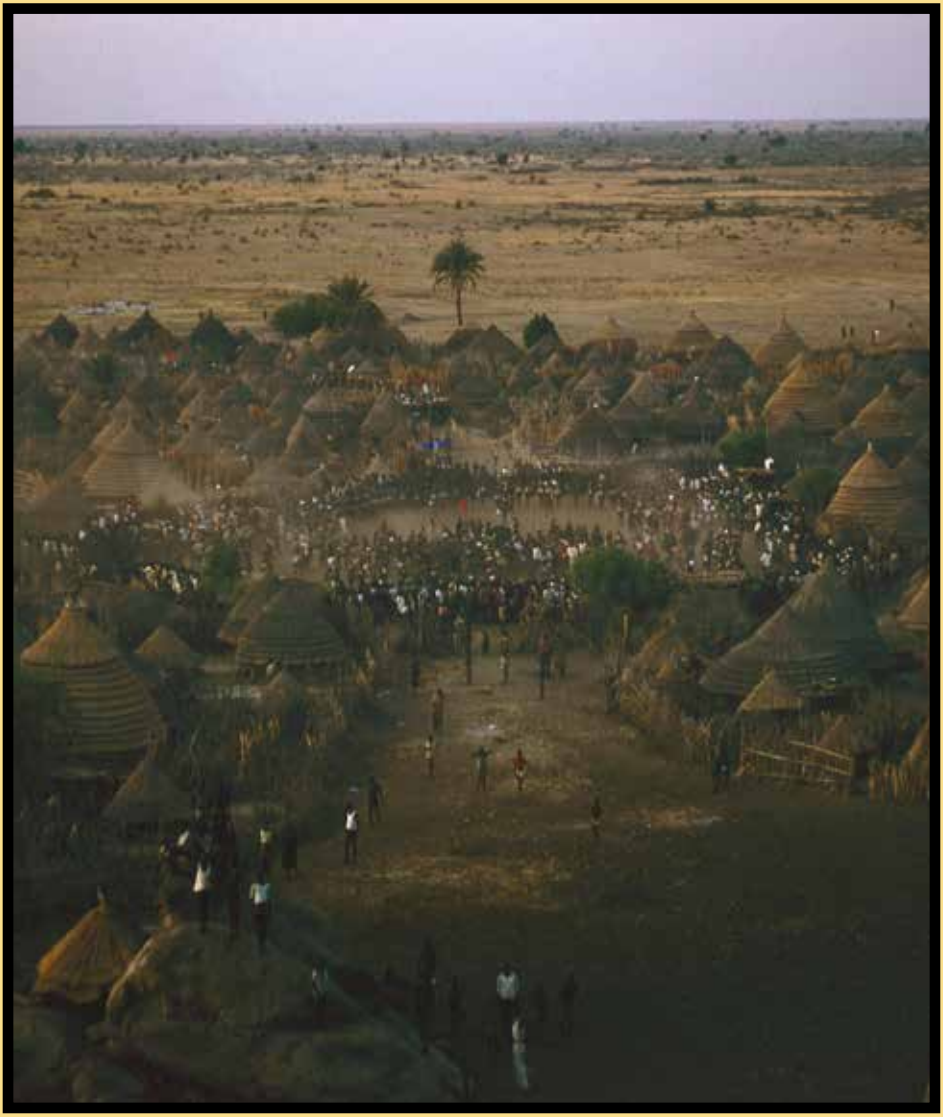
Sudan Studies
for South Sudan and Sudan

Number 65 February 2022



Front cover photograph: Wiatuo village, Lafon, Equatoria in 1974 (Credit: Sudan Achive, Durham, W. T. W. Morgan Collection, SAD.955/16/20).

Contents

Registered Charity No. 328272

Editorial

Welcome to Issue 65 and best wishes for a happy and peaceful 2022. This issue of *Sudan Studies* is appearing a little later than normal as we have had to wait for copy to be completed. However, this has had the advantage that the articles that deal with contemporary events in Sudan were written very close to the date of publication.

We begin this issue with four obituaries of people we have lost in the latter half of 2021: **Mohamed Beshir Ahmed** aka Abdel Aziz Hussein Alsawi, **Philip Bowcock**, **Dr Ahmed El-Bushra** and **Professor Anisa Joseph Dani**, all of whom were active members of SSSUK and will be sorely missed. Thank you to Gill for collating all the many tributes published in this section of the journal. We were also sad to hear of the death in January 2022 of one of our recent contributors, Ann Crichton-Harris (see Issue 63), who did important research into the medical history of Sudan and whose wide-ranging work will be known to many.

The late **Abdel Aziz Hussein Alsawi's** article 'On the Essence of John Garang's Historical Role' is our first article. Alsawi sent us this article for publication shortly before he died. In it, he focuses on the need for Sudanese and South Sudanese political parties to critique their own organisations, leaders and policies, seeing this as vital if the Sudans are to achieve enduring democracy.

This issue is unusual in that the remaining articles fall into two main subject areas. The first section marks the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972. Secondly, we have reflections on the Sudan revolution by commentators and activists, including a short story that was specially written for this issue by the SSSUK President, novelist Leila Aboulela.

The Addis Ababa Agreement, 1972

We are re-publishing the introduction and first section of the **Rift Valley Institute**'s transcript of the Juba Lectures of 2014, which appeared in the report *We Have Lived Too Long to Be Deceived. South Sudanese discuss the lessons of historic peace agreements.* The agreements discussed were Addis Ababa in 1972, Wunlit in 1999 and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005.

The lectures took place just after a new war began in December 2013 and they offered an opportunity for academics, activists, church representatives and others to discuss the agreements and see what lessons could be learnt from them. The Addis lecture is reprinted here as it offers important insights into the Agreement's significance for an independent South Sudan. The discussants were **Oliver Albino**, who is one of the last surviving negotiators of Addis, **John Akec**, **Douglas Johnson**, **Alfred Lokuji** and **Lam Akol**. We are

grateful to RVI for permission to reprint their report, which is available in full on their website: www.riftvalley.net

Two other contributions focus on the Addis Agreement, both by SSSUK members working in Southern Sudan in the 1970s. 'State Building at Southern Regional, Provincial and District Levels' is by **Garth Glentworth**, who recounts his experience of running a training programme in 1974. The aim was to support the administrative objectives of the Agreement and train Southern administrators who had been appointed to replace Northern officials and staff the newly established ministries at all levels. He offers us insights into what has come to be known as 'state building', with its emphasis on the importance of personnel in effective administration in Africa, including Southern Sudan. While leaders hoped to provide basic services such as health and education to the population, this proved impossible to achieve, not least because staff costs consumed most of the available resources.

The second reprint is of an article by **Rosemary Squires** that appeared in the first issue of the government-run magazine *Sudanow* in June 1976. This provides the wider context of political thinking in Sudan at the time. Dr Squires discusses the implications of President Nimeiri's proposed sub-division of the three Southern provinces into six, each with their own provincial capitals. The rationale of this decentralisation policy and its intended effects on the provision of services and economic development is outlined. The difficulties facing Sudan as a whole and the Southern Region at the time are clear and at the end, Squires addresses criticisms of the policy, including the dangers of promising local participation in government processes that could well be disappointed.

In the next issue of *Sudan Studies*, we will continue to mark the anniversary of the Agreement with articles about its making and its context, the role of the Sudanese and international Churches at the time along with views from contemporary Southern female peace activists. I would like to thank Professor Peter Woodward and Dr Douglas Johnson, who sit on our Editorial Board, for their work in bringing this initiative to fruition.

Reflections on a Revolution

Our section 'Reflections on a Revolution' begins with a poignant short story written specially by the novelist **Leila Aboulela**. Next, political scientist **Prof. Peter Woodward** tackles the question of whether Sudan can move from being an army with a state attached to a state with an army attached. Then Sudan's newly retired Ambassador to the USA, **Dr Nureldin Satti**, investigates the concepts of consciousness and enlightenment. **Mawan Muortat**, an SSSUK Co-Deputy Chairperson who has lived, studied and worked in both Sudans, looks at reasons why many South Sudanese are sceptical about Sudan's

Revolution. **Husam Elmugamar**, a doctor and human rights activist, then plumbs the depths of meaning of the most celebrated slogan of the Revolution: "Freedom, Peace and Justice!" **Dr Jihad Salih Mashamoun** examines why the non-violent approach of the revolutionaries is so important. Lastly, we round off with former journalist **Gill Lusk** giving her perspective on some of the key themes of the last three years' momentous events. Thanks go to her for editing this section.

We have two book reviews, the first by **Suad Musa** of the Oxford Sudan Programme's edited volume *Women Writers of the Two Sudans* and the second by **Peter Woodward** of Norwegian academic Terje Tvedt's *The Nile. History's Greatest River*.

Our regular newsletter from **Francis Gotto**, the archivist at the Sudan Archive in Durham, completes this issue. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Editor if you would like to review a book, contribute an article or have an idea for a future issue.

Obituaries

Mohamed Beshir Ahmed aka Abdel Aziz Hussein Alsawi

Mohamed Beshir Ahmed aka Abdel Aziz Hussein Alsawi was born in January 1941 in Jjgjoul, a village south of Abri in Sudan's Northern Province (now Northern State). His father was a senior officer who worked in different parts of Sudan before the family settled in Khartoum North.

Mohamed Beshir graduated from the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies of the University of Khartoum with a BSc honours in 1964. After working for a year at the Ministry of Finance, he then joined Foreign Affairs as a diplomat, serving in Geneva and Bonn. As a diplomat and because of the repression under President Jaafar Nimeiri, he adopted the pen name of Abdel Aziz Al Sawi. It remained the only name that the majority of activists and intellectuals knew him by till recently.

He felt uneasy about working as diplomat and writing in opposition to the government, so in 1987 he left his job to focus on writing. He joined the London-based magazine *Ad-Dastour* (the Constitution), a leading weekly critical of the Nimeiri dictatorship which was funded by the Ba'ath Party and run in collaboration with the head of the wing of the opposition Democratic Unionist Party led by the late Sheriff Hussein al Hindi.

Photograph: courtesy of Deya Elmardy.

Politically, Mohamed Beshir was a founding member of the Arab Socialist Movement, established in the 1960s by likeminded students at Khartoum University, especially his life-long comrade Mohamed Ali Jadein and others at Cairo University-Khartoum Branch. The movement was an incubator for the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party's Sudan Branch, which came into the public sphere in the early 1970s. He is considered one of the founders of the Party, together with the late Badr al Din Mudathir, Shawgi Mallasi and Mohammed Ali Jadein – though he was not known publicly as he focused on writing.

He spent some time in prison after the 1971 Communist coup by

Hashim al Atta and the purge of the left. Critical of the Iraqi Ba'ath, he led a breakaway faction with Jadein in order to "Sudanise" the Party. They took the lead in establishing the Sudanese Ba'ath Party, a small faction compared to the dominant original branch in the country.

Around 2015, Mohamed gave up all party politics. He had rich and extensive connections across the entire political and intellectual spectrum in Sudan and the Middle East. He published more than a dozen books and dozens of articles on issues of identity, history, including the Mahdist revolution. Lately, he had focused almost entirely on education, democracy and enlightenment.

Mohamed belonged to many civil society organisations, including SSSUK, Open Themes, Sudan Research Group, U of K Alumni and the Arab National Conference (see https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17550912.2017.1349068?journalCode=rcaa20).

It was in the summer of 1987 that I met Mohamed in person for the first time, though I had been reading his articles for years, knowing him only by his pen name, Abdel Aziz Alsawi. I was a postgraduate at Bradford when he came to settle in London following his decision to leave his diplomatic job to dedicate his life to research and journalism. With our similar academic background, shared past political affiliations and with our families all living in Khartoum North, it was not surprising that our friendship developed and extended to our relatives in Sudan. For the following 35 years, we remained in close contact, almost on a daily basis, until the eve of his recent untimely death.

He never married, dedicating his whole life to his intellectual projects. Across the major schools of thought in Sudan, he was known as modest, quiet, decent and well respected.

Mohamed Beshir died peacefully on Sunday 3rd October 2021, after heart surgery two days earlier.

Abdel Azim el Hassan

See *Sudan Studies*, Issue 17, 1995 for Dr. Azim el Hassan's review of Alsawi's 1994 book *The Dialogue of Identity and National Unity in Sudan: a new perspective.*

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With heartfelt sorrow and grief, Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok mourns with the people of Sudan the passing of the thinker and intellectual writer *Ustaz* Mohamed Beshir Ahmed (Abdel Aziz Hussein Alsawi). As one of our national Intellectual and political pillars, he contributed responsible and visionary ideas. He confronted the issues at hand with audacity and courage, and wrote perceptive treatises on the concepts of revolution, change, history and the issues of peace in our country. In him, we mourn a national intellectual, a serious and

diligent researcher and a writer who was keen on the process of enlightenment and to make criticism that was constructive.

FaceBook Posting by Sudan's then Prime Minister, Abdalla Hamdok, 3.10.21.

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Alsawi, he was a great intellectual, a committed person, to humanity and to Sudan, for his project of enlightenment and for building a modern Sudan that belonged to humanity.

Yasir Arman
Deputy leader, SPLM-North and then Hamdok's Political Advisor, telephone message to Gill Lusk, October 2021.

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Mohamed was an amazing man. When I came to England, I lived with him for the first ten years and he became a father figure to me and grandad to my children. They called him *Amo jido*, meaning "Uncle grandad", which became a nickname known by many people in the community.

We have been through everything together, the good times and bad. My children actually went to visit their grandad the day he passed away and while they had stepped out to buy food, my husband, Kamal Eldow Ahmed, was with him when they needed to call an ambulance. Even though he passed away suddenly, he was with his family that day and people who loved him dearly.

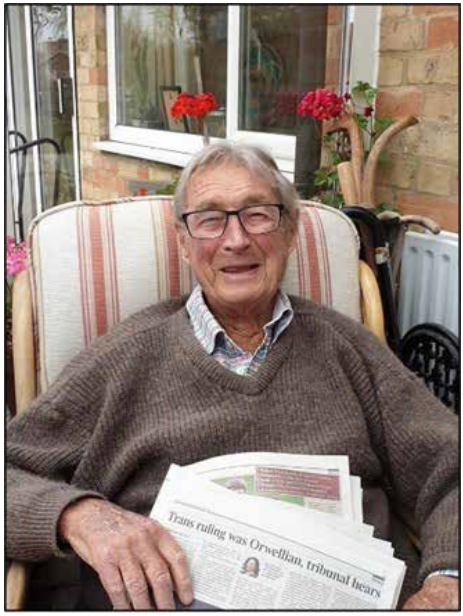
Deya Elmardi, SSSUK Caterer.

Philip Parnell Bowcock

28th April 1927-4th June 2021*

Philip Bowcock died peacefully at his home in Kent on 4th June 2021. He was born at Riverside Farm, Chebsey, Staffordshire, the first of three sons. From an early age he showed an academic bent and loved reading although he also grew very strong physically and helped his father on the farm. He loved being a scout and subsequently led a scout troop on camp at the age of fourteen because the leaders were away serving during the war. At sixteen he was thrilled to gain an open scholarship to St. John's College Oxford to read history and went up in 1944. Philip thrived at Oxford and joined many societies. He was elected secretary to the Oxford University Conservative Association where he succeeded Margaret Roberts (later Margaret Thatcher). Subsequently Philip chose to broaden his interests by exploring plays and music, as well as the social pleasures of Oxford. He also explored his Christian faith through a discussion group, and this commitment became a lasting and quiet influence throughout his whole life.

After gaining his history degree and having narrowly missed serving during the war, he was obliged to complete national service and was commissioned as an officer in the 15/19 King's Royal Hussars. His regiment was stationed in Khartoum, and this taste of travel and the charm of the Arabic speaking world sparked his interest in working for the British government overseas. Whilst in Khartoum he also improved his riding skills, on both horse and camel, and learnt bridge and Scottish dancing, which suggests life wasn't all hard work.



In 1949 he was appointed to the Sudan Political Service and was sent to the Middle East Centre for Arabic Studies (MECAS) in Lebanon to learn Arabic. Although they studied hard, this group of selected civil service and foreign office recruits took time to enjoy the social pleasures of life in the Lebanon at the time. He kept his Arabic skills to his death and loved to converse with junior doctors in Arabic if the opportunity arose. He

later added more languages to English, totalling twelve languages altogether (Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, Arabic, Nuer, Cinyanja, Cibembe, Silozi, Spanish).

In 1951 he started as an Assistant District Commissioner in Khartoum and in 1952-3 was posted to Western Nuer district, Upper Nile Province (now Unity State, South Sudan). During his time in Khartoum his head was turned when he met Brenda Stephens, a midwife in the hospital and they later became engaged. Brenda found a nursing post in Western Nuer district and both fell in love with the charming Nuer people. Not long after arriving in Bentiu, via paddle steamer because the terrain was too swampy for permanent roads, Philip was left in charge of the whole district. He was twenty-four and was responsible for the administration of 14,175 square miles with a minimum population of approximately 170,000 people. By comparison Wales is 8,015 square miles. As he said, we could not have done this without the consent and trust of the people. Philip and Brenda were married in Malakal in 1952 and worked together in Western Nuer until Sudan gained independence [self-determination] in 1954.

Philip then moved in 1955 to work with the British Overseas Civil Service in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) for the next nine years as a District Commissioner in Broken Hill (now Kabwe), and later at Mungwi and Sesheke. He finally ended up as the district magistrate in Choma, having previously taken the 1st part bar examinations. During this time in Northern Rhodesia Stella, Matthew and Oliver were born. Life continued to be very varied with regular trips to meet the local chiefs in remote villages, often only reached after several days on trek via Land Rover or on foot. When Zambia gained independence [in 1964], Philip chose to return to the UK for the schooling of the children although he would have loved to have stayed on in Africa.

Philip took the Home Civil Service examinations and was offered a place as a Principal in the Ministry of Technology in London. Although the work was interesting and his colleagues stimulating, he found commuting in London and working for a government department much less satisfying than the independence of his previous posts. When he was offered favourable terms as an Articled Clerk in his uncle's solicitors' practice in Leek, Staffordshire, he decided to take the plunge and turn to working in the law. This was a challenging time since he had a six month period whilst unemployed and studying for the 2nd part bar exams.

He duly passed his bar examinations at his first attempt, and the family moved to Staffordshire where he flourished and eventually became senior partner in Bowcock and Pursaill. His years as a country solicitor were very happy, and he loved the stimulus of the law whilst working with kind, good

hearted people in a family firm. In 1980, he was unexpectedly asked to leave this rural life to return to Africa to supervise the elections that transitioned Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. He was not ready to retire at age sixty-seven when, sadly, Brenda died leaving him bereft. She had earlier persuaded him that they should move to live near the younger generation before they reached old age, so that the youth would not be burdened with caring for elderly relatives at a distance. He decided to follow her plan and build an annexe on the side of Stella's house in Otford. Although it was a wrench moving away from the Staffordshire community, this proved a good decision.

He made many deep friendships after moving to Otford where he was adjacent to the family and, therefore, able to share in the pleasures of grandchildren and later great-grandchildren. When he died, he was still a member of a political discussion group, a history group, a literature group, a regular bridge four, the Sevenoaks chess club as well as U3A (University of the 3rd age), although most were recently curtailed by COVID-19. He was an active member of the Athenaeum Club in London, and a visit there was usually accompanied by a visit to an exhibition or the theatre. No time was ever lost in exploring further about history, politics, art or literature. However, science was his Achilles heel, and as for understanding anything about medicine and how his body worked, that was a closed book. This was a source of frustration to his family who would repeatedly explain, for example, that there was a high mortality associated with climbing ladders when aged ninety!

The grandchildren regarded their grandpa as a legend who often had a drink and snack by his side and would hospitably invite any visitor to join him immediately. His thirst for knowledge included enthusiasm for exploring many parts of the world. He did this first with his close friend and aunt by marriage, Sylvia Bowcock, and later with Elizabeth Hagmeier from Victoria, Canada, whom he met on a trip to Oman. She became a close companion of his, 'together apart' as they put it. They shared travels, books, gardens, and political discussions over the nineteen years they knew each other.

We are forever grateful that Matthew encouraged Philip to capture his memoirs in his book *Last Guardians*, which is still available at Amazon.[1] It is a fascinating story of working in three crown civil services and then the law.

As a farmer's son he loved his garden and planted over two hundred and fifty trees in various gardens in his lifetime. He was still planting trees in 2020. More than anything, Philip was interested in other people. He remembered not just his friends, but his children's and in turn his grandchildren's friends,

[1] *Last Guardians: Crown Service in Sudan, Northern Rhodesia and Britain*, Bloomsbury, 2015, ISBN: 9781784534387 is out of print but available from various outlets.

and he would enjoy meeting them again and recalling what they had told him about themselves. Everyone was of interest and importance to him. He was always kind and scrupulously fair and honest. He is a huge loss to his friends but especially his family.

* This family obituary, published on MuchLoved.Com, is reproduced with the kind permission of his son, Matthew Bowcock.

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The SSSUK Secretary, Jane Hogan, adds:
Philip was an enthusiastic and supportive member of the SSSUK Committee for over 15 years, retiring in 2011, and he always enjoyed meeting up with old friends and eating Sudanese food at the AGM. In 2006, he was invited back to Sudan as part of a small group of Sudan Government pensioners to celebrate the 50th anniversary of independence. On one evening visit to a group of craft stalls, he delighted the Nuer craftsmen by addressing them in their own language.

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Chairperson Gill Lusk adds:
Philip's kindness and his interest in people and in the Sudans shone out of him. After the Annual Symposium in central London, he never failed to join those relaxing in a local pub. I remember how on one occasion he recounted how when he got married in Sudan, "We had to wait because we had to obtain the Governor General's permission." I was surprised and asked: "Was that because you married a Sudanese woman?" He laughed. "No! She was British but I still had to get his permission!" He joined in friendly conversation as readily as serious discussion, listening carefully to what people were saying. After a long day, he would stand up and announce: 'I'd better go and see to the chickens!" And off he would set on the long trek back to his village in Kent. We miss him.

Dr Ahmed El-Bushra

Ahmed El-Bushra was born in Berber, Sudan in 1936,[1] the youngest of four children and the only son. His family moved to Kassala when he was small. The only one of his siblings to go to school, he had a love of learning from an early age and would apparently encourage all the children in his neighbourhood to gather around the area's one street lamp to do schoolwork after dark.

Ahmed was sent to the then British-run Khor Taqqat Secondary School as a teenager and went on to do a degree in History and English at the University of Khartoum, graduating in 1960. This was then followed by a Post-Graduate Diploma in Archaeology (Egyptology) at University College, London. It was here that he met his wife, Judy El-Bushra[2] (*née* Ballantyne), whom he married in 1964. Ahmed loved music and entertained his future in-laws when he first visited by singing Sudanese folk songs to them. With a group of fellow students, he performed in front of the Queen Mother and legend has it that he once played the bongos in the Soho jazz club Ronnie Scott's, although this was never confirmed or denied by him.

Ahmed and Judy moved back to Sudan in 1964, where he worked as a lecturer in the History Department at the University of Khartoum. In 1966 their daughter Sarrah was born. They moved back to England in 1968, where Ahmed worked towards his PhD on the history of Sudanese Nubia at Cambridge University, as well as becoming a lector in Arabic there.

He remained in Cambridge until 1977, during which time two more children were born, Moy and Suhayla. The family then moved back to Khartoum, where Ahmed became Director of the Juba University Centre, as well as returning to the History Department at the University of Khartoum as a lecturer. His youngest son, Magid, was born in 1980.

[1] Ahmed was one of the generation of children born under the British occupation of Sudan, whose age was determined by height and who were given the birth date of January 1st.

[2] Judy El-Bushra was a specialist in gender, conflict and development studies and details of her many books and papers may be found on line.

In 1984 the family moved back to England for the last time when Ahmed was made Cultural Counsellor at the Sudan Embassy in London, a position he held for six years. During this time, he promoted cultural and academic relations between Sudan and the UK, and looked after the many Sudanese foreign students who had come to study in London.

Ahmed was an excellent cook, and he and Judy hosted many wonderful gatherings with friends and colleagues from the Sudanese diaspora and international community – first in Cambridge and, later, in their home in northwest London, where they would remain until Judy's death in 2017, and Ahmed's earlier this year.

Ahmed remained interested in politics and history well into his retirement but he wore his knowledge and intelligence lightly. He was a calm and gentle man, remembered fondly by all who knew and worked with him, and will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

Suhayla, Sarrah, Moy and Magid El-Bushra

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Ahmed El-Bushra always seemed to have a twinkle in his eye and that is how I shall remember him. As his children so movingly write above, "he wore his knowledge and intelligence lightly". He would sit quietly in often long and sometimes tortuous SSSUK Committee meetings, saying little until he felt he really wanted to make a point. Words were not there to be wasted. Yet until illness made it impossible for him to come, he faithfully attended and even after he stopped, he asked for the minutes to be sent to him so that he knew what was going on. He was, after SSSUK co-founder Prof. Peter Woodward, the Committee's longest-serving member. We miss him.

Gill Lusk
SSSUK Chairperson

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Ahmed El-Bushra was born in 1936 in Berber. He went to school in Kassala before entering the University of Khartoum to read history. At that time, the University was modelled on the British university system and mainly staffed by British academics. Ahmed thrived in the prevailing liberal atmosphere and after graduating, was sent on a scholarship to study for a post-graduate diploma in Egyptology in the School of Oriental Studies, University of London, before continuing, to complete his PhD. It was while he was there that he met his wife-to-be, Judy Ballantyne, and they started a long and successful life together.

Back in Sudan, he joined the staff of the Department of History. In addition to his teaching and research, Ahmed became the coordinator with the new University of Juba, established after the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972. Juba University enjoyed considerable support from Khartoum, much of it organised by Ahmed from his busy office.

On one occasion, I was waiting for a flight from Khartoum to Juba when Ahmed seemed rather reluctant to issue the ticket. After some delay, he consented, only for the flight to be cancelled at the last minute: the World Health Organisation had closed Juba airport due to an outbreak of plague. I gave Ahmed a silent vote of thanks for possibly saving my life.

His experience in administration made him a strong candidate for the position of Cultural Attaché in London and in 1984, he settled into his new office in Sudan House, Rutland Gate, in Knightsbridge. From there, he had a range of duties. One of the most important was supporting Sudanese students in British universities; another was recruiting British staff, often fresh out of university, to work not only in Khartoum but also Juba and later Gezira universities. The expansion of secondary schools in Sudan was another concern, with particular need for native teachers of English language and literature, in which he was involved in conjunction with Voluntary Service Overseas and the British Council.

Another of Ahmed's responsibilities involved serving on the committee of the Gordon Memorial College Trust Fund. This had been started by General Herbert Kitchener the year after the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest of Sudan in 1898. The Fund was raised by public subscription in Britain and paid for the building of the original Gordon Memorial College, which became the University of Khartoum following Sudan's independence in 1956. The Fund continued to be based in London and Ahmed, as Cultural Attaché, was Sudan's representative, keeping it updated on developments in the University and advising on awards.

In 1986, a group of academic staff in Britain who had links to Sudan met to set up the Sudan Studies Society of the UK and from the outset invited Ahmed to join its Committee. In addition to his contributions there, he offered the hospitality of Sudan House for the early annual symposia of the young Society. They were always lively occasions, though SSSUK later outgrew the building's capacity.

Following the 1989 coup in Sudan which led to the establishment of an Islamist regime, the relationship between Britain and Sudan changed markedly. Ahmed stepped down as Cultural Attaché and in due course, Sudan House was used for other purposes, until it was finally sold off. Ahmed and his family continued living in London and he remained an active figure on various com-

mittees for a number of years, as well as a prominent member of the growing Sudanese community in Britain as many sought refuge from Sudan's repressive regime. Sadly, his health declined over a number of years before his death in 2021.

Judy predeceased Ahmed in 2017 and he leaves their four children, Sarrah, Moyasser, Suhayla and Magid, and five grandchildren.

Professor Peter Woodward

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Ahmed was a founder member and gave long service to SSSUK. I never saw him as high-profile, always in the background, whenever he made a contribution, it was very helpful and he always had the organisation in mind and not just something to put on his CV. He had a quiet involvement. It was a quiet interest and a genuine interest. He was kind.

Dr Jack Davies

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I was shocked and very sad to hear at the AGM meeting in 2021 that Dr Ahmed El- Bushra had passed on earlier that year. Ahmed was the Cultural Counsellor when I worked at the Sudan Cultural Counsellor's Office of the Sudanese Embassy in the very grand Rutland Gate in London in 1984-85. I was the 'English Language Teaching (ELT) Recruitment Officer', recruiting the next group of teachers of English bound for Sudan. The job also involved oversight of the library. My boss was actually the very gracious Mr Agabani, but Ahmed took a real interest in my work and in the library.

The office was a very happy one, given Ahmed's personality and leadership. He always had such a spark and perhaps a glint in his eyes that expressed a real interest in people. To me he was everything a Sudanese gentleman should be – witty, intelligent and very kind, with hospitality as part of his DNA. I was only 22 years old when I joined the staff at the Embassy, so it was really my first job in the UK. Ahmed would often wander into the teacher interviews I was holding and ask the applicants a surprise question. That was always done in a supportive way and not done to shock or surprise the applicant.

The interviewee would ask, "Who was that?" and I would reply rather grandly, but very proudly, that that was THE Sudanese Cultural Counsellor to the United Kingdom. He'd leave the interview saying, "You will be most welcome in the Sudan." Ahmed would also travel to Farnham Castle, where the teachers recruited undertook a short course on Sudan before their postings

and he would talk so warmly to the participants. He was likely the first person from Sudan that the newly recruited teachers had ever met.

Sometimes the recruitment process went quiet and I would retreat to the library at the Cultural Counsellor's Office. Ahmed would often join me and it was there that he shared his background in archaeology. He encouraged me to read about Sudanese archaeology and every time I visit Karima, Meroe and the like I think of those times having tea with Ahmed in the library. For both of us it was a relief to get away from signing letters and documents.

I was working at the Embassy when the April 1985 coup was announced that overthrew President Nimeiri. All the staff went to work as normal following the news and Ahmed called a staff meeting in the lounge (which was later to host an SSSUK meeting, although I forget the year.) He told the staff that we should work as normal until further advised. He said this while sitting under a very large picture of Nimeiri looking down at us. You have to remember with this story that I was still very young and not experienced in diplomacy (diplomacy after all was Ahmed's job), when I asked "if it would be appropriate to take down the photograph and then destroy it – to smash it?" Ahmed replied that the photograph should be taken down carefully but not destroyed as "You would never know when we might need it again".

I always used to look forward to seeing Ahmed at the SSSUK symposiums, which he attended regularly – in fact it made the meeting for me that he was there and I could speak to him. My deepest sympathy and condolences to Ahmed's family and friends.

Simon Bush taught in Sudan in 1983-4 and worked at Sudan House 1984-5. He was the second Honorary Secretary of SSSUK.

I do not understand what this means. Presumably in White Nile Province. It is not in Northern Sudan but in the central part of the Republic of Sudan

Professor Anisa Joseph Dani

died Friday, June 4th, 2021

It was with deep sadness that I heard the shocking news of Anisa's untimely death. Rest in Peace, Professor Anisa. She is a hero in the country and her name will be remembered. She worked hard to give her knowledge and used her skills to teach others.

Anisa Dani didn't allow any cattiness from other women to bring her down. She had high respect for herself and what she believed in. She wasn't afraid to share her opinions and speak truth; she listened but she didn't allow others' problems to bring her down.

Dr Anisa had remarkable intelligence and many connections, characteristics of her success and experience. She worked hard and she achieved.

Her educational and career paths were trail-blazing. She finished her elementary school in South Sudan at a time when there were no intermediate schools there. She was accepted by Kosti Secondary School, in White Nile, northern Sudan. After that, Ahfad University in Omdurman awarded her a place and she was one of the first South Sudanese women to go to university. She is highly respected by Ahfad University as one of their leading alumnae.

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She did so well there that she won a scholarship to Manchester University. This was the start of her long association with the north-western English city, where she obtained a PhD in Social Studies in 1992. She was one of the first South Sudanese to get a doctorate. She then spent some of her happiest times working in different senior positions in the development sector in Manchester and later in the Sudan, with the Sudan Council of Churches. She was later appointed Professor in Juba University's Department of Rural Development, a position she held until her passing. She is remembered and respected as an outstanding academic by her students and peers.

Anisa inspired everybody by her care for others, her love for the downtrodden and her fierce fight for gender equality and respect for the rights of women. She had grand plans for the development and provision of basic services to her people and particularly her fellow women, especially in education and economic empowerment.

As if she knew she would be leaving us soon, Prof. Dani delivered one of her most passionate, brilliant and powerful presentations, at a Manchester Meeting held on May 15th 2021. She invoked the importance of gender equality, women's leadership, education, development and personal sacrifice to invest in one's professional growth in the greater national interest, to give service to the long-suffering people of South Sudan. Little did we know then that would be the last time we would hear this elegant and inspiring woman.

Many people will remember Anisa for many great things and many will agree that she was the humblest, most caring and loving human being, whose integrity, sense of justice and love of hard work were unparalleled. She gave all she had for her country, South Sudan, and she had a special place in her big heart for her Mundari people.

I will miss you for ever. Go in peace wearing that beautiful smile of love, care, faith and hope. Amen and Amen.

Hanan Babiker
Chairperson, Sudanese Women's Union, UK.

* * *

Anisa did good work and organised a number of meetings. One point is that her interest was to have a base in the north of England and she had contacts there because of her post-grad work. She organised possibly at least two meetings based in Manchester and that attracted members from the North. That didn't continue, unfortunately. You could rely on her to put on a good meeting. She was very pleasant in all dealings and I found her efficient in any work I did with her. If you asked her to do something, you knew it would be done.

Dr Jack Davies
Former *Sudan Studies* Editor.

* * *

My memories of Anisa – we studied at the same time at the University of Manchester in the 1990s – are strongly visual and aural. She had a most vibrant and illuminating smile; the most gentle of voices; and she formed a graceful, svelte figure who never overpowered but always soothed and strengthened everyone else in the room, simply by being there.

Mourning the loss of Dr Dani, South Sudanese civic activist Suzanne Jambo in the *Juba Mirror* asks why elders are dying away from their homelands.[1] It is a very important question, highlighting as it does the multiple human rights violations that are occurring around the world that result in families being separated one from another and the most lovely and gentle of women, like Anisa, not being able to be where they most want to be, when they most want to be there. The day must dawn when freedom of movement is no longer dependent on your riches but on your enjoyment of equity in access to basic human rights. I am sure that Anisa would want nothing less.
Solidarity, Rhetta

[1] See sssuk.org for Suzanne's article from the "*Juba Post*".

Dr Rhetta Moran
Founding member of the Manchester-based human rights group, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Participatory Action Research (www.Rapar.org.Uk) and initiator of Status Now for All, which works for indefinite leave to remain for undocumented migrants (www.STATUSNOW4ALL.org).

* * *

There were many sides to Anisa that we did not see, for she hid her light under a bushel. She was a very private person and even when she chaired SSSUK from 2004 to 2007, including leading our delegation to the International Sudan Studies Conference in beautiful Bergen, Norway, in 2006, we did not learn about the many parts of her life that she preferred to keep private. So it is heart-warming to read the tributes above and to know that she was greatly valued in the world beyond the SSSUK Committee.

Gill Lusk
Chairperson SSSUK

On the Essence of John Garang's Historical Role

Abdul Aziz Hussein Alsawi*[1]

The principal tenets of the "New Sudan vision" as put forward by Dr John Garang de Mabior, founder and leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, can be summarised as follows: a unified Sudan, ethnic-cultural diversity, equal citizenship rights and social justice. In practice, this vision was exemplified in interaction with the Northern political and intellectual movement, culminating in the SPLM's membership of the opposition coalition, the National Democratic Alliance, in 1995 and in Northern membership at all levels of the SPLM's hierarchy.

Going beyond the traditional Sudanese practice of paying tribute to public personalities means subjecting their role to objective scrutiny, as this renders their contribution a source of enrichment of our public life. Based on this concept and within the limits of a short article, what is the essence of the term "historical" in Garang's role?

While there is near unanimous agreement about his outstanding intellectual and academic qualities as well as his charisma, this author holds the view that Garang's New Sudan vision and its practical applications represented a real breakthrough within the Southern Sudanese context. The mindset among the Southern Sudanese elites, even those of the relatively younger generations, had remained solidified around a perception of "the Southern Cause". This was characterised by regionality (as opposed to Sudan-wide ideas) and by separatism/partition; by conservatism regarding social and national liberation issues; and by blind antagonism towards the Arab-Muslim component in the national identity of the North. Hence the exceptional value of the New Sudan vision lies in the fact that it established a strong Southern link, for the first time, with the modern progressive political and intellectual movement in the North.

A degree of qualification may be gleaned from the above about the absolutism the New Sudan vision implies about its newness. It is an established fact of modern Sudanese history that the basic components of the vision had been gradually and progressively expounded intellectually and politically by the leftist movement in the North, particularly the Sudan Communist Party. This was the first party to propose self-rule for the South, as far back as the 1960s. It

[1] Abdul Aziz Hussein Alsawi sent us this piece only weeks before he died and agreed that we could edit it. He was never able to do a final check, so we hope that our light touch has done justice to some of the ideas that he was so keen to convey to the world.

was, therefore, no surprise that the SCP's formal adoption of this in the Addis Ababa Accord of 1972 was preceded by an initiative by the late Communist leader Joseph Garang, who was Minister of Southern Affairs in the early stages of President Jaafar Nimeiri's "May" regime (1969-85). In retrospect, Joseph's execution by the regime in 1971 symbolised what was to come, as it was the same regime which effectively ended the Addis Ababa Accord when it embarked on the destructive course of "Islamisation" in the early 1980s.

It is likewise a fact that responsibility for the absence of an effective and constructive approach regarding the "Southern Question" lies squarely on the shoulders of the May and the *Inqaz* ("Salvation", 1989-2019) regimes. It was natural that the ensuing void was filled by insufficiently considered calls for separation/partition. However, due to the imperative need for self-criticism, it has to be admitted that the post-1980s era has shown that the Sudanese left, along with the whole of the political and intellectual movement, needed to carry out a critical assessment of its record. This was particularly needed regarding the degree of its democratic orientation and consequently its ability, or rather inability, to put an end to the recurrence of *coups d'état* since independence by establishing a durable democracy. Despite variations in the degree of democratic orientation, the fact that two chances to establish democratic government were squandered, resulting in nearly back-to-back authoritarian military regimes, proves conclusively that all parties fell far short of the required level.

In view of the close correlation between politically closed regimes and the disintegration of countries, as demonstrated by the breakup of the Soviet Union, the failure to deal with the "Southern Question" that resulted in separation is related to the inadequate level of democratic orientation. This is because the unequal development that is the root cause of marginalisation can be eliminated only in a democratic context. Emergence of more serious forms of marginalisation in the "New South" (Darfur, the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile) is due to the same reason. This fact, incidentally, indicates the source of impending dangers to August 2020's Juba Peace Agreement between the Khartoum government and several former armed opposition movements, dangers visible in the splintering of the Forces for Freedom and Change alliance.

Garang's premature death in July 2005 and the extraordinary level of underdevelopment in the South help to explain the devastatingly inauspicious beginning of South Sudan's Independence era, with its combination of civil war and autocratic regime. However, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that these circumstances are also linked to an inherent weakness in the make-up of the SPLM. The split in the ranks of the SPLM-North in mid-2017 was further

proof that the SPLM itself was not entirely free of the innate affliction which hindered the development of the Northern political movement.

Nevertheless, there are indications that this split was not entirely barren. In July 2017, the SPLM-North (led by Malik Agar and Yasir Arman) published a detailed study, which was in effect a comprehensive reappraisal of the Movement's history, entitled *Towards a Second Birth of the New Sudan Vision*. This was a crucially important but rare event in Sudanese political life. Such reappraisals are the only way to rid political life of the inherent weakness which has rendered it unable to develop an antidote to the endemic malaise of military intervention.

In response to an invitation from Yasir Arman, whose responsibilities will, hopefully, not prevent him from continuing to participate in open discussions, the author of this article engaged in a written dialogue with the study's authors, along the lines of the argument outlined above concerning Garang's leadership and the SPLM. I suggested that the model of the Peoples' Democratic Party of Turkey (HDP) might be of value to the SPLM-North as it endeavours to forge a path from armed to political struggle. Still, there are significant differences between the two countries' historical contexts, as Turkey went through a deep process of modernisation from the beginning of the last century. Due to its links with Europe, this process, although imposed by force, produced a measure of enlightenment in Turkish society (mainly independent thinking), which is a necessary condition for fostering democratic culture. The inadequacy of the democratic orientation of Sudanese political movements can be explained by the fact that Sudan's cultural, social and class structure was not subjected to far-reaching modernisation that would open up horizons of democracy and enlightenment.

This is an ever-topical subject in the present situation because it pertains to how we can avoid our recurrent failure to forge an open-ended democratic course. Above all else, this requires a conviction that our historical development allows for only small steps and mutual compromises of all sorts to ensure that the Democratic Transition proceeds safely to its end and that the prospects for establishing a viable democratic regime worthy of this description are enhanced.

*Abdul Aziz Hussein Alsawi was the pen name of Mohamed Beshir Ahmed, who sadly left us last October. He was a prolific writer, mainly in Arabic, and a staunch member of SSSUK. Tributes to him can be found in the obituary section of this issue of *Sudan Studies* and on our website, www.sssuk.org

The Addis Ababa Agreement, 1972

We Have Lived Too Long to Be Deceived

The text below is a reprint of the Rift Valley Institute's (RVI) report *We Have Lived Too Long to Be Deceived* which was originally published by RVI in 2015 and can be found on its website at www.riftvalley.net. This publication is a transcript of the Juba University Lectures, 2014 that brought together South Sudanese and others to discuss three historic peace agreements in South Sudan. In this reprint we present the introduction to the report and the section on the Addis Ababa Agreement, together with the relevant biographical details of the discussants: John Akec, Douglas Johnson, Alfred Lokuji, Lam Akol, and Oliver Albino. We are grateful to RVI for giving us permission to reprint this document.

Introduction

In December 2013 a new war began in South Sudan. Peace initiatives over the following eighteen months culminated in an agreement between government and armed opposition, which was signed in August 2015. The agreement came into effect in late 2015, but many uncertainties surround its implementation.

The war that began in 2013 is the third in South Sudan's short post-colonial history. Do previous conflicts and agreements hold useful lessons for the current situation? Historic peace agreements in South Sudan were the subject of a series of public lectures at Juba University in 2014, which were organised by the Rift Valley Institute and the Center for Peace and Development Studies. Three agreements were discussed: the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, which brought the first civil war in the South to an end; the Wunlit Conference of 1999, which opened the way for reconciliation of the two factions of the SPLA; and the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ushered in the process leading to independence for South Sudan in 2011.

Academics, activists, church representatives and others discussed critical questions raised by these three agreements. Why do negotiations succeed or fail? When do opportunities for peace present themselves? What is the role of civil society? And what are the implications of these agreements for the present situation? This publication is based on papers presented over the three evenings of lectures at Juba University and transcripts of the discussions that ensued.

The lectures attracted an audience of several hundred students and members of the public. The speakers included Oliver Albino, one of the last surviving negotiators of the Addis Ababa Agreement, Dr Lam Akol, Chairman of the SPLM-DC (Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Democratic Change) and Emeritus Bishop Paride Taban.

The lecture series was opened by the Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr John Akec, who reminded attendees of the importance of open debate for political process. Dr Douglas Johnson, the distinguished historian of South Sudan, began the session on the 1972 Addis accord with an account of the twelve days of talks

between the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) and the Government of Sudan based on the minutes of the negotiations. The political implications of the agreement were discussed by Dr Lam Akol and RVI Fellow Dr Alfred Sebit Lokuji, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University. Oliver Albino described the atmosphere in Addis Ababa and his own role in the negotiations. He described himself modestly as 'having been picked from nowhere because others dropped out.'

The second evening of the lecture series examined the Wunlit Peace and Reconciliation Conference of 1999. The Wunlit meeting brought together customary leaders from the Nuer of Western Upper Nile and the Dinka of the Lakes region, with observers from other areas of the South, signalling an end to eight years of South-on-South violence. The opening speakers were John Ashworth, advisor to the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC), whose three decades of experience go back to the years before the second civil war, and Naomi Pendle, a British researcher working on the history of inter-tribal peace meetings and customary law.

The chair of the session on Wunlit, RVI Fellow Dr Leben Moro, Dean of External Affairs at the University, introduced contributions from three other speakers: First, Bishop Paride Taban; then, Dr Judith McCallum, head of Saferworld's Horn of Africa Programme, whose research has focused on the impact of the civil war in South Sudan on community identity; and finally Dr Julia Duany, Vice Chancellor of the John Garang Memorial University, who together with her late husband, Dr Michael Wal Duany, was one of the organising secretariat of the Wunlit conference.

The panellists detailed the logistical difficulties associated with the organisation of a people-to-people peace process and the importance of preparation and implementation. Despite the destructive effect of war on social relations, as detailed by Dr Duany, the success of the community-led dialogue at Wunlit, demonstrated the strength of the metaphor employed by Bishop Paride Taban. 'The politicians are the fish, the civil population the water.'

The discussion on the final evening, chaired by RVI Executive Director John Ryle, focused on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005. The lead speaker was David Deng, Research Director of the South Sudan Law Society, who addressed the question of the limits of the transitional process following the CPA and the unfinished business of peace. The other speakers were Don Bosco Malish, Programme Officer in Juba for the Open Society

Initiative in Eastern Africa (OSIEA); Census Kabang Lo-liyong, an environmental management specialist; and Dr Douglas Johnson.

The discussion pointed to a lack of implementation of key elements of the CPA as the root cause of the current social and political breakdown in South Sudan. In particular, David Deng drew attention to the failure of the government in the transitional period in implementing a process of national reconciliation and healing. The presentations inspired an energetic floor debate, revealing the strength of feeling evoked by the CPA in the context of the present conflict.

The first of many speakers from the floor, the South Sudanese writer Taban Lo-liyong, posed the central question of the current situation: 'After our independence, how do we live together as a nation?'

As South Sudan struggles to find an answer to the current internal conflict, the lectures made it clear that it is necessary to look backwards as well as forwards. The three historic peace agreements examined in the lecture series represent a range of different ways of reaching a political settlement, each with its successes and failures—and each with implications for the future of the country.

1. Addis Ababa Peace Agreement (1972)

Sponsored by the World Council of Churches, the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement was the outcome of talks in Ethiopia between the Nimeiri government and representatives of the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM). The agreement ended the First Sudanese Civil War (1955-1972), established the Southern Region and brought a decade of relative peace. This ended in 1983 with President Nemeiri's abrogation of key elements of the agreement.

John Akec

The taste of freedom

I remember when the Addis Ababa Agreement was signed. I was just a boy, in my third year of primary school. I remember running to the dusty airport in my village in Gogrial to receive General Lagu and Kuol Amum. They addressed us on the airstrip, saying that this agreement was for us, the young generation.

The Addis Ababa Agreement brought autonomy for South Sudan for the first time. It brought a parliament and an executive, which had a very limited budget. For ten years we had a taste of freedom. Really, we were free. The army moved away, the police were moved, and we only had South Sudanese ruling over us.

The Addis Ababa agreement shows us that democracy can only come about when you give people room to debate issues. Politics is to be debated and discussed. Although you may not always see progress being made…

Douglas Johnson

The lessons of the agreement

The 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement was both a peace settlement to end fighting in Sudan's first civil war and a political settlement. A political settlement was necessary to be able to bring about an end to the fighting. The negotiations were successful, but in the long term the agreement was not.

The success of the negotiations was based on the fact that both the Government of Sudan and the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) were serious about negotiating. Both sides had to overcome internal opposition to the negotiations. There were senior figures in the Sudanese government and army as well as in the Anyanya movement who were opposed to any negotiations taking place, and the leadership had to overcome or even override these objections in order to send delegations to Addis Ababa.

'Despite opposition within both the government and SSLM, and reservations on both sides, the two delegations were in fact committed to reaching an agreement.'

Direct negotiations had been preceded by a series of preliminary indirect talks through intermediaries in the All Africa Council of Churches (AACC) and World Council of Churches (WCC) who went back and forth between the different sides. Also, there were a number of South Sudanese individuals, whom we would now call stakeholders, who were living abroad but were not part of either the government or the exile movement. These people were also brought in to the indirect negotiations.[1]

> Unlike the 1965 Round Table Conference, when political parties met for the first time to discuss 'the Southern Problem,' no time limit was set. The WCC informed Abel Alier, then Minister for Southern Affairs, that the SSLM had appointed a delegation for 'negotiations to continue till a solution is found.'[2]

What lessons can be drawn from this summary of the 1972 Addis Ababa talks?

Firstly, despite opposition within both the government and SSLM, and reservations on both sides during the negotiations, the two delegations were in fact committed to reaching an agreement. In other words they entered into negotiations with serious intent, not to play for time.

Secondly, the negotiating delegations were unbalanced, not only in numbers but in expertise. The government side included several representatives from the military, as well as persons with expertise in administration and finance. The SSLM delegation did not have equal representation in those fields, especially for the military and the economy. Lagu had tried to strike a regional balance within southern Sudan, but Bahr el-Ghazal was under-represented. This had a bearing on the balance in the agreement, especially in economic matters.

Thirdly, the moderator's interventions at strategic moments kept the negotiations on track: at times summarising points made in order to move the discussion on; at other times asking the delegations to clarify their positions, refusing to allow discussion to be

1. Abel Alier, *Southern Sudan: Too many agreements dishonoured*, Exeter: Ithaca Press, 1990, 51-92; Joseph Lagu, *Sudan, Odyssey through a State: From ruin to hope*, Omdurman: M.O.B. Center for Sudanese Studies, 2006, 239-47.

2. Alier, *Southern Sudan*, 95.

side-tracked; sometimes breaking for prayer to allow tempers to cool; and finally sharply reminding them that the discussions could end in failure.

Fourth, the role of the Ethiopian government was more indirect. It offered a safe and neutral venue for the talks, Haile Selassie gave his advice only when appealed to, and delivered his opinion diplomatically, but unambiguously. His position as a respected elder statesman of Africa meant that what he said mattered, and there was no recourse to coercion. There is no pan-African statesman of similar stature today.

'When the agreement was published, it was under the rubric, "A Solution for the Southern Problem". This was the fundamental weakness of the mandate of the negotiations.'

Fifth, there were other southern Sudanese 'stakeholders' present as observers, who played no direct role in the formal negotiations, but whose influence would have been felt in informal discussions outside the negotiations.

Sixth, all the texts that were discussed and agreed were drafted by the negotiating delegations in their committees, rather than drafted by an external mediator. However, the brevity of the final document allowed for different interpretations of how it was to be implemented. This is one reason why, in the CPA negotiations, the different protocols were spelled out in great detail.

Seventh, an agreement on the administrative arrangements for the southern region was quickly reached, whereas most of the time was spent arguing about security and the composition of the army. This was a lesson the SPLM/SPLA learned when it insisted on retaining a separate army for the South in the CPA negotiations.

Finally, there was the focus on 'the Southern Problem'. When the agreement was published, it was under the rubric, 'A Solution for the Southern Problem'. This was a fundamental weakness of the mandate of the negotiations. Ezboni Mondiri and Lawrence Wol Wol tried to open up the discussion to include a solution for the whole country, but they were hampered by the fact that the SSLM itself had never made this one of their political goals and the government delegation had not come prepared to discuss a broader solution. Mansour Khalid was reported to have regretted this later, saying that, had they had accepted some federal formula for the whole country, it would have been impossible for Nimeiri to abrogate the agreement later.

Alfred Lokuji

Why the Addis Ababa Agreement could not last

Was the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement of 1972 a substantive engagement between the parties with the aim of pursuing a sustainable peace, or simply a Khartoum government exercise in public relations? If a party to a conflict seeks only to postpone military defeat or to improve its positions in the battlefield, it might be described as buying time. While an unsuccessful peace deal may not necessarily be evidence of buying time, other actions can indicate when there is a failure to meet the necessary conditions for sustainable peace.

My approach is one that might best be described as an autopsy of the Addis Ababa agreement. It is increasingly evident from the brief history of post-colonial independent Sudan—and now South Sudan—that its peace agreements represent strategies to buy time in order to regain military advantage rather than a genuine and sustainable resolution of conflict.

Discourse on the Sudanese conflicts between government and anti-government forces has generally worked on the assumption that putting an end to conflict is not just desirable but possible, regardless of the types of party to the conflict or the type of government in power. In the case of the Addis Ababa agreement little attention has been paid to the strategies Nimeiri used to undermine the agreement.

Four factors in particular act as predictors of whether a peace is genuine or just buying time: the character of the regime, international partners, style of leadership, and cessation of hostilities. I look at each one in turn.

Was the philosophical or ideological stance of the Nimeiri government democratic or autocratic, dogmatic or pluralistic? A dogmatic socialist ideology seemed to colour all actions of the regime, especially after the establishment of the government party, the Sudanese Socialist Union.

Later on, during the rapprochement with the religious leaders of Sudan—the precursors to the Islamists—religion took the dominant position. With such a stance, based on dogma rather than on equality before the law, conflict with enemies becomes mandatory. And peace overtures become tactical moves.

International partners as observers, arbitrators, facilitators, enforcers and witnesses to a peaceful resolution of conflict are essential if a peace agreement is to be worth the paper it is

'It is increasingly evident … that [Sudanese] peace agreements represent strategies to buy time in order to regain military advantage rather than a genuine and sustainable resolution of conflict.'

written on. The 1947 Juba Conference, for example, though not a peace agreement, would not have been so well-remembered if it were not for the presence of the colonial organizers of that conference.[3]

By contrast, the June 1966 Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference on the South had no outside observer or witness as a signatory. It is no wonder that the conference bore no fruit. Attempts at peace within Sudan by Sudanese alone, to the exclusion of international observers, such as the 1965 Round-table Conference, have never succeeded in bringing about lasting peace.

'The leadership and decision-making style of the leaders of the conflicting parties may matter a great deal.'

The Addis Ababa agreement had witnesses. This was a good start if peace was to be sustained. Unlike the CPA, though, it lacked the economic, legal, and diplomatic wherewithal amongst the witnesses to enforce the agreement and hold the parties accountable, should any of them fail to live up to the terms of the agreement.

The leadership and decision-making style of the leaders of the conflicting parties may matter a great deal.

In the case of Sudan, the first characteristic of the leaders is that they were military men. This is true of General Jaafar Nimeiri and General Joseph Lagu, and was true of General Omar Bashir, Commander Riek Machar in the Khartoum Peace Agreement of 1997, and John Garang de Mabior, Commander in Chief and Chairman of the SPLA. An autocratic leader is not beholden to his people or to his military advisers, who may have no say in whether the peace or a ceasefire should be sustained or not.

The other characteristic when we talk of ceasefire, is whether our leaders are genuine. Ceasefires can easily turn out to be mechanisms for a lull in the fighting, to prevent further losses of ground, or to regain strength through the re-stocking of weaponry. There are many more declarations than actual instances of peace. This is the essence of Abel Alier's argument in *Too Many Agreements Dishonoured*.

John Garang warned the Anyanya forces in 1972:

> Any Southerner who holds the mistaken view that Arab Nationalism, now sincere … gives the South local autonomy in good faith, and that this autonomy will be guaranteed by a few phrases scribbled on some sheets of paper … christened 'The Constitution'—that Southerners either suffers from acute historical myopia or else, advocates the treasonable stand of

3. *Minutes of the Juba Conference*, EP/SCR/1.A.5/1, Juba, 21 June 1947.

opportunism, national subjugation, and continual Arab chauvinism and domination. In short, such Southerner calls for surrender in a camouflaged form.[4]

To have positive peace, you level the ground for all citizens to enjoy the political, economic, social, cultural benefits that the nation can afford. That did not happen.

There are people who romanticise the Addis Ababa agreement and the self-government period in South Sudan. But there was a high level of interference from Khartoum at that time, and having the Anyanya forces fully integrated in the national army left the South without any sort of military guarantee. This allowed Khartoum to continue with business as usual.

In 1972, while a Captain in the Anyanya Army, John Garang argued that the Nimeiri regime was entering into negotiations 'just for the purpose of lengthening its own days of breath.'[5] In the agreement, the autonomous government of Southern Sudan would have its own executive, its own legislature. And yet, when Nimeiri did not like the legislature, he dissolved it. Is that true autonomy? Does that tell you that Nimeiri was sincere in establishing an autonomous government for Southern Sudan?

The only reason the Addis Ababa Agreement lasted from 1972 to 1983 is that we in the South had been suffering for so long that we thought there was no way but up. The South had to take it in good faith. It turned out that it was a false hope.

Lam Akol

Necessary conditions for making peace

Peace agreements are not made between friends. Agreements are between people fighting each other, who necessarily don't trust each other. We can assume each side will try to get the most it can from the final settlement. But for any agreement to succeed, at least four conditions must be satisfied.

Firstly, there must be a stalemate in the conflict. Anything that contributes to the war effort must have reached a stalemate, be it military, political, or diplomatic. If not, one of the sides will continue to believe that it can still gain on the battlefield.

Although secret negotiations between Khartoum and Anyanya representatives started as early as May 1971, it was not until after the coup and counter-coup of 1971 that the process crystallised into a genuine search for peaceful settlement. By the second

4. John Garang, Letter from The General Headquarters, Anyanya National Armed Forces, South Sudan, to The Commander in Chief Anyanya National Armed Forces, Leader of the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement, Members of the Anyanya SSLM Negotiation Committee, 24 January 1972.

5. Garang, Letter to Anyanya Forces, 24 January 1972.

half of 1971, internal conditions within the Government and the Anyanya combined with external factors to render the search for peace the best option for the two sides.

By 1971, Nimeiri had lost the support of the Soviet Union, Arab socialists and the Eastern Bloc and had begun to look to the West for help. The West was intent on a peaceful settlement in South Sudan, and had set certain parameters for assisting Nimeiri. This had an effect within Sudan. When Nimeiri lost the Communist party's support, he became politically very vulnerable, and began looking for an alliance with the Southern forces.

To the south, the coming to power of Idi Amin in Uganda in 1971 deprived Nimeiri of the support of Obote, who had been ruthless against the Anyanya. Amin's support for the Anyanya movement helped to create a condition of stalemate.

But the push for peace also worked against the Anyanya in that they would lose support from activists and refugees in neighbouring countries, especially Zaire and Uganda. After the signing of the agreement on 27 February, Lagu discovered that these countries were pushing him to sign a peaceful settlement. His back was exposed.

The second condition is this: you must have a facilitator or a mediator who enjoys the trust of and has influence with the parties. In the case of Addis Ababa, this was Burgess Carr.

'You must have a facilitator or a mediator who enjoys the trust of and has influence with the parties.'

The first serious attempt for mediation in the problem of the war in Sudan was made by the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF), which was affiliated to the Parliamentary Labour Party in Britain. Its Secretary-General, Barbara Haq, was given the responsibility of mediating in the conflict and began to meet with Mading de Garang, on the side of the Southern rebels. But she came to be perceived as actively supporting Joseph Garang and her role came to an abrupt end: Mading would have nothing more to do with the MCF.

In 1971, the WCC and the ACC enjoyed respect and influence on both sides, with the Government and with the Anyanya. On 15 May 1971, they visited Khartoum, they met with Abel Alier, who was the Acting Minister for Southern Affairs, and Abdulgasim Hashim, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. They met later and submitted six points to the Anyanya as the basis of the agreement.

These were taken to Mading de Garang in London, who then communicated with Joseph Lagu. The Government wanted to ascertain if the Anyanya were ready to negotiate within a united Sudan. On 30 October 1971, Joseph Lagu wrote to Mading saying,

'You can now tell the Government that we are ready to negotiate within a united Sudan.' Things began to move quickly.

The third condition for success is that negotiators must enjoy the trust and confidence both of their principals and also of the rank and file of their organisation if they are to deliver what they put their name to in peace agreements.

The question of people to trust as negotiators was a problem for the Anyanya. The SSLM delegation—of which Oliver Albino was a member—was headed by Ezboni Mondiri. Ezboni was effectively dismissed by General Lagu when Lagu came to Addis Ababa in March 1972, intending to re-negotiate the terms of the Agreement. But there was pressure on Lagu to sign the peace agreement. Ultimately, when he went to meet Emperor Haile Selassie to discuss these matters, the only concession he could achieve was that the 6,000 Southerners to be incorporated into the national army should be Anyanya, rather than Southerners. He then signed the agreement.

'The agreement did not fail because of anything intrinsic to the agreement, rather, it failed because of the application.'

The fourth and final necessity is that there must be some common ground to make a peace agreement possible. The Anyanya was calling for a separate South while the government of Sudan wanted a united country. When Lagu agreed that there was room for a settlement within a united Sudan the peace agreement was possible.

For the Anyanya, though, it was not easy to abandon their call for a separate South. Most of the opposition came from this angle. It was not easy either for Nimeiri to sell a ceasefire 'cooling-off period' to the military in the north, nor the concept of sharing power with rebels who had until recently been seen as highwaymen.

The Agreement did not fail because of anything intrinsic to the agreement, rather, it failed because of its application—mostly because the condition of stalemate was changing.

The agreement enjoyed initial success. Nimeiri was serious. He worked hard to see that agreement succeed. For him, it was a guarantee of his survival. Having lost political support from the North, he began to rely on the South. And in many cases, he did things that went beyond the conditions of the agreement. For example, he asked Lagu to nominate 200 soldiers from his army to join his Republican Guard, the force which later helped foil coups in 1975 and 1976 against Nimeiri's regime. Things began to change in 1977 however, when he made the National Reconciliation Agreement with the opposition in the North—Sadiq al Mahdi

and Turabi. From that time onwards, in relation to the south, he became more confrontational.

Yet, from the beginning, there was a lack of pluralism in the implementation of the agreement. The fact that the SSLM did not insist on its own continuation meant everyone joined the SSU, Nimeiri's Sudan Socialist Union. The unity of the South as one entity was threated by the divisions and wrangling among Southern politicians over power in this one party. And then finally, there was a lack of development. Development and peace go together. If you have no development, peace is threatened, and there was no development in the South.

'The agreement was owned by all Southerners. There was no separation between 'liberator' and 'liberated'. It was all Southerners together.'

In a real sense, the Addis Ababa agreement brought peace to South Sudan for 11 years. There were only occasional skirmishes within the army, such as in Akobo, in 1975, or with Joseph Aguet in 1976.

The agreement was owned by all Southerners. There was no separation between 'liberator' and 'liberated'. It was all Southerners together. Except for the army in some areas, you never saw an incident where the Anyanya said, 'We brought the liberation, so we should do the job.' There was also an atmosphere of healthy democracy, as individuals from rival factions within the SSU competed for positions in the Regional Assembly

They managed to form a government from scratch. The interim High Executive Council of 12 Ministers started with one office, one car. In 1974 it was able to build the current Ministries, the houses of the Ministers, and the Assembly. Despite the difficulties of low budgets and constant interference from the central government, they were able also to develop institutions.

Finally, for the first time, Southern Sudanese had a considerable presence in the national army, especially in the officer corps.

As regards the present situation the first lesson is the issue of the supremacy of the political over military. In any libera- tion movement, it must be the political that directs the military. Otherwise, when weapons are laid down, they don't know what to do next.

The second lesson is that, throughout all the stages of the negotiation, it was the national government of the day that took the initiative. It was the government that gave the delegation of SCC and AACC the six points for the agreement. It was the government that gave a suggestion for the framework for discussion. It was the government that took a blueprint to Addis.

For the agreement to survive, you must have a genuine multi-party democracy and ownership. Everybody felt they were part of the agreement. The Anyanya fought for the Southerners: they brought peace for the Southerners, so it must be the Southerners who enjoy peace.

Those who are qualified should take their qualifications and use them properly. This was one of the things that the Government of the High Executive Council did. They collected Southerners who were in the North and brought them to the South, and gave them positions based on their qualifications. There was no segregation according to whether one had been in the bush or not in the bush, whether one had fought or not. It was based on merit.

Oliver Albino

Making peace in Addis Ababa

John Ryle: Oliver Albino, you are one of the few people who can talk about what it felt like to arrive in Addis Ababa, the imperial capital of Ethiopia in 1972 to negotiate peace. You went, after more than a decade of war and suffering in South Sudan, as the representative of South Sudanese people, to try to end this long period of difficulty in the South. Uncle, I would like you to cast your mind back to February 1972, because I think that was a critical moment. When you arrived in Addis, did you think that these peace talks were going to succeed?

'No I didn't think they would succeed. By then, I had already lived too long to be deceived.'

Oliver Albino: No. I didn't think they would succeed. By then, I had already lived too long to be deceived.

At that time, I was not even supposed to be a member of that delegation, but they were short on numbers. Many of the delegation members had refused to take their seats, and I was one of the people fished out of the waters to become a member.

When I arrived, I was a stranger. I was in a place where I had to ask for guidance—but there was none. I asked how we were going to start—but no one knew. This was perhaps because the whole team had been replaced just as we were called to the negotiating table.

That the agreement was going to succeed was something impressed on me by the presence of Mansour Khalid, and by the confidence he had in Nimeiri's sincerity. As our relations with the North will show, Mansour Khalid became a different man after living long enough with Nimeiri. He has since written books about

Nimeiri's insincerity. My confidence, which I built around Mansour Khalid's confidence in Nimeiri, collapsed with his.

To the best of our ability, we did what we could. There were pressures on the leadership, and the leadership was also putting pressure on us. I was chairman of the political committee. Somebody passed on words from General Lagu. He said he was happy with work done by the Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs, but not by the political committee. We had sold out the South, he said. So I was thrown aside as somebody who had sold out the South. I decided to not go to the conference for three days; those days were spent discussing me.

In the end, Lagu took me aside and told me I was doing fine, but the committee was not. I replied, 'I'm the leader of the committee. How can I be doing fine and the committee not?' Only when the committee as a whole was praised did I return. It was playing games, but it is how it happened.

Douglas Johnson: Dr Lam emphasised the importance of common ground and mentioned also the approach of the Government to Lagu and to Mading de Garang on the issue of starting negotiations on the basis of a united Sudan. Why did the leadership of the SSLM shift their position from total independence of the South, which was understood at that time as being what the Anyanya was for, to accepting other conditions for negotiations? Was this a debate within the leadership? Or was it decided by Lagu and only a few people?

'To the best of our ability, we did what we could. There were pressures on the leadership, and the leadership was also putting pressure on us.'

Oliver Albino: Well at that time, if you said 'federation', people would look around to try to see who had said it. And it's true even now, when you ask, 'What is federation?' If you ask me, I would struggle to explain the idea, even having studied political science. Despite that, you could go deep into any village and find people talking and singing songs about federation. If we shifted from one point to another, people didn't mind—they knew who we were. Particularly in Juba here, people knew, 'Oliver is there, so it's OK.' Whether we shifted from position of unity, or onto something else, the people knew we were aiming for something they would approve. In most cases, this is the principle.

Alfred Lokuji: As you left Addis with this agreement, and you came to establish the Government of South Sudan in the context of unity, what were the concerns that you had about the agreement at the time? Was there anything that really worried you?

Oliver Albino: The one or two worries that we had about the agreement were never spoken. We had hoped at the time to meet our leader, Joseph Lagu, to tell him we were being forced to sign it. We wanted to persuade him to refuse and change the agreement to what we wanted. This was our aim. But we were never so lucky.

'I have sense of pride, though, being one of the few surviving members of the delegation to the Addis agreement.'

Lam Akol: My question is related to the SSLM. Why did they not raise the issue of their continuation as a political party?

Oliver Albino: That was another thing we wanted Joseph Lagu to insist on—the SSLA. It was one of the things we had wanted Lagu to hear. Again, we were not so lucky. I have a sense of pride, though, being one of the few surviving members of the delegation to the Addis Ababa agreement. I was picked from nowhere, because all the other members dropped out.

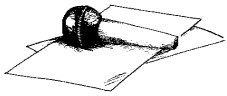
Lam Akol: Because they wanted separation!

Oliver Albino: I also wanted separation at that time. But I knew that even separation had to be negotiated.

Beny Gideon, South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy: Both parties ratified the agreement in Addis Ababa on 27 March. How did the people accept it? What was the reaction of the people?

Oliver Albino: From what I heard, they were happy. Very happy. Of course, politicians criticised the form of agreement we brought, saying that it had been tampered with and so on, but the ordinary man was happy as long as there was an agreement.

Discussion: The lessons of Addis Ababa



Benjamin Gurogimba: One of the factors that, according to you, Dr Lam, is necessary if an agreement is to be reached is a stalemate. Where are we currently with regards to a stalemate?

Lam Akol: The question of stalemate has many facets. You could have military stalemate, political stalemate, diplomatic stalemate, and so on. My own analysis of the situation at the moment is that there is no military stalemate, and that's why the parties think they can slog it out in the field. But they are facing difficulties in other arenas. So whether they will be wise enough to see that military factors alone will not be able to deliver anything, remains to be seen.

John Ryle: What is the one lesson from the Addis Ababa Agreement, positive or negative, about the agreement, or its implementation, that is important for us to bear in mind for the current peace talks?

Douglas Johnson: I think that the most important thing that we've got to ask is, what is the seriousness of the opposing sides in negotiating? Is there any common ground? Have we reached a point yet where the popular will can be heard and have any impact on the negotiating sides?

Oliver Albino: The difference between the trouble now and the Addis Ababa agreement is that we were making an agreement to change borders. We considered those people as completely alien, as people who could not understand our politics. Those people were different from us, our problem with them was political. Now, although we are the same people, it is politics that has brought the trouble.

'The difference between the trouble now and the Addis Ababa agreement is that we were making an agreement to change borders. We considered those people as completely alien.'

In both cases, the war is political, and we have got to look at it politically. Even if it is tribal, we must look at it politically. If a Nuer takes a spear or a gun and shoots a Dinka, what is his reason? It is not just because one is Dinka and one is Nuer. It is politics.

Do not get hatred into your politics. Many of the things I have seen are driven by hate; the original motives are lost.

Alfred Lokuji: Khartoum and Nimeiri paid a price to buy peace in South Sudan, going through the motions of sharing power. But the idea that we were now a Sudan where all are citizens were equal on every definition of citizenship, was not present in the Sudanese mind. That never happened.

The lesson is that if peace is pinned on the efforts of one person who is willing to make certain sacrifices in order to prolong his regime or his party, the political system has to move fast to get ideas into society. Otherwise, peace will collapse very quickly.

Today, the greatest problem is that we have pinned our problems on individuals. We don't recognise the systemic nature of the problem. We have to think about ways of solving problems as South Sudanese together. Individuals are always going to be willing to pay short-term prices in order to appear to have won in any situation, but these will not be lasting solutions.

Lam Akol: The most remarkable thing about Addis Ababa was the ownership of the agreement by the people of South Sudan. I'm happy that the SSLM did not negotiate itself into the agreement. Negotiating yourself into an agreement is the surest way to disaster.

I hope future agreements will only be about what needs to be done in South Sudan, and don't negotiate individuals, political parties, or groups into the text of the agreement.

Notes on contributors

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Douglas H. Johnson is a historian of South Sudan. He was Assistant Director for Archives in the former Southern Regional Govern- ment, and worked in various relief programmes during the recent civil war. He was appointed an international expert on the Abyei Boundaries Commission, and is author or editor of numerous books on Sudanese topics.

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State Building at Southern Regional, Provincial and District levels in the 1970's

Garth Glentworth*

Introduction

Once the Addis Agreement had been signed, witnessed and codified in the organic law, 'Regional Self-Government in the Southern Provinces', the most important political and administrative objectives were the establishment of effective regional government backed up by provincial and local governments with at least basic competence throughout the South. Although it was not part of the terminology at the time, this would later become known as 'state building'. The context was urgent – the near total withdrawal of the Northerners who had occupied the main positions in the governance and administration of the Southern region.

I was a member of a team sent by Birmingham University in 1974 to "study problems of administration in the three southern provinces in relation to the overall economic development programme and on the assessment, to submit detailed recommendations relating to development administration training needs for the area."[1] The main focus of the project was to train the new southern administrators for their roles.

I argue that the priority of employing Southerners in the public sector drove out any serious attention to a wider development agenda not least because there were not sufficient funds to do so.

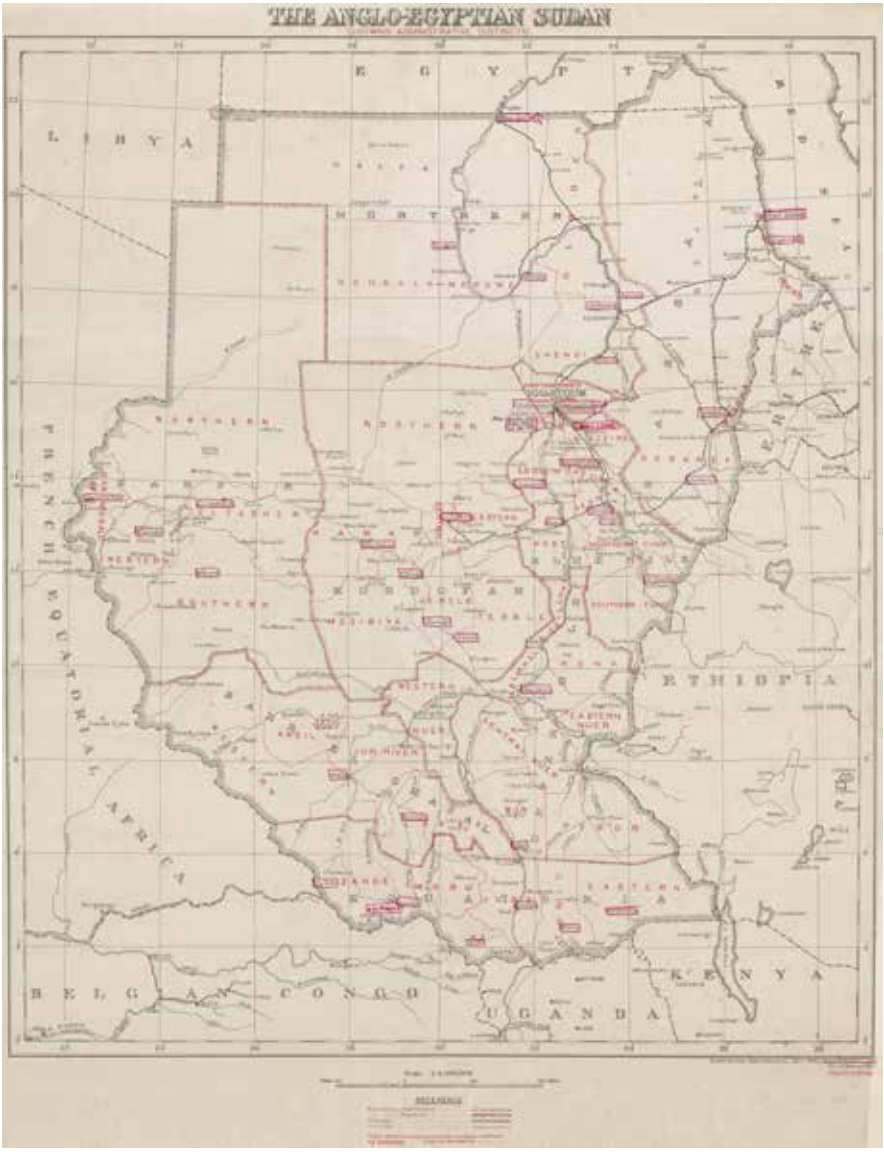
It should be noted that it is an analysis from a distance as we were never part of any inner circles. It also of course takes full advantage of hindsight.

The Apparatus of Government and Staffing

After the Addis Ababa Agreement was signed, with the exception of a few core national responsibilities led by National Defence and Foreign Affairs, a range of ministries was created at Regional level that had full responsibility for their remits. Though not in close relationships, these ministries paralleled their equivalents in Khartoum.

The President of the Southern High Executive Council, its ministerial members and provincial governors were appointed by the National President. In the latter two categories, appointments were made on the recommendation

[1] Terms of Reference (TOR) for the mission were contained in the final report, *Development Administration and Training in the Sudan: Report of a Mission to the Sudan, March-June 1974*. The TOR also included a two week workshop for senior administrative and professional officers.



The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan: showing administrative districts. Khartoum: Sudan Survey Department., March 1953. (Credit: Sudan Archive, Durham, SAD 862/11/3[MP])

of the President of the High Executive Council to the National President. One of the criteria for appointments appeared to be membership of the only permitted national political party, the Sudan Socialist Union. However in the South this may have been matched in importance by a candidate's prominence

among leading politicians in the old political parties, tribal membership and, in a few cases where they could be found, technocratic skills.[2]

In so far as there was a policy about the Southern takeover, it was focused on personnel. Southerners were determined that this was **their** new government and that it must be run by Southern personnel. The immediate task was staffing at the three levels of administration, a task made urgent by the almost complete departure of Northern administrators. Southern appointees would occupy vacant positions and also staff the large number of new posts that had been created.[3] The absence of alternative employment opportunities made public service positions with salaries highly prized.

In Regional Government newly recruited and promoted officials came from a mixture of backgrounds. A few continued from the previous administration in the South or returned from working in government in Khartoum. These tended to fill the senior positions as no other people with relevant experience were available. Other officials had been in government at various times previously, but had been dismissed or had left to join the Anyanya, to become school teachers or try to start businesses. Most appointees were new recruits- a few graduates and diploma holders, but far more school leavers, some with school certificates but many without. Overall, experience in government and administration was minimal.

At provincial and district levels, administrators were supposed to be joined by decentralised Regional Ministry officials. The three provinces and twenty-five districts at that time varied enormously in available resources and their ability to attract new personnel. Recruitment of even partially qualified personnel was a huge challenge. All the positions were hardship posts by Southern standards, which meant that conditions were very difficult indeed. Local government officers talked of 'footing' – the only way they had of getting round their districts as they had no transport. A lot of offices and housing in district headquarters had been completely destroyed during the war.

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[2] As outsiders the team members did not of course know the detailed criteria that were applied when making appointments.

[3] Southern Sudan shared this priority with incoming independent governments in the nineteen sixties and seventies. The conventional wisdom was that all that was required formally was a change from colonial officials to locals - then carry on more or less as before, albeit with more varied and ambitious objectives. The creation of the Southern Regional Government was an example of decolonisation in most practical ways with the same priorities in terms of personnel. In aid circles more generally, priorities changed to 'Institutional Development' after 1980 and then 'Governance' from the early nineties. These later approaches did not downgrade the importance of personnel but placed it in a wider context of needs .

Many recruits came from the Anyanya or other guerrilla movements for two main reasons. Firstly, they were willing enough and tough enough to serve in difficult rural areas without support. Secondly, there was a security dimension. Those who had not been absorbed into the National Army as part of the Addis Agreement or recruited into the Police or Prison Service could be placed in what was a disciplined, uniformed Local Government Service, where their activities could be monitored and when necessary constrained.

The lives of the new recruits in local government were not made any easier by the commitment throughout the country to implement the radical Sudanese 'People's Local Government Act' of 1971, which in many of its provisions could only be described as aspirational and almost visionary, rather than practical and realistic, particularly in the traditional rural areas.[4] Imposing the new system or more realistically reaching an accommodation with powerful local chiefs who had been accustomed to running local affairs during the war, were two of the main challenges facing the new officials.[5]

Training for Administrators

What officials needed at all levels except possibly in a thin layer at the top, was experience, and as a partial substitute training. The courses that were provided for local government officers were organised by the Ministry of Regional Administration and Legal Affairs with support from the Institute of Local Government Studies in Birmingham University of which I was a member.

Courses had to be tailor-made and cover the very basics of administration, for example: how to write and file letters, keep records, write minutes, hold meetings. Work with political ministers was mentioned but not covered in anything like the depth required for successful relationships. A special effort was made to inculcate a belief in the supremacy of the Rule of Law. Possibilities in rural development were explored in a field trip to a rural training centre in Yei.[6]

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[4] This act abolished the colonial system of local government and the judiciary based upon the traditional authority of chiefs and sheikhs replacing it with local councils. The law was never fully implemented.

[5] The vital importance of the chiefly hierarchy was underlined by one of the first actions of Dr John Garang when he came to power. He summoned all the leading chiefs and 'kings ' to his Headquarters at New Site in early 2005 to brief them about his regime and policies and to try to ensure their loyalty and support for his government.

[6] The Birmingham team was also tasked with assessing needs in health, education, agriculture and trade and the situation in taxation and budgeting as a whole. The concept was that local government administrators would lead development in these areas. The survey was done by simply asking the opinions of available officials and

One difficulty that emerged during the training was the poor standard English. The Regional Government was adamant that the language of government at all levels was English, though previously Arabic had been used and Juba Arabic was (and is) the lingua franca. Written English was the main problem.

The Challenges of Administration

Available office accommodation for the expanded Regional Government could not initially house the range of new ministries.[7] However, the situation was improved in the mid-seventies by the construction of a hastily built Government office complex in central Juba. In provincial towns the problem was even worse and at district level horrendous. The inherited colonial tradition of providing housing for officials and their families at heavily subsided rents increased the problem of provision, especially where there had been war damage. Another problem arose where the previous occupants had been Southerners working for the previous administration and were reluctant to move out.

All kinds of logistical support were extremely limited and inadequate in the seventies. Even the Regional Government suffered severe shortages of typewriters, filing cabinets, Gestetner machines, chairs and desks. Initially, the only telephone system in government was a venerable wind-up one that seemed to work only in Juba. Though there were police radio links, the Provincial Administrations in Wau and Malakal were isolated from the Regional Headquarters in Juba, making the role of the Provincial Commissioner even more important in overseeing all aspects of the governance of their vast provinces.

Transport was another major problem. Vehicles were old, rundown and in need of spare parts that were not available. 'Cannibalisation' was the result with ever more vehicles finishing up immobile in Public Works Department compounds. The average life of a new Land Rover in the South was said to be only 18 months.[8] Fuel was always in short supply and had to be carried in 44 gallon drums for any lengthy journeys.

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local citizens as there was no possibility of more research.

[7] One possibly apocryphal story which may have applied more to Khartoum where all university graduates were for a time guaranteed a 'government' job was that new recruits were told only to come to work every alternate day as there was nowhere for them to sit.

[8] Drivers were able to take advantage of the ignorance of their superiors about vehicle management particularly in the districts. Vehicles were 'tired' and needed six gallons of precious fuel to travel 500 yards from the Inspector's house (if he had one that was habitable) to the office (if he had one). The balance could be sold on the black market.

Both dominating and creating all these problems was the crippling shortage of finance. Funds came from the National Government in Khartoum with only minor licences and taxes levied in the South. Members of the visiting team in the 1970s did not (and still don't) know what criteria or formula were applied in calculating the South's share of revenues, but no Sudanese Government has ever been in a position to meet all the public sector's needs, let alone in the seventies. Oil had not been exploited and earnings were mainly from agricultural exports. The South suffered from being at the end of a budget chain with a very small revenue base of its own. There were never going to be enough funds.[9]

Nonetheless, there was a feeling that the South was doing the best that it could with the available resources. Albeit minimally, Regional Government was functioning down to district level in the hands of Southerners, a tremendous achievement in spite of crippling shortages of resources, finance and experienced personnel.[10]

State Building?

In hindsight, was the South right to concentrate so completely on the changeover and recruitment of Southern personnel to Government institutions?

The immediate economic, social and political reasons did seem compelling. Southern personnel in public positions were the most visible and tangible signs of Regional Government. Salaries paid to Southerners were vitally important as there were no other means of employment with guaranteed incomes. Competition for administrative jobs was intense, not only because of the number of extended family members dependent on a salary for everything from school fees to basic food supplies, but also because Southerners wanted to be involved in running their country and prestige was attached to a Government job. Ex-fighters had to be rewarded for their efforts and sacrifices.

Corruption or at least patronage played a part, but in any case the result was large-scale recruitment. Little attention could be given to qualifications and experience, partly because so little was available and also because the visible occupation of positions by Southerners was more important. Little or no

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[9] Douglas Johnson in *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* states that the Southern Regional Government "was specifically denied the right to legislate or exercise any power over economic planning" (p. 40). The Regional Government was allowed to levy local taxes including corporation taxes, and additional revenues from central government were promised.

[10] A significant contribution to this was made by the stabilising and quiet leadership of the President of the Southern High Executive Council, Abel Alier, who was hugely respected by all parties and tribes.

attention was given to job descriptions, hierarchies and what the incumbents were actually going to do.

The resulting huge salary bill pre-empted the provision of adequate running costs, equipment purchases, service provision and development expenditure. Some ministries drew up what were almost symbolic policies and plans for wider development goals in health and education etc. with little or no ability to implement them. Others did not even bother. Frustration built up among some ministers and officials, but many were content just too occupy the positions and pursue their private interests.

Foreign aid partially compensated by providing funding for and sometimes delivering direct services in health and education in concentrated geographical areas (e.g. Equatoria) but not on a scale that could cover the whole country and make any overall difference. There were large over-estimates in Government of the resources that would be forthcoming from donors. The inexperience of Southern officials was evident as few knew what documentation had to be provided so as to release the funds that were available.

One psychological and a practical issue may also have had a contributory effect in the failure of leaders to produce policy and programmes. A good number of the Southern elite had lived in East Africa for years during the war and chose to keep their families there while they returned to Juba after the signing of the Addis Agreement. The contrast between the comfortable and well equipped capitals of Nairobi and Kampala, and one of the most basic (Juba) where living was a struggle and health and education services of very poor quality made this a logical choice. Understandably, it also resulted in frequent lengthy private visits to East Africa that took up a lot of time and (more damagingly) energy and attention. These visits may well have taken priority over up-country expeditions and building up knowledge of the Southern environment.

It is hard to get away from the view that state building in the sense of an effective government at different levels delivering services and development to the population was never seriously pursued in the seventies. The costs involved far outstripped subventions from the National Government, foreign aid and any local revenues, and there were major political problems emerging as to which areas and tribes would receive services and projects first.

Conclusion

'Government' seems to have been equated with employing as many Southerners as possible in the public sector, without much concern for the resources required to give officials something to do. It was enough to occupy positions and be paid. This is not just a cynical view; although never explicitly articulated

this approach could be defended as a rational response to the realities of the time.

During the period of Southern administration that followed the Addis Ababa Agreement this pattern of expenditure concentrated on personnel became established and this became even more pronounced in the run-up to Independence. The public sector became entrenched as a reward system and set of entitlements for those fortunate enough to be employed, rather than a set of institutions acting as service providers to the community. The attitudes and values established during this period and since continue to affect efforts at 'state building' in South Sudan.

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Not Just Lines on a Map

Rosemary Squires*[1]

How do you administer a country the size of Sudan, especially if you intend to do more than merely maintain law and order: if you intend to initiate development. How do you manage such a diversity of cultures and bring about a better standard of living on an equal basis? How do you involve widely different socio-economic groups in government and developmental processes?

As part of an effort to find solutions to some of these problems, President Nimeiri announced the details of the sub-division of the southern provinces during the Unity Day celebrations at Port Sudan, in March. This was the final part of a policy initiated in 1974; when the rest of the Sudan was divided into 12 provinces; and created six provinces in the Southern Region. Bahr el Ghazal, Upper Nile and Eastern Equatoria retained the old province capitals of Wau, Malakal and Juba. The new provinces of Lakes, Jonglei and Western Equatoria having as their capitals Rumbek, Bor and Yambio.

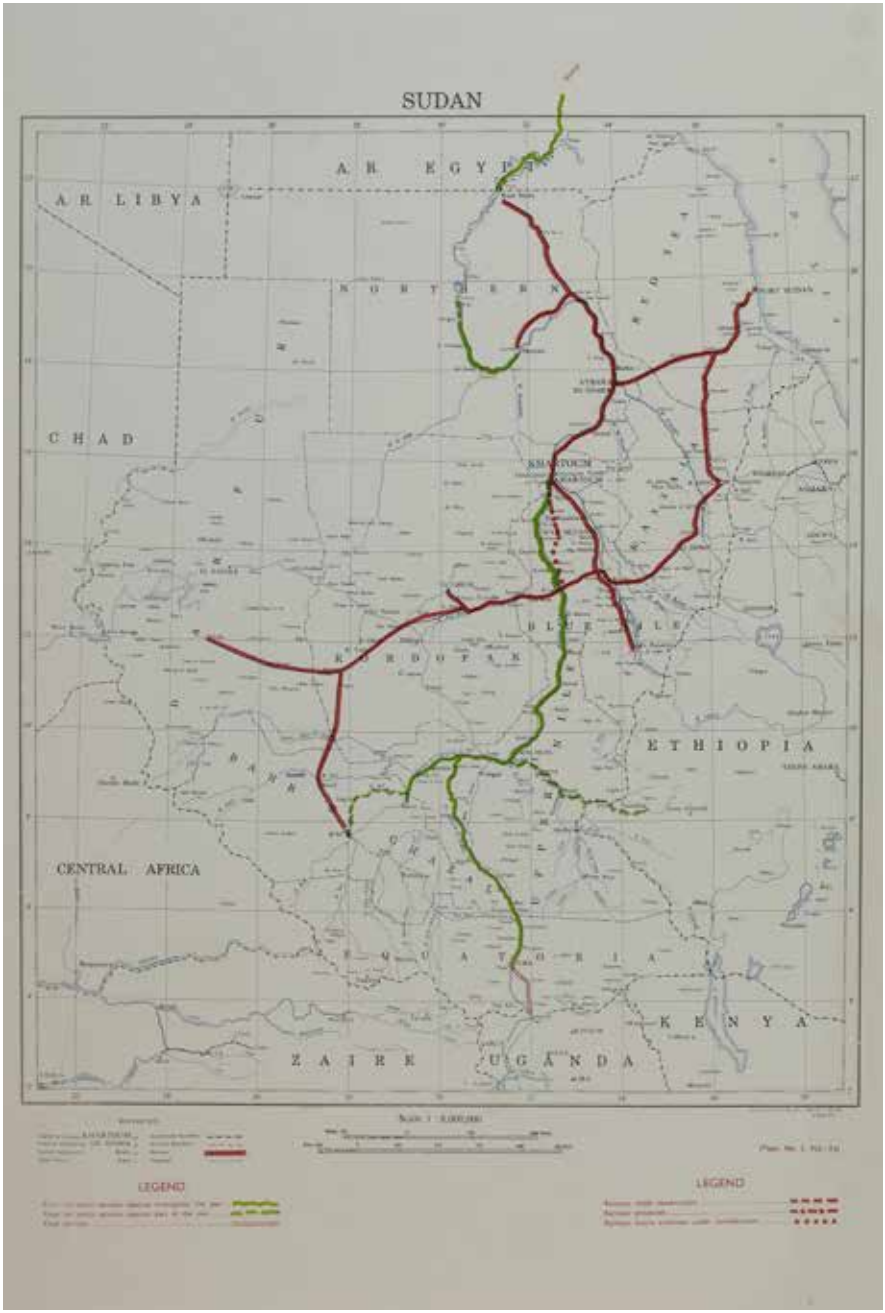
The old provincial framework dating since the Anglo-Egyptian period was designed to facilitate the maintenance of law and order and the effective collection of taxes, and reflected the colonial policy of native administration, in which local tribal leaders shouldered a good deal of responsibility, with a minimum of British and Egyptian personnel.

This pattern of administration demonstrated colonial interest in the Sudan: the control of the Nile basin, and at a later stage, the management of the Gezira plantation. Throughout Africa the pattern was repeated, with effective administration and the provision of an infrastructure being concentrated in the critical area between the location of exploitable resources and the point of exportation.

As a result, government machinery was heavily centred in Khartoum, and with the growth of the Three Towns conurbation, came the concentration of medical and educational services and a rise in the standard of living out of all proportion to the rest of the country. Perhaps more detrimental was the focusing of expertise in the urban areas in a country where development will for some time to come, be essentially agricultural.

To redirect attention towards the countryside, the Sudan, in common with

[1] This article was published in the first edition of *Sudanow*, Volume 1, No. 1, in June 1976, pp. 6-9. *Sudanow* was a government publication and its first editor was Bona Malwal Madut Ring. It has been re-typed and the original punctuation and spelling retained.



Sudan, Khartoum: Sudan Survey Department., corrected 1972.
(Credit: Sudan Archive, Durham, SAD/PF 33/1).

other African states such as Tanzania, embarked upon a policy of decentralization and devolution.

The underlying philosophy and guidelines for execution of this policy, were expressed in the People's Local Government Act of 1971. The main effect of this legislation is to move the locus of executive-political power away from the centres of Khartoum and to a lesser extent Juba to the provincial headquarters, with the aim of integrating grass roots political representation, and administrative decision making and implementation, from the provincial level downwards.

The provincial commissioner represents the government within the province and is responsible for general policy, control, coordination and the supervision of all government departments at work in the province. The People's Executive Council is made up of indirectly elected representatives from a subordinate system of local councils, and nominated officials from government departments, has policy making powers in the maintenance of public order, imposition of taxes, preparation of the provincial government budget, and initiation and administration of economic development projects. This council may delegate selected powers and duties to subordinate units as circumstances require.

The provincial structure of the Sudan Socialist Union is designed to complement the administrative and representative hierarchies at all levels. Not only to ensure people's active support for government policies but also to encourage popular involvement of the people in the formulation of those policies, right down to village level.

In the implementation of such a complex piece of legislation in a country as large and as diverse as the Sudan, the geographical delimitation of the province unit is obviously of extreme importance, and the recent subdivision is an attempt to ensure that each province is capable of becoming an economic and socially self-sufficient unit.

The rationale behind the division of the provinces was the creation of units small enough to be efficiently administered, in which as far as was possible, ecological conditions were sufficiently uniform to allow the adoption of a regional development plan for each area as a whole. Areas in which the lifestyles and tribal affinities of the people were sufficiently close to enable local government participation to be representative, and to make people feel that governmental decisions, at the very least, had taken their personal interests into account. In subdividing the provinces the old district boundaries were maintained. Although the 'tribal' basis of these boundaries reflected the old colonial administration, they will continues to fulfil a function in maintaining confidence among people, in what will probably be a rather delicate period of

transition between the old and the new systems; with the intended transfer of local power from traditional leaders to new elected representatives. As a result the configuration of some of the new provinces may appear rather strange. For example, areas within a few miles of Wau will now be administered from Rumbek. It is to be expected that initially this kind of configuration will seem to some people, to be less than sensible.

In a country like Sudan, where the rate of urbanization has been unequal, benefits will accrue from the creation of new administrative centres. Each new province capital will be a centre of economic growth and with the improved infrastructure which it must necessarily develop as an administrative focus, will become an agent in the process of innovation diffusion. In some cases this may take some time. For example whereas Rumbek is an established town of 18,000 people, with a network of reasonable roads to link it with most areas in Lakes province, Bor is, in modern terms scarcely more than a village, in one of the least developed areas of the Sudan, but its selection as a provincial capital may well do more to initiate change, in that part of the Nile Valley, than a myriad of individual schemes. It is also important to see the selection of new province capitals in terms of the long term development of the Sudan; for the people actually to be affected by large-scale projects such as the Jonglei canal and its associated developments, it is important that they feel capable of making their opinions felt, and for those involved in the implementation of such projects, it is important that the local administration be as efficient as possible.

The growth of administrative centres will have other 'spin-off' effects. With an ever increasing number of Sudanese people anxious to become part of the modern economy, the rate of migration to the old province capitals had become alarming. Juba, for example has grown from a small town in the 50s to 56,000 in 1973 and an estimated 77,000 in 1975. Attendant upon this growth are the problems of unemployment, insufficient housing, and a lack of basic services. The growth of Rumbek, Bor and Yambio will tend to reduce the pressure on Juba. In addition these three towns will develop into important market centres dependent on the surrounding areas for the provision of food, so stimulating farmers to increase production and gradually move away from subsistence agriculture.

The policy of province redivision, is not however without its critics. Fears have been expressed over the availability of sufficient trained personnel to implement the policy, with many government departments in Juba now well below establishment strength. Considerable thought will also have to be given the whole question of financing the policy. The ability to raise revenue locally will vary widely from province to province, and in itself create inequalities. It is actively harmful to encourage people to participate in the government process;

to motivate their interest, and then leave them without the wherewithal to do so effectively. Many African regimes have learnt the hard way that to engender a spirit of self-reliance and then fail to supply the expected government support, leads only to dissatisfaction and eventual disillusionment. A great deal of thought, and the application of basically sound principals, has gone into the policy of decentralization and devolution within the Sudan's new local government system, but a great deal of effort will be required to effectively implement that policy.

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Reflections on a Revolution

Our Revolution is a Mother

Leila Aboulela

After we quarrelled, my sister cut me off. Whenever I phoned her, she didn't pick up, nor did she reply to my texts. I kept on phoning. It all felt like a bad dream, the worst misunderstanding. Dalia and I had always been close, especially after we lost our parents. I rang the bell to her flat and she didn't open even though I knew she was inside. She lived above her in-laws and our quarrel had been about them. It never occurred to me that she would take their side.

I drove my car to the dealer to get the smashed window fixed. The mechanic I spoke to said he was too busy to get the work done within an hour, it would have to wait. Until when? He just shrugged his shoulders. He looked at me with complete disinterest as if he was too world weary and important to deal with my request. So, there I was in the garage arguing and pleading, when a man walked out of the office and called my name. I didn't recognize him at first – glasses instead of contact lenses, hair slightly longer. He turned out to be Emad, Dalia's ex-fiancé, the one she had dumped after finding out that he was getting psychiatric treatment. Then, without thinking, she went and said yes to the next suitor. Emad said he was working for his father now. I hadn't known that the garage belonged to his father. He turned to the mechanic who was already standing straighter. 'What's the car needing?' The mechanic replied that fixing the window was simple and he could get it done within an hour.

'Why don't you come and wait inside,' Emad said.

Normally I would have said 'no thanks', hopped into a taxi and killed the time at Dalia's flat. Yesterday, she had again refused to let me in, knowing perfectly well that I was the one banging on the door, that I was the one tired from dragging my leg up all those stairs. I wasn't going to risk going there again. My only other option now was to wander around and find a coffee shop. They would probably be rowdy today because of the planned protest and with the Wi-Fi blocked by the government, so I accepted Emad's invitation. Besides, seeing me on friendly terms with the owner's son, the mechanic was bound to get my window fixed in the shortest possible time.

Emad's office was nicely air-conditioned, and he ordered me a drink. We exchanged small talk but didn't mention Dalia or her husband. Emad expressed his condolences for the death of my mother. We shared memories of her. I sipped my drink and started to relax. A woman walked in. She was visibly pregnant. What startled me was how uninhibited she was, talking to Emad as if I weren't there. 'Come with me to the protest,' she said to him. I remembered the

slogans from the start of the revolution. *Freedom, peace and justice – civilian rule is the choice of the people. We are all Darfur! Enough is enough with this government. Just Fall.* I had not participated in 2019. My mother, anxious about my bad leg, had forbidden me from going. I would not be able to run far once the teargas started.

Her name was Sally. I immediately sent a text to Dalia. 'You won't believe who I'm with now? Emad's wife!' Dalia was bound to be interested in her ex. And we could slip back to how we were, our quarrel forgotten.

Sally was different than Dalia – especially in looks, hair all naturally frizzy and wearing denim dungarees. But there is no need to describe her because the whole world got to know her. She was the one in the news photo, taken by my phone, that spread from Washington to Kuala Lumpur. The pregnant woman standing up to the snarling soldier, her belly between them, her unborn baby inches away from his gun. Sally the icon of the revolution. Her taut bulging stomach thrust out against the brutality. Innocence and hope leading the rebellion, coming smack up against the murderous army. But that came later. As did all the praise – *Our Revolution is a Mother. We're sacrificing for our unborn children. Fearless Sally*… And then after that the backlash, the condemnation and envy - *But how could she expose her unborn child to the teargas… How could she be so careless… What kind of mother-to-be is that…. the battleground is no place for a six-months-old foetus.* To be honest, Emad said that last sentence to her now in front of me but in gentle tones, more questioning than assertive, nothing like the hate poured on her on social media. But the photo and all that it brought was still in the future. On that morning when my car window was getting fixed, she was still a stranger to me. I witnessed the exchange between her and Emad. Sally, insistent that he shuts down the garage for the day and encourages his staff go to the protest.

I kept glancing at my phone waiting for Dunia to answer my text. Instead of feeling awkward, I was captivated by the discussion between Emad and Sally. 'I have to take my father's wishes into account,' he said. 'I am not my own man.'

'Yes, you are. I know it,' she said, with the kind of confidence that was contagious.

I got to know the two of them well after that, indeed it was with Sally that I went to my very first protest, at first wary but then more confident, feeling safe because I was with her. She was a natural leader, there was a charisma about her and an ancient fearlessness which that photo later captured. No longer seeing Dalia or going over to her place, I suddenly had plenty of time on my hands and a lot of bewilderment. Emad and Sally took me in or at least partially filled the gap. Sally wanted a listener, a follower. Emad was happy to make her happy. I had never been greatly interested in activism. But now when Sally spoke about power and injustice, I started to understand.

'My new friends.' I sent a selfie of the three of us to the silent Dalia but instead of the grudging but affectionate reply I expected, she wrote, 'I can't believe you can be so inconsiderate.'

Photos, even that famous one of Sally, don't tell the whole story. What we heard, what we felt in the streets. The acrid constant fear, the heat, the beat of a drum, the hubbub of voices, a high pitch of a woman calling out, the low rustle of wind through the trees, the sudden loud din and tinny echo of a microphone getting started. Sweaty palms and hoarse throats. The exhilaration of being all together, anger coalesced, a cry against injustice and fear, and later collective grief.

When we sang the national anthem tears ran down my face. Love was the flag swaying, love for this homeland with all its shame and damning faults, this city with its new alien ugliness, the desert and river that pulsed the span of our lives.

Voice messages to Dalia…*I might die any day here and you are my flesh and blood… How can you be so hard-hearted ….When I see Emad with Sally I know that you married the wrong man… Get out of this marriage, Dalia, don't be afraid, you deserve better…..Enough. Enough of what you've put up with…*

Her reply eventually came, her voice …. *Can't you see that you are making things worse? Putting me in an impossible situation….*

"An army with a state attached"

Peter Woodward

The current situation in Sudan increasingly reminds me of Voltaire's description of Prussia in the late nineteenth century. As is often said, Sudan has experienced three successful military coups since its independence in 1956 (1958, 1969, 1989) and the military have ruled for the large majority of that time. But it was also successfully challenged by popular uprisings in 1964 and 1985, and there have been further challenges since 2019 that are still ongoing. The late Bob Collins wrote in 2008:

> The legend of the (virtually) bloodless revolution became deeply embedded in Sudanese folklore. "Remember the October Revolution" [1964] became the rallying cry during the bloodless fall of Numayri's military regime in 1985 and has remained so in Sudanese anti-government demonstrations ever since.

Yet the events since 2019 have been far from bloodless, while the current military leaders seem ever more determined to prevent a meaningful transfer of power: why is the situation apparently so different to 'Sudanese folklore'? I suggest that in part at least it is due to the changing relationship between the army and the state over almost 100 years.

Sudan Defence Force

The re-conquest of Sudan in 1898 was the work of British and Egyptian forces, and the co-domini (Britain and Egypt) continued to provide the core of the forces that 'pacified' Sudan until the 1920s. With Britain fearful of Egyptian nationalism, the British rulers then decided to establish the Sudan Defence Force (SDF). But the path from the '20s until independence made only limited use of the force for internal security: instead, this path was essentially a political process, involving relations between the rival co-domini and the rival political movements in the country itself. Thus at independence there were few expectations that the now national army would become directly involved in the country's politics.

Abboud regime

However, things changed only two years later when the army's commander, General Ibrahim Abboud, took power. The takeover encountered little opposition and the coup was accepted as a short-term measure by the prime minister and others following the unstable politics of the two previous years. Known

as "Pappa" Abboud, the new ruler seemed almost avuncular at first and, with the exception of southern Sudan, not notably repressive. It was not an ideological regime, nor did the army engage significantly in activities beyond its own perceived security role. But beneath the surface various discontents rose, becoming more vocal and in 1964, demonstrations and strikes broke out. They lasted only a few days and the casualty figures were low when Abboud handed power back to the civilians. He and his fellow senior officers were allowed a comfortable retirement without any great anger or resentment: and the legend of popular revolt was born.

Nimeiri regime

Sudan returned to its pre-Abboud system of parliamentary government and to its old practices of sharp political rivalries achieving little more than confusion and unstable government. Rumours of a possible new coup circulated widely and in 1969 it duly took place. However, this coup was led not by the army's commander but by middle-rank officers inspired by Nasser's 1952 coup in Egypt. One result of that was uncertainty concerning the stability of the army itself. It experienced a number of attempted coups and in one early attempt in 1971 Nimeiri escaped only narrowly. The issue of regime stability also affected Nimeiri's ideological journey and with it, his relations with political movements and the state itself. He was himself of a pragmatic turn of mind, coupled with support initially for Nasserism. His enemies in 1971 were backed by the Sudan Communist Party and their failure was followed by a move to the West. Later in the decade, another close shave took Nimeiri into an Islamist direction. Meanwhile the army had also begun to move into more direct participation in the economy, including the transport system; and the provision of special social services, such as medicine, that were not available to the civilian population at large. By the 1980s, his personal support in the army, let alone the populace, declined while the economic hopes of Sudan's new growth faded. In the face of growing opposition and demonstrations in 1985, Nimeiri was overthrown while he was abroad.

But while Nimeiri was deposed, senior army officers did not make a complete retreat as Abboud's regime had done. There were difficult negotiations between senior officers and leaders of the civilian movements, mainly from professional groups, before a compromise was reached. It involved a transition to elections and a return to civilian government, but the army retained many of the enterprises it had acquired under Nimeiri; scarcely any officers were punished; and the army remained a potential threat.

Beshir's regime

However, the elected civilian governments behaved much like their predecessors, with confusion and weak policies, and once more action by the military was rumoured. When it came in 1969, led by Brigadier Gen. Omer el Beshir, the initial identity of its leaders was unclear, but not for long. It was soon identified as the military wing of the National Islamic Front and behind the scenes was directed by the leading Islamist ideologist, Hassan el Turabi. It was the most ideological regime Sudan had had: as one of its supporters wrote, its purpose was "to control the state and impose its ideology on society" (El Affendi 1991). To this end, there were purges not merely in the army but in many institutions, as well as new controls on social life. The hard ideological agenda lasted for much of the 1990s before divisions led to the removal of Turabi, leaving the army more powerful and with its own political machine, the 'Islamist' National Congress Party. With oil wealth now from the South, the army found more ways to extend its commercial activities, including growing arms and construction industries. It was accompanied by ever greater corruption in what was increasingly labelled a military kleptocracy. The peace-making with the SPLA in the South in 2005, and the South's subsequent secession in 2011 brought problems with oil revenues but did not diminish the army's domination of the state, receiving over 40% of the national budget, while its role in the economy was maintained.

In the 2010s, the economy worsened and from 2013 onwards, there were waves of increasingly large, persistent and peaceful demonstrations. The citizens of the state were once more pushing back, as Collins had predicted. But now both civilians and the army recalled the experiences of the two previous successful revolts: the civilians realised that this one would be tougher and longer; while the armed forces realised that they needed to protect their established interests by conceding as little as possible.

After Beshir

It is around three years now since the current waves of demonstrations began and they show the degree of desperation felt by so many, amidst repeated reports of killings by the security forces. Superficial concessions have been made, including the detention of Beshir, and a transition to civilian rule was agreed with professional groups similar to events in 1964 and 1985. But the army continued to use force as demonstrations persisted. It justified this to its international supporters, mainly Egypt (with its similar regime) and the autocrats of the Gulf states as seeking to keep order – in the face of demonstrations that were the outcome of its own years in power.

The military's long growth in building its dominance of the state and its

involvement in large areas of the economy have given it a lot to lose: while the continued impoverishment of so much of the growing population, especially in the urban areas, has motivated their resistance; the "legend" of 1964 and 1985 persists. At the start of 2022, it looks like a deadlock but a highly unstable one with a very uncertain outcome: can there be a civilian-led state with an army attached?

Reflections on the 19 December 2018 Revolution

Ambassador Nureldin Satti*

"A revolution of consciousness and enlightenment": this is how the 19 December 2018 revolution in Sudan is described by many of those who played a part in it. The slogans of Freedom, Peace and Justice encompass, in absolute terms, the penultimate goals of the revolution that are not time-bound but embody the fleeting and unachievable dream of humanity. Those lofty slogans constantly show their limits when they are put to the test within the harsh realities of societies such as that of Sudan, confronted with the challenges of despotism, violent conflict and injustice.

This, in a way, is the major 'conceptual' challenge that pits the forces for change against the deep state and the proponents of the old regime, whether civilian or military. It is also the defining trait of the various uprisings, revolts and revolutions led by the Sudanese over so many decades, not to say centuries, without fulfilling their promise. Bridging the chasm between the dream and the harsh realities of everyday life requires more than lofty ideas and noble intentions. The soft power of the street and its youthful and dynamic protestors are constantly met by the solid power of the deep state in its military or civilian attire, standing in the way between the people and their legitimate, if ever-evasive, dream of Freedom, Peace and Justice. Redressing the balance of power to the advantage of the masses requires a united civilian front and a carefully designed and implemented plan to placate the military, limit their influence and wrest them out of the political equation. This is not going to be a walk in the park and the plan needs to comprise continued pressure from the street, the unity of the civilian forces, and astute and concerted political action that would harness the competing interests of regional and international powers.

Strategically, the semi-academic approach to the notions of consciousness and enlightenment generated by the revolution should be reflected in the areas of rebuilding governance structures, civic action, socio-economic reforms, youth employment, national reconciliation, accountability and expunging corruption from social, economic and political practices. It is only then that adequate space can be created for consciousness and enlightenment to contribute to the endeavor of nation-building and state-building in a meaningful way.

In Sudan, as in many other countries sharing similar socioeconomic and political complexities, revolution is not an event but an all-embracing process that encompasses change of mindsets, behavioral patterns and review of state

structures. Skewed civil-military relations have been a defining factor in the stunted evolution of the state and the society in Sudan. One crucial task of the revolution is to look into these relations with a view to defining what future role the military can play in the democratic civilian rule in Sudan. This requires a structured dialogue with the military establishment so as to do away once and all with the military coup phenomenon that has plagued the political and socioeconomic situation in Sudan for over six decades.

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The Sudanese Revolution Through a South Sudanese Lens

Mawan Muortat*

In South Sudan, public concern about the unfolding events in Sudan is lower than expected, considering the shared history between the two countries. More surprisingly, if not disappointingly, sympathies tend to lie with the military rather than the pro-democracy revolutionaries.

Sudan is still viewed as a hostile entity. The current popular uprising against military rule is not the first in Sudan. The election of civilians to power following similar past pro-democracy revolutions did not lead to breaks in military suppression in the South nor did it stimulate a desire to seek peaceful resolution of the South's demands. If anything, things worsened repeatedly on both counts. The two major breakthroughs to the problem, the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement and the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, occurred when the army was in charge in Sudan. This is not to say that the military rulers are not as ruthless as their civilian counterparts but it may explain why the South Sudanese are not holding their breath over the unfolding civil uprising in Sudan and the prospects for a civilian takeover.

As well as being shaped by known historical grievances, South Sudanese attitudes toward Sudan are also being influenced by future hopes and fears. As the power struggle continues in Khartoum, the sympathies of some South Sudanese are with the most pro-South or Juba-friendly groups – be they military or civilian. They want an end to the alleged entrenched harbouring by Sudan of anti-Juba insurgencies. Conversely, the insurgents themselves and their many supporters want groups that would continue such support to take over in Khartoum.

It is these fears for the future that shadow South Sudanese perspectives and prevent people from viewing the precarious state of Sudan more objectively. Wider and clearer media coverage of the struggle in Sudan, by English-language Sudanese media and local media in South Sudan, is needed to help raise awareness in the country.

There are, however, South Sudanese activist groups, though very small, which are not only supportive of their Sudanese counterparts but are inspired by them. They feel undaunted by the current lack of public support and are thus willing to do the groundwork and wait.

This brings us to the next point, which is the wider meaning of the Sudanese revolution, particularly if it were to take its course and the obstructive junta is removed. Will it usher in a new and sustainable era of stability and

economic development? Will it deliver on its promises? History, both in Sudan and in the region, tells us otherwise.

While this does not mean that the Sudanese revolution or other similar civil actions in the region are worthless, it suggests that they, alone, are insufficient to bring about the desired outcomes. A revolution might set us off on the right path but it won't per se take us to the promised land.

Sudan is 66 years old this year. It has changed leaders at least twelve times, counting the current incumbent, Lieutenant General El Burhan. Despite this, and the fanfare that accompanied most of these transitions, the living conditions of the average Sudanese have not improved since independence in 1956, and in some cases, have deteriorated.

A South Sudanese making a quick survey of the surrounding countries would see only failure. From lawless Libya to forgotten Chad, Central African Republic and Congo-Kinshasa, to Uganda, whose post-Museveni future looks ominous. Genocide might be unfolding in Ethiopia. There is a risk the country might disintegrate, while the investors who were lured by its recent economic success are now deserting it. Sudan, which has been plagued by strife and misrule since its independence, is again staring into the abyss. This leaves Kenya but it, too, is not completely out of the woods. Each of these countries is at least 60 years older than South Sudan – and was, even that long ago, in a better shape than South Sudan currently. Given its turbulent neighbourhood and considering the unpleasant face its own leaders have already revealed, nothing short of a miracle could usher South Sudan on a different path.

Revolutions in such conditions are inevitable, if not necessary, notwithstanding their potential to bring about bloodletting and untold suffering, together with social ills which may define the nature of the post-revolution society. South Sudan itself is a case in point.

For the revolutionaries, therefore, to end up on the right side of history by delivering on what is promised, they must be mindful of all these ground facts. They must understand the unstudied causes of the recurrent failures, be equipped with their solutions, have plans for effecting those solutions and be aware that much of the revolution's work would be to implement the lesson-learned inspired structural changes – over a long-allotted period. Even after all this, success might elude them.

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The Deeper Meaning of the Sudanese Revolution

Husam El-Mugamar*

حرية سلام وعدالة

Freedom, Peace and Justice!

These are the slogans that have guided the Sudanese through the ongoing revolution. On the surface, they represent the fundamental and basic human rights. These cries for change are able to win the hearts and minds of many at a time where basic human rights are regularly undermined throughout the globe. Women and men, young and old came together to protest peacefully against the dictatorship, regardless of race or creed. Each turning towards a central oppressor – the unilateral ideologies of one of the most aggressive regimes of kleptocracy, that weaponised Sudanese culture and faith to maintain its grip on power.

At a first glance, this slogan is a rallying cry for almost universally accepted rights and dignities. However, each word in this phrase represents a poignant rejection of the twisted cultural brainwashing which the regime utilised to maintain its legitimacy.

Freedom can represent the breaking of many chains that have tied down the Sudanese since the start of the Bashir regime. From the bottom-up funnelling of resources to a privileged few, leaving many in a state of economic servitude, to the use of political Islamism to tie dissenting views with immorality and imprison the minds of the Sudanese. The weaponisation of Islam against the people perfectly exemplifies this. Since the regime's inception, the establishment has sought to align themselves with piety. First-hand accounts illustrate military propaganda being interspersed with Islamic sermons and lectures. Moreover, the regime has utilised mosques by placing and promoting loyalists in key religious institutions to preach legitimising sermons to attendees in person. "They were washing our brains", was a statement made by a young man who was witness to these actions. This religious brainwashing even extended to forms of expression such as dress. In fact, many have been killed or brutalised for wearing shorts, dreadlocks or trousers in public. Is it any wonder then, that the Sudanese rallying cry centred on freedom? This was not freedom only in an abstract sense but freedom to oppose a regime where the stakes were not only failure but going against Allah.

In a country which housed the longest-running civil war, leading to the secession of the South, peace is a call which is desperately needed by its people. Hundreds of protestors have lost their lives to the extreme brutality

of Bashir's militias during the revolution. In the meantime, Sudan's story is marred by a long history of tribalism, ethnic tensions and even genocide in Darfur. Millions of Sudanese have been displaced by this violence. Lives have been lost and wealth stolen and hoarded amongst the privileged few. In fact, according to the UN. Security Council's Panel of Experts, Sudan raised serious concerns over gold smuggling in Darfur. These horrific acts of cultural genocide could not have taken place without the foundations of racism and tribalism being strengthened. It is well known that Bashir's regime upheld the "Arab" culture of the northern tribes as superior, creating a dichotomy of Arab versus non-Arab in one of Africa's most diverse countries. This left many with only two options: assimilate or suffer. Of course, colourist rhetoric means that Sudanese with darker skin tones and African-associated features could not do this. Hence, this faction of society unfortunately faced the brunt of state-sanctioned violence seen in areas like Darfur, the Nuba Mountains and Kordofan. With this in mind, the protest chant of "*Salam*", or peace, represents a rejection of the tribalism and Arabisation that lead Sudan to this point. In the words of the late Dr John Garang, "Arabism cannot save us; Africanism that is opposed to Arabism cannot save us; Islam cannot unite us; Christianity cannot unite us – but Sudanism can unite us, because it is the common house."

With a failing justice system that has routinely failed to prosecute the architects of Sudan's problems and has protected Islamists in power, "Justice!" is a call for righting all the aforementioned moral wrongs. Justice for the murdered protestors, for those lost in Darfur, for the religious and ethnic minorities who have long been persecuted, for the children who died in famines because of a failing economic structure that sidelined infrastructure, for the diaspora who left their homeland with no other choice, for those who died because of an underfunded and unfit-for-purpose healthcare system. Justice is invoked for all the Sudanese who suffered under the heel of the Bashir regime.

The peaceful protests have created a culture that is expressed widely by almost everyone participating in the revolution. The culture is now deep-rooted in the fabric of Sudanese society. We have listened to revolutionary music, poems and performance arts. These many forms of creative art will have a long-lasting effect in Sudan and globally; this a major shift in the cultural *Zeitgeist* that constitutes a deeper change in Sudanese societies and communities around the country. The youth of the revolution are well connected, informed and determined to gain their freedom and to form long-lasting civic institutions. They are also acutely aware of the value of good governance and accountability. This way of clear vision will lead to stable and robust institutions. With this collective awakening, we have faith that the hopes of the

peaceful resistance for a democratic and prosperous Sudan will be realised, sooner or later.

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Thoughts on Sudanese Practising Non-violent Resistance

Jihad Mashamoun*

During the events of the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011, I was fascinated by the level of commitment that people put themselves through to end authoritarian rule in whatever form it took in their countries. After all, the stories of that commitment reminded me of the similar stories I had heard from my grandmother, aunts, uncles and other relatives regarding Sudan's October Revolution of 1964 and the April *Intifada* (Uprising) of 1984.

Naturally as I was a political science undergraduate at the time, I committed myself to understanding what dynamics and conditions had opened the way for both events. I wanted to evaluate if those contexts were being replicated during the *Ingaz* regime, the political Islamist "Salvation" regime that lasted from 30th June 1989 to 11th April 2019. I read a lot of books on social movements, political development, armed resistance movements, civil-military relations and political theory, and yes, I enjoyed reading Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*. I also appreciated the stance of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army of equality for everyone in Sudan, regardless of ethnic or religious identity. I have always believed Dr John Garang's saying: "Sudanism can unite us because it is a common house."

However, by reading Sudan's own history of political development, I realised that it would be very challenging for a third revolution to happen in Sudan similar to the October Revolution and the April *Intifada*. That is because the *Ingaz* regime had managed to divide the political opposition, infiltrate civil society and consolidate its influence in the country through careful planning ever since the 1950s. Importantly, there were instances when outside powers had supported that regime to support doable but short-term objectives. Those outside powers came to similar conclusion, that the regime had consolidated its rule throughout Sudan.

For example, the United States government under George W. Bush began intelligence cooperation with the *Ingaz* regime by flying General Salah Abdullah "Gosh", the head of the Sudan National Intelligence and Security Services, to the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in 2005. And the European Union joined the Khartoum Process on migration in 2014. This helped strengthen the Darfur *Janjaweed*, from which the Rapid Support Forces of Lieutenant Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo "Hemedti" were formed. That is because the RSF, which the regime used to patrol the border under the Khartoum Process, controlled the smuggling routes to Libya which refugees used to board boats to Europe.

A personal turning point in understanding Sudanese politics happened in 2012-13. At the time, young people, close to me in age, were leading protests against the regime which resulted in them being attacked by security forces. Amid the excitement of people protesting on the streets, without the leadership or support of the political parties, those parties have always responded by trying to unite to help guide a supposed transition. I was disappointed, though, that the parties didn't do more to help protestors who were continually suppressed by the security forces. So I decided to talk no longer about Sudanese politics but to focus on reading about non-violent resistance methods.

To my fascination in 2016, through the news and social media, I learned that other Sudanese youth had also been reading about non-violent resistance methods, such as boycotts and absenteeism from work, to oppose the then regime and were also disappointed by the parties. Although the methods were still in their infancy, they started to have an impact, so that to minimise the impact of a well coordinated disobedience movement, the regime decided to declare 19th December as the official national independence day, instead of the traditional 1st January.

The involvement of youth in coordinating the movement impressed me as I identified with them in wanting change in Sudan for the better, rather than constantly having to be careful how we spoke in order not to be arrested for expressing our expectations of a better life. Of course, I was also taken over by joy at the resilience that people displayed in 2018, which led to the December 2019 revolution, where I found that young people were coordinating the non-violent resistance movement by applying in practice the theories of non-violent resistance which I had only read about.

I was hopeful about the developments and believed that a full civilian government could be and should be formed, but I also understood that the former *Ingaz* regime would not give up power: it had truly used its 30 years in power to root itself into every part of the society and state. Therefore, the political parties knew it would be a challenging task to uproot it, especially as they do not have the power of the state – the military and the security forces that protected the regime. This is at odds with the people's demand for the dismantling of the entire *Ingaz* regime. That's why the revolution is still going on.

What continues to fascinate me is that fellow Sudanese have persisted in maintaining their demands for freedom, peace and justice whereas Lt. Generals Abdel Fattah el Burhan and Hemedti planned to use the transition period to tire the people of those demands. That is a hard lesson that both sides are coming to grips with at time of writing, and a hopeful one for those wanting to explore further the depth of non-violent resistance in practice.

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The Revolution: Thinking and being

Gill Lusk

"What happened was not a revolution", said an old friend with extensive knowledge of both Sudan and of politics. Note the past tense. I beg to differ and I hope the paragraphs which follow will show why. The reasons the friend gave, in June 2020, were the "many internal weaknesses of the social movement that brought Bashir to jail" and that "Islamists are still powerful and able to build a campaign...". He also noted that it is not enough to call something a revolution for it to be so, citing Portugal in 1975. The first points clearly contain a lot of truth but many people more widely might disagree with that last reference. Those of us old enough to remember that Portugal, Greece and Spain – now successful democracies and staunch members of the European Union – saw brutal military dictatorships overthrown only in 1974-5 might surely remain optimistic about Sudan's future. We might even remain convinced that the Revolution that broke out in late 2018 in Sudan really does deserve that name, regardless of attempts by the old regime to counter it. Indeed, the term of "counter-revolution" surely allows for the eventuality of failure, albeit temporary, in any revolution.

One partial criterion for defining a political and/or social revolution is "new ways of thinking and being".[1] In Sudan's case, another marker is the slogan "*Hurriya, Salam wa Adala! El Thowra Khiar el Shaab*!" (Freedom, Peace and Justice! Revolution is the People's Choice!) The shouts of "*Thowra*!" continue to ring out at every protest, regardless of the military coup of October 2021 and the restoration since then of sacked Islamist officials to senior government positions, including diplomatic and other powerful civil service posts.

The persistence of street protests (in themselves 'a new way of thinking and being') has been a defining feature not just of continuing unrest, as a casual observer and many foreign journalists might think, but of the astonishing determination of the public to resist the reimposition of Islamist rule enforced by the military. Despite the very real danger of death or serious injury from lethal gunfire and unusually toxic teargas, slogans condemning the *Keizan* (Islamists) and demanding civilian rule (*medaniya*) have continued to rise from towns and cities across the country, and not just from young people. Images of this resilience tumble over one another, clogging mobile phones and, in the less joyful but equally brave ones, often providing evidence for eventual prosecutions. One of the most memorable is surely that of a young man leading a

[1] Gill Lusk, 'Spring of Hope', *Sudan Studies* No. 60, July 2019.

procession of protesters while solemnly bearing before him the shroud for his own funeral, a defiant offering to the powers-that-be.

The first word that came to my mind when I thought about key themes of this Revolution was 'peacefulness'. Although Sudanese protests have been historically known for their peacefulness, the adoption of non-violent protest as a specific strategy is surely new. It has been hugely effective and also astonishing in the face of such violent provocation from the security forces. Protestors worldwide regularly turn to violence, even if only in response to official abuse. Yet even when uniformed Sudanese thugs attacked patients and staff in hospitals (itself a crime under international law), the victims responded with calm dignity.

Resilience is demonstrated every day in far less dramatic ways that the wider world never sees. Thousands of people demonstrate but behind them stand thousands more who encourage them, feed them and tend their wounds. If this were an army, it would be a major logistical operation. Yet these are just 'ordinary' people, in support networks based on the extended family, on neighbourhood and on the Revolutionary Committees – so organised and therefore now so powerful.

This blending of informal and formal organisation may be one of the hidden benefits of the Revolution. Traditionally, structured organisation is not that widespread in a society based on large extended family networks and such organisation has been largely the domain of the professional class. For instance, the doctors who played such a leading role in the 1985 *Intifada* (Uprising) against the late President Ja'afar Nimeiri were highly organised, even naming surrogates to take over their tasks if they were killed or arrested (just as the French Resistance did during the Second World War).

Unlike past protestors, the young people who spent days, weeks and months gathered at the 2019 sit-in outside Army Headquarters in Khartoum had – indeed, made – the time to discuss with each other, to nurture their ideas and their creativity. One fruit of the current Revolution thus seems to have been to spread ideas and methods about organisation. Some civil society groups had long been teaching young people the skills needed for democratic change: now they had a chance to 'take ownership' of their ideas and put them into practice.

That includes creativity. Painting, poetry and music have all flourished under the wing of the Revolution. While all these pursuits existed before, of course, there has been an eruption of self-expression and experimentation that customary society doesn't encourage. What can look like mere fashion to outsiders can look like major and even shocking change to the elders. Skinny jeans and baseball caps can convey layers of message about change. It's threatening to some and especially so to the Islamists and their military proxies that

organised the 2021 coup. That lid will be impossible to force back on. It tolls the knell of their failure to brainwash a whole generation that had known nothing but rule by Islamists.

Less adventurous than the protestors are the political parties, especially the big three: the National Umma Party (NUP, which, confusingly, used to stand for the National Unionist Party), the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Sudan Communist Party (SCP), which also stands for the small secularist Sudan Congress Party). The confusion goes far beyond acronyms. For decades, and piled on top of personal conflicts, the Umma has been divided between those wanting to maintain the silken grip of the Mahdi family and those, often youthful, openly calling for the internal democratisation of the party. This split persists, despite the death from Covid-19 last year of former Premier El Sadig el Mahdi, and despite the Revolution opening up new demands and possibilities. One wing has continued to display the juggling skills for which El Sadig was famous and has alternated between supporting and condemning the junta headed by Lieutenant General Abdel Rahman el Burhan.

Meanwhile, since their name referred to an improbable union with Egypt rather than with each other, the Unionists have remained even more divided than they had been virtually since Independence in 1956. Some openly supported the coup, most not, but internal squabbles have again trumped serious politics. Both these major, religious-based, parties rely on traditional, often rural and regional, constituencies and one of the great unknowns of the Revolution is how much it may have affected the electors on whom they have always counted. Certainly, the Islamists backing El Burhan's *coup d'état* appear to be counting on winning eventual elections to re-establish their grip on the country. The control that they have been working to regain over the civil and military administrations would ensure electoral victory but disaffection from the two formerly leading parties would also help. Nevertheless, such disaffection might not turn out as the Islamists hope. Though public opinion is impossible to predict amid such turmoil as Sudan has experienced since 2018, social media abound with video clips of people in town and villages nationwide in often impromptu chants where "Burhan" has a persuasive last-syllable rhyme with "*Keizan*".

Meanwhile, the Communist Party spent over two years focussing on criticising the transitional civilian government headed by Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok rather than developing policies to deal with the crucial issues in the country (such as establishing democracy, bringing leaders of the regime of Gen. Omer el Beshir to account or trying to sort out an economy ruined by that regime). Nor did the Party focus on the full civilianisation of the government which was so desperately desired and needed.

How can three internally undemocratic parties whose leaders stay in power for decades bring democracy? As in previous coups in Sudan, much responsibility lies with political parties which have preferred fighting themselves and each other to building democracy and protecting it from the military and from undemocratic parties, such as the various manifestations of the National Islamic Front (NIF), which used the army to seize power in June 1989. Several smaller parties and groups have shown hopeful signs of building modern, forward-looking organisations, where principles, ideology and policy matter more than age and family connections, and which deplore the lack of regional, ethnic, religious and gender inclusivity of much political life. The Revolution has again highlighted the weaknesses of the main political parties, which have not known how to react to an event which they did not catalyse and in which they have not yet found their role. For many if not most politicians, some sense of accountability to the public at large might be a good starting point. The youth who have been the driving force of the Revolution have repeatedly shown that they see parties as pretty irrelevant and that is only partly because the revolutionaries have little idea of what is needed to govern a country. The parties don't often think in policy terms, either. The late Abdel Aziz Alsawi makes the point elsewhere in this issue of *Sudan Studies* , that if they are to be democratic, political parties need to undertake some serious self-criticism.

Winds of change do not move at the same speed or, therefore, the same power. No societies, and especially highly conservative and traditional ones, are used to taking the lead from young people. Yet that is what has happened in Sudan's Revolution, repeatedly leaving the parties behind. The impetus for protest has come from a section of society long ignored in terms of decision-making, which in itself is pretty revolutionary. This in turn has become the basis for the extraordinary resilience and determination which have spawned an exemplary resistance movement. The coup-makers assumed that resistance would fizzle out quickly, especially if they kept on killing a few demonstrators at every march and injuring dozens more, often seriously. Instead, it has just kept on going. "You can't kill us all!" is one of the brave shouts from the marchers. It is the very spirit of human resistance, reminiscent of France's wartime *Chant de la libération*: "*Ami, si tu tombes, un ami sort de l'ombre à ta place*" (Friend, if you fall, a friend comes out of the shadows to take your place).

The dogged conviction that right will prevail, however long it takes and however much pain there is, also took the international community by surprise. "The revolutionaries are in it for the long haul", commented one Sudanese politican and analyst. It's taken most outside observers a long time to absorb the implications of this and many still haven't, as demontstrated by pleas from no less than the United Nations Secretary General, the Portuguese, Socialist,

ex-Premier António Guterres, for the Sudanese people to display "common sense" and work with the military. The short-termism of modern, especially Western, politics makes this 'fight till the end' attitude of the demonstrators hard to grasp for many of the 'internationals', especially at the institutional level. This doesn't fit in with modern diplomacy, either, where conflict-resolution ideas suggest that an even-handed approach where adversaries meet in a putative middle is the prime way to tackle conflict and instability.

That's what makes it very striking – and positive – that Western governments of varying political hues and UN bodies have stuck to their mantra of supporting "the Sudanese people". Every official statement seems to reiterate the protestors' slogan, "Freedom, Peace and Justice!" This acknowledgement of the will of the people in an uprising looks unprecedented, certainly concerning an African uprising or 'Arab Spring'. Crucially, it has set a precedent and is something that Sudanese democrats – first and foremost the politicians – can build on, if they can find a way forward. Instead, media social or otherwise have been full of condemnation of Western insistence on the democrats compromising with the Sudanese military, a proposal which is anathema to those on the streets who, notwithstanding their astonishing adherence to their code of peaceful protest, have in fact been fact fighting a kind of war. It's a war they intend to win and believe they can. Self-confidence is one of the fruits of the Revolution and it takes many forms. In football, collective self-confidence can make the difference between winning and losing. Yet in the "might is right" world of the army, RSF and the 'shadow militias' of the former regime, power is based not on moral conviction or sheer determination but on a shoot-to-kill policy and the lethal use of teargas fired directly at unarmed civilians. There are no international controls over the constituents of such gas and that used in Sudan appears more toxic than any legitimate crowd control might require, say human rights experts.

The assumption of eventual victory is thus something the protestors share with the military, who have the Islamists behind them. The timing of the October *putsch* has widely been explained abroad by the growing disagreement among civilian politicians and the fact that "a coup was in the air" (not least because Finance Minister Gibreel Ibrahim Mohamed and other politicians who then embraced the coup, began to talk publicly about supporting the army). Gen. El Burhan exaggerated and exploited this discontent to the full, using it to attempt to justify the military's abolition of the civilian, officially executive, wing of the government, led by Hamdok. Other reasons lurked behind the coup, however, including threats from the Empowerment (*Tamkin*) Elimination, Anti-Corruption and Funds Recovery Committee to the military's grip on parts of the economy, including the domination of gold mining and

trading by the de facto Rapid Support Force (RSF) boss, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo 'Himedti', the Sovereignty Council's number two. Both El Burhan and Himedti are also at risk of being charged for their roles in the regime's ethnocidal war in Darfur, potentially by the International Criminal Court. They are thus widely seen as having plenty of reasons to fear the democratic transition. If they needed further convincing, the frantic withdrawal of Western troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, leaving the people in the hands of the Islamists they had been fighting for two decades, will have convinced Sudan's military that they certainly didn't need to fear unwelcome foreign intervention in Sudan (Egyptian, Saudi, United Arab Emirates' and Russian support being welcome).

Western short-termism and its failed longer-termism are a gift to the Islamists whose perspective is eternity. They had been waiting not only in the wings but in the homes, offices and training grounds where they have been planning their return since President Omer el Beshir was overthrown in April 2019. Some of those plotters were from the start military. The NIF-National Congress Party regime began 'Islamising' the officer corps from the moment it seized power in 1989 and so 30 years later, there remained few who were not Islamist or at the very least, more than willing to cooperate. The Sudan Armed Forces are seen as having greatly increased their power in relation to civilians within the regime over the years, especially after the conflict between El Beshir and Hassan el Turabi came to a head from 1999. This does not mean, however, that the Islamists had been defeated by the army, as some maintain. The erosion of an ideology though wear and tear does not necessarily change its fundamentals. From its start, there was corruption within its own terms in Sudan's Islamist regime yet in its first decade, no one doubted that it was Islamist. The reappointment of senior officials from the previous regime surely erased any doubts about the cooperation between the military top brass and the Islamist politicians who had originally promoted them.

At the end of January, the situation looked like an *impasse* but was it? The collapsed economy was sinking further, for help from Russia and some Gulf countries could not match the now suspended Western aid and investment that Hamdok's government had so tirelessly and successfully unleashed. Even a heavily armed military junta cannot efficiently run a country without at least a degree of cooperation or where the international community openly attributes the moral high ground to the general public, and explicitly not to the government. Persistent civil disobedience campaigns and shuttered town centres ensured that production and trade were constantly disrupted, along with the steadfast blockading of roads. Many Sudanese observers felt that a compromise with the coup-makers was inevitable but the question was: what

kind and degree of compromise is acceptable or even possible when there is a total absence of trust, since the military-Islamist axis had calculatingly and bloodily sabotaged the very transition of which it was supposed to be part? Meanwhile, human rights activists and politicians in Sudan and beyond were busily collecting evidence to prosecute or impose individual sanctions on key leaders of the coup regime. That doesn't look like an *impasse* but it does look like a Revolution.

Book Reviews

Ahmed Al-Shahi and Laurent Mignon (eds), **Women Writers of the Two Sudans,** Holywell Press, 2019, £15.

Women Writers of the Two Sudans, is a collection of essays in Arabic and English, presented at the conference organised by the Sudanese Program at St Anthony's College, University of Oxford in June 2017. The essays provide narratives that reflect the experiences, interests, and concerns of Sudanese women writers who employ various forms of creative writing. Despite the variety of titles and wide range of topics, the essays collectively tell a story about women in the creative writing field; their struggles for identity, and to replace the objectivity that is attached to women with subjectivity and purpose. The authors implicitly adopt feminist language that calls for gender equality and challenges the prevailing portrayal of women. Although there are now two states in Sudan, the writers in this volume were born and raised in a unified Sudan and subject to relatively similar patterns of patriarchal norms and discriminatory attitudes.

Starting with the essay, 'Looking for A Foothold: The Sudanese Short Story Since the 1940s', Najat Idris Ismail, takes us through the trajectory of women in the field of literary writing; which began in the 1940s with the first female Sudanese story writer, Malakat Al-Dar Mohamed (1918-1969); two decades after the first male story writers in the 1920s. Malakat won the prize for the short story competition of the Sudanese Broadcasting Company in 1947, for her story 'The Village Doctor' '*tabeeb al-qarya*' and won recognition from media institutions as a distinguished writer (p. 11). Subsequently, she opened a new era for women paving the way for their entry into the field of literary writing, despite the ponderous remarks of male critics that reduced women's writing to mere autobiography, forcing some of them to avoid bold writing and / or to adopt pseudonyms to disguise their identity. There are now dozens of veteran women and new confident and skilful generations of women writers; some have won prizes, for example the Tayeb Salih Prize for short story writing. Najat views short story writing as a cultural legacy, rooted in the popular culture of storytelling which is usually undertaken by elderly women (grandmothers or *Habouba*) to nurture and guide children, and document events (p. 12).

This view of storytelling as a commonplace in the culture of both South Sudan and Sudan is continued in the essay 'South Sudanese Folktales in Our Time', by Marcelina Morgan. She highlights the importance of folktales and

storytelling in facilitating dialogue in conflict resolution and reconciliation among the communities of South Sudan. She alerts the reader to the diminishing participation of grandmothers in storytelling, which has been caused by the war and the accompanying social, economic and environmental crises, as well as by technological developments.

Stella Gaitano points to the high rate of illiteracy among women and girls in her essay 'The Book of Hope and Suffering'. Illiteracy, combined with social taboos, oppression, and the repercussions of the Civil War (including human rights violations and gender-based violence), has led to a dearth of southern female creative writers relative to men who entered the field in the 1950s. In addition, the use of Arabic in the north of Sudan and English in the south, alienated the pioneer southern women writers working in Arabic in the north. However, since the 1990s, new generations of displaced southerners have emerged writing in both languages and becoming the voice of their people, including Gaitano herself. The predicament of war and displacement makes it imperative for women writers in South Sudan to engage in writing and not succumb to the intensely negative criticism from their male counterparts. Gaitano wonders whether women writers can simply be a voice for women or if they can broaden their interests to include the political and economic issues that are responsible for women's suffering and vulnerability, noting Agnès Lokudu's stand against anti-women norms and rhetoric. Gaitano's question draws attention to the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into all human interventions, including what we hear, write, and read. Storytelling is a mechanism for education and advocacy, and story writing can help fight injustice against women and raise people's awareness of the need for gender equality.

The essay, 'The Image of Women in the Sudanese Novel', by Sara Hamza Aljack, is a protest about the stereotypical representation of women that has prevailed since the 1920s in literature. Women have been portrayed by male and female novelists alike, as primitive objects and subordinates and the positive shifts in women's position in society that occurred have been denied. For example, in one of her novels the author Zaynab Bilayl writes: "… *and you will waste all this beauty in one useless obsession. You would have had recognition in the house of a happy husband and would have given birth to good boys and beautiful girls!"* (p. 37). This type of novel tends to weaken and frustrate the efforts of pioneering writers like Malakat Al-Dar Mohammed who wrote the first novel that was published in Sudan.[1] This was entitled *The Vast Emptiness* and in it Malakat defended gender equality and women's rights. The social and economic changes that

[1] Malakat Al-Dar's novel was published in Sudan in 1970, which was after she had passed away.

have taken place in Sudan have enabled women to leave the private sphere for education and work. They have made significant contributions to the development of society and become equal partners with men in the public sphere challenging the stereotypes of them as mere objects and subservient to men. However, Aljack claims that as novelists, women have not been able to follow in the steps of the pioneers and represent women in the way they aspire to.

In her essay, 'The Mother and the Motherland in Sudanese Women's Literature', Amal Osman explores the manifestation of the "mother figure" in five stories by Sudanese women writers i.e. 'Tea Lady' (*sitta al-shay*), by Islam Al-Amin; 'Old Ways', by Asiya Elgady; 'A Lake the Size of A Papaya', by Estella Gaitano; 'Speculations and Lessons Learned by the Average Sudanese Diaspora Child', by Hanin Mohamed; and 'A Cup (*Funjan*) Full of Sudan', by Amal Osman. Osman clarifies the literal meaning of "mother figure" and its symbolic manifestations in "motherland" and "homeland", and its connection with culture and landscapes She assumes that through their stories, women writers aim to demonstrate another gentler face of Sudan so as to counter the widely recognised image of Sudan as merely a country mired in wars, genocide, and political corruption. She suggests that perhaps the title, 'A Cup Full of Sudan', indicates that the writer aspires to the reunion of the two Sudans.

The poetic creativity of Sudanese women is thoroughly debated by Rawda Elhajj, a prominent Sudanese poet, in her essay, 'Creative Transcendence: A Description of the Status of Women's Writing in Sudan'. Rawda highlights the agency of illiterate Sudanese women who despite their illiteracy have contrived various oral forms of narration and poetic creativity to preserve moral values and contribute to happy and sad occasions. Amongst these women is *al-Hakkama*, a famous poet and singer in western Sudan, who is both revered and feared as she can make or break men's reputations, incite conflict or advocate for peace. Through their ancient poetic tradition these women have set the stage for contemporary female poets and inspired them to follow their example. Nevertheless, in her translation of classical poetry, Rawda alludes to the limited literary production of Sudanese women, together with their inability to keep pace with developments in the status of women. She charges that in responding to criticisms of women, female novelists tend not to support women, argue for them and/or offer purposeful and constructive ideas. Instead, they become neutral and avoid any pro-woman stance.

As a result of fierce fighting to establish their identity and force recognition of their work, women writers have influenced the creative writing landscape in their favour, growing in number from a single woman in the 1940s to many courageous, skilful, and confident writers who are resolved to keep striving and achieve the impossible. This book constitutes an enlightening document

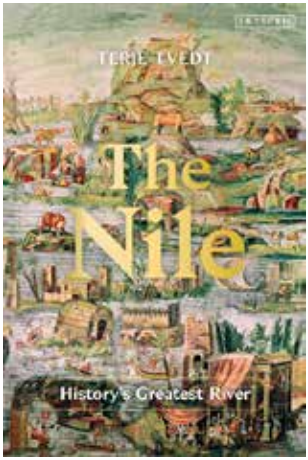
about the agency and determination of Sudanese women writers, that has enabled them to challenge the neglect, belittling, and doubting of their literary output. The content of this volume is the embodiment of a ceremonial poem for women written by Rawda Al-Hajj: 'She is a woman like all women', presented in the book, and one of her masterpieces.

She is a woman like all women
They (women) change what cannot be changed
They (women) facilitate what cannot be facilitated
They (women) explain the inexplicable
They (women) beautify with love the ugliness of life
(p. 16, my own translation)

A feminist language flows between the lines of the contributions in this book, although none of the writers attempt to explicitly incorporate feminist thought and ideals. This is a shame as it could have further enriched the debate about women's role in creative writing and added an intellectual dimension to the essays.

Suad M E Musa is the author of the 2019 Aidoo- Snyder Prize-winning book, *Hawks and Doves in Armed Conflict in Sudan, Hakamat Baggara Women of Darfur*. She is an independent researcher on gender, sustainable development, and peacebuilding and the founder of the Gender Centre in El Fasher, Darfur.

Terje Tvedt, **The Nile. History's Greatest River,** Bloomsbury, 2021, ISBN 9780755616794 hardback, £27.



This book reflects Terje Tvedt's lifetime of work on water in general and the Nile in particular. But it is a lot more than simply a book on the Nile's history, it shows too Tvedt's recognition of the influence of a range of other disciplines: geography, anthropology, political science and of course hydrology. It is a delightful book to read, and has beautiful illustrations. If the original Norwegian was half as good as this English translation it is no surprise that it was a best seller in Tvedt's native land. The book also serves as a memoir of his many journeys covering the whole length of the river's varied and extraordinary character.

The history itself is presented against the water's flow. It starts from Egypt in the north and works its way upstream to its sources in East Africa and Ethiopia. The book really begins with the pharaonic period and its dependence on the river in all aspects of life: indeed it has been called an 'hydraulic society'. Tvedt presents a very engaging account of the river in Egypt, replete with many myths and stories of the times, interspersed with his travels there. But above all the core concern is the attempt of the ancient Egyptians to control and use the Nile with barrages, canals and irrigation.

Once his story reaches East Africa Tvedt goes even further back in time to the thousands of years of pre-history, first with the origins of man in the Nile basin, and then the river as one of the earliest routes for the millennia of migrations that eventually covered the world. He then ranges from that time right up to very recent developments in East Africa and Ethiopia. As he puts it, the historian, "Does not dwell in the past, is not simply or only pursuing the 'primary movers', but *is* in the present, albeit with an historical awareness of the now".

Utilising the Nile waters has once more become a preoccupation of Egypt in the modern era, especially since successive Western invasions, starting with Napoleon's invasion of the country in 1798. However the French were pushed out by the end of the nineteenth century and it was Britain that went on to link its dominance of Egypt to the extension of its empire over the whole White Nile basin, as well as expanding its interest in the Blue Nile as it flows through what is now Ethiopia.

It was under British control that major dam-building projects were widely

undertaken from Aswan in the north to Lake Victoria in the far south. In modern times the effect of building dams has been much discussed with grave concerns expressed by environmentalists. Tvedt, however is impressed by the huge dam building itself, and appears to take it as an inevitability in the face of need in a time of upward demographic trends and growing aspirations. He appears also to accept the developmental role of autocratic rulers, a number of whom he has met. He makes only brief reference to the negative comments on human rights expressed not just in the West, but also by critics in their own states. Events in several countries in recent years, notably in Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, have shown significant conflicts in the states themselves. (Throughout the book Tvedt likes to digress into broader issues, in this case the 'artificiality' of many post-colonial states in Africa: the emergence of the world's newest independent state, South Sudan, is but one example.)

However, most importantly the newest and largest of the dam building exercise is the Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile in Ethiopia. It is the greatest challenge to Egypt in particular, for Britain's legacy in both Egypt and Sudan was that the Nile waters were theirs, as they affirmed by treaty in 1959: still the only international treaty concerning the river. Since the start of the Renaissance Dam Egypt has seen it as an existential issue and has challenged both the building and the filling of the dam, sometimes in bellicose terms. In response Ethiopia and several East African states have asserted the importance of using their own share of the waters that feed the downstream Nile. Many attempts have been made to bridge the differences and look for a more consensual approach by all the riverine states, attempts for which Tvedt shows an underlying sympathy. The Nile may be 'History's Greatest River' but with its limited volume of water it actually presents enormous challenges to the international relations of the countries through which it flows, and indirectly to the wider international community as well. Herodotus referred to Egypt as, 'The gift of the Nile', but does the present situation make it the prisoner of the states of the upper Nile?

Peter Woodward

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. After a period of closure during the worst of the pandemic the Archive is now open to the public as usual. So please get in touch, whether to pursue your own research, to suggest additional records we should try to collect, or to make a donation to the collections yourself. The Archive's homepage has changed and is now https://libguides.durham.ac.uk/asc-sudan-archive and includes a blog. More digitised material from the collections is added most weeks; digital images are linked from the catalogues but can also be browsed here http://iiif.durham.ac.uk/jalava/.

The deferred Durham residency of the Sir William Luce Fellow, Dr Katie Hickerson, will take place this year and her public lecture 'Over the Ruins: postcards, politics, and the visual culture of regeneration in imperial Sudan' will take place at Trevelyan College in Durham at 12:00 on 16th June 2022. Past Luce lectures are available online at https://bit.ly/3G2nIUg.

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. This is a summary of accessions since June 2021.

Sudan Volunteer Programme newsletters, 1997-2020

*__Donald Saville__, Physics Lecturer / Senior Lecturer, Khartoum University 1963-1967: smoking pipes, butterflies, and other museum objects, photographs

*__Harold R. J. Davies__ (1931-), Khartoum University (1955-60) and Swansea University (1960-97): monographs, pamphlets and ephemera, 1885-2014 (24 boxes)

*__Lidwien Kapteijns__, Professor of History, Wellesley College: research notes and papers including audio tapes, interview transcripts, photographs,

relating to Mahdism and the history of the peoples of Darfur region, 1970s-1980s (6 boxes)

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Sudan Directory (1950)

Catholic Directory of the Sudan no. 8 (2006)

*__R. C. Garrett__ (1899-1974), Finance, Military Transport, Stores and Ordnance Departments, 1925-1949, and C.R. Garrett (?1925-2016), S.A.D.F. 1944-1945: photos, correspondence and printed matter (2 files)

*__St Clair U. Cunningham__ (1892-1970), Egyptian Army then S.D.F., 1919-1927: 1 photograph album including prints of the Aliab Patrol 1919-1920, and map

__James W. Muller__, Professor of Political Science, University of Alaska: map of Nubia and Abyssinia, from A. K. Johnston's *The National Atlas of Historical, Commercial, and Political Geography* (editions from 1844)

*__Roland C. Stevenson__ (1915-1991), C.M.S. missionary, 1937-1980, Head of Department of Sudanese and African Languages, University of Khartoum, 1983-1988: research files relating to Sudanic languages (4 boxes)

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*__Ewen Campbell__ (1897-1975), Sudan Political Service, 1922-1947: diaries, correspondence, photograph albums, misc. papers, printed material (1 box)

__Jon Arensen__, former Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Houghton College; Murle field work, 1976-1984: 96 photographs

* accruals to existing collections

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