon. Secretary** Dr Zaki El Hassan

**Hon. Treasurer** Dr David Lindley

**Hon. Editor – *Sudan Studies*:** Dr Justin Willis

### **Ordinary (Elected) Members:**

Dr John Alexander

Mr Philip Bowcock

Prof Richard Gray

Miss Joan Hall

Mrs Jane R Hogan

Mr John Udall

### **Co-Opted Members:**

Dr Ahmed E. Ibrahim

Ms Gill Lusk

Ms Aliya Mahmoud

Mr Michael Medley

Dr Abdelsalam Sidahmed

Mr Adrian Thomas

Dr Andrew Wheeler

Mr Paul Wilson

Prof Peter Woodward

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## SSSUK SUBSCRIPTION POLICY

The Committee of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom has approved the subscription policy stated below during its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The 18<sup>th</sup> AGM was informed of the policy and no objections were raised.

This becomes necessary in order to reduce the workload on the Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary of SSSUK in relation to the administration of subscriptions and to ensure a fairer treatment of new members joining late in the year.

1. Subscription fees for existing members become due on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January of each year.
2. New members joining in the second half of the year are to enjoy an effective 1<sup>st</sup> year membership of 17-13 Months.

This only applies to new members and not to old members rejoining the society after a lapse in their subscription payments.

3. New members who join during the period January-June are treated as existing members.
4. Any member who does not pay his/her subscription for two consecutive years will have their membership terminated and their details removed from SSSUK database.

A final reminder will be sent to the member before removal from the database.

5. Any member who does not pay his/her subscription for the current year by the time of the AGM will not receive new issues of Sudan Studies.

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## SSSUK ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM 2005

10:00 – 16:30

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2005

### CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANELS

Khalili Lecture Theatre (KLT)

Main Building, SOAS, University of London

Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG

(Nearest Tube: Russell Square – Piccadilly Line)

The AGM and annual Symposium for 2005 will take place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2005 at the Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS-University of London.

Members are encouraged to organise panels and present papers on issues related to Sudan.

Individual presentations are expected to last a maximum of 15 minutes with additional time allocated for questions.

If you are planning a panel then please contact the AGM Coordinator (SSSUK Secretary) to discuss the details.

Proposals should be sent to SSSUK Secretary as soon as possible but no later than Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

Details of the cost, programme and registration will be circulated at a later date.

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## Special offer for SSSUK members

### ***ISLAMISM AND ITS ENEMIES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA***

(Alex de Waal, ed.)

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## CALL FOR INFORMATION: D.R. Ewen's Letters from Khartoum

I'm currently editing the very absorbing letters of Professor Dick Ewen, Lecturer at Gordon Memorial College and later University of Khartoum, 1951-64, written to his mother in Scotland. I have been attempting to compile a list of short biographies of people noted in the letters, but am having difficulty with quite a number of these. I'd be very grateful indeed to hear from anyone who can provide information for, or who can put me in contact with, any the following.

- Sayyed Mekkawi (student at Erkowit in 1951).
- Abdel Aziz el Zein (student, 1952)
- Bakri Baldo (student)
- Ahmed Fadlalla (student)
- Valli Hazandras (Greek student, (Senior English Honours class, 1960-61))
- Taki Zaki (Senior English Honours class, 1960-61)
- Isam Ahmed (Senior English Honours class, 1960-61)
- Lamia ? (Egyptian girl, First Year Language class, 1960-61)
- Vella ? (Maltese, went to Canada 1965).
- Hassan Badawi (young Sudanese artist, I think, in 1962/63)
- Mohamed Omer Khalil (Ibid.)
- Taki Zaki (Turko-Greek-Sudanese)
- Dr. Abdulla Urdayathalla (1961: "He is working now in the South")
- El Amin Abdel Kerim (Honours History graduate, went on to London School of Oriental and African Studies)
- Col. Ahmed Mukhtar (Commandant of Military College, promoted to Commandant of the Army's entire Infantry School, 1962-63)
- Bob Kay (Engineering, 1960/61)
- Dean Smith (Professor of Physiology, died suddenly, July 1960)
- Dr Mustafa Awad Abdul Kirim (Arabic Dept., died of meningitis)
- ? Chadwick (botanist, 1961)
- The Boltons (Engineering)
- The Liebeteggers (Austrian).
- The Pettits (he in Botany, she in Bio-Chemistry)
- The Perrotts (Law Faculty, Austrian wife)
- The Russells (Architecture, 1962-63)
- Gordon Adams (technician in Chemistry)
- Prof. Oliver
- Prof. O'Brien (Physics)

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- Prof. Lumsden (Gynaecology, a Scot, arrived late 1962)
- Anne Graham (Lecturer in Geography)
- Anis el-Shami (University Council)
- Kenneth and Betty Wales (1952)
- Mr. (?) Teplor and his wife (Soviet Ambassador, 1960/61)
- Mr. (?) and Mrs. Eugenie. Vorotiline (1960/61)
- Menai Jones (Welsh domestic science teacher) and husband, Bernard
- Miss ? Williams (hospital matron, 1962-63)
- Mrs. Randell (taught at girls' school in Omdurman, 1962-63)
- Ray Balfour (British Embassy), 1962/63
- Carroll Brewster (American lawyer)
- Hassan Dubloun
- Ben Haines
- ? Bryant (succeeded Nancy Moller at Women's Hostel, 1960),
- John and Metta Cole
- Bernard White (1960-61)
- Mark Fisher (Philosophy. 1960)
- Thabit Hassan
- Taha Abbas (1952)
- Bilail (1952)
- Ali Salih
- Mustafa Hummuda
- Rahman el Sheikh
- Fuad Akasha (1953)
- Osman Beshir (largest furniture manufacturer in Omdurman)
- Ali Nasri Hamza (shifted from the Exams Council to Deputy Headship of a Secondary School, 1963. Is this the same person who later became Senior Inspector with Ministry of Education. He hoped for a UNESCO job in Libya organizing the exam system there. Did he get it?)
- Who was the doctor who was conducting the anti-meningitis campaign in the Sudan in 1951?

My contact: **Associate Professor Russell McDougall**

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Alex de Waal (ed.), *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Hurst, London, 2004. xiii+279.

Much of the literature on Islamism and terrorism, especially since 9/11, has focused on the activists and their deeds often offering accounts that have nods and winks towards a variety of secretive sources. Less often have these deeds been presented from within the context in which the movements have developed (with the exception of Israel/Palestine). Certainly the accounts of al-Qaeda have usually mentioned that Osama bin Laden was in Sudan from 1991 to 1996, and that his and other Islamist groups there extended their tentacles across the Horn, but generally only with brief and somewhat superficial accounts of where he fitted into Sudan's experience. This collection is a significant contribution to redressing that imbalance.

That said the first substantial chapter, by A H Abdel Salam and de Waal, is one of the exceptions since it is a survey of the concept of *jihad* in the evolution of Islamist thought generally and not just in Sudan. It is a sophisticated discussion of the usual suspects, but will add little new to the many reviews of this subject in recent years. In the following chapter the same pair turn to *jihad* in Sudan in the years after the coup of 1989 that brought Hasan al-Turabi and his followers to power. Here the authors are effective in setting the Sudanese context for the regime's hosting and encouragement of international Islamist terrorism. It was in practice two sides of the same coin. *Jihad* was invoked in the making of Sudan's home grown Islamist revolution, especially in the civil war in the south, just as much as it was by the various Sudan-based groups that carried their activities to neighbouring countries of Africa and the Middle East. Parts

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given the secretive nature of the regime in its early years particularly there are always new details to emerge and interpretations to be made and this chapter is a useful addition to the literature thus far. As always with revolutions- and this has been an attempted revolution from above- the power of ideology itself wanes, leaving vulnerable self-serving elites. They may try to reform while clinging on to as much power as possible or they may be overtaken by events and/or the opposition their ideological programme has provoked: in Sudan's case from the south to Darfur and to a lesser extent in the east as well.

The book then moves on to a chapter by Roland Marchal on 'Islamic Political Dynamics in the Somali Civil War'. Marchal has been actively engaged in fieldwork around the Horn for years, especially concerned with the social context and impact of conflict. The subject of Islam in Somalia has risen in interest since 9/11 both with regard to its past role and future potential, but with more assertions than acceptable answers. Marchal is able to fill out the realities with a more credible account of Islamist activities than is normally given and nailing much of the exaggeration about al-Qaeda and the conflict in Mogadishu in the early 1990s. An appreciation of the limitations of Islamism in Somalia would though have benefited from greater reference to the anthropological and historical literature on Islam and its place in the structure and evolution of Somali society.

Another area in need of greater investigation is tackled in M A Mohammed Salih's chapter on Islamic NGOs in Africa. This is more wide ranging geographically than the rest of the book, but still has great relevance to the Horn with its large Muslim population. As well as much

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attention focused on these NGOs and their possible links with terrorism. One question is whether it is possible for NGOs funded largely from the Gulf states to avoid the Islamist influences that have emanated from the peninsula? Another is the inevitable 'totalising project' of Islam and whether it can be compatible with the pluralistic vision of 'civil society' encouraged by the West and at least mouthed by African leaders? Perhaps Islamic NGOs will remain a dimension of the perceived competition with the West in Africa, even if purged of any links to terrorism?

De Waal then returns in chapter six to look at the destabilisation of the Horn from 1989-2001. Central to this is the role of Sudan in its support of Islamism across the region. As in the earlier chapter on Sudan he is able to add more detail and interpretation to the picture already known. He emphasises the tensions in ruling circles between realism and idealism in its foreign policy, but whatever those struggles the fact was that, until the attempted assassination of President Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, it was overwhelmingly the Islamist idealists whose actions prevailed. A reference to the literature on revolutions and foreign policy making would have helped to explain this. Revolutions are ideological movements and ideologies know no borders: even nationalism was an ideology of international implications. Such international forces, should they fail, provoke a backlash as Sudan discovered after 1995, eventually being forced back to the predictable path of realism. The latter part of the chapter is concerned with US policy. Here de Waal thinks that the US did develop a policy, but that it was unlucky. The policy against Sudan might be summarised as less than Somalia with its US military engagement, but more than Rwanda and the inaction during the genocide. It consisted of encouraging the good guys in Washington's eyes- the renaissance leaders

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regime change in Sudan. The bad luck was the quagmire of Zaire/DRC and the internecine war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Though de Waal thinks 'The United States is so powerful that it no longer needs to know much about the rest of the world and adapt its power to local realities' these events show that perhaps this is not in fact the case: even direct intervention can have its limitations, in Iraq now as in Somalia a decade ago. In addition client states can manipulate patrons and put their own perceived interests above US wishes. Certainly the US has the power to exert great influence, as in the Sudan peace process since 2002, but it cannot of itself simply determine the outcome of developments.

A H Abdel Salam and de Waal combine once more for the concluding inevitable post-9/11 chapter. Once more we learn of US power, especially among the poor weak states of Africa, as they sign up to be in the 'war on terror'. The third deployment of US troops- after Afghanistan and Iraq- was to Djibouti, but here it was smaller in numbers since there were not big battles to be fought, rather it consists of intelligence gathering and special operations on both sides of the Red Sea. The US was also chasing and seeking to sanitise money from the Muslim world to banks, NGOs etc. As well as security the US chased Africa's oil, both because of growing international competition for black gold, and perhaps to reduce reliance on the Middle East. This is seen to be necessary in part because those who believed that invading Iraq would secure Gulf oil may have to learn that military might alone is no guarantee of success and could instead be counter-productive. Perhaps the Horn will remain the Horn and controlled by neither Islamists nor the West.

Peter Woodward

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*Luigi Messedaglia tra cultura e impegno politico e civile nel Novecento*. Biblioteca Civica di Verona. Studi e cataloghi, 35. 2003. 382 pp.  
ISSN 1722-9219. 20€

Fruit of a conference at Verona, this book examines the wide-ranging culture and contributions to society and to politics of a notable provincial member of Italy's humanist elite in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1935 Luigi Messedaglia published *Uomini d'Africa*, a study mainly concerned with the work of his cousin of an elder generation, Giacomo Bartolomeo Messedaglia, who was an officer in the Egyptian army from 1876 to 1889 with notable experience in the Sudan. In this volume, Dr Claudio Gallo describes Luigi's research on his relative's career and prints six letters from the son of Romolo Gessi, which throw useful additional light on Gessi's background and activity in the Sudan. The volume also contains a complete listing of all the voluminous correspondence received by Luigi Messedaglia now available at the Biblioteca Civica, among which *inter alia* are thirteen letters from Bernard M. Allen, author of *Gordon and the Sudan* (1931), and four from Gordon's relative, Colonel J. Moffitt. G.B. Messedaglia's manuscript, passed to G. Casati on his death, has not however yet been traced.

Richard Gray

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Fergus Nicoll, *The Sword of the Prophet. The Mahdi of the Sudan and the Defeat of General Gordon*. Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 2004. xiv, 323 ISBN 0-7509-3298-8 (cloth)

This tale has been told many times before, but Fergus Nicoll's new book offers a narrative which takes a slightly different perspective from much of the literature on the dramatic events of 1881 to 1885, and is more readable and less partisan than some work. The book is cast as a biography of the Mahdi, rather than as the story of Gordon, or of the collapse of Turco-Egyptian rule, and its particular strength lies in an extensive use of Arabic material which many English-speaking writers have neglected. Nicolls draws widely on the large published secondary literature on the Mahdi, and makes some nice use of a range of primary documents. In consequence, he manages to some degree to escape the fascination with Gordon which has affected much of the writing on the Mahdiyya, and he *almost* avoids the eccentric but widespread notion that these events can most usefully be read as some sort of personal struggle between Gordon and the Mahdi. What one might call the Gordon-centric view does manifest itself – the Governor-general creeps his way into the full title of the book, and there is a fair amount of the Gordon-pacing-the-palace-roof prose which seems to be an inescapable component of English writing on the Mahdiyya. But there is a good deal more space given to ambitions and policies of the Mahdi himself, all of it thoughtfully written and supported with extensive quotations. Nicoll explores the intellectual background to the Mahdi's *jihad*, fitting him into a wider pattern of Islamic renewal in Africa and noting the remarkable lack of any engagement between this vision of renewal and the intense debates over Islamic modernism which were in progress at Egypt at the

This edition of Sudan Studies was originally distributed in hard copy to members of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. This is a solid and interesting story, on which Nicoll is to be commended. (see [www.sssuk.org](http://www.sssuk.org)).

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congratulated, and the book provides both a readable general text for anyone interested in this enormously important period of the Sudan's history, and a useful addition to student reading lists for those who teach on the period.

There are, on the other hand, no real challenges to conventional wisdom here. Turco-Egyptian officials are presented as generally incompetent ; the Mahdi was both inspired and inspirational; the Khalifa was a ruthless autocrat who abandoned the Mahdi's vision. Most importantly, a rather casual use of language elides the central question of how the Mahdi has been interpreted, and reinterpreted, since his untimely death. Nicoll refers to the Mahdist state as a 'new nation', but he does not ask how it was that a man who explicitly saw 'the affair of the Sudan' as no more than a stepping stone to the capture of Cairo, Mecca and Baghdad has come to be identified as – in Nicoll's words – the 'father of modern Sudan'. That process is perhaps as important to an understanding of the modern Sudan as the story of Aba Island, Shaykan and Khartoum.

Justin Willis

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