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for South Sudan and Sudan

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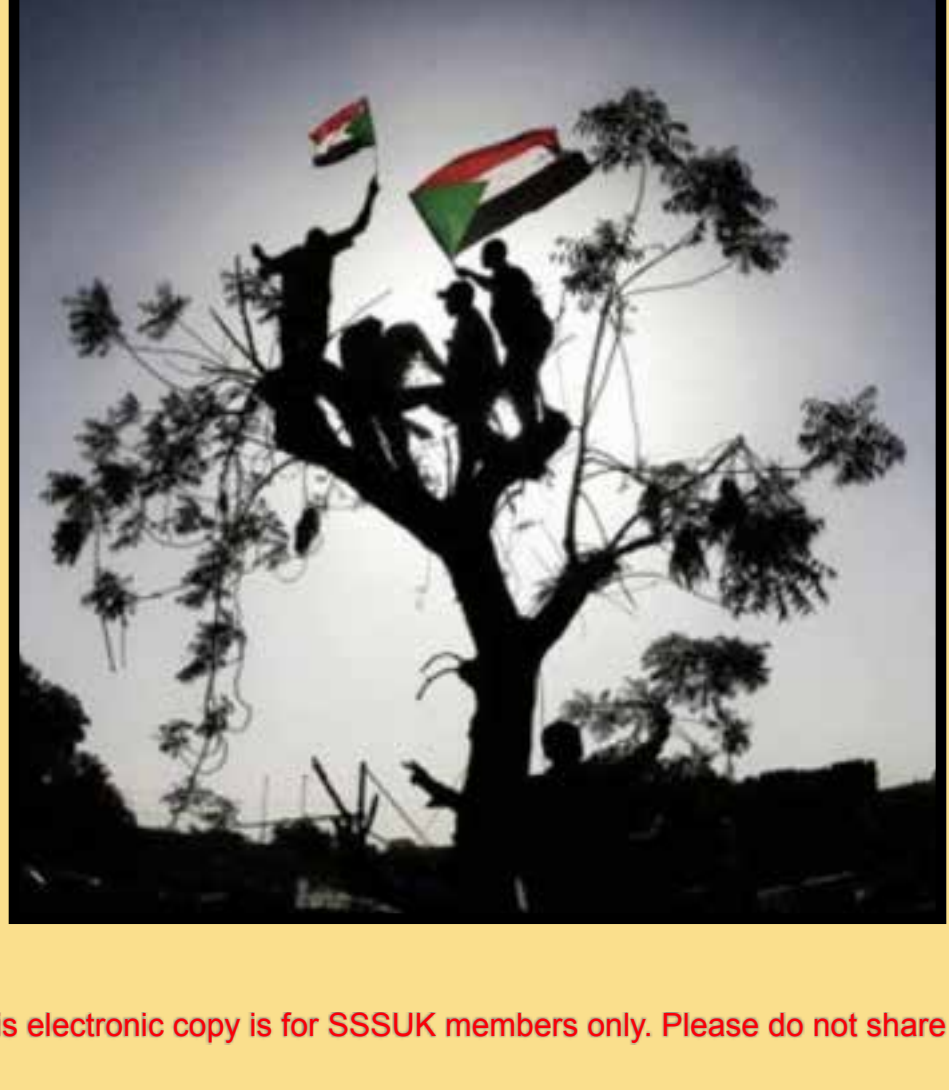


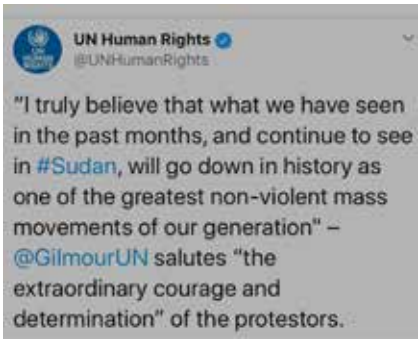
Front cover photograph: The sit-in site on 12th April (Photographer unknown).

Contents

Editorial

Welcome to Issue 60 of *Sudan Studies*. This has been a momentous year for both Sudan and South Sudan. While the people of South Sudan wait patiently for the peace they have long been denied, Sudanese have been living through the greatest upheaval for decades: they call it a 'Revolution' or '*Thowra*'. So fundamental are the events of the past six months that they go well beyond even the ousting of the President of 30 years, Omer el Beshir. The movement encompasses all aspects of life, from politics to art, from economics to music, crossing boundaries of age, class, gender and ethnic group in an entirely new way. The *Thowra* has made the powerful tremble not only in Sudan, where they have been trying to salvage their regime, but in Africa, the Arab world and beyond.

It has also triggered unprecedented statements of support for protestors from many governments. These may be summed up in this Tweet by the United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights and the head of the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York, Andrew Gilmour.



He made the comment during the 41st Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in July 2019. This also illustrated the constraints of diplomacy: at the request of the African Union but to the dismay of many rights advocates, the Council refrained from debating the Sudan situation in order not to disturb the hoped for agreement between the Transitional Military Council and the Forces for Freedom and Change.

This issue of our journal devotes considerable space to recent events: history is being made and we felt the need to record some of it. Sadly, we also need to record the deaths in April of two men who, in different ways, have contributed enormously to knowledge of the Sudans. South Sudanese journalist **Alfred Logune Taban** founded the *Juba Monitor* and was a staunch defender of press freedom, which earned him a place in Juba prison. My most

vivid memory of him is from an earlier time, dancing to *Saturday Night Fever* at a *Sudanow* party in Khartoum in the late 1970s. American disco music impressed me a great deal more than it did him: he said it was made by 'machines', which of course in part it was.

Rex Seán O'Fahey was also a man who liked good cheer and is much missed, especially in his long-term adopted home of Bergen, Norway, whose University has links to Sudan that are strong and deep. As Emeritus Professor of History of the Middle East and Sudan, he maintained his interest in Sudan studies and particularly Darfur.

We are also sad to report the death of **John W. Hannah**, who wrote in *Sudan Studies* Issue No. 57 on his experiences as an Assistant District Commissioner in Juba. It seems he maintained till the end the resilience he had shown in South Sudan. His son David tells us that he died peacefully at home in Burford, Oxfordshire, with his family beside him on 17th July 2018. This was only a couple of months before his 93rd birthday, yet "he was still swimming daily until just a few months before and was still teaching French a week before his death!"

The deaths have also been reported of two South Sudanese activists, **Samuel Dong Luak** and **Aggrey Ezbon Idri**, who were snatched from the streets of Nairobi in January 2017. We hope to publish fuller obituaries of both men in our next issue, as well as those of John, Alfred and Seán, and would be pleased to hear more from their friends and colleagues.

Our articles in this issue include two features on the Revolution by Sudanese activists. Long-standing SSSUK member **Selma Elrayah** tells us about her eye-witness role in President Omer el Beshir's downfall, while psychiatrist **Sara Beleil** tackles the psychopathology of everyday Islamist rule. **Gill Lusk** provides an inside-outsider's analysis, while music fan **Peter Verney** tells us about the song and dance of a Revolution. SSSUK founder Professor **Peter Woodward** reminds us that Sudan has reason to be proud of its civilian uprisings. Finally, **Mawan Muortat** reports on his recent visit to Juba.

War in South Sudan is the subject of the first of our book reviews. **Peter Woodward** has reviewed two books: *First Raise a Flag. How South Sudan won the longest war but lost the peace* by **Peter Martell** and *South Sudan's Civil War. Violence, insurgency, and failed peacemaking* by **John Young**. Meanwhile, **Andy Wheeler** reviews **Jesse Zink**'s *Christianity and Catastrophe in South Sudan. Civil war, migration, and the rise of Dinka Anglicanism.*

Mawan Muortat reviews a compilation of Arab short stories edited by **Sarah Cleave**: *Banthology: Stories from Unwanted Nations* while **Gill Lusk** writes about *Civil Uprisings in Modern Sudan. The 'Khartoum Springs' of 1964 and 1985*, by **Willow Berridge** of Newcastle University. *Transforming Sudan: Decolonization,*

economic development and state formation by **Alden Young** comes under scrutiny from **Iman Sharif**, while **Lutz Oette** of SOAS reviews **Olaf Köndgen**'s: *The Codifications of Islamic Criminal Law in the Sudan: Penal Codes and Supreme Court Case Law under Numayrī and al-Bashīr*.

In our regular feature, Sudan Archivist **Francis Gotto** brings us news from the Sudan Archive at Durham about its latest acquisitions.

Also in the interests of documentation, we include below web links to sites that will give readers more information on recent events in Sudan, in the form of video clips and photographs. Due to the extreme violence deployed by the security forces, some are extremely graphic, except for those from the *Art of the Sudanese Revolution* site.

As for the photographs that we have used in this issue of *Sudan Studies*, we have credited those who gave us permission to use their pictures but by the very nature of the events, many photos have circulated anonymously. If any photographer finds we have used their work inadvertently, we apologise and would be happy to credit them in the following issue.

Web links

The web links follow, with thanks to SSSUK Committee member **Abdel Azim el Hassan**:

BBC documentary on the 3rd June massacre, told through the phone-cameras of those who kept filming, even as they came under live fire. With English subtitles.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-48956133/sudan-s-livestream-massacre or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dR56qxM4kHA

A good Wiki summary of the 2018-19 protests with links to articles and other resources.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018%E2%80%9319_Sudanese_protests

Channel 4, Yousra Elbagir: The women on the frontline of the protests in Sudan.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2G9IYXlAT1g

Art of the Sudanese Revolution; an exhibition: for more information, contact the Sudan Doctors' Union UK.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EIJKEqTyqg&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR20-Dd3BINyL36wCxOWU-EVJnUuQoncx2Iyo46H_soqKFoCMaQuM1fyrHM

The indefatigable Sudanese BBC correspondent Mohanad Hashim: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-48030340/sudan-s-revolution-of-awareness

Twitter: Hashtag in Arabic. Title: Documenting the Massacre of the General Command
https://twitter.com/hashtag/%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AB%D9%8A%D9%82_%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%B1%D8%A9_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%87_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87?src=hash

(This is a live source and some videos there might not be authenticated and some entries in Arabic contain strong language.)

Guest Editorial, Gill Lusk

Omer el Beshir: My Role in his Demise

Selma Babikir Elrayah*

December 2018

When the EgyptAir plane landed at Khartoum international airport on Dec. 7th 2018, I didn't think I would end up witnessing a piece of history that I never thought to see in my lifetime. Never in my wildest dreams did I envisage that I would feel euphoria such as I once-upon-a-time had felt. My husband Osman and I were on our usual holiday back home, looking forward to meeting family and friends and excited about the projects we were planning and hoping to embark on during our stay.

We have always been preoccupied with the idea and desire to 'pay back' Sudan after witnessing how the Beshir regime managed efficiently and systematically to erode all the benefits of the good, free, liberal education and health service that my generation enjoyed. For political reasons we decided to exile ourselves and leave Sudan in August 1979 and come back to live in the UK from where we had returned home nine months earlier, after living in England for six years as postgraduate students. We are the lucky generation that Sudan looked after, and in the 60s she gave us the best education on offer up to university level.

The euphoria that I referred to earlier was the October revolution of 1964. As I said, my generation of the 60s witnessed and participated in a peaceful civil uprising that uprooted the military dictatorship of Ibrahim Aboud. However, thirty years of the so called 'civilisation project' – constructed by the National Islamic Front and led by its architect and commander, the late Hassan Alturabi – had transformed and damaged Sudanese society beyond recognition. The NIF worked out meticulous programmes of intimidation, indoctrination and terror, including the well documented running of torture centres known as 'ghost houses'.

Sudan had historically adopted a gentle, decent form of Islam, where it merged its African and Arab legacy, producing a trusting, gentle and giving people, ethnically mixed, who had lived in harmony for centuries. The Beshir regime started by introducing laws and regulations, aimed at changing the way people celebrate and live their lives. Not forgetting the war waged against our people in Darfur and south Sudan, and how the regime brought about the secession of South Sudan, turning Sudan into a miserable country. These policies of hate were carried out with impunity, while torture, imprisonment and brainwashing through the state-owned media enabled them to enact many

misogynistic and uncivilised laws. They interfered in all aspects of the private lives of Sudanese people. They allowed and let all public institutions to become run down and set up parallel private institutions, from schools to hospitals to transport etc. All of these private institutions were managed by committed members of the Islamic Front. They burdened people with taxes that were ruthlessly collected. The poor of Sudan bore the brunt of all these injustices, but obviously hated the regime and resented it.

On the way from the airport to my childhood home in the old postal district of Abu Rof in Omdurman, my mind wandered back many decades and mixed feelings of joy and sadness engulfed me. The streets were empty, with hardly any cars. The city was beautiful and it was as if I saw the place for the first time; we drove along Nile Street in Khartoum, passing the old Khartoum Zoo that was sold long ago and the animals scattered all over the country: most are now dead. Selling land and historic iconic places is a trademark of Beshir, his friends and family members. Passing by the old Grand Hotel, I was reminded of the demonstrations that I had witnessed in 1964 while travelling from Omdurman during the October Revolution. As we passed the Hotel, we always shouted "Down, Down USA!"

At last we reached home, with the River Nile passing right in front, two miles after the Blue and the White Niles merge before continuing its epic journey northward to Egypt. The house used to have a postal address and in the 60s I used to receive letters from my friends in secondary school. The postman used to come on his donkey with my letters – the good, old Sudan – and he was full of admiration for me, a girl who received letters, God rest his soul.

Most of the family members were asleep. I live in a compound inside which are four closely related families: two of my brothers, my sister, and myself in a flat upstairs. Next door, is my late cousin's family. Within these houses, those who were under, or just over, 30 years old and their friends from the neighbourhood, were to play a crucial and important role in the upcoming events. Nearly all these people are graduates, without prosperous jobs or hope for a better future, unlike my generation.

Our house is nearly one hundred years old and my family has lived there all that time, as have most of the families who live in Abu Rof. It is typical of all old Omdurman districts in this respect. These are close-knit communities and very intertwined, just like the structure of the houses and the streets they occupy. For example, if you enter our compound from any of its six access doors, you can easily end up in a different part of Abu Rof, without needing to go on to the main road. This structure helped the Omdurmanians to protect each other during the events and protests in December 2018, when the regime's 'dogs', as they were nicknamed, chased demonstrators.

One early afternoon, although worried about anything happening that could jeopardise my exit from Sudan, I hesitantly agreed to go to Omdurman's first demonstration. It was the first one I had participated in since 1964. According to the information we had, the gathering was at a specific area near Omdurman Hospital and people were to gather near or around the house of Ismail Alazhari, the first Sudanese prime minister. We drove there, going round and round with no sign of any gathering, apart from people going about their usual business. Before deciding to return home, we passed three girls walking leisurely. I opened the window of the car and after greetings were exchanged, I asked them where they were going? They did not find my question strange and one of them looked at us, raised her index finger and made circles on the air and said, "same place, same place". Immediately we understood. Laughing, we looked to park the car and followed them until we reached a junction leading to the Hospital. We stood there and nothing was happening, it was just a regular busy road, with people coming and going. One of my companions said, "Why can't we start it ourselves?" I was in no mood to listen to her but before I could even turn round, and seemingly from nowhere, we heard chanting and a huge crowd of people just appeared, right there in the middle of the road, all shouting slogans against the government and even naming some of its members.

Unbelievable excitement swept through me. We all ran towards them, but honestly I do not know, even now, where they emerged from. They completely controlled the road and I don't remember there being any cars on that usually congested road. I entirely forgot my fear and hesitation and joined in. We continued southward, going around the front of Omdurman Hospital towards the Khalifa's House and the Mahdi's Tomb. The minute we turned westward, the security forces caught up with the demonstrators and showered us with tear gas. From the back of the crowd, I saw two groups of security service militia advancing, armed with sticks and whips, one group coming from the side of the Hospital and the other coming from the front. People started running and I ran too. Luckily a young rickshaw driver agreed to take us out but I lost my companions in the confusion.

That was a momentous day; thereafter, a series of small roadblocks were set up by demonstrators in various parts of Omdurman and particularly in Abu Rof. My family's compound became a safe place, where demonstrators could enter and then hide in the back streets of Abu Rof. Many similar houses in the neighbourhood did the same, and as with us, the tear gas penetrated inside their houses. During that entire holiday, until the first week of February 2019, the neighbourhood, and others in old Omdurman, was the site of hit-and-run road-blocks and tyre burning. At the same time, the security militias in their

unmarked trucks were stationed all over Omdurman: the photo below is of one of three trucks that were parked in front of our compound. These trucks sent a strong message i.e. that the militiamen would not hesitate to use their power including firing live ammunition; which they did.

Pick up trucks with armed militia in front of our compound in Abu Rof, taken from the living room (Credit for all photographs: the author).

April 2019

The protests continued after we left Sudan and returned to the UK. Then came the momentous events of 6th April and the fall of Beshir. This was the anniversary of the overthrow of President Nimeiri in 1985 and the day the huge sit-in began at Army Headquarters. Five days later, Beshir was ousted by a Transitional Military Council. My husband Osman and I couldn't manage to maintain a normal life 24/7. We were flipping through the news channels and calling family in Sudan and around the world, seeking more news. This became too much to bear and this time, Turkish Airlines took us back to Sudan. On the 1st May 2019, our plane landed at Khartoum International Airport and my God, it was really 'new Sudan'. Immigration hardly took any time and there were no unnecessary questions that were aimed at reminding you of the strong

arm of the regime. Apart from a nephew and niece, none of our family knew we were coming but my niece ensured that some family members were waiting for her at the sit-in at the Army Headquarters, where we headed directly from the airport. We were filled with joy and pride and felt heavy loads slip from our shoulders, knowing the battle was not won yet, but sure it would be.

Inside the sit-in area was a vision of a Sudan I thought we had lost forever. Before entering the area, everybody was searched. However, the way it was done was courteous, with funny chanting to the individual being searched, asking them to raise their arms, or open their bags – a way of communication that I thought had been lost. It was like a festival of joy, creativity, music and love, all in the Sudanese way as we knew it. Not ignoring the real issues of the protest and sit-in, there were corners for discussion, platforms for political rallies, music and singing. Below are photos that give a flavour of the atmosphere and how the people inside the area by the Army Headquarters were committed to change in Sudan and prepared to defend their achievement, demanding complete power to try and work together to build a New Sudan.

Huda Ahmad Suliman at sit-in: kids' tent.

Testimonies

I managed to collect testimony from three individuals who were participants in the protest. Their statements and reasons for revolting against Beshir's regime could be typical of anyone that took to the streets.

The first testimony is from a widow, housewife and mother.

"I am educated up to elementary school. I first heard about the demonstration in Atbara and we asked ourselves, why are we not protesting? We in Abu Rof were the first to go out, us the women. Our sons went ahead of us but didn't do anything, so we went out and we stopped the traffic and burnt a tyre, and we did it so many times at night. Bit by bit more people in Abu Rof were coming out. Then the security police threw tear gas at our boys and imprisoned and whipped them.

Mother and her children at the sit-in.

The reason I got involved was that my late husband was an army officer and was sacked in the public interest at the prime of his life and with young children.[1] He tried many jobs, so he could provide for his family and many times we waited until two o'clock for him to come with food. He tried many jobs until in the end he did an exam to be a customs facilitator. I personally suffered from Beshir. My children who graduated didn't have jobs. That is why we wanted Beshir out and wanted to have a non-military government that would respect us and provide services. We want to live a decent life. We want a government that respects our rights."

The second testimony is from a young man.

"In my neighbourhood we set up five committees for the resistance and in support of the protest. The committees represented people from the centre, north and south of our district and those from Wad Nubawi and Soug Alshajera; all of the members are between 20 and 35 years old.

Our neighbourhood is one of the oldest districts in Omdurman, with a glorious history. It gave the first Martyr during the 2013 uprising, Ahmad Albadawi, who was killed in a brutal way. He wasn't even involved but was curious and a sniper killed him.

We want a civilian government to punish all those corrupt people in the fallen government and the previous ones. The government must dismantle

[1] During their 30 years of rule, the Beshir regime sacked thousands of officials from the civil service and the military on political grounds citing 'public interest' as the reason for doing so.

the security committees who were responsible for our misery. Dismantle all institutions belonging to the 'K*eezan*', the National Congress Party [the ruling party, the rebranded NIF]. Any institution belonging to them, we don't want. Then we come to what our district needs:

- Health: We have the Swiss clinic, which works well but we want to be part of it. This clinic is historically and remains supported by the government of Sweden. We need another district hospital.
- Environment: Improving the environment and cleaning the neighbourhood is fundamental. It is a place of history and we need to repair and improve the drainage in the area.
- Education: Our school, Khalid Salim, has thousands of professional graduates. We need to equip the school, ridding it of all members of the National Congress, and develop projects to support the school. Our girls travel outside the district to go to school – the local school (Sit Hamida) needs to be rebuilt so that our girls can go to school locally.
- Youth clubs: we have three. They were effective and important but now are hardly used by young people and we need to take control and develop them for the benefit of the community and its young people, without the control of certain groups."[2]

The final testimony was from a young female graduate of the University of Khartoum.

"I live in Omdurman and I am twenty-eight years old. We revolted because of the troubles that were happening to us. There were injustices in all service institutions where people were not promoted because of their ability and productivity, but for their membership of the ruling party.

I witnessed what happened to the Tennis Service Club, which catered not just for young people in the capital but at a national level for all the country clubs. The Tennis Club and its various facilities are public services. The government wanted to force the Club to sell its land and gave them an ultimatum of a couple of days to pay over the equivalent of twelve thousand dollars, otherwise they would demolish the site. We witnessed the demolition of nearly all the facilities apart from a very few, which were not adequate. The only choice left is for those who can afford to pay to go to Alfateh Hotel, which is out of the reach of all those young people who used the facilities at the Tennis Club.

I would like to see peace and freedom in all parts of Sudan and most impor-

[2] The youth clubs were taken over by Beshir's supporters – mainly security personnel, who were planted there to intimidate youth from the local neighbourhood.

tantly, real change in our lives, so that all age groups in our communities find the cultural and social programmes that are part of a rich, normal life."

Throughout our second visit to Sudan, I frequented the sit in daily until the small hours of the night, mixing and debating issues while meeting people from different generations. It was the first time I had attended the Darfurian corners, listening to their issues and their grievances, particularly against the head of the Military Council, General Burhan, and his deputy, who are implicated in the Darfur war. I also visited various members of the Sudanese women's movement. It was great to witness the commitment of people at the sit in despite the difficulties and hardship. People are determined and have rejected the ideology of the Islamic Front and their brutal unfair practices of arbitrary killing, theft and genocide that have created disfigured and broken communities. Ultimately, people have had enough and broke through their barriers of fear and stood as one, demanding change and denouncing the rule of the military. All these demands and protests were accompanied with arts, music and fun. The revolt uncovered the creativity and good spirits of the demonstrators.

Preparation for 6th April at local level.

July 2019

We came back from Sudan so excited, hopeful and full of high spirits. Our excitement and happiness was completed when two of my children and their families planned to visit Sudan in December 2019, now that Sudan would wel-

come them and their European spouses without any pressure. However, in the early hours of 3rd June my 'phone rang and I knew it would be bad news but I could never have imagined it would be that bad. When I answered, I could hear crying and screaming at the other end: "They dispersed the sit-in, they shot them, they shot, shot them all!" We all ended up crying and screaming and no words could express how we felt; it was the worst and saddest of moments. I felt their loss and also felt guilty; again we were safe here in the UK and well protected, while the poor brave brilliant people who were not asking for much – only peace and justice – were being shot while they were asleep.

There was another source of guilt and awareness of the huge debt we owed. Osman and I had developed a close relation with those guarding the entrances to the sit in and also those up on the railway line. It was so hot and they were there 24/7. We decided to get them big straw hats and bought about a hundred from Omdurman market. The trader who sold the hats to us gave us a big discount when he realised that we were taking them to the sit-in, as he wanted to make a contribution. We kept seeing those guarding the site wearing their hats, and we recognised and greeted each other. When I realised they had decorated their hats, I brought five extra and asked them to decorate them and write on them the names of each of my grandchildren.

One of my grandchildren's hats.

I worry that these people would have been the first to be killed. I hold the Transitional Military Council responsible for their killing and I promise to keep their memory alive as long as I live.

*Selma Babikir Elrayah is a British Sudanese. She graduated from Khartoum University and London University, and has worked as a librarian in public libraries for over 20 years.

Spring of Hope

Gill Lusk*

Introduction

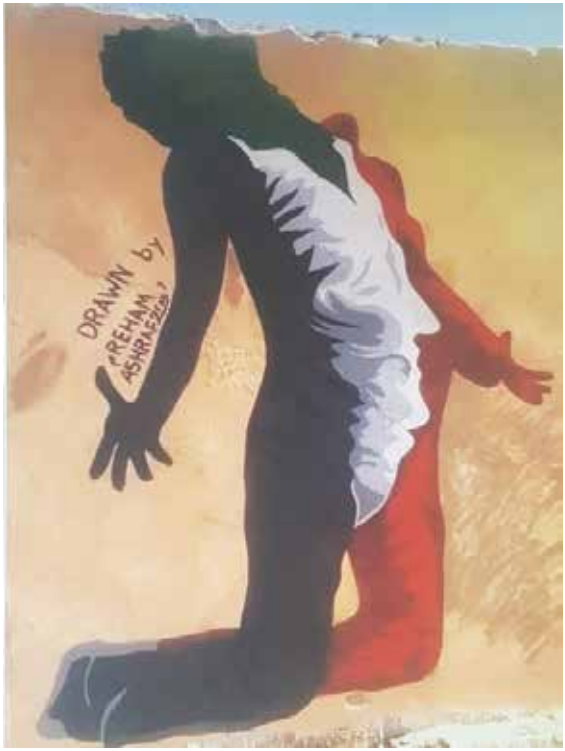
> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way...

The memorable opening lines of Charles Dickens' novel of another revolution, the one that erupted in France in 1789, capture a human spirit that has manifested itself just as strongly this year, nearly 3,000 miles away and 160 years after he wrote *A Tale of Two Cities*. That book's "engagement with the immense moral themes of rebirth and terror, justice, and sacrifice gets right to the heart of the matter...", wrote the historian Simon Schama in his introduction to one edition. Getting to the heart of the matter is why, whatever the eventual political outcome, the momentous events that erupted in December 2018 in Sudan can truly be called a 'revolution'.

As with the French Revolution, it is certainly about overthrowing the *ancien régime* but it is also about so much more. "Rebirth" implies new ways of thinking and being, and these have been flourishing, especially in the improbably fertile terrain of the mass sit-in of civilians outside the Sudan Armed Forces' Headquarters. This energetic forum of debate and creativity lasted from 6th April until 3rd June, when those in power, who had publicly pledged not to attack the protestors, brutally cleared the site at the cost of well over 100 young lives.

The astonishing creativity of this gathering may have been dented but it was certainly not extinguished. Sudanese know the value of their Revolution. For weeks after anger exploded in December, journalists and foreign officials spoke of "demonstrations" and "protests" over the price of bread, as if people were simply complaining to the local bakery. I recently found a note which I had made in early January: 'No one is talking about bread!'

Instead, the demonstrators were shouting "*Tasgut Bass*!" meaning "It **must** go!" That's the National Congress Party (NCP) regime they were talking about. For years, people had stoically been awaiting the *Intifada* (Uprising), yet when it came, they immediately started referring to **this** uprising as *Thowra* or



Picture by Reham Ashraf, Art of the Sudan Revolution Exhibition, London, July 2019; mobile exhibition organised by Sudan Doctors' Union-UK.

Revolution. The resounding slogans told the story: "*Hurriya, Salam wa Adala! El Thowra Khiar el Shaab!*" thundered one. "Freedom, Peace and Justice! Revolution is the People's Choice!" It rang out everywhere, from old and young, rich and poor. Demonstrations had happened before: this was different.

From the start, other major themes were "*Silmiya*!" ("Peaceful!"), which was to become a by-word for the protests, and "*Saguta, saguta el Kayzan!*" That means "The mugs must fall!" "Mugs" or "cups" is how Sudanese allude to the Islamists who have held power for 30 years. It is widely said to derive from something that, citing the Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan el Banna, the Sudan regime's godfather, Hassan Abdullah el Turabi, said about Islamists scooping from the sea of religion, just as mugs are used to scoop up water from the ubiquitous communal water pots or *zirs*.

Diary of a revolution

Five dates stand out. On 13th December, protests took place in the Blue Nile town of Ed Damazine after the government headed by President Omer Hassan Ahmed el Beshir raised the price of bread. Then on 19th December, the protests spread to the north, to the old railway and trades union capital, Atbara, where they became more overtly political. The movement then built steadily, embracing all age-groups, regions, ethnicities and walks of life. Young people were especially prominent and in a traditionally segregated society, women were conspicuous by their substantial and substantive presence alongside men.

The watershed date was 6th April, anniversary of *Abreel*, the 1985 civilian *Intifada* that overthrew the late President Ja'afar Nimeiri. It is one symbol of the Sudanese public's ability to remove military dictatorships. The other is the 'October Revolution' of 1958, which led to the resignation of General Ibrahim Abboud. Many Sudanese who flooded this April to the vast area in front of *El Giyada*, the Armed Forces' HQ in Khartoum, later said that there had been no plan for the mass sit-in there. That is most probably the case, although the Sudanese Professionals' Association had been calling for collective sit-ins since January at least. It seems that at least an initial protest there must have been planned by the SPA, a union coalition which was by then coordinating the backbone of the protest.

Protestors on bridge with Sudan Professionals' Association banner, 22.4.19. (Credit: Khalid Hamid).

Yet spontaneity is also a keystone of this movement, as it was with its predecessors. From 1985, I vividly remember how thousands of people simply ran out of their houses to join the Uprising against Nimeiri. "We didn't even lock our door!" one woman excitedly told me at the time. The same happened again this year, only on a much grander scale, as might be expected after nigh on 30 years of official torture and killing in the name of religion. Feeling runs very deep, a fact often under-estimated abroad. No one knows how many people filled the vast sit-in site but by the end of May, there were certainly tens of

thousands, maybe more. Thousands more protested countrywide, from Nyala to Port Sudan to El Obeid.

It took only five days for the authorities to move and, significantly, they moved against the head of state, not the demonstrators. That helps to explain why the eventual forced clearance in June was a shock to so many. On 11th April, senior army officers announced that they had overthrown Field Marshal Beshir and formed a Transitional Military Council to rule the country. The TMC's first Chairperson, Gen. Ahmed Awad ibn Auf, lasted only one day, which helped to give the impression that the TMC was weak as well as basically well-intended. This was far from the truth, as those at the sit-in were to discover to their cost on 3rd June, when armed and uniformed men attacked them with live fire, as well as beating, whipping and rape.

"The epoch of belief"

The destruction of what had become a kind of revolutionary festival site that people dropped in and out of and even visited from abroad was such a massacre that it is easy to forget now what had happened in the preceding months. The pattern of repression of the movement by the regime was in fact already all too clear from late December. The revolutionaries' mistake was to believe against the evidence that because they had achieved the removal of the detested Beshir and established their festival site on the army's doorstep, they had already won the day. It was a view that ignored the fact that the senior ranks from which the TMC was drawn had been carefully recruited from the party faithful since the early 1990s. The National Islamic Front (NIF), which seized power in 1989 and later rebranded itself as the NCP, had from the start rejected the traditional principle of a professional and apolitical army, sacking over 1,500 officers deemed anti-Islamist in 1990 and summarily executing 28, the 'Ramadan Martyrs', whom it accused of planning a coup and who are far from forgotten. Hope springs eternal, as it must, and the youngsters who were not even born when the NIF took power chose to believe the protestations of the TMC and in particular, of its number two man, Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, aka Himedti, who just happened to be the chief of the Rapid Support Forces. The RSF are the recycled *Janjaweed* responsible for the genocide in Darfur, where Himedti was also a key leader.

The revolutionaries were too busy with their revolution to be analysing the strategy of the 'deep state', carefully constructed over 30 years by the regime and indeed, for over a decade before that, when the NIF was preparing for power after Nimeiri opened up the political system in 1977. Indeed, it has been a truly remarkable revolution but it also began long before it flowered so prolifically in the no man's land beside the perimeter of the army camp. The

Revolution grew for nearly four months before that and it also had time to put down deep roots. Sudanese had moved from fear to hope and, with the arrogance bred of incumbency and self-righteous Islamism, the regime underestimated the people over whom it had held sway for three decades.

Words tumble over one another to try to capture the essence of the Revolution: hope; determination; humour; courage; non-violence; joy; egalitarianism; sacrifice; imagination; creativity; excitement; wonder at the sheer possibility of everything. From the early days, an ubiquitous slogan from the May Events of 1968 in France came back to me: "*L'imagination au pouvoir!*" That means "Imagination in power!", something greater even than "Power to the imagination!"; moreover, "*pouvoir*" in French means not only "power" but "to be able". "*L'imagination au pouvoir!*" is an imperative that implies total creativity, that nothing is impossible. That was exactly the mood that dominated the Sudanese sit-in. That spirit still pervades the Revolution and it is its phenomenal strength but, to the extent that it gives insufficient attention to hard-headed planning, sometimes its weakness, too.

The "immense moral themes": terror and sacrifice

'Justice' is a word that is often bandied around thoughtlessly and even antagonistically, especially by those who live in states where, despite all their weaknesses, the rule of law prevails. It has a deeper meaning in many countries where people suffer from rulers rather than rules. A 30-year reign of terror in Sudan has given the cry of 'Justice!' great depth. If "reign of terror" sounds exaggerated, try being a young woman wearing jeans in Sudan under the Islamist NCP, or a Darfur or Nuba widow scraping a living for her children by selling home-brew beer in a country that once, many moons ago, boasted industrial breweries. Both those women have been lucky to escape with a whipping and abuse that is only verbal.

Even less fortunate have been the literally hundreds of thousands of people, overwhelmingly unarmed civilians, who have died during the NIF-NCP's long reign. Everyone has lost someone dear to them. As long ago as April 2008, John Holmes, who was then the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief and now chairs Britain's Electoral Commission, told the United Nations Security Council that 300,000 people could have died in Darfur. Civilians have been dying in Darfur in large numbers ever since but the figure stuck there and in some media reports, has even shrunk. This is an indicator of the regime's great skill in manipulating opinion, national and especially international, but its constant disinformation has come back to bite it in revolutionary form.

Internal war has always eroded governments in Khartoum. For decades,

this comprised successive Northern governments' wars against the South, where literally millions of civilians died. More recently, the underlying factor has been the NIF-NCP regime's bid to change the ethnic and political demography of the Two Areas – the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile – and of Darfur, where the International Criminal Court indicted President Beshir and others for genocide. That is a very big word and crucially, it implies intent, not only the callousness of 'war crimes' and 'crimes against humanity', with which the Commander-in-Chief and others were also charged.

The regime's ethnocidal policies were made easier by a mixture of public ignorance of distant events with racial and regional prejudice among a wider population which was also struggling to survive its depredations. A growing consciousness that these ways of thinking must change if Sudan is to move forwards democratically is one of the great achievements of the Revolution. That has been helped by a young generation who, thanks to social media, are well aware of how their counterparts live and think in other countries in a way that, in a socially highly conservative society, many of their parents were not. Before Beshir was side-lined, when the regime tried to accuse Darfur students of carrying arms against the government, protestors marched shouting, "You arrogant racists! The whole country is Darfur!" The revolutionary celebrations at *El Giyada* saw an unprecedented degree of regional and ethnic mixing, amid endless discussions about the challenges facing the country.

These challenges include Sudan historically being ruled mainly by people from the Arabic-speaking tribes of the Nile Valley. The Arabic language

Demonstration at Port Sudan with caption:
"You arrogant racists! The whole country is Darfur!"

has held (Northern) Sudan together but it has also helped to compound the second-class status of the 'marginalised areas', where Arabic is often a second language. That in turn has sparked fears of national fragmentation. Such issues have been healthily debated by the revolutionaries and, although change will inevitably take time, doors have opened in many minds.

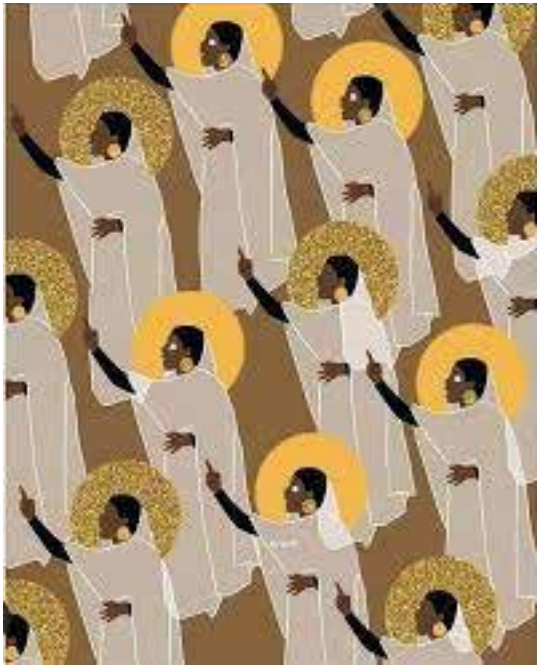
One symbol of this has been the widespread brandishing of the national flag from Independence in 1956: blue for rivers and sea, green for field and forest, yellow for desert. These are colours found in many African flags and they contrast with the red, white and black-plus-green-triangle adopted by Nimeiri in 1970 and modelled on Arab flags. This contrast between Arabism and Africanism has been reinforced by the fact that in April, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates all immediately came out in favour of the TMC, while the mediation between TMC and protestors is by the African Union, with an East African regional body, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and neighbouring Ethiopia.

"Season of light"

The urge for a more egalitarian society has also been striking in the role taken by women. Young women – and many older ones – have found a freedom they would never have dreamed possible before the Revolution. In fact, both genders have found a freedom of expression in the broadest sense, both in the brave street demonstrations and in what was for weeks the safety of the *Giyada* sit-in. Freedom to think, to talk, to dance – freedom to **be.** However, for women there is the extra and very fundamental dimension of having for centuries deferred to fathers, brothers and husbands in a highly patriarchal and segregated society, a subjugation amply bolstered by 30 years of Islamist rule. Young women were certainly the main porters of hot food for the daily Ramadan *fatur* at the sit-in during the long hot May days of fasting, food most probably prepared by themselves and their mothers and aunts! Yet they have been far more visible overall as leaders of marches, as speechmakers, as leaders of every kind. That's revolutionary and none of them will ever forget what they did and can do.

Soon after the sit-in began, a video clip of Alaa Salah enthralling the crowds as she rapped the Revolution and the crowd chanted "*Thowra*!" became a worldwide symbol of the movement: *Kandaka*, a name for Nubian queens of over two millennia ago. Viewed on hundreds of thousands of Sudanese mobile phones – as the whole uprising has been – it helped spur on the idea not only of women's rights but also that the world could see what was happening in Sudan. A burst of urgent artistic creativity followed, with walls and roads being beautifully painted with the story of the Revolution, all

told by individuals who may never have enjoyed such opportunities for self-expression before. This made it all the more painful when after the 3rd June massacre, the regime painted over or simply destroyed the artwork which meant so much to democracy activists. Fortunately, most of it had been photographed on the same ubiquitous camera-phones and some is now the subject of exhibitions held, for the time being, overseas.



*Art Print of "*Kandaka*", a picture that went viral.*

It is striking that most of the art did not display the anger and hate that would not be surprising after 30 years of oppression. After all, many of the marchers' slogans were about overthrowing the regime or, specifically, the *Kayzan*, and about not abusing people's faith. Instead, most of the the paintings were full of hope for the future, portraying a brighter world than the one most of these youngsters have ever known. Some were quite simply just about beauty or exploring imagery: Art for Art's sake. In a country that has never prioritised art and where Islamists added their own restrictions on depicting human faces, this is all remarkable and indeed ground-breaking – and the opposite of the iconoclasticism associated with some revolutions. This is about creativity rather than destruction. That also makes it a revolution, rather than just a revolt.

This all fits well with the insistence on peaceful action. "*Silmiya*!" is a key slogan and it's interesting that the adjective is in the feminine gender, with the feminine noun "*Thowra*" being taken for granted. The demonstrators have practised what they preach, and to an astonishing degree. Rarely can such mass protests have witnessed such a lack of destruction, let alone rioting, looting or physical attacks on those sent to curb their freedom. At the beginning of this *Thowra*, several NCP buildings were torched, enabling the regime to point to "criminals" and encourage the sort of even-handed response to

both government and opposition that has long characterised the policies of other governments, however terrible Khartoum's atrocities. Wiser heads in the SPA soon prevailed and the protests have since then been a paragon of non-violent courage in the face of extreme provocation by the security forces. Their attacks ranged from firing live ammunition or large cannisters of tear-gas to using rifles to beat the youths sprawled helplessly at their well-booted feet. As the Sting song says, "Takes more than combat gear to make a man".

"Season of Darkness"

In April and May, the TMC's assurances that it would never attack the protestors' sit-in site, among them personal promises from Himedti, lulled the revolutionaries into a false sense of security. This was compounded by the active participation in the music and debate of many soldiers, usually middle-ranking or junior officers, or ranks, many of whom actively protected the demonstrators. Videos abounded of the military joining in the celebration and being feted by students as they brandished the national flag or made the "V for Victory" sign that is another hallmark of this Revolution, some even weeping for joy. Another echo of 1985, when people stood facing the troops chanting, "*El jish, jish esh Shaab*!" – "The army is the people's army!"

There was an overriding sense that the Revolution had won. Yet only a few short weeks beforehand, dozens of people had been killed by security forces (120 by May, says the Sudan Doctors' Union), and hundreds injured, many very seriously. Video films abounded of such attacks by men almost always dressed in camouflage uniform. There was blood everywhere. Some clips were filmed secretly from balconies, some bravely made by those in the midst of official violence which went far, far beyond any reasonable concept of crowd control. They were instantly transmitted to the world by smartphone and carefully documented by human rights organisations, starting with the SDU which, as in 1985, was a key component of the protests. That tells us why the TMC attempted to block the internet completely. This is the evidence needed for eventual trials. Some assailants wore balaclavas but so deep was their sense of impunity that many of the men committing what must in international law constitute "crimes against humanity" are clearly identifiable from the photographs. That will be crucial when investigations are eventually carried out. The clause in the 5th July agreement between TMC and opposition that there should be a "national" investigation of human rights abuses falls worryingly short of the original opposition demand for an international enquiry, as rights organisations were swift to point out.

Some of the most shocking videos, from January, show young people being thrown into the security forces' standard-issue white pick-up trucks. Men in

smart desert camouflage then leap on to their prone bodies from the roof of the cab. Repeatedly. Nevertheless, the abuses that caught the attention of the world, including of Western governments, were those involving attacks on hospitals where the injured were being treated. Live ammunition and tear gas were fired inside clinics and doctors and other medical staff were particularly targeted. On 17th January, Dr Babiker Abdel Hamid Salama was shot dead at the well-known Royal Care International Hospital as he treated patients.

The world wakes up

This and other attacks on medics broke all 'rules of war' and the regime found itself unable to talk its way back into international acceptance as it usually did. It was a turning point. World media coverage grew and helped to push powerful Western governments into the public criticism of the NCP regime that had long been lacking. Their engagement with the NCP regime had mushroomed since the Khartoum Process of 2015, a European Union-funded initiative to, in its own words, "establish a **continuous dialogue** for enhanced cooperation on migration and mobility"; in other words, to limit migration from North-East Africa to Europe.[1] Britain, which spearheaded the EU policy, also launched what it called a "Strategic Dialogue" and talked optimistically of gaining "leverage" in Khartoum. The NCP regime grew accustomed to a warmer welcome in Western ministries, especially in Germany, Italy and the UK, as well as the United States, and in Russia and China.

The Khartoum Process included funding for the NCP regime to curb migration from and through Sudan. The Border Guards tasked with this are largely former *Janjaweed*, now seamlessly absorbed into Himedti's RSF. He promptly boasted publicly that the EU had "paid us" to stop migration. The EU took refuge in the diplomatic nicety of stating that it had given money to the government, not the RSF.

Sudan oppositionists loudly took up this issue, noting that most migration to Europe from Sudan consisted of people fleeing the very regime which the EU was helping to fund. These objections carried over into the Revolution. As the RSF were increasingly blamed for killing unarmed protestors in the capital – just as they had in Darfur – the Khartoum Process[1] was quietly suspended, with the implication that it could not be reopened without the "civilian-led government" that the West and the African Union by now insisted on. So was London's Dialogue, a reform helped by the Ambassador appointed last year, Irfan Siddiq and this April, a new Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan, Robert Fairweather. After the TMC embarrassingly published separate photographs of Siddiq and the EU, Netherlands' and US envoys shaking

[1] https://www.khartoumprocess.net/about/the-khartoum-process

hands with Himedti, the British Ambassador won praise from Sudanese democrats by leading Ramadan sunset prayers outside his house.

UK Ambassador leads prayers outside his Khartoum residence.
(Credit: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 25.5.19)

Deep State

This is a big change from earlier Western (along with African, Arab and Asian) willingness to turn a blind eye to the NCP's corrupt and genocidal rule but it does not in itself dismantle the deep state that the NIF-NCP had patiently constructed. The strength of these structures is often underestimated by Sudanese and interested outsiders alike. From 1977 onwards, the NIF quietly planned its "Salvation Revolution", a Marxist-Leninist model with a trump card: the political exploitation of the deeply-rooted national religion, Islam. Firewalls were built, sleepers slept, NIF trusties were at party expense sent abroad to study information technology in a society where most people had then never seen a computer. They created a system where they often equated criticism of the regime with the unthinkable – criticism of Islam. Religion was used as a means of political control.

The deep state that the NIF built is in fact based on the force of arms, especially the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). Under the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with South Sudan, the NISS was supposed to be transformed into an intelligence-gathering body rather than the enforcement agency it had always also been. That was never going to happen and the NISS armoury includes tanks, as well as the RSF, reputed to be 30,000 strong. From the 1970s, NIF militants underwent military training and often walked the streets carrying hidden iron bars. Yet it took the current Revolution

for an admission that party militia existed: in January, former Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha – seen in the West as the 'goodie' of the CPA – said the NCP's "shadow militia" would "rise to maintain the regime even with their souls".[2] This was seen as a threat to kill demonstrators, whom the then President Beshir had called "rats and infiltrators".[3]

These party militias and the RSF are widely blamed for the clearance of the sit-in site on 3rd June and the atrocities committed. Many have talked as if the RSF is a state-within-a-state and Himedti the next dictator. Yet those who in the wee small hours of 3rd June killed protestors as they slept at the site wear the same neat uniforms and drive the same pick ups, known in Sudan as "Thatchers", as those who have slaughtered protestors from the start – sometimes by simply spraying a street with rapid fire, sometimes in targeted assassinations. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that they are enjoying themselves but they are also clearly under orders. Whose orders? is the question. The RSF are widely blamed but there is also a belief that men (and they are all men) from the regime's many parallel covert organisations may have put on the same uniform. There is a reluctance to blame police or army but while many police and troops may indeed be marginalised, it is a fact that, as in the Darfur slaughter, none of this could have happened if both the Army Command and the old regime's civilian leaders had not wanted it to.

"Winter of Despair"

This nexus of determined and dangerous men who have nothing to lose is what makes the deep state so tough to dismantle. In the 1990s, soon after seizing power, the NIF had set up a myriad of parallel security organisations, some to spy on each other. Money was laundered on international circuits, some Islamist, some purely criminal. The regime created a secret web of connections for many purposes, including international jihadist training or attacks abroad: for instance, it was implicated in the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and the assassination attempt on Egypt's then President, Hosni Mubarak, during the African Union summit in Ethiopia 1995. Internally, it privatised most major businesses into its own hands and purged the civil and armed services of presumed opponents. Totalitarians who plan so strategically and who execute their plans are not easy to dislodge, as many former East Bloc countries know.

"Everything before us"

These are some of the challenges that confronted the revolutionaries after

[2] Ali Osman, Sudan Channel 24, 8.1.19

[3] Amnesty International, 18.1.19.

their top coordinating body, the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), aka Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change, and the TMC announced on 5th July that they had reached agreement on forming a transitional government. This was met with celebration on the streets but unsurprisingly, a mood of caution also prevailed. Protestors and politicians alike do not trust the TMC, not just because it's military but because it represents the old NIF-NCP regime and because it has killed their comrades in cold blood.

Mistrust: cartoon of soldier in charge of the Sudan Television logo.

Much of the sit-in's success was built on organisation at grassroots level, by neighbourhood committees – in Sudan, people know their neighbours. These committees have supplanted the regime's version of local committees, formed to spy on people and exercise local control and, from the NCP's point-of-view, never entirely successful. Where the family dominates social organisation, people have a solid, ready-made, resistance network. Grassroots resistance will help to keep the Revolution alive, whatever the coming official politics. Many have believed that the sheer weight of continuous Revolution would eventually erode the old regime.

Paradoxically, the agreement could weaken that process by bestowing legitimacy on the TMC, which is to lead the supreme body, the Sovereign Council, for the crucial first 21 months. The FFC have by no means got all they asked for, even on paper: the investigation of the regime's atrocities will be crucial in at least slightly rebalancing the power relations. This is something external human rights groups or governments could help with. The politicians of Sudan Call (a member of the FFC) and other groups should now count a great deal more than they have in the Revolution: although most of them have no practical experience of governing after 30 years out in the cold, they do have more experience of at least party politics than most of the younger revolutionaries. Policies will be needed and many Sudanese experts have been quietly working on these.

The TMC's bid to divide the political groups – a practice long honed by the NIF-NCP – began even before the 5th July agreement, when two Darfur parties signed a separate cessation of hostilities agreement with the military. Other groups then said they would break the opposition cooperation agree-

Some of the tens of thousands of protestors who marked the 30th anniversary of NIF-NCP rule on 30th June, Airport Rd, Khartoum. (Credit: Geoffrey York)

ments which have been so hard won over many months. If the persistent Revolution cry of "*Medania!*" – "Civilian!" – is to come to fruition, the politicians will need to collaborate, not squabble. The mainly young revolutionaries have shown them the way and do not look likely to give up.

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Al Inqaz; Power, Money, Ideology or Plain Psychopathy[1]

Sara Beleil*

Psychopathy is a constellation of traits that encompasses a variety of features, including interpersonal behaviour. Psychopaths can present themselves as very successful. Their superficial charm and ability to manipulate others can act as useful but dangerous tools. Many such people are found in prisons because of their antisocial and impulsive behaviour. Characteristics that define psychopathy are: a lack of empathy, guilt or remorse; an inflated sense of self-worth; pathological lying; manipulation and a parasitic lifestyle. Other common characteristics can be criminal versatility, numerous marital relationships and generally a failure to learn from experience; there is also a strong association with instrumental violence. Lastly it is interesting to note that psychopaths tend to blame others and do not accept responsibility.

One does not need to think deeply to describe Omer el Beshir and his associates in these terms. The title of this article alludes to the three decades of Beshir's dictatorship regime. Years of war, oppression, genocide and corruption have seen Sudan disintegrate into a fractured country with a completely dismantled infrastructure. The economic destruction wrought by the regime affected all services. Health became a luxury few could afford and the outbreak of epidemics became a normal, annual occurrence. Even the armed forces were not immune to the destructive force of the regime and were transformed into an ideological army for the protection of Sudan's rulers, rather than a national army that served Sudan and the Sudanese people.

It would be wrong to assume that the revolution started in December 2018. It had been simmering and bubbling for years, but December saw the whole population of Sudan saying 'enough!' Recent years saw the *Inqaz* working hard to reinvent itself to gain acceptability in the region, hence El Beshir's surprise on hearing the chants asking for him to '*Tasgott Bas*!' ('Just Fall, That's All!').

True to the nature of psychopaths and their failure to learn from experience, El Beshir went back to his ideology textbook asking for a '*fatwa*' to kill the peaceful protestors. He then demonstrated his mercy by ordering only one-third of the protestors to be killed, despite having the blessings of the Imam to kill half the people.[2]

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[1] On seizing power in 1989, the National Islamic Front called its "Revolution" "*Al Inqaz*" or "Salvation".

[2] General Himedti said this in an interview and quoted Beshir: "I'll state it openly so people will know; President el Beshir told me that as we follow the Maliki school of

The ideological and fundamentalist aspects of the regime have alienated Sudan from the world and led to one of the largest brain drains the country has seen over the last 30 years. The regime fostered tribalism and embedded racism and discrimination in all of its practices. Women were particularly targeted for oppression as part of the regime's attempt to create an Islamic fundamentalist state.

The uprising in December 2018 culminated in the sit-in in front of the army headquarters in Khartoum on the 6th April 2019, after months of brutality, torture, killings and detentions suffered by peaceful protestors. During the period from December to April, doctors and health facilities were targeted with extreme violence.

The violent atrocities perpetuated by the Janjaweed on the 3rd June at the sit-in area, where protestors believed themselves to be safe, were a shock. Many people were shot at and killed and many more were detained, beaten and tortured. Sudanese culture is known for being conservative and peaceful and the whole nation was shocked at the escalation of violence to the point where a teacher died in detention following severe torture and rape.

During the weeks following the toppling of Beshir on 11th April, the sit-in site became an area of beauty, celebration and education. Civilians coloured the sit-in with art-work, music and reading tents, boosting the morale and spirits of the protestors. We saw the elevation of women, as they were given a chance to lead discussions about feminism and art. This was remarkable, as despite the Beshir government's tyranny and its tactics of misogyny and tribalism, we saw men and women united regardless of tribe and gender. The recognition of female strength was exhibited in the common chant of protesters who hailed female freedom fighters as 'Kandaka', a title given to Nubian queens. Fundamentally, the sit-in was a beacon of progress and hope for the Sudanese people. The attack on the 3rd June was an unwarranted heinous and deliberate crime aimed at dismantling this.

The *Janjaweed* attacked in the early hours of the morning during the holy month of Ramadan, committing the same atrocities as they did in Darfur. The barbaric attack was meant to strike fear into the protestors and break the spirit of the revolution. During the day, over a hundred people were killed and over 700 injured, and many are still missing. Sexual violence has been used for years in Darfur as a weapon and women and men were similarly assaulted during the attack at the sit-in. The rape assaults were conducted in front of detained

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Islam, we have a *fatwa* that states you can kill one-third and leave the two-thirds to live in peace. He added that those who are more observant (of the Maliki school), would kill fifty per cent".

Wall painting at sit-in site next to Army Headquarters.

and beaten protestors and some were forcibly instructed to watch, with guns pointed at them.[3]

[3] This was a verbal account from a verified source with whom the SDU-UK have been collaborating, so as to facilitate support for the victims of sexual violence and rape.

A verbal account of an activist who was brutally raped highlights the code of silence that is sustained by a culture of stigma, shame and fear. These are real obstacles that prevent many people from speaking out and reaching for help.[4]

Sexual violence is an on-going risk for female health workers including doctors, nurses and midwives, who are extremely vulnerable and continue to be harassed and targeted by the *Janjaweed* forces at healthcare facilities. This is most challenging, as many are themselves traumatised by what happened on the 3rd June and have identified their need for further training on rape counselling in conflict zones.

Sudanese people have learnt through their own lived experience and from the history of other nations that peaceful protest is the successful way

Painting by Amel Bashir, used to illustrate the SDU's 'Silence in Blue' campaign against sexual violence. The colour blue is widely used as a symbol of the Revolution, especially on social media, as it was the favourite colour of Mohamed Hashim Mattar, a British-Sudanese engineer killed by security forces.

[4] The activist is highlighting her fear of further targeting by security forces and emphasising her concerns for her family and the stigma and shame attached to her position.

to gain democracy and realise the goal of a civilian government. The revolution against all that defines *Al Inqaz* continues. The resilience, courage, commitment and unity of Sudanese all over Sudan and across the globe provides optimism and hope that we will attain the Sudan we glimpsed during the eight weeks of the sit-in.

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"They tried to bury us. They did not know we are seeds": The Music of Sudan's Revolution

Peter Verney*

Introduction

"Art is like water", the late singer Mohamed Wardi, veteran of the 1964 and 1985 Sudanese uprisings, told a London audience in 1994. "They can't stop it from flowing, however hard they try." Time has shown that he was right – eventually.

The outpouring of artistic creativity during the Sudan Uprising of 2018-19 has been one of its key characteristics, reflecting and influencing the thinking on the streets and fuelling the debate about the country's future. Songs, chants, poetry and street art have come to embody the spirit of the uprising, permeating the protests and demonstrations not only in Sudan but also wherever supporters gathered around the world. Media reports that the protests were just about bread and fuel were ridiculed in song, and Sudanese drew strength and courage from creative verbal assaults on the regime they had endured for 30 years.

The seven-week sit-in outside the Armed Forces General Command – the *Qiyada* – through April and May 2019 became an extraordinary rallying point for Sudanese from all walks of life, with an atmosphere likened to an 'alternative' music festival or the Paris Commune. Tents and a main stage were constructed; bold debates and musical performances were held in the shadow of the regime's armed enforcers, and the vitality of the sit-in managed to catch the fickle attention of the international media.

The entry of a Sufi *tariqa* into the sit-in, with their own chants and rhythms, blended seamlessly into the mix along with roving violinists. Muslims joined Coptic Orthodox Christians singing hymns, while contemporary hip-hop artists could be heard alongside the stalwarts of an older musical discipline. Visitors to the sit-in included diplomats and reporters, who were moved and impressed by the display of talent and resourcefulness, and the welcoming spirit.

Celebration

The sit-in "symbolised the new Sudan, where a multi-faith, and multi-ethnic colourful mosaic society allowed everyone to debate the future of Sudan, to sing, dance, write, act, draw and dream of new Sudan," according to the organisers of #SudanRevolutionArt, a series of art exhibitions in solidarity, whose

first event was held on 5th-6th July at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies.

The late anarchist activist and writer Emma Goldman (known for the immortal line, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution") would surely have felt at home, as no doubt would the singer Rihanna, who has lent her voice to support the Sudanese. The spirit of Bob Marley, too, was present in the *ad hoc* reggae sessions.

The revolutionary songs are not a new phenomenon, of course. October 1964 and April 1985 brought about protest songs such as Wardi's "*October al Akhdar*" (Green October) and Mohamed el Amin's "*Masajeenik*" (Your Prisoners). As well as the elder statesmen of Sudanese music with a political dimension, it is important to acknowledge the precedents in recent years by artists such as Rasha Shekheldin, Nancy Ajaj, Shurooq Abu el Nas and Abazar Hamid.

Mahmoud Abdel Aziz

The late Mahmoud Abdel Aziz, who stayed in Sudan and suffered tragic consequences, has left a legacy which lives on. Born in Khartoum Bahri in October 1967, he became famous despite his music being barred from Sudan's broadcast media. When he died in Amman, Jordan, in January 2013 and his body was flown home, his fans mobbed the Khartoum Airport runway and huge crowds came out on the streets.

At a time of extreme repression, when many singers and artists had to flee the country, Abdel Aziz had stayed in Sudan and continued to perform, risking arrest. Aware of his popularity, the Bashir regime had attempted to co-opt him, to the extent that the President danced with him on stage but he refused to conform, and was frequently arrested and flogged for drinking alcohol.

History Professor Abdullahi Ibrahim says Abdel Aziz "presented a symbol of a subculture". The journalist Mohamed Wahbi, author of *The Light Thief*, a biography of the singer, told the *Guardian* that his fans "mimicked his look, his haircut and even the way he spoke. [Now] they want to see a Sudan of social justice and without [religious] public order laws."[1]

Street Chants

The call-and-response chants illustrate how the shared oral culture has evolved to meet the occasion. Chants such as "Bullets don't kill: submission does!"

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[1] 'The dead Sudanese singer inspiring revolt against Omar al-Bashir', 7th Feb 2019 https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/feb/07/unfettered-spirit-of-sudanese-singer-lives-on-in-bashir-protests-mahmoud-abdelaziz-moons-of-the-countryside

exemplified their peaceful defiance in the face of live ammunition, and the watch-words "*Silmiya*" (Peaceful), "*Madaniya*" (Civilian) and "*Aadala*" (Justice) were taken up on the streets of Sudanese towns as well as in cities across Europe and the USA.

The call for the regime to go – "*Tasgut Bas*!" ("Just fall!") – turned into "*Tasgut Tani*!" ("Fall again!") and "*Tasgut Taliti*!" ("Fall a third time!") in response to the removal by the Transitional Military Council (TMC) of first Omar el Bashir and then Awad Ibn Auf as leader, while holding out against the pressure for civilian rule.

Satirical references to the regime came in all forms, with rhymes for "*Koz*" and "*Kezan*" in abundance. Is there a word in English as succinct as "*Koz*"? "*Koz*" - plural "*Kezan*" – is Sudanese slang for the Islamists. Literally meaning a mug for water, it is freighted with irony, and some say it comes from a claim by Dr Hassan el Turabi that his party would bring water to the people. It has come to denote religious corruption and arrogance. "*Aye Koz, na dusu doz – ma bnakhaf, ma bnakhaf*!" ("We will bring down any *Koz* [Islamist] – we will not fear!") was heard in Whitehall as well as Khartoum.

Revolution

Calls of "*Thawra*!" (Revolution) are echoed in songs ranging from the hip-hop directness of Ayman Mao's colloquial style in "*Dam*" ("Blood") to the classical Arabic of lyricist Abdul Qadir al Kiteyabi in Shurooq's anthemic "*Min Aglek Ya Watani*" ("My Nation"). Haiti's Wyclef Jean, founder of the Fugees, has also sampled the "*Thawra*!" chant in his tribute song "Nubian Queen".[2]

The oral culture which trades in quick-fire word-play to the sound of a drum, such as the *daloka* songs, is readily adopted into the rap/hiphop verse of contemporary Sudanese artists such as Ayman Mao, Nas Jota, Zeyo, Ali GX, Mr Crazy, Crazzy Soulja, CWP, Sebastian, AoA and AG. "Dissis Man" became one of the popular protest singers at the sit-in, with his songs mocking and teasing the military and the "*Kezan*" and translating their "dirty" political tricks into everyday language.[3]

On 13th July 2019, Ayman Mao and the neuroscientist poet Dr Marwa Babiker teamed up to release a rap/poem in solidarity with the marches that day calling for civilian rule.[4]

Improvisation

The term "*Barmeel*-man" was coined to refer to someone who sets the rhythm

[2] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a4fF-qCqOs

[3] https://www.facebook.com/mohmmed.elniema/videos/2238438736254090/

[4] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6yh5o7Ovzs

Screen shot of Ayman Mao and Dr Marwa Babiker in video, 13th July 2019. They are both wearing blue (the colour of the revolution) #BlueForSudan.

or tone of a mass demonstration, seen in this footage of a revolutionary march in Khartoum. ("*barmeel*" means "barrel").[5]

More improvised percussion came from the contingent of youths who kept up continuous chants and banging on the iron bridge, creating a metallic river of sound.[6] It would have delighted fans of the Mutoid Waste Company, who invited their audiences to do something similar at Britain's Glastonbury Festival in the 1980s.

Imagination

The people who took part in impromptu parties at the sit-in, defying deadly forces to do so, drew on a wealth of historical allusions and roots for their contemporary manifestations. The image of the Nubian "*Kandaka*" princess which captured the imagination of the international media was just one of these. Videos of "brides of the revolution" with wedding crowds singing songs of the uprising became a feature on social media.

Destruction

On 3rd June, the TMC's militia, largely from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), moved in and destroyed the sit-in, with a violence hitherto seen in Sudan's

[5] https://twitter.com/SudaneseTc/status/1146912544323334145

[6] https://twitter.com/SudaneseTc/status/1146912544323334145

periphery but rarely in the capital. They killed over 120 people, wounded hundreds, and raped and sexually assaulted many more in what has been called the Khartoum massacre. Even women selling tea were murdered by the militia. They smashed the site, with its exhibitions and tents displaying the country's different cultures, and painted over the many murals. The regime shut down the internet, and Sudanese were cut off in their grief amid the mayhem.

Recognition

Despite the horror of 3rd June, it is clear that the experience of the previous six months had fired people's imagination and self-respect. It seems they were discovering their own talents and bonding in their diversity, in the face of what had now become a shared experience of violent oppression. On 30th June massive demonstrations of more than a million people showed their continuing resistance to the regime. By 8th July, the TMC and civilian negotiators were working on a draft agreement, whose outcome is not yet clear.

Meanwhile there are large numbers of photographs and videographic records of recent months, and a number of exhibitions have been staged or planned. The poetry has been so prolific that it needs an article on its own. The songs and chants meanwhile, shared through social media, have also survived and continue to play a central role. In recognition of the need to collect and archive these examples of Sudanese creativity in song and explain them to the outside world, Professor James Dickins of the University of Leeds has proposed an archive and website. Contributions or suggestions for material are welcome via the author.

Song Lyrics

Here are three of the revolutionary songs, with substantially differing musical and lyrical styles, which help capture the mood of the country.

Watani (My Nation) – Shurooq Abu El Nas
Lyrics by AbdelGadir el-Kiteyabi, sung by Shurooq Abu elNaas

Shurooq's song "*Watani*" is in classical Arabic, and uses the twelve-tone scale, in a departure from the traditional Sudanese pentatonic scale. Recorded in London, it was released on 3rd April 2019.[7]

My Nation

My nation, oh my nation, you embody my identity
You are etched upon my face, echoed in my voice, reflected in my nature
I am your mirror; your two Niles are my eyes, and my face is your mirror.
Let whoever brings injustice to you fall
And I would give my life for your survival
Your river Nile taught us how to live, as swirling currents, youthful, free
Bring peace into our lives, for peace is what we love
Let us do no harm to neighbours, even when they do us harm
We revolt, and when we do, our torrent breaks down barriers and walls
We rise up, and when we do, we erupt like a fiery volcano over the oppressors
When the people of Sudan revolt, we teach the world what revolution means
As one generation succeeds another, we have been revolutionaries inheriting from revolutionaries
We teach the world what revolution means

[7] Video link: https://vimeo.com/333972427

Shurooq speaking to the assembled Sudanese protesters in Whitehall on 6th April 2019 (Credit: Frédérique Cifuentes).

وطني

وطني يا وطني يا وطني
يا ذاتا تسكنها ذاتي
يا رسمة روحي في وجهي
في صوتي في وسم صفاتي
فأنا مرآتك - و عيوني
نيلاك - و وجهك مرآتي
فليسقط من سامك ظلما
و لتحيا تفديك حياتي
علَّمنا نهرُك أن نحي
كالموج شبابا أحرارا
نحيا بالسلم و نعشقه
لا نؤذي الجار و إن جارا
و نثور نفيض إذا ثرنا
كالسيل نهد الأسوارا
ننتفض فنعصف بالباغي
بركانَ لهيبٍ جبارا
: علّمْنا العالَمَ ما معنى
شعبِ السودان إذا ثارا
جيلا عن جيل قد كنا
ثوارا ورِثوا ثوارا
قد علم العالم ما معني
شعب السودان إذا ثارا

Rusasa Haya / *Dam* (Live bullets / Blood) – Ayman Mao

Texas-based Sudanese rapper Ayman Mao worked with a group of Sudanese artists of diverse ethnic backgrounds on a song, "La (Dictatorship)" (No to Dictatorship) in 2012. He also wrote songs about the situation in Algeria and Syria.

The brutal repression of the September 2013 protests led him to write "*Rusasa Haya*" (Live Bullets), also known as "*Dam*" ('Blood') - or "*Dum*", depending on transliteration. Five years later, "*Dam*" became an anthem of the uprising, with its lyrics as relevant as ever. Mao flew to Sudan in mid-April 2019 and appeared on stage at the sit-in outside Army headquarters in front of tens of thousands of people on 25th.

The song's blistering attack on the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) had been recited by demonstrators for months, as Sudanese reporter Isma'il Kushkush explains in *The Nation*, (June 4th, 2019):

> Online videos of his April 25 concert show him in a *dashiki* and newsboy cap and wrapped in a Sudanese flag, swinging left to right onstage with a mic in hand... the crowd responded loudly after each verse with *Thawra*! (revolution).
>
> For months, protesters had chanted the song's verses during demonstrations. Children made cell-phone video recordings of themselves singing it. Civil servants on strike in government offices shouted out its lyrics as they faced off against officials. "There were no words to express my feelings," Mao said after his performance.[8]

Rassasa hayya (**Live ammunition**)

Thawra!
Wa yagulu layk mattata (**And they tell you it's a rubber [bullet]**)
Thawra!
Dayl janjaweed (**They're *janjaweed* [militia members]**)
Thawra!
Janjaweed rabbata (***Janjaweed* thugs**)
Thawra!
Galu al-gaddiya (**They said it's all**)
Thawra!

[8] https://www.thenation.com/article/sudan-revolution-music-protest-repression/

Halwasa wa Hawwata **(Hallucination and fanboyism)**
Thawra!
'Amleen 'usbajiyya **(They act like thugs)**
Thawra!
Wa ihna nas shaffata **(But we're conscious people)**
Thawra!
Ma basheel bundugiya **(I don't carry a rifle)**
Thawra!
Fi yedi balata **(In my hand is a brick)**
Thawra!
Barjum al-fasad **(I strike corruption)**
Thawra!
Barjum al-wasata **(I strike nepotism)**
Thawra!

The green partyman in the district feeds us the party line,
Spreading rumours just like the village gossip.

Dafa'uluk kam? **(How much did they pay you?)**
'Ashan tagliba dum **(To turn it into blood)**
Ashtarok bi kam? **(How much did they buy you for?)**
'Ashan tagliba dum **(To turn it into blood)**

Using gunpowder, using tear-gas,
Brought the people together against the Kezan
We have the hearts of lions, inside the Maidan
We are the people who come out, to free Sudan.

We come out of our houses,
We come out of our homes,
Not because of benzine,
Not because of prices.

We the people came out, to exact revenge,
From the traders in religion
And the killers of protesters.

Dafa'uluk kam? **(How much did they pay you?)**
'Ashan tagliba dum **(To turn it into blood)**
Ashtarok bi kam? **(How much did they buy you for?)**
'Ashan tagliba dum **(To turn it into blood)**

Milad (Birth) – Nancy Ajaj

Nancy Ajaj - *Milad* (Birth/Nativity) – 2019.[9]

Lyric translation and commentary from the YouTube entry.

***Milad* (Birth)**

Would they with the same ruthlessness towards the innocent,
turn it against those who have robbed the hungry of bread
Would they with the same gluttony for bloodshed, return an inch of the lost homeland
But in their wretchedness and deceit, it was they who brought ruin and humiliation upon the people
From whence did they come?

© Nancy Ajaj Official, Published on Feb. 7th, 2019 YouTube Channel ©

Other songs of the revolution

Nile Blues – Lil Freeny[10]

Lil Freeny's song "**Nile Blues**", written by Osama Mustafa, reflects on "the Sudanese revolution and the strength of the will of the Sudanese youth despite the abuse and massacre of the Janjaweed."

System Must Fall – Voice of Sudan

Voice of Sudan - **System Must Fall** (ft. Muna Majdi, Chin Chillah, WD Alzain, Nile, MILZ, Moe & Ariel)[11]

This song was produced during the sit-in, before what became known as the Khartoum massacre of 3rd June 2019. The artists express their solidarity with the Sudanese people and support their demands for a civilian government, their determination and hope for freedom and human dignity.

A Summary of Videos

The following video links are to songs of the Sudanese resistance from before and during the revolution. (Thanks to Saad al Kabli). The list is not exhaustive, and the author welcomes additional suggestions.

[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vd6hvkMbHu0

[10] https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=Haz2QaVpkSY; https://twitter.com/The_Tasetian/status/1146337564703494144

[11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX20rT-qdFk

Artist	Song Title	Link
Nancy Ajaj	Dream	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpGX_fIR84Y
Nancy Ajaj	Milad (2019)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vd6hvkMbHu0
	Al-Warda -2012	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgZaLnUvW6U
NasJota	LA (Dictatorship)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHx_ON78ENg
	feat. Mista D. “ Tasgot Bas	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=immgEQZSu3E
Ayman Mao	Rasasa Hayah	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rVc5SHmbOo
Rasha	Sudan Ma3leesh Hakamoka Nas Al Jeesh	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n37Xx-7IGYY
Shurooq Abu el Naas	Watani (2019)	https://vimeo.com/333972427
Shabab Jiddo	Silmiya (2019)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEX5rtU6Rzc
Asawt Almadina	| Loqat Al-shawarae	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUKlAHBkm8o
Aswat Almadina	ستة و يك | لا للتدخل الأجنبي |	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwSuzfmvT_w
Mista-D)	Al’Hissa Watan (الحصة وطن)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQlfiTMBYIY
Sammany Hajo	Al Ajnihat Alfajr Trafref على اجنحة الفجر ترفرف	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82m9Mp54SKk
Sammany Hajo	Yawtatni Ybald AHbabi	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IZpPMfYfyg
فرقة هايبريد	يا غريب عن ديارك مصيرك تعود	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hcl4KUd0ysw
Zoozita	Al shaab Habibi we shiryani	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMgwHazpAng

Artist	Song Title	Link
(Unknown)	وانا ما راجع، لي مطالب Ana Mabaje3 lay Mataleb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FB9TSjIBf1g
Nile	Revolution Songs	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QxWn_kmKx0
Ameer	Goom Ya Abdelhai	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HWWPP7hbNA
(Unknown)	For your Country and My Country	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fkMxNpf1Ng
Ahmad Amin	احمد امين | الرئيس مانافع | مع الكلمات	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiKW7fj7mdg
Ahmad Amin	احمد امين | البلد والقاضي سارق | مع الكلمات | اغاني سودانية جديدة	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXLmda0WxPk

See also:

https://t.co/RUaf1ywxQJ
https://t.co/SMETx9CBfO
https://t.co/Cn66ffoYtI
https://t.co/wzTm4tlcld
https://t.co/Hmo78lzdUN

Tasgut Bas! (Ali G.X ft. Lil Mezo & Mr.Crazy | #راب سوداني ثوري)

*Peter Verney wrote the Sudan chapter of the *Rough Guide to World Music* and compiled the Rough Guide to the Music of Sudan CD. He has written on music and censorship in Sudan for Article 19, Freemuse, and Index on Censorship.

Uprisings in Sudan

Peter Woodward*

The months of protest this year have been accompanied by repeated references to the two occasions in the past that military regimes in Sudan were overthrown by popular demonstrations, in 1964 and 1985. These achievements have become legendary in Sudan, and developments in 2019 have invited comparisons with them.

In 1964, Sudan had been independent for less that a decade; it was only two years after independence in 1956 that essentially divisions and indecisions amongst civilian politicians saw the army intervene in 1958, widely believed to be at the behest of the then prime minister. Thus there was an element of ambiguity about the coup from the outset and relations with leading elements of civil society persisted through six years of generally conservative military rule. That in itself provoked opposition from growing radical groups, amongst which the Sudan Communist Party (SCP) was prominent. However, the spark for unrest in 1964 was the growing civil war in the South: it was when two students were shot dead protesting at the growing conflict that thousands took to the streets, with staff and students from the University of Khartoum prominent amongst them. The army was ill-prepared for the role of confronting civilian demonstrations, while many ordinary soldiers and junior officers showed sympathy for the protestors: within a week the government stepped down. At the same time the military regime had little strong international support: its downfall was quick and its successors posed no threat, so that there was no attempt at intervention. The outcome was in effect a return to the situation pre-1958, as the old politicians reverted to the old system with its constitutional and political shortcomings. Meanwhile the former military rulers were permitted to retire and some, including the former President Ibrahim Abboud, lived quietly in the community.

The second successful coup in Sudan in 1969 brought a regime with a very different complexion. It also followed a period of unsuccessful civilian party politics, but had more radical ambitions than the previous military regime. Initially it showed the influence of the SCP but later turned to a pro-Western policy, before taking an Islamist turn in the early 1980s. The regime's political roller coaster was matched by economic twists and turns. Sweeping nationalisation during its communist incarnation was followed by efforts to expand both agricultural and oil exports, neither of which proved successful. By the mid-1980s, there was once more a rising tide of opposition, driven by deep-

ening economic and political problems. Economically, the strategy of turning Sudan's agriculture into the bread-basket of the Middle East had largely failed (though it did see sugar exports rise) while leaving a legacy of debt which required imposing painful cutbacks on the population at large. At the same time in Darfur and Kordofan there was a growing famine, which brought thousands of hungry people to the banks of the Nile, and with them, a sense of shock and outrage in the capital.

Meanwhile the hopes of oil wealth were dashed following the emergence in 1983 of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in the South, swiftly followed by its successful attack on the oil fields, which was to close operations for many years (as well as the joint Sudan-Egypt project to build the Jonglei Canal in the South). Opposition also grew to President Nimeiri's coercive imposition of *Sharia* (Islamic law) in September 1983. Rising popular discontent led once more to widespread demonstrations in 1985 in which professional groups and students were again prominent under the banner of the National Alliance for National Salvation. With Nimeiri sick and in the United States for treatment, there was uncertainty about how to react but senior commanders decided to accede to demands for reform by proposing not a full retreat but the formation of a Transitional Military Council (TMC), including civilians from the National Alliance under a little known general, Siwar al Dhahab. Nimeiri's downfall was also accepted by his two main international backers, Egypt and the USA. (He remained in Egypt for many years before returning to die in Omdurman). The TMC was an uneasy arrangement with the military still prominent, and after a year Sudan returned once more to the *status quo ante* with an elected government dominated by the old parties. With the country's problems remaining largely unresolved, in 1989 the Islamist military coup masterminded by Hassan al Turabi brought Omer al Beshir to power.

The 2019 uprising brought references to the earlier uprisings, and lessons have clearly been learned (in addition to those from the Arab Spring of 2011 and recent events in Algeria). This time, Sudan's state security structures were more entrenched and had 30 years' experience on several fronts. The situation required even greater organisation, bravery and endurance from the protestors than in 1964 or 1985. However, the security forces were once again vulnerable to the pressures of peaceful resistance on the front line amongst both soldiers and some junior officers. In addition, there were tensions between different branches of security to be exploited by protestors' demands on both personnel and structures.

At the same time, the dangers of a repeat of the ambiguity of the military/civilian TMC of 1985 have been remembered by the civilians. While the current military has wanted to establish its own transitional council, potentially

including civilian members, many protestors called for an all-civilian transitional council. The apparent deadlock was broken when the military junta let loose the most hated security force in June 2019: the *Janjaweed* militia that had wreaked mayhem in Darfur in the '00s was now given the freedom to crush civilian demonstrators on the streets of Khartoum. If there is to be another transitional council, the military intend that it should be hand-picked by them from their own Islamist civilian supporters, anathema to the combined opposition Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC). It reflects the depth Sudan has reached. The decades of conflict first in Southern Sudan (now a separate state), then in other outlying regions – Darfur, Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and the East – finally brought unprecedented violent repression in the capital.

As for the demonstrators, many left dead and more, battered and bleeding, the struggle continues. As the late Bob Collins wrote some years ago, "'Remember the October Revolution" [1964] became the rallying cry during the bloodless fall of Nimeiri's military regime in 1985 and has remained so in Sudanese anti-government demonstrations ever since.' If the FFC is to succeed in gaining real power, they will have to avoid any return to the unstable interim independence constitution of 1956, as happened after the uprisings of 1964 and 1985. Perhaps thinking along the lines of the 2012 paper 'Towards a Sustainable Political Transformation in Sudan: Elements of a Roadmap' could be a starting point.[1]

*Peter Woodward is Emeritus Professor, University of Reading, UK

[1] Towards a Sustainable Political Transformation in Sudan: Elements of a Roadmap emerged after a meeting of Sudanese civil society activists and politicians at Harvard University, USA, in 2012. The professionals established the Expert Advisory Group. The paper can be downloaded at https://www.dabangasudan.org/uploads/media/5b7968722453d.pdf

Juba Trip, May 2019.
Brief Observations from an Uneasily Calm City

Mawan Muortat*

I have just returned to the UK after a fortnight's trip to South Sudan. For most people, life is still very hard and the future is uncertain. This sad reality, notwithstanding the joy of being home again, was overwhelming.

The White Nile below, minutes after taking off.
(Credit: All photographs taken by the author)

The upgraded Juba airport is still too small
but it is clean and better organised.

I was young when I arrived in the UK 35 years ago. I have now lived longer in the UK than in the country of my birth. If one's sense of belonging is chiefly a function of the time spent in a place, I should be more of an Englishman. But for all the good that England has poured on me, I remain primarily South Sudanese. Furthermore, of my first 26 years of life, only nine were spent in South Sudan, the rest were in the North.

So where does the attachment to that country come from? I am by no means alone. South Sudanese, even those born outside the country, share this connection to their country.

It could be the beauty of the land, its emerald green carpet of the Sudd and the forests. It could be that much of the land is a wild uninhabited garden – a gift from God. It could be the strength of the people, their resilience and bravery.

The inclination of South Sudanese to violence is the root of their misery. But without that, they would not have halted the deadly centuries-old southward march of Islamic *Jihad* and Arab-centric tyranny.

Maybe it is simply due to its magical children's stories of the cheating fox, the killer lion and the trees that can talk and sing. Stories that, during the dry season are told under moonlit skies. When the rains return, the children hear the tales behind closed doors and in the dead of the night as the rain beats on the roofs and the thunder roars and rolls away to distant terrifying forests, where lions roam and plot.

Or it may be the inner beauty of the people, their infectious kindness to one another and to all people. Yes, I know that this is not always the case.

South Sudanese need to rein in on their passions; and if provoked beyond what they can endure, they should spare their fellow South Sudanese from their rage.

South Sudan is a rich mosaic of cultures, languages and people – a kaleidoscopic nation with great potential, that has suffered too much for too long.

Looking around in the region from the Sahel to the Middle East, one asks oneself why this country cannot escape this game of mindless butchery?

South Sudanese must push their leaders to end the war and reach a just and lasting peace so that the country returns to the path of development.

Both the government and Riek's supporters have agreed to extend the formation of the unity government until the armies have been merged in a manner agreeable to both sides. Efforts are underway behind the scenes to bring Thomas Cirillo's group into the deal.

There is currently no cause for undue optimism or pessimism. People must wait. But all can help by watching their language. They could reach out to each other, with love, respect, compassion, patience and understanding.

You can taste all kind of cuisine in Juba but nothing beats the local traditional food in places like the Konyo-Konyo market. Mawan Muortat is on the left and Aru Muortat on the right.

The country deserves better.

I asked my son Aru, who turned 24 this year and who came on the visit with me, to share his impressions. This is what he said:

> I was disappointed that there was little change in Juba since I was last there in 2013. There is certainly some new foreign investment that is apparent in the growing real estate business. But there isn't much growth in new small businesses or local investment.
>
> There are few resources and people are surviving because they get help from their more fortunate relatives or relatives living abroad and because of international aid. Despite this, they rise early each day and get on energetically with their daily businesses. I have noticed this energy even among the more fortunate young entrepreneurs with strong financial backing from family or friends in high places.
>
> In the past, this group spent their energies on enjoying their boundless

cash. Nowadays, that is still so, but they are more determined to turn the cash into tangible and lasting ventures and assets.

Noticeably, and unlike the South Sudanese from the diaspora, those inside the country are less concerned with politics. Other than the prevalent anxiety about the war, they don't bother too much with minor political developments or rumours. Instead, they tend to be preoccupied with their day-to-day businesses. All in all, people are still positive and hopeful for the future.

*Mawan Muortat is a South Sudan Political Analyst

I unintentionally frightened this greengrocer by taking a snap of her shop. She took me for a policeman or a security agent.

Capitalism: Phenicia Supermarket.

More capitalism: Four to seven storey high-rise buildings are popping up everywhere in Juba, especially in the premium central district, where land and property values are rocket high. Many are hotels which among others, accommodate returning rebel leaders and their families. With their private security not in place yet, members of these elites refuse to risk being housed among the public. The extortionate bill (paid in dollars) is being footed by the government at a time when it struggles to pay its own employees. No price is too high for peace it seems; we hope they are successful this time. Other buildings are rented by international aid organisations. A few are office blocks housing foreign investors and a tiny but growing number of local businesses. Most of the properties are owned by Ethiopian and Eritrean investors. Unsubstantiated rumours claim that some of these investors are fronts for the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea themselves, cashing in on the lucrative South Sudanese oil economy. Others are rumoured to be fronts for corrupt local officials. This is not the bottom-up rural led development we hoped to see in our new country. The level of inequality is now severe. Maybe the economy is skewed by the recent wars and the trend will be reversed.

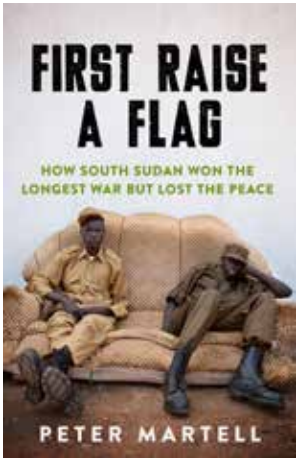
Change is coming despite the obvious problems. There are deals with Chinese firms to implement infrastructure projects paid for by crude oil. This makes affordable what our cash-strapped government cannot buy. It, in principle, also means we'd avoid falling into debt with the Chinese as has happened to some countries recently. Since involved South Sudanese officials will not handle project cash, the process should be, in theory, less susceptible to corruption. But some may still find ways around this. The projects include a countrywide comprehensive road network, an electricity grid and a major hospital in each state capital. But starting a project is one thing, delivering it on time and within budget is another. If delivered even with some delay or increased cost, it would still be a major step forward for the country.

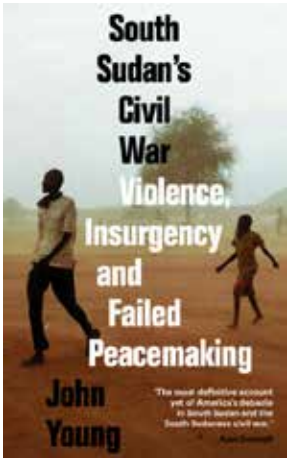
Basketball is doing well. Juba now has twelve clubs and there is an annual basketball league. The sport is growing rapidly in the states too. A few outstanding young players have won scholarships to Europe and the USA this year. In other sports, South Sudan's football team, the Bright Stars, continues to enjoy enormous popularity throughout the country. In October last year, the country's chess team took part in the 43rd Chess Olympiad in Georgia, where it beat 45 countries to emerge as champions of Group E and brought a gold medal home. All these games cut across the ethnic divides. The growth in these and other locally popular sports such as volleyball and athletics has the potential to unite the country and improve its global image. Yet the organisers and participants behind these successes are volunteers with little government support so far.

Book Reviews

Peter Martell, **First Raise A Flag: How South Sudan won the longest war but lost the peace**, Hurst, London, 2018, ISBN 9781849049597, paperback, £25.

John Young, **South Sudan's Civil War: Violence, Insurgency and Failed Peacemaking**, Zed, London, 2019, ISBN 9781786993748, paperback, £18.99.





In 2011, there were great celebrations in Juba at the birth of the world's newest independent state, South Sudan. In 2019, the world is wondering what went wrong, and why the intervening years have been ones of conflict and failed peacemaking. These two books, in their very different ways, tell us more about not only South Sudan but separation as a route to resolving the issues of deeply troubled states.

Peter Martell was a correspondent for the BBC and his book is largely about what he observed. He gives a basic account of the South's sufferings, from slavery to religious and racial discrimination, but it is what he has seen and vividly broadcast to the world that is the core of the book, describing horrific events of the civil war since 2013.

Martell lived in Juba for three years before leaving shortly after independence in 2011, and he has returned on numerous occasions since. He travelled all over the country by various forms of transport, with a particular attachment to his motorbike. Much of the blame for what he observed he laid at the feet of the 'elite' (one chapter is entitled 'The War of the Educated') – it was sometimes said that a PhD stood for 'poverty, hunger and disease'); while it was mobilised militias, often identified ethnically, that carried out much of the slaughter, only a fraction of which made it to the world's media. At the end of the book he tells us that he still has a dream of a better South Sudan – but it is a dream more than a hope. Perhaps the latest peace agreement can, with international support, have more success.

John Young's book covers much the same events but from a different perspective. Young started off as a journalist in northern Ethiopia in the

1980s, reporting on the revolt of the Tigray People's Liberation Force (TPLF) in its successful march to power. He also developed an academic interest in revolutionary movements generally. Like Martell, he has spent considerable time in South Sudan but mostly seeking to analyse what has gone wrong, with less attention to describing the events. Overall, he finds few positive angles to explore, while castigating some of the protagonists unmercifully. In contrast to the TPLF, he refers on a number of occasions to the shortcomings of the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), especially for its failure to develop a political and administrative infrastructure that could be a basis for state-building after independence. He lays the blame in part on 'Dr. John' – John Garang, PhD – who attracted criticism as well as praise for the actions of the movement he led. Garang died shortly after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005: for some he was a martyr; for others he left a more disputed legacy.

The other main target for Young is what he labels 'an American Midwife' and its 'misadventures' which he discusses at length. While he contrasts the TPLF and the SPLA, in the 1990s there were those in Washington, led by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who put Garang on a pedestal alongside Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia, Issayas Afewerki in Eritrea and Yoweri Museveni in Uganda as revolutionary leaders of an African renaissance. Others in and around the Bill Clinton administration thought likewise and campaigned strongly for the cause of the SPLA. President Clinton's successor, George W. Bush, continued support for the SPLA, backed by evangelical Christian groups, some of which saw south Sudan as the frontier to be defended against violent Islamism. However, Bush, unlike Clinton, pushed for a peace process that resulted in the CPA. For Young, this was another major US mistake, for while much international support and expertise fed into the CPA, the agreement itself was deeply flawed, and he laid out its shortcomings from the outset, later producing a book on the subject (Zed Books, 2012).

After independence, the splits in the SPLA/M led to the South Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO), and Young has clearly had close contacts with its leaders, including Riek Machar and Lam Akol. He is far from uncritical of SPLM-IO but shows them greater sympathy and understanding than he does for Garang's successor, President Salva Kiir. Young also brings out the extent to which the SPLA-Kiir has been denuded of what Young calls 'Garangists', with Salva relying instead for his security on newer recruits drawn increasingly from his own Dinka clan. His other base of support is seen as his international backers including the USA and, vitally, Uganda. As for the future, the 2018 peace agreement remains fragile and a possible international trusteeship has also been raised in the US in particular,

which would be a major concern for the African Union and the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development.

Both books left me wondering about the whole issue of secession. From time to time, it is raised as a potential solution for divided heterogeneous states, and in South Sudan's case was widely endorsed internationally. Yet it was a right generally denied to African separatist movements, most notably in recent years for Somaliland. (I heard that Somaliland's representatives in Juba in 2011 wore sweatshirts saying 'SOMALILAND NEXT': in terms of preparedness for independence, Somaliland has had a stronger case than South Sudan.) South Sudan's experience may be seen as showing the challenges in dividing a state in two.

The CPA itself opened the door for secession, but there were numerous unresolved legacy issues in 2011. One was the border itself, including the flash point of Abyei. It affected the whole tenor of relations between the two governments involved, including accusations of repeated cross-border support for armed opposition groups in both countries. It also deepened the sentiment in South Sudan, at least as repeated by the new president, that rather than pursuing Garang's vision of the 'New Sudan', the struggle had been to reverse the history of southerners' suffering at the hands of successive northern rulers as outlined by Martell. But a people with real grievances today still need something beyond the cultivation of an image of historic suffering if they are to move forward: victimhood is not enough to create a positive, and dynamic, message. Yet political dreams of the past have been shattered along the way. Garang's dream of a New Sudan has instead become two states with many old problems, in both continued if not intensified, as in South Sudan's terrible civil war, while in Sudan, Hassan el Turabi's prescription of an Islamic state has decayed into a near-bankrupt coercive autocracy until finally called to account in 2019. Both countries need to think again and plan for achievable future ambitions.

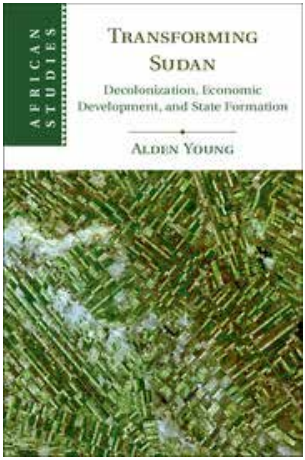
At the same time, separation is unlikely to mean isolation from a neighbour of longstanding, however dark the history. Separation involved substantial population movement, especially of South Sudanese in Sudan, while post-independence conflict sent numbers of refugees in the other direction. Economically, South Sudan and Sudan remain tied by oil, for dreams in Juba of exports via East Africa rather than the Red Sea remain very distant, while oil itself remains vital to two desperately struggling economies. Water issues are also likely to require increased cooperation, especially with Ethiopia building the huge Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile, producing potential existential challenges for Egypt, if not Sudan. Agriculture is another area for cooperation, not only in international trade but to raise sustainable production in the face

of growing populations and the environmental impact of climate change.

South Sudan and Sudan are learning the hard way that dividing one state into two is rarely easy. We in Britain have had the long running saga of Ireland, now morphing into the issue of Brexit; while the apparently amicable separation of Eritrea and Ethiopia produced one of Africa's two largest inter-state wars since World War II (the other had involved Ethiopia and Somalia a few years earlier). Francis Deng hoped to limit differences by calling for a confederation of South Sudan and Sudan, while Mansour Khalid wrote of 'Our common future': what an irony that the 2018 peace agreement between the government of South Sudan and the leaders of SPLM-IO was hosted by the then Sudanese President Omer el Beshir in Khartoum.

Peter Woodward

Alden Young, **Transforming Sudan: Decolonization, Economic Development and State Formation**, Cambridge University Press (African Studies), 2017, ISBN 9781107172494, hardback, £75



Alden Young is a political and economic historian of Africa. His interests include the roles played by Africans in the creation of the current international order. He has been an Assistant Professor in African History and the Director of the Africana Studies Program at Drexel University, Pennsylvania, since 2014. He received his PhD from Princeton University and then served for two years as a Dean's Mellon Post-doctoral Teaching Fellow in the Department of Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

This is Young's first book, based on his PhD, and offers a historically grounded account of policymaking in late colonial and post-colonial Sudan from the end of the Second World War in 1945 to the mid-1960s; a narrower focus than the title suggests. Young argues that British officials and their Sudanese colleagues in the civil service were like their peers across the decolonising world in believing in the potential of the post-colonial state to solve economic questions in the public interest. In the process, he challenges the common perception among social scientists today that independent African states were always rapacious and corrupt, with institutions that served little purpose other than patronage and so-called legitimation of the state.

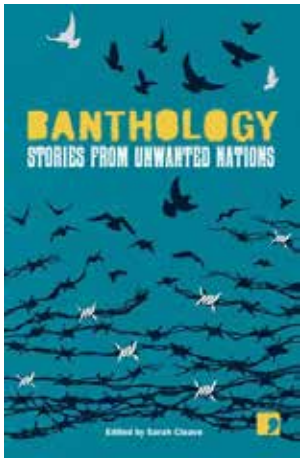
The study also compares Sudan to the early actions and performance of other British post-colonial states, and finds striking similarities in their choice of management tools in policy and decision-making. In the case of Sudan, state officials, politicians and international advisers were faced with serious challenges that were often infrastructural, for example, a massive territory with a rail network that omitted large parts of the country. Sudan also faced the challenge of working with the economic theory that shaped the world during the 1950s and '60s, i.e. the promotion of capital investment as the engine of economic growth. Conceptions of the Sudanese economy were marked by notable omissions, for example, the exclusion of major activities such as livestock production – this was not included in gross domestic product figures even though it involved twice the number of people as cotton production. Livestock was not accounted for in economic planning until the later 1960s and '70s.

Young reminds the reader that at independence in 1956 the country's prospects looked bright, as World Bank officials noted after their first mission in 1958. They reported that the government showed a sound grasp of development and followed a conservative financial policy. Also in the 1950s, Sudanese officials were not seen as corrupt or incompetent. According to the World Bank, Sudan was led by very competent senior officials; its concern was only with the lack of technical expertise at the middle level following the departure of colonial officers from most administrative posts in 1954. Sudan was expected to make an easy transition to independence: Bank officials also agreed with the direction of economic policy, notably increasing the amount of cultivated land in order to raise more cash crops for export (cotton in particular). This policy produced reasonable gains during the 1960s; a similar policy worked for the Ivory Coast, a country with which Sudanese officials had close links through the African Development Bank, which was based there and headed initially by the influential Sudanese economist Mamoun Beheiry.

Similar policies benefited the Ivory Coast right up to the 1980s but for the much larger Sudan they did not produce the effect of binding together all the outlying regions. In many parts of Sudan, promises of development were never realised and insurgency filled the vacuum, with rebel movements fighting under the banner of development. Their principle was that only by creating a more unified country politically could proper national economic development take place. Successive Sudanese finance ministers have had a more international focus and tended to pursue economic development through closer integration with the global economy.

Iman Sharif
Iman is an academic researcher at Bangor Business School, based in North Wales. Her undergraduate study was at Aix-Marseille University in France in applied economics, and she studied for her Masters and PhD at Bangor University. Her main research area is bank credit and its impact on economic activity and her wider research interests include experimental markets in economics and behavioural finance.

Sarah Cleave (Ed.), **Banthology: Stories from Unwanted Nations**, Comma Press, Manchester, UK, 2018, ISBN 9781910974360 paperback, £9.99.



In 2017, President Trump signed executive order 13769 'Protecting the Nation from Foreign terrorist Entry into the United States'. It banned people from seven Muslim majority countries – Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Libya – from entering the USA. *Banthology* is a collection of short stories by authors from these countries. The book gives voice to, and shows some esoteric facets of, countries that the White House would like us to believe are populated by terrorists.

The book is very small and I felt that more ground could have been covered but what it lacks in size it makes up for in prose and plot. Despite their similarities, the countries are still very distinct from each other. This is reflected in the style of writing, the natural landscape in which the stories are set and the sensibilities of the characters. Many of them long for freedom; they want to break from suffocating traditional practices, and from religious and political oppression. They need to escape the terror of war. To go somewhere, anywhere.

'Bird of Paradise' (by Rania Mamoun, Sudan), is set in Wad Madani, the largest city outside the capital, Khartoum. Just nearby are the lush canal-irrigated agricultural fields, which once were the backbone of the country's economy. Our heroine is an intelligent young woman. As a child, she would excitedly watch the planes as they flew overhead. She would gaze at the colourful migrating birds that she called "birds of paradise" and dreamed of growing wings and flying away like them. We read, "... I loved their sublime voices and the way the sun glinted off their brilliant blue feathers. They arrived at certain times of the year, visiting us at dawn and at dusk, lingering for a while in the neem tree in our front yard." But tradition, personified in her controlling brother, stands between her and her ambitions.

In the 'Beginner's Guide to Smuggling' (Zaher Omareen, Syria), we meet a Syrian asylum seeker whose impersonations include Kazuba Szabolcs who is described as, "Hungarian ambassador to Turkey's husband" and Nicodemus Vasilios, a Greek doctor. He is a survivor of a capsized boat. His destination is Sweden, "the land of honey, cinnamon and warm evening tea". But this will entail another perilous journey across Europe. He expects to fail and is

reluctant to put up a big fight; he has to cross five borders and his false identities could be discovered at any check point, ending his dream. Abu Kalimera, the document forger, is untrustworthy, nor is God always dependable. Since he was a child, he has treated the relationship with God as a strictly utilitarian one. "If I passed an exam, I gave a bit of money to the mosque. If I failed, they didn't get a penny", he wrote.

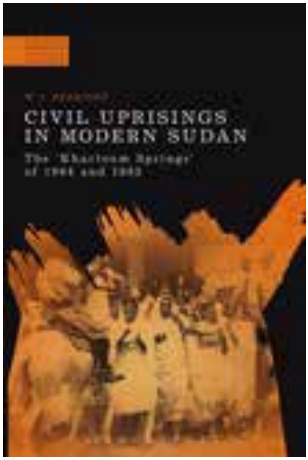
Fereshteh Molavi's 'Phantom Limb', tells of a young Iranian asylum seeker's struggles to keep his old dreams alive while existing perilously at the margins of Toronto society. He is trying to return to blogging but finds that pointless since Iran and his old activist life back home are both behind him. But it is easier to keep the interest in theatre going. His friends are an Iranian Kurd, a Syrian Armenian and an Afghani. All are in refugee status limbo and are exploited by an unscrupulous employer. The evenings are for acting and directing, as they turn their shared house into a stage. A Persian cat, Bottomless Gut the greedy employer and increasingly distressing family news from the Middle East create a fluid space between the grim reality and the fertile mind of the determined playwright.

Ubah Cristina Ali Farah's 'Jujube', tells the story of Ayan Nur, a child refugee. Here, Somalia comes face to face with its previous ruler, Italy. Singora is Ayan's mistress and the dysfunctional mother of a child Ayan is hoping her employer will help reunite her with her mother and sister, who are thought to have found refuge in America. Can Singora help? More fundamentally, did the mother and sister really survive that blood-soaked night when the "men with eyes blacker than the bottom of hell" attacked, razing the village and separating her from her family?

If my brief overview of a few selected stories has awakened your interest, then you should hurry and get a copy. *Banthology* is an interesting read and I would recommend it to anyone.

Mawan Muortat
South Sudan Political Analyst

W. J. Berridge, **Civil Uprisings in Modern Sudan: The 'Khartoum Springs' of 1964 and 1985**. Bloomsbury, London, 2015. ISBN 978-1-4742-98666-7 paperback (2016), £28.79 (available from the publisher).



This wasn't supposed to happen. The *Sudan Studies* review of Willow Berridge's work on Sudan's two previous uprisings was meant to flow from the pen of one of the heroes of the 1985 *Intifada*, the late and sorely missed Amin Mekki Medani.[1] Dr Amin was then in Khartoum and several SSSUK Committee members went to great lengths to get the tome to him. They eventually succeeded in reaching him in Nairobi but, alas, he was soon too ill to say the things which he had told us he really wanted to say about events in which he had personally been deeply involved.

Fortunately, this is a book that endures but sadly, we shall never know what Amin would have said about a volume in which he himself features, as he did in the 1985 Uprising, and then as Minister for Peace, Reconciliation and Elections in the transitional government that followed and which prepared the way for the democratic polls of 1986. I cannot claim such involvement nor can I claim the scholarship with which British historian and SSSUK member Willow Berridge has assiduously researched both that and Sudan's October Revolution of 1964. However, I **was** living in Khartoum in 1985 and have life-changing memories of the joy and the energy as people from all walks of life rushed to the streets to march against President Ja'afar Nimeiri and his ever more repressive regime, eventually succeeding in bringing it down. It was thus a surprise to see that an event that no one disputes was a popular uprising led, like today's, by professional unions, is described in the Wikipedia entry on Amin Mekki as "Sadiq Al-Mahdi's Revolution which overthrew the Nimeiry dictatorship". It is relatively easy to rewrite history but not even staunch Mahdists claim **that** revolution.

Writing **about** history is far from easy, though, and Dr Berridge dazzles with her ability to research and then marshal thousands of facts from Sudan's modern history. Such skills are the foundation of academic work but this research is unusual among English-speaking authors in that many of the

[1] See *Sudan Studies* No. 59, Jan. 2019, for Suliman Ali Baldo's obituary of Amin Mekki.

sources are Arabic publications, often Sudanese media. These range from the veteran *Al Sahafa* via *Sawt al Umma* to the Islamist *Al Alwan*. The downside is that the press was far from free under Nimeiri and was even more heavily censored after the National Islamic Front (NIF) coup in 1989. We are left with what the newspapers say someone said, with little or no contemporary analysis of what that actually meant.

Berridge has also consulted a large number of books in Arabic, ranging from apologists for the NIF regime or its rebranded version, the National Congress Party (NCP), to writers such as the late Baathist leader, Shawgi Mallassi, and the Communist Party's Sidki Kaballo. She has also personally interviewed an astonishing 48 people, including the then President Omer el Beshir's Islamist newspaper-owning uncle, El Tayeb Mustafa, and the late father of Islamism in Sudan, Hassan Abdullah el Turabi, about whom Berridge has since written a whole book.[2]

One interesting result of comparing two uprisings that were in many ways disparate is that commonalities emerge. The father of the past 29 and three-quarter years of Islamist repression was, lest we forget, also leading his troops – civilian on that occasion – in 1964 and he was already known for the contradictions that many now see as a development post-1999, when the "split" with President Omer began to manifest itself. On Page 30, Berridge notes:

> By the time he came to write about the October Revolution on its first anniversary in 1965, al-Turabi had already rediscovered himself as an Islamist politician, having been appointed secretary general of the Muslim Brotherhood's executive bureau and having established the Islamic Charter Front during the previous year. In the article he wrote on the Revolution for the party's newspaper, *al Mithaq al-Islami*, he subtly re-interpreted it and added a moral and religious agenda. Whilst he acknowledged that the overthrow of Abboud was in the first place 'a popular revolution against a military dictatorship', he also stated that the revolutionaries of October were motivated by a desire to 'cleanse the moral corruption that had spread through the administration in terms of neglect and bribery and [acquisition of] forbidden wealth and which was reflected in public life in the drinking holes and brothels.' It is worth noting in this context that throughout the period of the November Regime [Abboud's government], members of the Brotherhood had sought to publicize

[2] *Hasan al-Turabi: Islamist Politics and Democracy in Sudan*, W. J. Berridge; Cambridge University Press, 2017, ISBN 978-1-107-18099-4.

the sexual depravity of senior members of the junta. Al-Turabi was, as usual, tailoring his message to suit his audience. To an exam hall full of students he talked about political liberty, whereas to a more socially conservative electorate he spoke about public morals.

In similar vein, Berridge shows us that El Turabi would not only tailor his words to suit his audience, he would tailor his definitions to suit his ideology. The following text for example (Page 199) would not chime with most liberal views of democracy:

> ... Whilst al-Turabi was sent to prison by Umar al-Bashir along with the other political leaders, it is now acknowledged by many – including al-Turabi himself – that this was a ploy to disguise the fact that al-Turabi and the NIF *Shura* council were themselves behind the coup. As seen in previous chapters, the NIF chief was himself a champion of democracy during the 1964 October Revolution and had participated in both the parliamentary regimes brought about by the 1964 and 1985 uprisings. However, by the 1980s and 1990s, he had begun to adopt a far more ambiguous position on democracy. In 1983, he contended that 'an Islamic form of government is essentially a form of representative democracy. But,' he continued, 'this statement requires the following qualification. First an Islamic republic is not strictly speaking a direct government of and by the people; it is a government of the *shari'ah*. But, in a substantial sense, it is a popular government since the *shari'ah* represents the convictions of the people, and therefore, their direct will.' Al-Turabi's belief that his state was 'democratic' was rooted in his somewhat optimistic conviction that his own personal interpretation of *shari'ah* was one shared by the entire Sudanese public. There is some evidence that this conviction was genuine – in 1996 al-Turabi was prepared to test it out by sanctioning multi-party elections in Sudan, but was overruled by senior generals and ministers who did not share his optimism. Al-Turabi is often dismissed as a hypocrite who betrayed his former commitment to democracy by allying with military dictators. However, what this indicates is that al-Turabi shared the same paradoxical beliefs of the more secular branches of the 'modern forces' following the 1964 and 1985 uprisings – that 'democracy' would be implemented after suspending 'democracy' for a period to prevent 'anti-democratic' forces (the 'sectarians' being the culprit in both cases) from exploiting 'democracy' to prevent 'democracy'.

This is precious material, perhaps unmatched in English-language writing

on Sudan. Yet it is also mostly material from people with political agendas and in many cases, carefully calibrated tactics. Memory can always be faulty and some politicians are particularly prone to uttering contradictory statements; El Turabi was famous for it. This all begs the deeper question of how we should understand past events when clearly factual sources are few and far between. The sort of data that can form the basis of research in many countries – such as official records of births, deaths and marriages, of arrests and trials, of business or development contracts, even of official appointments – are frequently absent or withheld in Sudan. This can be for political reasons in a situation where state and government often merge or simply because of a lack of record-keeping. This is an issue that keeps arising during the 2019 Revolution, when journalists and others find it hard to answer the traditional "five Ws": Who? What? When? Where? Why? Meanwhile, Sudanese human rights activists have for the same reasons been struggling to document the deaths, injuries and arrests of protestors. Such information is crucial to subsequent trials – and to the writing of future history books.

An additional difficulty arises in interpretation. I don't think I would be alone in disputing the last sentence of the above quotation. The notion of El Turabi sharing anything with the "more secular branches of the 'modern forces' " is hard to swallow: he was no "champion of democracy" – indeed, he was the instigator of an aspiringly totalitarian regime the like of which Sudanese people had never suffered. Exploiting democracy to prevent democracy is precisely what El Turabi did, and his disciples did and still do. Berridge notes that it was "somewhat optimistic" to believe that "the entire Sudanese public" shared the Islamists' view of what constituted the *shari'ah* (Islamic law). I would go further: it was the whole interpretation (*ijtimaa*) not only of jurisprudence but the understanding of Islam as a whole that was at stake, along with the political exploitation of the faith. El Turabi is seen as a politician more than a theologian. "Democrat" is not the first word that springs to mind. He certainly could seem eccentric and chilling, with his disconcerting high-pitched giggle – like many, I experienced this personally. Nevertheless, his strategy for taking and holding power was anything but eccentric.

The Islamic Charter Front, rebranded (not for the last time) in 1976 as the NIF, spent some 13 years systematically preparing for power and there is little analysis of this remarkable strategy in the book. It is not easy to research, as it was based almost entirely on covert operations. The event that made it feasible was the late President Nimeiri's "National Reconciliation" in 1977, when he successively took the Umma Party, the Unionists and the NIF into government. El Turabi became Justice Minister and Attorney General in 1979 and he never looked back. This was only the visible tip of the iceberg, widely accepted in a

society tolerant of the wide range of Northern (though not Southern or other regional) political claims, where everyone seemed to have a cousin who was an Islamist and also one who was a Communist, plus everything else in between. Behind the scenes, a great deal was happening: the ground was being laid for the NIF's 1989 *coup d'état*.

The NIF was already highly organised but efforts redoubled. Its public activities were well known but many of its activities were secret. Disciplined cadres outdid the Sudan Communist Party in Leninist techniques of, for instance, entryism into existing structures, including civil service departments, the military and security, the trades and professional unions. It was a fluid time politically and the NIF seized its opportunities. Front members were instructed to apply for "hardship posts" in far-flung places so that they could spread the word and prepare the ground. One example I came across was for agricultural extension workers to be sent to Darfur, a region that was later to become the regime's main target for genocide. This attempt was largely stymied by a watchful local official but many others doubtless succeeded, unnoticed. Sleepers slept, firewalls were built, recruits were trained in using computers (often in the West and at NIF expense), or weapons (often in Libya). Parallel security agencies were established, as were "charities", sometimes with hard-to-trace links to the party. "Deniability" and "need to know" were all useful words in the Islamist lexicon.

This was all crucial to the NIF's seizure of power on 30 June 1989 and, most of all, to its holding power for 30 years, a record in independent Sudan and initially deemed improbable in a country where a small minority of people supported its violent and extremist politics, and where most treasured justice and freedom, as Berridge demonstrates in her fascinating detailed accounts of the 1964 and 1985 uprisings. That is why it is perhaps surprising that her book does not delve into the NIF's determined and highly skilled strategies for taking and holding power. The text many times suggests that the Islamists were simply reacting to other people's and parties' actions, rather than building its own reality for the future. It is not by chance that the NIF built up Sudan's first computerised database, with banks of computers at its headquarters. Before the world was on line and when most people in Sudan had never heard about computers, it understood the power of information, something that many democrats still don't quite grasp – hardly surprising when they have lived without freedom of information or freedom of the press.

The "Tenacity of Political Islam", as Berridge calls it in Chapter Seven, is due not so much in Sudan to the power of ideological Islamism as to the power of the Islamists' organisation and planning. The National Umma Party is far larger and more influential, and the secularist parties enjoy the support

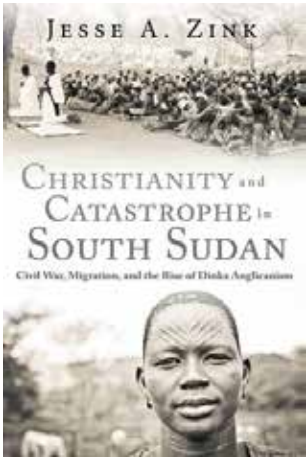
of a far higher proportion of the professional elite which dominates so much of public life. The 30 years of power achieved by Islamism in Sudan might well have been impossible without its exceptionally organised and secretive structures, its unparalleled access to finance (often international and some in cooperation with Usama bin Laden) and the determination, skill and ruthlessness of its cadres.

Dr El Jizouli Dafa'allah became Prime Minister for the transitional year after the 1985 Intifada and Berridge devotes a lot of attention to the role of a man she describes as a "moderate Islamist" and sometimes, an "independent Islamist". El Jizouli had long before distanced himself from the Muslim Brotherhood while maintaining that he was still an Islamist. The fact of his premiership was nevertheless very useful to an NIF already planning for power and this is an area that would benefit from further research, as would Sudanese Islamism more widely. The NIF was the only political party that had the capacity and motivation to plan so strategically and entrench so deeply, and that is why it is so hard to uproot in 2019. The structural roots spread deep and wide, even if the ideological ones do not.

This is an exceptional book which, notwithstanding a mass of detail, makes the reader want to know more. There are many more sources to read or to interview and, in addition to her book on Hassan el Turabi, it would not be surprising if in the future we find ourselves engrossed in further work on Sudanese politics from Dr Berridge.

Gill Lusk

Jesse A Zink, **Christianity and Catastrophe in South Sudan, Civil War. Migration, and the Rise of Dinka Anglicanism,** Baylor University Press, 2018, pp. 259, ISBN 978-1-4813-0822-9 hardback US$49.95



From the mid-1980s until the present, South Sudan has known almost continual war both with the Khartoum Government and amongst its own diverse peoples. A Peace Agreement (2005) and eventual Independence (2011) provided only temporary respite.

Alongside the desolation and destruction, however, there has also been an extraordinary religious transformation, with large-scale communal conversion from traditional religious beliefs towards Christian faith. In differing degrees, this shift in world view, religious experience and values has involved many of the peoples of South Sudan. Perhaps the most startling transformation, though, has been amongst the Dinka people, especially the Bor segment on the East Bank of the Nile where, before the second phase of the civil war (1983-2005), the Church consisted of very small communities, mostly in towns, of those educated in mission schools or in the emerging night schools of the Three Towns (Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North). Most dramatic in this context of religious change amongst the Dinka was the explosion in numbers and creative energy of the Anglican Church (now the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, ECSS). Whilst fiercely loyal to its Anglican roots, this religious movement was profoundly contextual and engaged with local cultural, social, political and military realities. For these reasons it is of interest not only in denominational terms but in the context of studies of religious change across the African continent.

This movement was first studied in the mid- and late 1990s through the Faith in Sudan research project, and most particularly, in the case of the Dinka, through the work of Marc Nikkel. Marc sadly died of cancer in 2000 before he could fully develop the implications of his 1993 Edinburgh PhD, entitled 'Dinka Christianity. The Origins and Development of Christianity Among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians'.

In this present work, Jesse Zink, eloquently and with evocative detail, carries Nikkel's work forwards (as he acknowledges) into a new generation, deepening, extending and reviewing his work, and bringing the story into the present day. Zink's work, *Christianity and Catastrophe in South Sudan*, is a development of his

Cambridge doctoral thesis, which won the Audrey Richards Prize from the African Studies Association of the UK for the best dissertation in African Studies examined in 2014/2015. Zink has enriched his thesis with further work, especially on the so-called Lost Boys, and exploration of the role of women in church life, particularly with regard to the development of Christian songs.

At the heart of the significance of this story is the profound insight it gives into the potential of Christian theology, vision, values and spiritual power to work in dialogue and harmony but also disruption and challenge with African cultures and traditions, and to renew them and equip them for the diverse threats and challenges of the modern age. Often ignored or underplayed by scholars, religion, and Christian religion in particular, is thus a crucial part of any adequate account of the political and social evolution of contemporary Africa.

Zink understands this well and his account weaves historical elements into his tapestry that could easily be considered irrelevant or superseded by subsequent events. Like Nikkel before him, he perceives the strange and powerful hold that the pioneer Church Missionary Society missionary Archibald Shaw (known to the Dinka as *Macuor)* still has on Christian Dinka. The heritage of the Book of Common Prayer, of hymn singing and Bible reading in the vernacular, of Anglican structures of ministry, of the place of literacy and education, are remembered as being rooted in Shaw and his colleagues, and inform but do not constrain their contemporary expression.

Like Nikkel, Zink explores the abundant hymnody of the contemporary Church. He interviewed a number of the contemporary hymn-writers, and is able to uncover the rich theological and psychological texture of the new songs. The war, deep suffering, the traditional spirit powers, disease, death, the rebellious history of the Dinka people, the struggle of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the abundance and fecundity of life in Dinkaland – all are grist to the wrestling with the strange purpose of *Nhialic* in these times. To sing in church is to take part in the theological and spiritual journey of your people. To read the Bible is to hear the story of your people. To pray to the God of the missionaries is to invoke *Nhialic*, the God of your ancestors.

The role of young people, men and women, has been recognised in studies of this movement, stories that have been chronicled historically but have entered also the realm of legend, parable and paradigm. Chief amongst these is the story of the Lost Boys, whose heroic and tragic journey from slaving violence in Bahr el Ghazal across the wastes of the Sudd to camps in Ethiopia is well told here. In Ethiopia the boys were trained by the SPLA as young shock troops in a "*Jesh Amar*" (Red Army). Simultaneously, they were formed by the

churches and their primary schools, the music of church choirs, the warmth of the Mothers' Union, into a different kind of army – an enthusiastic, often traumatised but highly motivated force of evangelists, devoted to the sharing of the message, the worldview, the music and the hope they had gained in the Ethiopian camps.

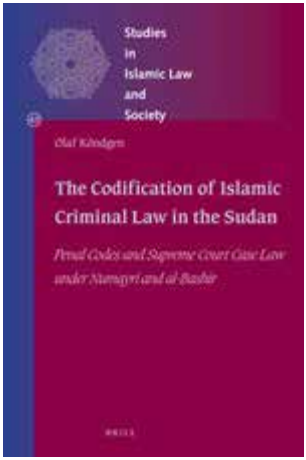
In 1991, these camps were dismantled and the refugees driven out following the fall of Ethiopia's Derg regime. On an epic march, a reputed 17,000 children and young people made their way to Kenya to a new home in the Kakuma refugee camp. Many stayed there many years – others made their way back into South Sudan as soldiers, or as evangelists, some travelling as far as Bahr el Ghazal, where their migration had begun. Many others eventually found their way as refugees to the US, Canada, Australia and other western countries. Zink chronicles these extraordinary stories, but also begins an important enquiry into the many forms of innovative change taking place within South Sudan and in displaced and refugee camps. These include changing forms of church leadership and membership, the crucial role of women in church leadership, in music and in many creative forms of community and outreach, the blending of old and new forms of youth organisation, the key role of prophets rooted both in tradition and the Old Testament.

Zink's account is not triumphalist. Whilst bringing to light the extraordinary creativity and impact of Christianity on Dinka identity and vision during a disastrous war, he also recognises in a concluding chapter that the Church has often become, like other locations in Dinka society, a site of struggle for power and leadership. Nonetheless the descent into war since independence has drawn consistent effort by the Churches to bridge chasms of hostility and build reconciliation. All resources of hope and healing continue to be desperately needed.

Andrew Wheeler

Andrew Wheeler worked in theological education with the Church in South Sudan for more than 20 years. His special interest has been the History of the Church in Sudan and South Sudan and he was the senior editor of the 'Faith in Sudan' series of books.

Olaf Köndgen, **The Codification of Islamic Criminal Law in the Sudan: Penal Codes and Supreme Court Case Law under Numayrī and al-Bashīr**, Brill, Leiden, Studies in Islamic Law and Society, Volume 43, 2018, 480pp, ISBN 978-90-04-34743-4, hardback, €149.



The late President Nimeri's ill-fated decision to adopt the 1983 'September Laws' marked a critical point in the development of Sudan's criminal legal system. It meant that Islamic law (*Shari'a*), which had hitherto been largely confined to personal laws, took centre stage in Sudan's criminal law. The adoption of the 1991 Criminal Act, based on an earlier 1988 bill drafted by Hassan al Turabi, cemented this process as an integral part of the legal agenda of the *Ingaz* regime, the 'Salvation' regime over which Al Turabi presided. The political (ab)use of *Shari'a* and the resulting human rights violations have been covered extensively. There has been less focus on the 1991 Criminal Act from an Islamic criminal law perspective, which is what Köndgen's book offers in great detail, in the first study of its kind. It critically examines the nature and application (legislative and judicial practice) of Islamic criminal law in the last 35 years, covering its role in Sudan's legal history, its sources and how it conforms to the *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Based on research undertaken in 2004 and 2009, Köndgen presents an in-depth analysis of the "Sources, Structures, Procedure, Evidence, and General Principles" of Islamic criminal law, and several key offences. This includes the law and its application by Sudan's Supreme Court in relation to unlawful sexual intercourse (*zina*) and related offences; unfounded accusation of unlawful sexual intercourse (*qadhf*); alcohol consumption (*shurb al khamr*); *hadd* theft (*sariqa ḥ addiya*); highway robbery (*ḥ iraba*); apostasy (*ridda*); and homicide and bodily harm, as well as t*a'zir*. The book also briefly highlights the human rights dimension of Islamic criminal law in Sudan, before concluding by reflecting on what his findings tell us about *Shari'a* in Sudan more broadly.

Köndgen highlights several flaws in the 1983 Penal Code, including from a *fiqh* point of view, before turning to the 1991 Criminal Act. He credits the latter with addressing some of the shortcomings of the 1983 September Laws, such as setting out the same blood price (*diya*) for Muslims and non-Muslims and for men and women in *qiṣ āṣ* cases (homicide and bodily harm). He also credits the role of the Supreme Court "as a security valve and as a regulatory agency", seeking to avoid applying *ḥadd* (corporal) punishment.

While important, the narrow, technical focus on the role of the Supreme Court leaves out the broader picture, namely how the Omer al Bashir regime has used the Arabisation and Islamisation of legal education and judicial purges to reconfigure the legal system so as to suit its strategic objectives.

One of Köndgen's most important findings is his rejection of claims that Islamic criminal law in Sudan "reinstates an authentic and indigenous system". There are "profound dissimilarities" between "historical practice" and the "present day codified form" of Islamic law, with the "colonial heritage" of the 1924 Criminal Act remaining visible "in form and content". *Shari'a* in Sudan is hybrid, eclectic and marked by country-specific influences and developments, turning it into a "Sudanese national version of Islamic criminal law". The claim in a memorandum to the 1991 Act that it enjoyed the support of the "Sudanese masses" is found to be a "mixture of facts and propaganda". Far from being eternal and sacrosanct, S*hari'a* has been controversial and will remain so, being a "human affair". This insight, derived from a legal analysis, is critical for any political debate on the future of S*hari'a* in Sudan.

The detrimental human rights legacy of Sudan's criminal law is equally critical for such debate. The book highlights several shortcomings and violations, and their political, class and gender dimensions, finding that Islamic criminal law has made a "sizeable" contribution to Sudan's "negative record" on human rights. Ultimately, however, the human rights dimension is not its main focus. For anyone interested in a more in-depth analysis of Islamic criminal law and human rights, there is by now a considerable body of literature and online material available. The key question of whether, and if so, how, S*hari'a* should be part of Sudan's criminal law, and legal system more broadly, is at the heart of reform debates. It has taken on added significance, and urgency, in the context of the struggle surrounding the current political transition. The instrumentalisation of S*hari'a* as a tool of repression and as a means of social control, and its potential for abuse, are pivotal factors to be considered in this regard.

Köndgen's book is a remarkable achievement, casting light on the doctrinal and juridical aspects of Islamic criminal law in Sudan, which have been rather neglected in the English-language literature. His book will be primarily of interest to readers with a legal focus but its findings have broader relevance. Köndgen is to be congratulated for taking a dispassionate view on the subject, and for probing whether Islamic criminal law in Sudan lives up to the claims of its supporters and to the requirements of S*hari'a*. His findings demystify Islamic criminal law in Sudan, demonstrating starkly that it is both a legal and political project, and part of a troubled history. Köndgen's work is a useful reminder that any claims to the law's legitimacy if not purity cannot escape

engaging with this legacy, and the harm and injustices that its application has caused in the Sudanese context.

Lutz Oette

Dr Lutz Oette is Senior Lecturer and Director of the Centre for Human Rights Law at SOAS, University of London. He is the co-editor, together with Dr Mohamed Abdelsam Babiker, of *Constitution-Making and Human Rights in the Sudans* (Routledge, 2018).

News from the Sudan Archive, Durham

The range of material in the Sudan Archive provides an exceptionally rich research resource for scholars in all disciplines of studies relating to Sudan and South Sudan and to the wider region, with records dating from the 19th Century to the present day. We are open to all so please pay us a visit, or get in touch, whether to further your own research, to suggest additional records we should try to collect, or to make a donation to the collections yourself. More details can be found at: www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/.

Recent accessions to the Sudan Archive

Acquisitions of recent publications are not generally noted – but are nevertheless received with deep thanks. Large accessions generally remain uncatalogued for a period of time but can usually be accessed on request.

Donald Savile, Khartoum University (1963-1967): "A southern Sudan journey", a short memoir of a four-week trip in Zandeland in the Spring of 1954.

Charles Benjamin Metcalfe (1913-1995), Inspector and Senior Inspector of Agriculture (1936-1955): photographs, cine-film, books, coin collection.

Paul Doornbos (1950-2018), anthropologist: academic papers, books.

David C. Driver (1922-2005), Sudan Political Service (1944-1955): books, newspaper cuttings, Sennar Dam/Gezira presentation photograph album.

***Arthur Hugh Alban** (1892-1978), Sudan Political Service (1921-1942), British Consul at Gore, Ethiopia (1942-1952): Mahdist banner, Ethiopian shield.

***Tarik A. K. A Elhadd**: Arabic translation of *Itchy Feet – a doctor's tale,* by Dr Alexander Cruickshank (first published in 1991), translated by Dr Elhadd.

Purchased at auction: 406 photographs taken by a manager of the Sudan Mercantile Company (Motors), 1920s x 1930s; includes 1 album (24 prints) of Uganda and South Sudan.

Purchased at auction: 5 albumen prints by the Zangaki Brothers depicting Suakin scenes, (late 19th century).

John Ryle: Sudan Council of Churches report on Yirol Integrated Rural Development Programme, (lead author, Mark Johnson, 1980).

Ludmilla Jordanova: Key plan of military areas in Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman (July 1942) (70.5 cm. x 100.5 cm.).

* accruals to existing collections.

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Annual Symposium and General Meeting

in association with the Centre for African Studies, SOAS

Saturday 7th September 2019

in the Brunei Lecture Theatre, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street (off Russell Square), London WC1H 0XG

Registration will be from 9.15-10.15am and the Symposium will end at about 4.30pm. Programme details will appear on our website **www.sssuk.org** once they are confirmed

Underground: Russell Square, Euston or Euston Square.
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It is helpful to have some relevant details about the author (2-3 lines), e.g. any post held or time spent in the Sudan and interest in the topic being discussed.

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