



SUDAN STUDIES

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CONTENTS

SOCIETY NEWS (3) - by A Trilsbach	2
Sudan Archive Move - by L E Forbes	4
CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT (1) Sudanese Studies: Past Present and Future	4
The State of the Sudan Railways Corporation - by S Bush	5
LETTER TO THE EDITOR (1) Tracey Boats - by Mrs C B Tracey	7
DATA SOURCES IN THE UK (2) Middle East Documentation Unit - by C H Bleaney	8
DATA SOURCES IN THE UK (3) Sudan Maps in Wales - by H R J Davies	10
CAN YOU HELP? (4)	11
FEATURE (3) Ecology, Marine and Bird Life along the Red Sea - J Jackson	12
CAN YOU HELP? (5)	14
ENVIRONMENT UPDATE (1) The 1987 Wet Season in Central Sudan - A Trilsbach	15
NEW RESEARCH (2) - by B Woldemichael	16
CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT (2) Strategies for Arid Lands	17
CAN YOU HELP? (6)	17
A Walk in Jebel Marra (Part 1) - by D Else	18
LETTER TO THE EDITOR (2) Babanusa Milk Factory: Early Days G E Wickens	20
CURRENT AFFAIRS IN SUDAN (2) - by C Gurdon	21
BOOK REVIEW (3) Set Under Authority - by M W Daly	26
BOOK REVIEW (4) Sudan Without Frills - by J Jackson	28
BOOK REVIEW (5) A Desert Dies - by H F Wood	30
RESEARCH PROFILE (3) Historical Ethnology at Frankfurt - by J Adelberger	32
RECENT PUBLICATIONS (3)	34
The Gordon Memorial Trust Fund	36
TAIL-PIECE (2) - by G Janson-Smith	36

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SOCIETY NEWS

By Tony Trilsbach, Secretary of SSSUK and Editor of SUDAN STUDIES.

The last newsletter mentioned that the Society had just over 200 members and that we could probably expect to settle down with a core membership of about 250. I am delighted to announce that this figure has now been exceeded and that membership now stands at over 300. Of particular pleasure has been an increase in Sudanese member.

Many important events have taken place since the last newsletter was distributed. These have included the first SSSUK Symposium and AGM, the formation of the first elected committee, the nomination of an Honorary President and Honorary Sudanese and other Overseas Corresponding Members, the publication of the Society's first Occasional Paper, and invitations for SSSUK to be represented at an international Sudan Studies Conference (see page 4).

The Symposium/AGM proved to be a great success. The major problem faced by the organisers was the overwhelming response, with over a hundred people attending. This more than doubled the expected numbers and the Society offers its sincerest gratitude to the staff of the Sudan Cultural Centre for their tremendous help in meeting the demands of the day and for providing refreshments. The symposium had a wide and interesting range of subjects for discussion, falling into the categories of History and Current Affairs, Science and the Environment, and Education. Although the content of one paper led to some passionate discussion, the sessions went without major hitches, the only real problems being overcrowding and the 'drowning' of some speakers by an overflowing water pipe outside the main speaking lounge. The papers will be published early in 1988.

The AGM went smoothly, with most discussion directed towards the length of office to be served by the committee and the election of Honorary Members. The new committee is as follows:

Chairman	Professor G N Sanderson (Historian)
Deputy Chairman	Dr P Woodward (Political Scientist)
Treasurer	Miss L E Forbes (Librarian and Archivist)
Secretary	Dr A Trilsbach (Geographer)
	S Bush (Former ELT Liaison officer)
	Dr D Lindley (Ecologist)
	Dr G E Wickens (Botanist)
	Dr P Wilson (Publisher)
	Dr J Wright (Surveyor)
Ex-Officio	Dr Ahmed el-Bushra (Sudan Cultural Counsellor)

Additionally, Sir Gawain Bell KCMG CBE was elected Honorary President, and Miss H Wood was appointed Assistant Editor of the Sudan Studies (Dr Trilsbach remains as Editor).



A list of Sudanese and Overseas Corresponding members will be published when letters confirming acceptance have been received.

By the time you read this, you should also have received the first of the Society's Occasional Papers, '**GORDON: Yet Another Assessment**', by Richard Hill. Many were distributed at the AGM, and others not previously despatched should have been sent in the same envelope as this newsletter. No doubt someone has slipped through the net and been missed out. If so, please write to me and I will rectify the situation as soon as possible. Please note that this is distributed free to members, but is charged at £3.00 plus 50p p&p elsewhere. The free despatch should not be seen as a precedent, and the committee may charge for future publications in the series.

One further comment needs to be made concerning publications. The Secretary has occasionally received publications which are not suitable for review, but which may be of interest to members. So far this has included several editions of the **newsletter of the Sudan Studies Association of America**, and a copy of the '**Bibliography of Geological Sciences for the Republic of the Sudan 1837—1985**', by J.R. Vail and J.P. Duggua. If anyone would like to consult these, please write to the Secretary.

Additional comments are concerned with SUDAN STUDIES. As you will see, this edition contains a variety of subject matter, but some points should be highlighted. Firstly, there is a shortage of material on the South, which would be nice to rectify in future editions. Secondly, although I am receiving plenty of new material it is tending to come from the same people. This, of course, is not undesirable in itself, but it would be nice to see a wider authorship, especially amongst members who served in the Condominium. Some of the most interesting correspondence I have received relates to articles which have been based on recent experiences, but which have been commented on by members with experiences from earlier times. This can be demonstrated in this issue with the letter on page 20. A similar comparison was shared at the Symposium in the session on Education, when experiences were shared over the last forty years or so. Finally, I appeal to be kept up to date with news concerning Sudanese visitors to the UK (or Europe or North America), information on conferences, TV programmes etc, and also information on data sources, new research, research profiles and the like.

Finally, I wish to thank everyone who has contributed to SUDAN STUDIES, offered suggestions on a whole variety of issues, and who attended the Symposium/AGM. (PS. **For your diary, the next Symposium/AGM will be held on Saturday September 24th**).

Please send all articles and correspondence to the Secretary/Editor as follows:

Dr A Trilsbach, c/o Department of Geography, University of Durham, Science Laboratories, South Road, DURHAM CITY, DH1 3LE, UK.

This edition of *Sudan Studies* was originally distributed in hard copy to members of the Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom. SSSUK now makes it freely available subject to licence and cordially invites readers to join the Society (see www.sssuk.org).

SUDAN STUDIES: Number 3 (November 1987)

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SUDAN ARCHIVE MOVE

As a result of major reorganisation in Durham University Library, the Sudan Archive (see *Sudan Studies* Number 1 February 1987, pp.4-5) will be leaving its home of thirty years at Elvet Hill, on 28th November 1987.

It is moving to a central location near Durham Cathedral and from 1st December 1987 it will be available at the Palace Green Section of Durham University Library. Benefits of the move include much improved search room facilities and proper environmentally controlled storage for the records. Specialist staff will also be transferring from the Oriental Section with the Archive and visitors and enquiries will be most welcome as usual.

Potential visitors should note the extended opening hours of the Archive: 0900-1700 Monday to Friday throughout the year and Saturday mornings during University terms. It will be closed on public holidays and between Christmas and the New Year. Please give prior warning of a personal visit to the Archive: a telephone call will do and there will be an ansaphone service during the hours the Archive is closed.

Enquiries should be addressed to the Keeper of Oriental books, Sudan Archive, University Library, Palace Green Section, DURHAM, DH1 3RN. (telephone Durham (091)-374-3028, telex 537351 DURLIB G).

SUDANESE STUDIES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Members who were unable to attend the SSSUK AGM in September may be unaware of the SUDANESE STUDIES conference to be held in Khartoum in January 1988 (5th-8th). The conference, which is being organised jointly by the Institute of African and Asian Studies (University of Khartoum) and the Sudan Studies Association of America, includes sessions on the State of Sudanese Studies (country-wise and discipline-wise); Refugees and Refugee Studies; Ethnic Studies and Ethnic Relations; Early Travellers to the Sudan; Famine, Drought and Rehabilitation; and National Integration.

Participants will be present from Sudan, the USA, Egypt, the Soviet Union, West Germany, France, Japan and the UK. Initial responses indicate that SSSUK will probably be represented by up to six of our members. Anyone requiring further details should write to the SSSUK Secretary.



THE STATE OF THE SUDAN RAILWAYS CORPORATION

Simon Bush reviews the current state of the Sudan Railways Corporation and tries to explain why so many operating difficulties have existed recently.

The deterioration of Sudan Railways services can be traced back at least fifteen years. Tonnage carried by Sudan Railways in 1973-4 was below one million tonnes, although it had reached three million tonnes in the early 1960s following the introduction of diesels. This decline in total tonnage occurred despite a considerable increase in industrial output and a fairly competitive rate of carriage compared with road haulage costs, although the effect of the new Port Sudan - Khartoum road must be considered. The reasons for the failure of the Sudan Railways to carry out its mandate are numerous and range from political interference in the management structure and system, to the lack of spare parts, and the involvement of the World Bank in Sudan Railways policy and development planning.

Sudan Railways remains the largest employer (apart from the central government) in the Sudan. It has a total workforce of some 33,450. With such a large workforce in strategic locations, the power of the railway unions is great; about 11,000 employees are located in Atbara alone. In 1982 Sudan Railways workers went on national strike, demanding higher pay and a reduction in market prices for various foods. The then president, Nimeiri, reacted by accelerating railway decentralisation plans which had begun in 1976. It was widely understood that these railway plans had been introduced for political and not economic reasons. One objective was to reduce the power of the unions at Atbara, the administration and engineering centre of the network. For a time, mainline engineering work was transferred to Nyala and Wad Medani, but returned to Atbara when the change in locations produced bottlenecks in the repair of stock. The general offices and management of the Corporation were, however, moved away from Atbara to Khartoum. The decentralisation plans failed because they were imposed too quickly and without first securing basic infrastructure and management.

Sudan Railways depends largely on foreign funding for its development programme, but foreign aid is not always injected in the appropriate area. Aid was used to purchase new locomotives instead of repairing existing stock, improving the main trunk lines and maintaining the signalling equipment.

Sudan is a vast country and communications are difficult. Sudan Railways provides the most effective all country transport system during most seasons. For customers it is more reliable and quicker than ad hoc lorry or bus systems. It takes thirty hours from Port Sudan to



Khartoum, while at least thirty six hours by road - so claims the Sudan Railways Corporation. But, as any passenger can relate, delays are very common, especially away from the primary trunk route between Port Sudan and Khartoum, and especially on the east-west route to Nyala. It has been estimated that only five per cent of passenger services arrive on time. The last Corporation report notes that:

“The record of train punctuality was very much affected by the incidents of heavy rains and winds, engineering works, engine failures etc., however a small number of freight and passenger trains arrived on time....”

In 1984 a ‘Survival Programme’ was designed by the Corporation. The target of the programme was to regain public confidence and also to improve Sudan’s transport capability. The programme started with the introduction of block goods trains from Port Sudan to Khartoum, combined with the introduction of an accelerated service on the Red Sea Line (via Atbara) to Port Sudan. The new express passenger trains, called ‘Super Express’ services, have reduced the travelling time from nearly two days to one. Seats must be reserved in advance from either Khartoum Central or Port Sudan stations. Full sleeping car and meals services are available. The express passenger services are very popular and other accelerated services may be introduced later this year on the routes to El Obeid and Nyala.

The Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr Serafino Wani (The People’s Progressive Party’s only representative in the Government), recently outlined the present poor condition of Sudan Railways to a press conference at the Ministry. In line with many government statements, Wani placed the blame upon the management of the Sudanese economy during the Nimieri regime and the ensuing lack of interest in the railways. The Minister outlined the railways’ current capacity which amounts to forty two locomotives (in the mid 1960s 200 main line locomotives were in use on the 5,500 km network). Of the forty two, ten were bought recently to transport famine relief items to Nyala and these ten remain the backbone of the railway. There are also six steam locomotives that were in use during the Condominium which have been reconditioned to carry light goods loads on the Blue Nile line to Roseires. A total of 6067 general goods wagons were owned, of which nearly one third were out of service. Available passenger coaches totalled 487, supplemented with twelve buffet, dining and kitchen vehicles in regular use on main line and express services. However, more than eighty of the passenger coaches are over fifty years old and must be withdrawn from service to meet safety standards.

Having the capacity to run only forty two locomotives has resulted in a reduction of the passenger timetable schedule. One consequence has been the complete cancellation of passenger services on the branch line to Roseires until further notice. Trains to Nyala are



running at an 'emergency service', but the vital Red Sea line to Port Sudan continues to run to schedule, as does the line to Wadi Halfa via Abu Hamed.

It seems that moves are afoot to open letters of credit worth \$7.5 million with the hope that forty main line locomotives will be reconditioned and put back on the rails in order to transport essential imports and exports.

Today Sudan Railways operates a route of 4,725 km, extending from Wadi Halfa in the north, via Atbara and Khartoum to El Obeid and Nyala, with a branch line from Babanusa to Wau in Bahr el Ghazal. The main trunk route from Khartoum to Port Sudan runs via Atbara, with an additional route via Gedaref and Kassala. Branch lines exist to New Halfa, Roseires and Karima. Sudan Railways maintains connections with the River Transport Corporation at the railhead of Karima (for Dongola) and Wadi Halfa (for Aswan and connections to Egyptian Railways). The passenger ferry service from Kosti to Juba has been cancelled due to civil war. The railway service from Babanusa to Wau has also been suspended because of anti-government fighting in the south.

Simon Bush was formerly the ELT liaison officer and is now responsible for the African Section at the Centre for International Briefing, Farnham, Surrey. He is also a member of the SSSUK committee.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TRACEY BOATS

I was very interested to see the article on the Tracey Boats in *Sudan Studies* Number 2 (June 1987, pp.16-7) and I hope it won't be taken amiss to make some corrections!

My husband, Christopher Tracey, was a very keen and enthusiastic yachtsman, but he was not a designer of boats. He realised the potential of boats to carry the cotton crops in the 1940s, to save spares and petrol for the lorries which were being used. He went to Aswan to see the boat builders there, who built boats with centre boards which could go to windward, unlike the Sudan feluccas which could only run before the wind. The idea of the centre board had been adopted in Egypt from British naval cutters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He engaged Hamimy Bey, with a group of Egyptian boat builders, to come to Wad Medani and the fleet was built there (where the photographs which appeared in the article were taken). After the war the boats were sold off to merchants and I believe that some are still carrying goods, trading on the Nile, today.

Eileen Tracey (Mrs C B Tracey).



CENTRE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

Heather Bleaney continues the regular series on DATA SOURCES IN THE UK with a description of some of the research material available at the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, at the University of Durham. (See also page 4)

The Centre's Documentation Unit provides a unique research facility of major international status. It represents the only freely accessible major collection of primary documents on the Middle Eastern and Islamic world in Britain, and forms one of the most important collections in Western Europe. The current purposes of the Unit, founded in 1970, are to monitor current economic, social and political developments in the Middle East, to procure a broad range of relevant primary material, and to make this available as widely as possible. The Unit contains some 150,000 publications, most of which cannot be purchased through normal channels. Its holdings include primary data in the form of official government reports and statistical publications; reports produced by banks, chambers of commerce, trade unions and political parties; the publications of the principal international and regional organisations working in the area. The Unit has good coverage of basic documentary material from the early 1960s onwards. In some cases, and for some countries, it extends back to 1945. Every effort is made to keep abreast of new developments in a wide range of research fields and to obtain primary documents as soon as possible after publication.

The Unit's holdings in the Sudan section number nearly 1200 items at the time of writing. The strengths of the collection lie in the documentation from the 1960s onwards, although there is some material from the 1950s and earlier. The sections on agriculture, education, economics and rural development are the best represented and, despite the difficulties of systematic acquisition, there are some good runs of statistical series. Indeed, an Oxfam researcher who visited us recently commented that the meteorological data in the Unit was more complete than that which he had been able to find in the Sudan itself (see the article by M Hulme in *Sudan Studies* Number 1, February 1987, pp.10-11.). Important holdings include the data from the population censuses; national development plans; Bank of Sudan reports and bulletins (from 1961); economic surveys (from 1963 with occasional gaps); and the reports of the Jonglei Investigation Team (4 volumes) c.1953.

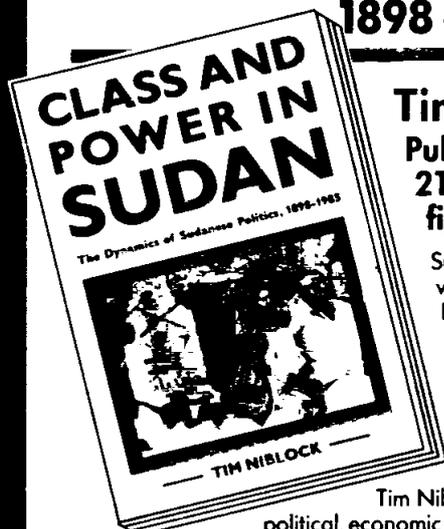
Much of the material is in English, or is dual-language English and Arabic. A relatively small proportion is entirely in Arabic. The Sudan section is on the automated catalogue, thus allowing great flexibility in access by the subject. There is also an author catalogue.

The Documentation Unit is open Monday to Friday, 0900-1700, throughout the year, except for periods around Christmas and Easter. Donations of material continue to be an important source of acquisition and are always welcome. Anyone wishing to make a donation or to consult the Unit is invited to contact Ms C H Bleaney, Information and Research Officer, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, South End House, South Road, Durham, DH1 3TG, England. (telephone 091-374-2824).



CLASS AND POWER IN SUDAN

The Dynamics of Sudanese Politics, 1898 – 1985



Tim Niblock

Published June 1987 392pp
216 x 138mm, tables,
figures and maps

Sudan, Africa's largest country, is endowed with immense economic potential. Possessing extensive tracts of cultivable but currently uncultivated land, it could emerge as a major source of food for the Arab world. Yet today, it is threatened by famine, while attempts at development are frustrated by civil war and political disarray.

Tim Niblock's challenging work examines the political, economic and social factors which have shaped the country's development. The fate of Sudan will be critical to the political stability of North-East Africa and to the Red Sea area. The Sudanese experience, moreover, is instructive for Third World countries as a whole.

CLASS AND POWER IN SUDAN, published by Macmillan, is available to members of the Sudan Studies Society at the specially discounted rate of **£29.50** (usual price **£35.00**).

The book is available through your local bookseller. In case of difficulty please fill out the form below and return to Za Bushell, The Macmillan Press Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS, England.

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SUDAN MAPS IN WALES

Jack Davies offers another contribution to the series on DATA SOURCES IN THE UK with an introduction to the principal series of Sudan maps, many examples of which can be found in the Department of Geography at University College, Swansea.

The map library at University College, Swansea is of a general nature, but has certain areas of greater strength. In Africa one of these is the Sudan. The basic map series for the Sudan is the rather ancient 1:250,000 series. Some of this has been revised more recently, but some maps still feature such captions as “Route marked by petrol tins and stone cairns”, “Featureless sand”, and “Solitary barchan”. Around Jebel Uweinat in the extreme north west corner of the country, tracks may be labelled “Bagnold 1930” or “Prince Kemal el Din 1925” and among other features lies the description “Large cairn of 4 gallon tins”. The library carries a complete cover of this series.

Since the Second World War, efforts have been made to improve map accuracy and information using air photographic evidence, using first of all air photography flown during the War (Trimetrogon Series). The series was based upon the simultaneous use of three cameras, two oblique and one vertical. The whole country was flown in a very short time and the programme was carried out oblivious of the cloud conditions. Certain selected parts of the centre and south of the country were mapped at 1:100,000 as a result. The cartography is rather crude and blanks often occur on the southern ones with the statement “Cloud cover”. Among them exist some aesthetically more pleasing and more accurate sheets such as for the Ingessana Hills.

During the 1970s a whole new generation of far better maps at 1:100,000 scale have been appearing based upon better recent photography, but so far only sheets for parts of the Nile Valley and the Red Sea Hills are available. Slow progress with this new venture is inevitable in a poor country of such immense size. Larger scale maps at 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 are in existence for the more sensitive parts of the country but these are not widely available.

More specialist maps have also been produced using air photography of varying dates. These include the Sudan land use maps (11 maps at 1:1,000,000) which used the Trimetrogon photography. Other photography helped produce the Kordofan Land and Water Use Survey at 1:250,000. More recently still, Landsat imagery and photography have enabled the production of some excellent geological maps of the whole country in two or three sheets.



A whole range of thematic maps has also been produced, usually on a scale of 1:400,000 or 1:800,000, for rainfall, vegetation cover, domestic animals, game animals, tribal groups, population, communications, administration etc. Town plans also exist with the best recent ones being for Khartoum and Port Sudan.

Clearly maps have been made in the past for specific purposes, and today provide useful historical information. In particular may be noted maps for the Gezira before the irrigation scheme was developed, earlier town plans such as the Omdurman 1:3000 of 1949, and the 1:100,000 maps of the Nile north of Khartoum. Maps of the Sudan were also produced in the nineteenth century. The earliest large scale ones of the river areas in the northern half of the country were produced by Cailliaud, a French engineer who accompanied the Egyptian army which invaded the Sudan, overthrowing the Funj Kingdom of Sennar, in 1821.

Although the map library at Swansea does not, by any means, contain all the above, it does nevertheless have at least samples of all the items referred to.

H.R.J. Davies is Senior Lecturer in Geography at University College, Swansea, Singleton Park, SWANSEA, West Glamorgan, Wales, SA2 8PP.

- For a recent very detailed summary of Sudanese topographic resources, see Hewett, R.B. (1986), From sketch map to Satellite: Modern mapping of Africa illustrated from Sudan, Proceedings of the SCOLMA (Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa)/BRICMICS Conference, edited by Larby, P.M. pp.25-32. - Ed.

- Other large collections of Sudanese maps exist elsewhere in Europe and the UK. The Editor is aware of collections at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, LONDON, SW7, and at the University of Durham, Department of Geography, Science Laboratories, South Road, DURHAM, DH1 3LE. (and the Sudan Archive - see page 4). It would be helpful to members of SSSUK if other large collections could be identified, especially those with public access.

CAN YOU HELP?

Peter Hogg lacks three parts of his set of SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS for the period up to 1955 - Part 2 of Volume XXVI (1945), Part 1 of Volume XXXV (1954), and Part 1 of Volume XXXVI (1955). Anyone who could help him to obtain the missing parts should write or telephone.

He lives at 33 Vine Court Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3UY. (telephone 0732-452558).



ECOLOGY, MARINE AND BIRD LIFE ALONG THE SUDANESE RED SEA COAST

Jack Jackson begins a short series on the natural history of the Red Sea Region.

With the exception of Port Sudan itself, the Sudanese Red Sea Coast is one of the least disturbed by man. The sea - warm, nutrient-rich and generally unpolluted - sustains a prolific submarine and bird life. Three zones will be considered in this respect: Port Sudan harbour, the area north of Suakin, and that to the south.

PORT SUDAN HARBOUR:

Port Sudan has a small harbour, uncleaned by either an inflow of fresh water or sea water. Since there is almost no tide, the waters are grossly polluted with oil and poisonous chemicals discharged by industries, which remain floating, along with dead pelagic fish, on the surface. Yet, despite this, life flourishes. Hundreds of juvenile butterfly fish, sardines, groupers, damsel fish, sergeant majors, garfish etc. can be seen, and even the occasional juvenile manta ray. Sharks and dolphins are common at the harbour entrance, as are many species of gulls, brown boobies, ospreys and pelicans, whilst at the closed end of the harbour, by the causeway, flamingos and spoonbills are regularly seen.

The Sudanese civil war has, from an ecological perspective, offered a number of advantages; the construction of a new oil terminal and the expansion of the old port of Suakin have been delayed, and ideas of a pipeline across the Red Sea, through to West Africa, have never seemed more untenable.

Pollution in these waters has increased over the last decade, and is manifested in a deterioration in water clarity and an interesting amount of dead coral. The precise causes are unclear, but four factors have been contributory. Firstly, the experimental deep dredging for manganese nodules which put the dredged silt back on the surface - although this did not last long; Secondly, the effect of the extensive construction work which has taken place around Jeddah in Saudi Arabia; the widening of the Suez Canal, with a concomitant increase in shipping and bunkering at sea (especially around Sanganeb); and finally, the surprising number of recent shipwrecks, which continue to spill oil for periods often exceeding ten years.

SOUTH OF SUAKIN:

South of Suakin, the weather is 'almost European' with rain, wind, rough seas and cool temperatures, but visibility in the water is poor. Here there are plenty of larger whales, crawfish (spiny lobster) and king prawns in addition to those fish found further north.



The area is replete with reefs, most of them badly marked or uncharted, some of which protrude a metre or so above the water and thereby constitute islands, providing havens for nesting ospreys and gulls, and egg-laying sites for turtles (as well as serving smugglers' uses).

NORTH OF SUAKIN:

North of Suakin, a similar profusion of badly chartered reefs is found, but, by contrast, these barely break the surface. The waters here are exceptionally clear and are the ones most frequented by divers and researchers. The inner and outer reefs have different characteristics and sustain different life forms. In both are found the normal reef-dwelling fish, but in the inner, immature pelagic fish, and fish that feed in shallow, sandy waters or on sea grasses

- including sand sharks, crocodile fish, soles - and occasionally dugong are also found. The outer reefs support a great variety of fish, some of which (the big, the famous and the less common) are listed in the appendix. Because the outer reefs have unusually steep gradients and the currents carry more nutritious foods, fish there tend to be larger.

Besides fish there are many creatures to attract the diver: brightly coloured and soft corals, nudibranchs, flat worms, shrimps, prawns, spiny lobster, crabs, clams, sponges and starfish, including the crown-of-thorns starfish which eats large areas of coral. This starfish was the subject of a Cambridge based research group in the early 1970s. Personal observations suggest that its numbers have been increasing over the last few years.

Shellfish are conspicuously low in number. The reasons would appear to be unclear. Two types are constantly collected by specialist fishermen for button manufacture and, to a lesser extent, for Dufra perfume, but this does not account for the small numbers of other shellfish. Oyster and pearl culture studies have been conducted near Mohamed Col at Dunganab Bay.

Very little commercial fishing occurred in the area until three years ago. British Aid runs a small programme, but its success has been very limited; Sudanese fishermen realised that catching more fish lowers the selling price and they reacted accordingly. Furthermore, when two shrimp boats were brought in from Bahrain, the success of the large catches of excellent king prawns was counteracted by their gross wastage; Locals refused to eat them because they looked like cockroaches and International hotels in Khartoum could utilise only a fraction of the catches. Neither refrigeration nor suitable packing facilities were available. A similar second attempt by an Italian boat two years ago failed in the same way and a Norwegian trawler three years ago failed due to complications with the customs authorities. Only the Egyptian fishing boats which have heavily fished the area (and illegally fished the area around Sanganeb - a designated marine park) seem to benefit.



APPENDIX:

Some of the more famous fish of the outer reefs include the grey, white tip, black tip, silver tip, tiger and hammerhead sharks; large tuna; large barracuda; large grouper; large Napoleon (giant humphead wrasse), and occasionally marlin; swordfish and milk fish. Shoals of more than a thousand barracuda and more than forty hammerhead sharks are common.

Smaller reef fish are too numerous to list, but among the commonest are blue spot lagoon, eagle, electric and thornback rays; sardines; lizard fish; moray eels; garfish; squirrel fish; flash light fish; pipefish; scorpion fish; stonefish; lionfish; peacock, redmouth, lunartail and marbled grouper; coral trout; jacks and trevally's; one spot, dory, blue stripe, humpback and twinspace snapper; fusiliers; leopard sweetlips; big eye, black spot and yellow lipped emperors; batfish; anthias; goatfish; sharksucker; clownfish; damsel fish; sergeant major fish; slingjaw wrasse; clown cons; bird wrasse; parrotfish; bump head parrotfish; thread fin, striped, lined, paleface, masked and orangeface butterfly fish; pennant, royal and emperor yellowbar angelfish; sailfin, bristle tooth, yellowtail, black, brown and sohal surgeon fish; orange spine, blue spine, and spotted unicorn fish; rabbitfish; orange striped, bluethroat, picasso, blue, yellowmargin and titan triggerfish; file fish; cube trunk fish; and masked, bristly, blackspot and porcupine pufferfish. Hawksbill turtles can also be found.

Less common are manta rays (which can gather in large numbers off Sanganeb and Wingate reefs in December) and a variety of sea mammals. These include pilot whales (which can be seen in large migrating schools in September), bottlenose dolphins (which can be found in small schools of six to eight at Sanganeb and Sha'ab Rumi reefs and occasionally off Wingate reef) and dugongs (which can be seen off Mohamed Col). There are also large schools of common dolphins off the mouth end of Sanganeb and Sha'ab Rumi reefs, which shelter inside the lagoon in rough weather.

Jack Jackson has written additional articles on 'Diving in the Red Sea' and 'Red Sea Birds', which will appear in the next two editions of Sudan Studies.

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THE 1987 WET SEASON IN CENTRAL SUDAN

Tony Trilsbach commences a semi-regular series of environmental updates. The material is drawn from news clippings, personal communications, field evidence and, most especially, the monthly reports of the 'Early Warning System'.

The 1987 wet season has continued the dry trend of the last 25 years or so. The rains have affected crop production through a deficiency of rainfall totals per se, a poor temporal spread of showers throughout the wet season, and an associated impact of pests.

The early wet season had an erratic temporal and spatial distribution of showers, although heavy storms were experienced in early June; Khartoum received 23mm in one storm, and parts of Northern Darfur, received a sequence of heavy storms which caught some farmers unawares in terms of agricultural preparation.

From mid June rainfall continued to be irregular, and most locations received below 'normal' rainfall, even by recent 'dry year' standards. Fortunately, however, some places, such as Gedaref, received a good distribution of showers, even if the overall total was low. Problems of pests began to emerge in those areas which had been 'wet' prior to mid June, but which then experienced a dry period. These conditions favour pest production, as well as jeopardise crop growth. The desert locust especially, became an acute problem.

By mid July serious rainfall deficits were being experienced widely. Variations from the 1951-80 mean were -66% (El Obeid), -50% (Nyala), -43% (Kosti), -37% (Wad Medani), -21% (Kassala) and so on. Very small surpluses (<5%) were experienced in a few localities, with one notable exception at Abu Na'ama where there was a 22% surplus.

There was no dramatic improvement in rainfall in August, and by the middle of that month it was evident that there would be a below normal harvest. In many areas where crops were continuing to grow successfully, the plants were attacked by insects, locusts and rats. By the end of the 'wet' season in mid October, the extent of the seasons' deficits became clear. The deficits shown in July were maintained to a similar degree of magnitude, for example, only 185mm of rainfall were received in Kassala throughout the wet season, whilst figures for Nyala and El Obeid were 272mm and 223mm. Additionally, in most areas the distribution of showers remained unsuitable for crop production, and the predicted bad harvest yields and poor quality grazing land was confirmed. This problem was most acute in North Kordofan and Northern Darfur, although all areas have been affected to some serious degree.

Once again the situation in the semi-arid belt is critical. Although there is no major livestock crisis yet, the poor crop harvest has led to dramatic grain price increases (£S200 per sack in El Geneina) and some migration from parts of Northern Darfur and North Kordofan.

Dr A Trilsbach is Lecturer in Geography at the University of Durham. He is also the Secretary of SSSUK and the Editor of Sudan Studies.



NEW RESEARCH

Berhane Woldemichael outlines research which he is conducting for his Ph.D. at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His provisional title is "Decentralisation and Development: The Impact of Administrative Reforms on the Development of Primary Education in South Sudan, 1972-1983".

Successive governments in the Sudan have admitted, at least in theory, that central administrative and political systems are unsuitable, given the vastness of the country (two and a half million square kilometres in extent) and the diversity of its ethnic composition. During Nimieri's rule, extensive reforms were carried out in succession at all levels of the government structure, which gave the Sudan one of the most decentralised governmental systems in Africa. Accordingly, local councils were entrusted by law with substantial administrative and political powers and, as agents of change, were 'supposed' to participate in economic and social development. However, the contrast between policies and practices was such that councils' activities were severely constrained by higher levels of government authority. As is well known, the reasoning behind the concept of decentralisation is that it allows the local administrative system to participate in the fundamental challenge of development. In the case of Nimieri's Sudan, however, there is doubt whether such reasoning predominated, and that is the basis of this research. In fact, field investigation on the education system shows that decentralisation in the Sudan has been partial and counterproductive.

The object of the research is to provide an in depth understanding of the effectiveness of decentralisation as a mechanism for development. This is perhaps best expressed in the form of the following hypotheses, an examination of which will provide explanation of the various elements of decentralisation under consideration a

- 1) Decentralisation in the Sudan could have been an effective tool of development administration; instead it was used as a smoke-screen to increase central control.
- 2) Entrusting power to local councils without a corresponding increase in their resources adversely affects their role as participants in development.
- 3) When local councils fail to deliver the basic services for which they are responsible, this in turn adversely affects community participation.
- 4) A decentralised system of government requires effective and active central participation, not only to control equality between areas, but also to maintain standards and to minimise wastage in the use of scarce resources.
- 5) Decentralisation based on territorially defined ethnic entities may not be an effective means of securing regional and national cohesion.

Berhane would be pleased to discuss/exchange ideas on the subject of this article, or to present a paper to any interested group or institute. His home address is 2 Bramcote Drive, Wollaton, NOTTINGHAM, NG8 2NH. (0602-261756).



STRATEGIES FOR ARID LAND

Members of SSSUK may be interested to know of the conference on STRATEGIES FOR ARID LANDS, which will be held at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, on 8th February 1987(?). It is being organised jointly by the Society for International Development and the Royal Geographical Society. The Provisional programme is as follows:

- 1) The Desert Challenge to Grass Genetics.
Dr G.P. Chapman, Wye College.
- 2) Water Resources Management in the Semi-Arid Regions of East Africa.
Paul Smith, Centre for Arid Zone Studies, University College of North Wales, Bangor.
- 3) Developed World Agricultural Techniques for Third World Development of Arid Lands.
Dr K.E. Foster, Office of Arid Lands Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson.
- 4) The People and their Need to Survive and Prosper.
Brendan Gormley, Oxfam Coordinator for Africa North.
- 5) Desertification in the Sudan. What needs to be done and what is being done.
M. Kamel Shawki, Commissioner for Relief and Rehabilitation, Sudan.
- 6) External Constraints and Pressures on the Peoples of Dry Lands.
J.J. Lawrie, Consultant for the Society for International Development, Royal Geographical Society.
- 7) Summary.
G. Lucas, OBE, Keeper of the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Further details can be obtained from J. J. Lawrie, Consultant for the Society for International Development, c/o Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7.

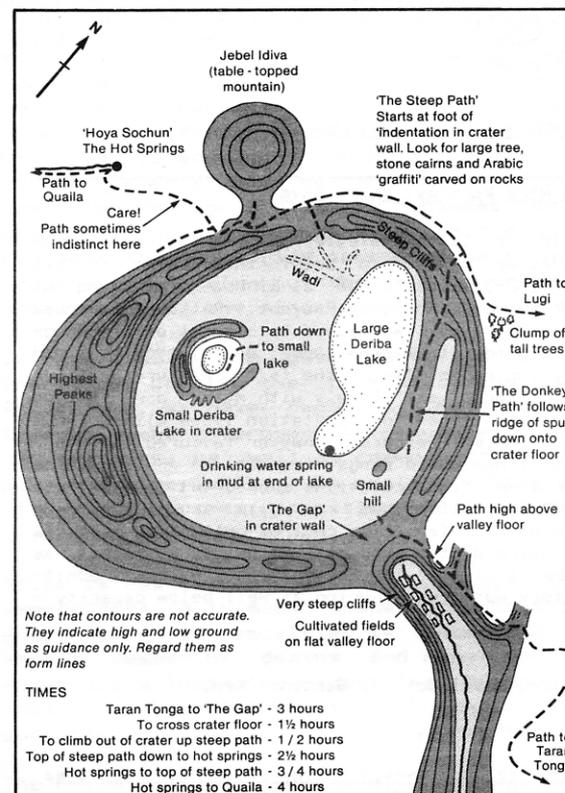


A WALK IN JEBEL MARRA (Part One)

David Else begins a three part story of a walk in Jebel Marra in December 1984.

Jebel Marra is a collection of mountains rising up above the plains of Darfur in the west of Sudan. The mountainous area used to be volcanic and at its centre is a huge crater containing a large circular lake and another deeper crater, itself full of water and known as 'The Eye of Jebel Marra'. It is also just about as far away from the sea as it's possible to get anywhere on the whole continent of Africa, and it is seldom visited by tourists.

Fig. 1 SKETCH OF THE CRATER, JEBEL MARRA
(reproduced from a sketch in the
'No Frills Guide to Sudan' - Bradt Publications)



We had heard a great deal about Jebel Marra. Other travellers had told us about the green mountain sides, the waterfalls, the orchards, and the baboons. From Sudanese acquaintances we'd even heard stories about lions! So in December 1984, just before starting work as teachers in Khartoum, we decided to visit Jebel Marra to take a look for ourselves.

But this was no fleeting jaunt: it was a day's bus ride to Kosti, two days on a lorry as far as El Obeid and then three more days by train to get to Nyala, the end of the railway line and the nearest large town to Jebel Marra. High up in the mountains there are no roads, only paths linking the remote villages, so we planned to walk between these villages carrying all we needed and camping along the way. Jebel Marra is no place to rush around!



In Nyala souk we stocked up with dates, lentils and dried tomatoes, and bought a couple of old olive oil containers for carrying water, then in Mogof el Geneina, on the outskirts of the town, we arranged a lift with a lorry heading up into the mountains. Even on the lower slopes the roads are steep, and towards the end of the journey the lorry crawled along in first gear most of the time. The drivers prefer to travel at night, as it's cooler for the lorries. After nearly one hundred kilometres of moonlit mountain track, we arrived at the village of Taran Tonga, the end of the road and the beginning of the walk.

At 9000 feet it was bitterly cold, so we huddled around the fire with the driver and his lorry-boy waiting for the sun to rise. But the prospect of walking in these little known and relatively unexplored mountains was too much: as soon as it began to get light we set off. Wearing every item of clothing and carrying only the barest of essentials the rucksacks felt light, and as the sun rose we looked down on the lower mountains, where we had been the night before, with their peaks still surrounded by mist. Ironically, thousands of miles from the ocean, they looked like dark blue islands surrounded by a silver-grey sea.

Turning our backs on these lower mountains, we could see in the distance the huge peaks forming the circular rim of the volcanic crater itself, and make out the 'dent' in the rim forming a gap which we would pass through to get down to the crater floor.

We planned to cross the crater floor, leaving by another path, and then walk around part of the outer edge, hoping to find the hot springs which emerge at the foot of the crater hills. We would then follow a stream from the spring down to the small town of Neretiti, another two days' walk away, where we could hitch a lorry ride along the new-tarred road back to Nyala.

It sounded straight-forward, and to begin with it was: The path from Taran Tonga up to the gap wound across the tops of ridges, along the sides of ravines or through narrow canyons, with the vegetation getting drier and shady trees to rest under becoming increasingly short and stunted. But while we were climbing higher in the mountains, the sun was getting higher in the sky, and just as it was beginning to get uncomfortably hot, we topped the ridge and could see down into the crater.

It looked quite literally, out of this world. In that first breathtaking moment it was the intense colours and peculiar formations that struck us most. The crater was five kilometres wide and almost perfectly circular with a flat floor, and browns, greys and pale greens blending together and shimmering in the heat. To the right was the large lake, vivid blue with a brilliant white outline.



To the left was a small crater with steep cliffs plunging straight down into the dark pool at the base. Beyond this was the crater wall, ranging from the saddle on which we stood round to the huge dark peaks of Jebel Gimbala, three kilometres away on the opposite side of the crater. We knew that somewhere to the right of those towering crags a path led up the almost sheer walls and out of the crater.

There were no signs of a path, and the Survey Department map we had (drawn in 1944 “from route sketches and information supplied by Captain Brown and company”) wasn’t much help either. But nothing could worry us. The view at the moment was so magnificent that we just stood and gazed in silent wonder.

David Else will continue his story in the next two issues of Sudan Studies. The next part will concentrate on his experiences within the crater. David Else is a former teacher of English in the Sudan and is the author of the No Frills Guide to Sudan, published by Bradt (see pages 27-9).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

BABANUSA MILK FACTORY EARLY DAYS

The article by Jon Williams in the last Newsletter on the failure of the Babanusa ‘Milk’ Factory reminded me of my own brief involvement in that ill-conceived scheme. During 1962-3 I was based at El Obeid carrying out vegetation and land surveys for the UNDP Kordofan Project. Although Babanusa was well to the south of my survey area I was asked to comment on the Range Management’s report on the grazing for that area (Abdel Magid, 1962). I had found the estimated range carrying capacities of the former Pasture Research Officer, M. N. Harrison (1955) to agree very closely with my own observations and I did not hesitate to use his figures for vegetation types with which I was not familiar. The Ministry of Animal Resources however favoured the overoptimistic estimates of transient New World range consultants who suggested that understocking was not a problem. My calculations showed that to meet the daily demand for 50 tonnes (10,000 gallons) of raw milk would require a catchment area almost the size of Kordofan. The cost of collecting the milk would clearly far exceed the value of the product. Naturally my report was disbelieved at the time, but when I visited the factory in 1970 it was admitted that I was right. The factory was then running at well below capacity -producing karkadeh.

Dr Gerald E. Wickens,

Economic and Conservation Section, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS IN SUDAN

Charles Gurdon provides the second article in his series on contemporary political and economic issues in the Sudan. The column is based on reports prepared for the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), but the author stresses that this column presents a personal viewpoint and does not necessarily reflect the views of the EIU, SSSUK or anyone else.

THE POLITICAL SCENE:

Sudan currently seems to be less stable than at any time for many years. Although a new coalition cabinet was sworn in, following the collapse of the government in mid-May, it fell again within three months. This time the reason was a disagreement between the UMMA Party and Democratic Unionist party (DUP) about the membership of the five man Supreme Council which acts as a collective head of state. The immediate issue may be resolved by reducing its membership from five to three so that in future the two parties will have one member each with the third member being a southerner. However, the formation of the new cabinet continues to be postponed with the government running on automatic pilot. A contributory factor for this delay was the resignation in September of the DUP- nominated Foreign Minister, Mohammed Tawfiq Ahmed, who did so in opposition to his own party's stance on various national issues. Although the coalition partners have reached a general agreement about the direction of the new government, it is still uncertain about which of the minor parties will be included in the coalition.

On July 25th the government introduced a one year State of Emergency, despite the fact that the one which was introduced in April 1985 was never repealed. The official reason for this move was to enable the government to crackdown on black marketeers, smugglers and hoarders, as well as common criminals and to end the wave of public sector strikes. In reality, however, it is more likely that it was to suppress opposition to the impending austerity programme which has since occurred.

After it was introduced [see Economy], there were indeed riots and demonstrations in many towns throughout the country. Although the exact number of casualties is uncertain, it is believed that there were a number of deaths and many wounded civilians. There were accusations that the opposition National Islamic Front (NIF) was inciting the rioters through their student and small trader supporters.

The Prime Minister, Sadiq el Mahdi, seems to have decided that he cannot afford to alienate his traditional Ansar followers in northern Sudan, for fear of losing their support to the NIF. Consequently he is trying to fudge the issue of whether to repeal or amend Islamic sharia law. The vast majority of Sudan's non-Muslims, as well as the centre and left wing political parties, are demanding its complete abolition. The NIF and the conservative major traditional parties, including the UMMA Party and DUP, are opposed to any dilution in the role of Islam



in the country. The compromise dual legal system which is now being mooted will be totally unacceptable to its non-Muslim opponents.

Sadiq's apparent increasingly hard-line and conservative approach has also been reflected in other ways. He is considering the idea of declaring himself the Imam of the five million strong Ansar which would make the removal of sharia law even less likely. At the same time, until widespread protests put an end to the plan, the government was going to pay his family \$5 million compensation for the expropriation of their lands by ex-President Nimeri. Despite foreign neutral eyewitness reports, he totally denied that a number of army massacres of civilians had occurred in and around Wau. The government also accused trade union leaders of treason for apparently adopting the same political policies as the SPLA, which Sadiq insisted was an Ethiopian puppet movement.

THE CIVIL WAR:

The war in southern Sudan seems no closer to a settlement and there are few grounds for optimism. This is despite the Sudan Council of Churches organised Addis Ababa Forum, which was an agreement signed in late August between the SPLA, the Anya Nya II, and the Sudan African Group of non-Muslim political parties. It stressed the importance of the Koka Dam Declaration, which has also been the SPLA's framework for a peace settlement, since it was signed in March 1986. While any consensus between political groups is to be welcomed, the agreement is largely irrelevant since it is the major northern parties, rather than these minor ones, which will represent the government in any political settlement. Unfortunately, neither they nor the SPLA seem willing to alter their preconditions for peace. At the same time the idea of a constitutional conference which is not attended by the SPLA also appears useless.

The pattern of the war has continued with the SPLA going on the offensive during the rainy season which has now ended. Now the army, which has distinct advantages during the dry season, can be expected to recapture lost territory as the SPLA retreat towards their bases in Ethiopia. The army's three regional commanders in the South have been replaced in recent months as part of a wider shake-up to improve the effectiveness of army operations. It has also been decided that all army officers will see active service in the South and that all promotions will depend on their performance in the war.

A further sign of the government and army's hard-line approach to the war was the September decision to expel three of the largest and most experienced relief agencies from the country. The expulsion of 'World Vision', 'ACROSS' and 'The World Lutheran Federation' followed the earlier expulsion of many of the smaller agencies. The official reason was that they were operating in the SPLA held areas and they are also surplus to Sudan's requirements. The reality, however, may be that this represents the growing



influence of the National Islamic Front who object to so many Christian organisations operating in the country.

While these three agencies have an excellent reputation, it is undoubtedly true that many of the smaller and more obscure agencies which have swamped Sudan since the 1984-5 emergency appeared more interested in proselytisation to Christianity than in relief work.

While the government's action will undoubtedly hinder relief efforts, so will the SPLA's repeated warnings that it will continue to shoot down any civilian aircraft in the region, even if they are carrying relief supplies.

FOREIGN RELATIONS:

Despite the announcement that there is to be a summit meeting between Sadiq el Mahdi and Colonel Mengistu, relations between Sudan and Ethiopia seem as fractious as ever. Khartoum continues to accuse Addis Ababa of supporting the SPLA, which is referred to as its puppet organisation. There have also been actual military clashes along the border in Kassala Province when Ethiopian troops and aircraft attacked Eritrean and Tigrean refugees. In addition they have dropped supplies to the SPLA positions well inside southern Sudan. Since Ethiopia links its own support for the SPLA with Sudan's alleged support for its opponents there seems little chance of real rapprochement in the near future.

While relations with Egypt seem to be improving, despite Cairo's refusal to extradite ex-President Nimieri, Sudan and Libya seem to have fallen out. This follows Khartoum's refusal to allow Tripoli to use Darfur as a springboard for its military operations in Chad. Furthermore, there is some evidence to suggest that Chad's attacks on Libya's own airbases may have secretly passed through Sudanese territory. Khartoum has also adopted a neutral stance and would like to act as a mediator in the dispute over the Aouzou Strip.

There was an embarrassing misunderstanding with Saudi Arabia over Sadiq el Mahdi's alleged expressions of sympathy to Iran following the conflict in Mecca. Although this was strenuously denied by Khartoum, its generally closer relations with Teheran and the increasing power of Sudan's Islamic fundamentalists has alarmed Riyadh. Since Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States are major creditors and aid donors, Khartoum will have to ensure that it does not offend them.

THE ECONOMY:

The August collapse of the government delayed an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over the rescheduling of Sudan's \$600 million arrears. Since an agreement with the IMF was necessary before its other major creditors would reschedule their debts, this slowed progress towards an overall solution to Sudan's economic crisis. Furthermore, the IMF was insisting on the introduction of a tough austerity programme before it would sign any agreement.



Following negotiations at the IMF's annual meeting in Washington, it now appears that the government has bitten the bullet and is prepared to take the harsh economic medicine, despite its political consequences. In early October the Sudanese pound was devalued by forty five per cent so that the 'customs' and 'incentive' rates were replaced by a single rate of £S4.5 to the dollar (compared to a current black market of over £S7). This new rate will not, however, apply to oil, wheat or medical imports which account for some ten per cent of total imports. At the same time the Finance Minister announced major price increases for gasoline, sugar and cement, which should bring an additional £S869 million for the government.

In return for these measures the IMF has apparently agreed to release \$4,854 million in credits over the next four years. However, no formal agreement has been announced by the IMF, which is forbidden by its own constitution to lend to member states which are in arrears. There is no question that Sudan itself can repay the \$600 million arrears and there is no obvious 'white knight' which could and would repay them. Unless the IMF is prepared to make Sudan a special case, which currently seems very unlikely, there must be considerable doubts about a final rescheduling agreement with the IMF.

An indication of just how dire Sudan's economic situation is, was revealed by the latest figures for inter-bank prices for its commercial debt. Banks are only prepared to purchase Sudanese commercial debt at two per cent of its face value, which is lower than any other African country. Consequently, its estimated \$1,800 million of total commercial debts could theoretically be purchased for \$36 million. The government has already shown considerable interest in buying back some of its debts at a significant discount and it is likely that this trend could expand. At the same time, it is having some success in its efforts to try and persuade bilateral creditors to write off or reschedule individual debts.

OUTLOOK:

As we approach the end of 1987 the prospects for Sudan are decidedly gloomy. It had been hoped that the collapse of the cabinet would lead to the emergence of a strong government of national unity which would be able to tackle the major problems facing the country. Instead, there has already been a two month delay and a new cabinet has not, at the time of writing, been formed. What is more, it is likely to be another weak UMMA/DUP coalition with little or no participation by the smaller regional parties. Both the coalition partners seem to be more concerned about retaining their traditional support in northern Sudan than in solving the country's problems. Consequently the NIF opposition is being allowed to dictate the political agenda and the government is merely reacting to it on an issue by issue basis. Despite the proposal of a dual legal system, the likelihood of Islamic sharia law being repealed now seems more remote than at any time since the 1986 elections.

Now that the dry season has begun, the army will go on the offensive and try and strengthen its military position before it is prepared to consider any political settlement. Once again NIF



pressure for a military rather than political end to the war is largely dictating government policy towards the conflict. Consequently, there seems little chance of a cease-fire, let alone a settlement, before the New Year.

Much as Sudan would like a rapprochement with Ethiopia, which might end its support for the SPLA and thereby enhance the chance of peace, it has little to offer Addis Ababa in return. Both its humanitarian instincts and international pressure will ensure that Eritrean and Tigrean refugees continue to receive shelter and assistance in Sudan. Therefore, the current stalemate is likely to continue between the two countries. Meanwhile Khartoum will try to reassure both Saudi Arabia and Egypt that, despite closer links to radical states in the region, it has a balanced foreign policy and that it knows 'which side its bread is buttered on'.

In some ways the economy has been the most interesting development in recent months and it will continue to be so in the immediate future. The government took a calculated gamble when it announced the current devaluation and the price increases. It had assumed that the 'State of Emergency' would enable it to keep the lid on any political unrest. Whether it has done enough to satisfy the IMF and other creditors is debatable. It is likely that further austerity measures in general, and any increase in bread prices in particular, would undoubtedly lead to further political unrest. The fragile coalition government is trying to balance on a very delicate tightrope between pleasing its creditors and maintaining political stability in the major towns. The next few months will be very dangerous and, while nothing is ever certain in Sudanese politics, the government's survival will depend on how it handles the central issues.

Charles Gurdon is a researcher in geography at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London. He also prepares quarterly political and economic reports on Sudan for the Economist Intelligence Unit.



SET UNDER AUTHORITY

Martin Daly reviews: SET UNDER AUTHORITY, by K.D.D. Henderson, Castle Cary Press, Somerset (1987), 224pp.

A notable trait of the Sudan Political Service, the administrative cadré of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, is how its members and ex-members turned in their leisure to literary pursuits. The results have ranged across a broad spectrum, both of subjects and of quality. K.D.D. Henderson's previous efforts include "The Making of the Modern Sudan" (1952), an important source for the study of the life and times of Sir Douglas Newbold. In "Set Under Authority" he undertakes "a portrait of the life of the British District Officer in the Sudan" during the Condominium, a subject approached from the viewpoint of one who served as an administrator from 1926 to 1953.

The book is largely a compilation of long extracts from the writings of British administrators, and is arranged in chapters designed to convey aspects of their work. In other words, it is not an autobiography (Henderson's name does not even appear in the index), but resembles rather R.O Collins and Francis M. Deng's "The British in the Sudan" (1984). The extracts chosen date almost entirely from the 1930s and later. Henderson is content to generalise and to illustrate, assuming a reader's basic knowledge of the subject, and in matters of interpretation and factual detail encounters disagreement. There is a tendency to reach, about the whole period of the Condominium, conclusions more appropriate for a shorter-time. The lack of source notes for the many quotations is an inconvenient omission.

"Set Under Authority" will be useful in indicating the wealth of historical information to be found in contemporary personal and semi-official accounts, most of which remain unpublished. Readers hoping for an account of Henderson's own long career in the Sudan will be disappointed. What remains evident, however, from this and his earlier, weightier work, is an abiding love for the Service and for the Sudan, especially the rural Sudan of his early career (p.66):

"My own pleasantest recollections are of open country - the early start before dawn in the northern grasslands stretching away to the fringes of the desert, with the planet Venus perhaps casting a shadow of your camel on the sand; or emerging, after three days twisting and turning through a forest of red acacias seamed with the footprints of playful elephants, onto the vast grassy plain of Lake Abyad at sunset..."

Martin Daly is Professor of History at the University of Memphis (Tennessee).



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SUDAN WITHOUT FRILLS

Jack Jackson reviews: THE NO FRILLS GUIDE TO SUDAN, by D. Else, Bradt Publications, Chalfont St Peter (1987), 64pp. Price: £4.95. He also offers some supplementary tips which may interest members of SSSUK.

Bradt's No Frills Guides cover the offbeat parts of the world not covered by the major publishers. They are basic, factual, informative, and frequently updated, an idea which is heartily applauded. The series is launched with David Else's guide to Sudan, which is a concise, well-written 64-page book, which gives a good general background to the country.

The early chapters are good with an excellent section on how to behave, but the book does suffer from a number of omissions. This can be demonstrated with reference to the section on travel. The book correctly states that Balkan Airways are the cheapest way to fly to Khartoum from London, but from early 1987 Sudan Airways have chartered Tristars from Jordanian Airlines complete with Jordanian flight crew and senior cabin staff. For only £30 more you get the extra comfort of an almost empty wide bodied jet, edible food and avoid Balkan Airways' five hour transit stop in Sofia. It is also worth noting that internal flights should be bought with local currency in Sudan to avoid excessive dollar surcharges.

Comments on shipping generate further inaccuracies. Boats from Port Sudan to the south (Djibouti, Kenya etc) have not existed in the last ten years. Occasionally small private yachts look for unpaid crew but this is rare. Regular ferries do run between Port Sudan, Jeddah and Suez but they tend to be very full.

Another important omission in the book is the currency exchange regulations which, due to the thriving black market, have existed for more than ten years. On entry you are supposed to declare all your foreign currency. In theory you should only change money in a bank at the official rates. For non-residents, all hotels other than the very cheapest have to be paid in hard currency against an official receipt. The currency exchange shops mentioned in the book were closed down in 1985.

One other big omission is the effect of rain on travel. Recently there have been a couple of years with little rain but this is not normal. In most years it can be impossible to travel south of Malakal except between late December and April, and south west of Kosti or on the track to Nyala between August and November. Even the main asphalt road around Kassala is often closed after heavy rain, as are Juba and Wau airports.

The chapter on health is good, though occasionally suffers from some misunderstanding. You cannot treat dysentery with just any antibiotic. Some are broad spectrum but many are more specific. Due to a WHO directive that all Third World dysentery should be treated with a combination of Terramycin and Flagyl, pure binding anti-diarrhoea treatments such as Lomotil have not been available in Sudan or other Third World pharmacies since 1985 so it, or imodium, needs to be taken with you. Gamma globulin injections only work against hepatitis A. There is a specific injection against hepatitis B (which costs £70) but it is most useful to those in the same high risk groups as those at risk of catching AIDS. In Sudan there have been some terrible cases of vaccinations going wrong, even with disposable needles and syringes, caused mainly by the vaccine deteriorating in refrigerators due to constant and prolonged power cuts. 'Jabs' need to be taken before departure.

The town by town section is a précis of a journey by the author and little else. Consequently, it is very limited when one considers the size of Sudan, even allowing for half of it being out of bounds due to the civil war. There is some confusion about Kabushiya. Ancient Meroe



town is on the railway line but the Sun Temple etc and the pyramids, which are at Bajirawya, are infact to the east of the railway. This is shown correctly on the map but the author refers to 'west' of the railway in the text. The columns and statues are not here at all but at Musawwarat es Sofra which, together with Naqa, are south east of Shendi nearly 80 kilometres away.

Port Sudan is the base for the best coral reefs in the Red Sea and for visiting the old town of Suakin. Three quarters of all visitors to Sudan come to Port Sudan and one third of them go only there and nowhere else but the author says 'there is no real reason to come here'. There are many cheap hotels and two quality ones better than the Red Sea Hotel. There are cheap and middle standard restaurants though the British Club is useful for meeting other westerners. There is an active Government Tourist Bureau where permission is required to visit either Suakin or the coral reefs, both of which can be arranged by the Hamido Tourism Corporation (Port Sudan PO Box 274), and not by the Red Sea Hotel. The boats with snorkel and diving gear are here and not at Suakin and the jelly fish in the Red Sea do not sting. It is important to know that snorkelling gear is not on sale in any shops. Air conditioned buses leave Khartoum daily for Port Sudan but involve an overnight stay in Kassala, making it a two-day trip at a cost very little less than the one hour air flight. The train is very unreliable and can take more than a week.

Dinder National Park is regularly visited by tourists without their own car. You go to Ed Damazine/Roseires either directly by air or bus via Sennar. Transport to the park can be arranged from there. The whole journey can be arranged by the Government tourist office in Khartoum.

The best section in the book is that on Jebel Marra. Very little is written about it elsewhere, but it is essential to get local police permission.

The Nuba Mountains are not so easy to move about in as the author makes out. Permission is easily given in Khartoum, but is then often rescinded by the police at Dilling and Kadugli. The sketch maps also suffer from most of the writing being too small to be read comfortably.

Photography can be very difficult outside Khartoum. Special permits are needed south of Malakal and are only available in Juba. It is always best to check with local police before using a camera. Citizens arrests are common, even in Khartoum and Port Sudan, so it essential to acquire a photographic permit.

The Sudan is a vast country, full of helpful friendly people who like to see and converse with foreigners. It has always been a difficult country to travel in, and all this has been made harder by the absence of any written information on the area, because the market is too small. Kim Naylor touched fleetingly on the area in his 'Nile Route' but here at last Bradt Publications with David Else are making a real effort. This is a first attempt; it has mistakes but is intended to be updated frequently and so is certain to improve. I wish them success.

Jack Jackson runs a travel company which specialises in travel to the Sudan. In particular, he is a specialist photographer, diver and railway expert.



A DESERT DIES

Helen Wood reviews: A DESERT DIES, by M. Asher, Viking, Harmondsworth (1986), 330pp.

Price: £12.95.

This book is a sequel to ‘The Forty Days Road’ (1984) and offers a detailed and lucid testimony of the author’s pursuit of his greatest wish: to become one of the desert Arabs of the Sahara. Set in the drought years of 1982-1985 it comprises not only a gripping account of personal development, but also a portrait of a traditional society undergoing changes due to the drought and the impress of the ‘modern world’.

The text is divided into five parts; the first provides an introduction to the author and his initial experiences of life with these Arabs. The subsequent three focus upon journeys made, and the final one provides a reflective and sombre evaluation of the ‘new man - outcast of two worlds - and the changed circumstances of life in 1985. Various methods are employed to help the reader, including a genealogy, maps, plates, companions list, tribes forming the Kababish, glossary, index and list of botanical species. Introductory quotations for each chapter add an historic dimension.

The content finds a natural form around the themes of personal development and the peoples of the desert. The recognition of external contrasts, between town and desert, the motor and the timeless dimension, are paralleled by the crossing of the perceptual boundaries in the author’s life: the loneliness of the vast desert becomes the peace; furry blobs (on the horizon) become camels; blank sand suddenly is alive with information, and the unfamiliar becomes the familiar as time reshaped and rearranged his perceptions.

The style is easy and relaxed; eminently readable the subjects which people discuss and ‘lessons being learnt’ are taken up and developed further by the incorporation of formal knowledge, local knowledge and personal reactions, to effect a comprehensive insight, making the routine memorable and significant.

The appeal of this book lies not only in the above however, for Michael Asher’s aim of being a part of a people and living on the knife-edge of survival, strikes a chord in each person who has ever wondered what it means to know, amongst other things, as Asher did, that ‘this is what hunger is really like’.

It is hard to fault a book which offers so much to the reader yet a few observations may be made, especially concerning the cartography. Although maps are visually appealing they are



not used to full effect; places and features mentioned in the text are omitted at the expense of camel motifs and unmentioned places included; maps are untitled; journey starts are not always marked and slipping between maps is therefore required to follow them throughout. The first journey is in fact incorrectly traced and spelling inconsistencies between text and map occur in a few instances.

In conclusion, this is an excellently written book, in which the style has pace and is flavoursome with the exacting detail which only such a rare and life-changing experience can afford. Its authenticity convinces and holds the attention of the reader throughout.

Helen Wood is a research student in the Department of Geography at the University of Durham. She is also the Assistant Editor of Sudan Studies.

NEW BOOKS FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION

THE SEARCH FOR PEACE AND UNITY IN THE SUDAN, Francis Mading Deng and Prosser Gifford (eds.), Wilson Center Press, Washington, DC, (1987).

The book is a collection of papers presented at the Workshop in February 1987 at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, to examine the issues and possible ways forward in the current civil war.

Available in the UK from Lilian Barber Press, PD Box 109, GRAVESEND, Kent, DA11 7QR. Price £6.95 (paperback) - Cheques and money orders payable to the Lilian Barber press, Inc.

THE ROLE OF SOUTHERN SUDANESE PEOPLE IN THE BUILDING OF MODERN SUDAN, Diana Rosenberg (ed), (1987).

In 1985 the University of Juba held a conference in Khartoum and invited scholars to present papers on the history of southern Sudan from the pre-colonial period upto 1972. The volume contains eleven of the papers and is 146 pages long.

The normal retail price is £6.00. The University of Juba is offering it to members of SSSUK for £5.00, inclusive of postage in the UK. Add an extra 25p for overseas postage. Please send your orders to Oriental and African Books, 73 Monknoor Road, SHREWSBURY, SY2 5AT, mentioning that you are a member of SSSUK.



HISTORICAL ETHNOLOGY AT FRANKFURT

Jörg Adelberger offers another contribution from West Germany to the regular series of RESEARCH PROFILES. Here he outlines Sudan Studies being conducted at the Institute of Historical Ethnology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt.

It is important to draw the attention of readers of *Sudan Studies* to the significance of establishing and promoting communications between individuals and institutions with similar interests. It is with this in mind that the following note has been produced.

The accompanying list of recent Masters and Doctoral theses outlines the type of work being conducted in *Sudan Studies* at the Institute of Historical Ethnology. Without exception, these theses were and are being written under the auspices of Professor Dr Andreas Kronenberg. The Masters theses are normally unpublished, although exceptions are mentioned below, but they can be obtained through inter-library loan. The list is in chronological order and English translations of the title or comments are in brackets. Current research theses and topics are also listed.

Ibrahim, H. (1978), **Ethnography of a Shaiqiya Village (El Gureir) and Social change**. Doctoral Thesis, 2 Vols., 402pp. Published under the title: **The Shaiqiya, The Cultural and Social change of a Northern Sudanese Riverain People**, in *Studien zur Kulturkunde*, Vol 49, Wiesbaden (1979).

Berié, E. (1982), **Die Bari-Gruppe im Sudan. Stand der Ethnologischen Forschung**. (The Bari-group in the Sudan, The State of Ethnological Research). M.A. Thesis, 170pp.

Lange-Stalinski, J. (1982), **Mündliche Prosa der Niloten im Sudan. Ethnologische Interpretationen Oral Traditionen**. (Oral Prose of the Nilotes of the Sudan. Ethnological Interpretations of Oral Traditions). M.A. Thesis, 132pp.

Sonnenburg-Page, A.M. (1983) **Historische Dynamik und Lokalgeschichte in der Bahr el Shazal Provinz, Sudan**. (Historical Dynamics and Local History in Bahr el Ghazal Province, Sudan). M.A. Thesis, 90pp.

Adelberger, J. (1983), **Das Sakrale Königtum der Shilluk: Struktur und Geschichte einer Institution**. (The Sacred Kingship of the Shilluk: Structure and History of an Institution). M.A. Thesis, 146pp. A revised extract has been published under the title: **Die Shilluk (Sudan). Sakrales Königtum und Politische Macht**. (The Shilluk. Sacred Kingship and Political Power) in *Anthropos*, Vol 82, (1987), pp.216-225.

Dabitz, G. (1984) **Seschichte der Erforschung der Nuba-Berge**. (History of the Exploration of the Nuba fountains). M.A. Thesis, 253pp. Published under the same title in *Arbeiten aus dem Seminar für Völkerkunde der J. W. Goethe Universität Frankfurt am Main*, Vol 17, Stuttgart (1985).

Völker, C. (1984), **Ethnische Bindungen in den Städten der Republik Sudan**. (Ethnic Bonds in Towns of the Republic of the Sudan). M.A. Thesis, 158pp.

Polzin, W. (1986), **Der Zar-Kult. Besessenheit, Symbolisches Verhalten bei Krankheit und Unglück**. (The Zar Cult. Possession: Symbolic Behaviour in Cases of Illness and Misfortune). This study draws on information from both Sudan and Egypt. M.A. Thesis, 131pp.



Roth, K-H. (1986), **Die Dinka. Quellenkritische Studie zu Möglichkeiten Historischer Forschung. (The Dinka. A Critical Source Study in the Possibilities of Historical Research)**. M.A. Thesis, 246pp.

Studies in progress:

Adelberger, J. **Die Soziale Organisation der Fur und ihre Historischen Veränderungen. (The Social Organisation of the Fur and its Historical Changes -working title)**. Doctoral Thesis based on fieldwork.

Braukämper, U. **Migration und Ethnischer Wandel - Historische Untersuchungen aus der östlichen Sudanzone. (Migration and Ethnic Change - Historical Studies from eastern Sudan)**. Independent research project based on fieldwork. Some preliminary results appeared under the title: **ökologische Grenilinen und Kulturelle Wandlungsprozesse zwischen Kamel und Rindernomadismus im Ostsudan. (Ecological Boundaries and Cultural Processes of change among Camel and Cattle Nomadism in eastern Sudan)** in **Paideuma**, Vol 30, (1984), pp.81-102. At present Dr Braukämper is attached to the Ethnographic Museum in Khartoum. In connection with his work there he has published the following articles: **Peoples and Cultures of the Sudanese Red Sea Area** in Hinkel, F. (ed) **The Archaeological Map of the Sudan**, Fasc.VI, Berlin (East), (1987) (forthcoming); **Zum Stand der Nubien-Sammlungen des Ethnographischen Museums Khartoum. (On the State of the Nubia Collections of the Ethnographic Museum, Khartoum, in Nubica**, Vol 1, (1987) (forthcoming); **Aufruf zur Rettung Sudanesischen Kulturerbes in Jahrbuch des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig**, (1988) (forthcoming) - this article is a revised German translation by Stein, L. of **A Plea to Save Sudanese Cultural Heritage**, in **Sudan Times**, 21st December 1986, p.3.

Dabitz, G., **Tima-Zum Wandel Kultureller Grundwerte einer Nuba-Gesellschaft in den Demokratischen Republik Sudan. (Time - Changes in Basic Cultural Values of a Nuba Society in the Democratic Republic of the Sudan)**. Doctoral Thesis based on fieldwork.

Grüb, A., **Die, Lotuho im Südlichen Sudan. (The Lotuho in the Southern Sudan: History, Oral Tradition, Economic and Political Organisation of an Eastern Nilotic People)**. Doctoral Thesis based on fieldwork.

Stierhof, H. **Ethnizität und Landwirtschaftliche Entwicklungsprojekte in der Republik Sudan am Beispiel der Khashm ml Girba und Sezira Projekte. (Ethnicity and Agricultural Development Projects: The Cases of Khashm el Girba and the Gezira)**. MA. Thesis.

The author is grateful to Adam Jones for his suggestions on the translations of some of the above titles.

Jörg Adelberger is currently working on his doctoral thesis at the Institute of Historical Ethnology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University. He can be contacted c/o Flutstrasse 17, OFFENBACH D-6050, West Germany. (telephone 069-895-587).



RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Al-Karsani, A. A. S., (1987), 'The Establishment of Neo-Mahdism in the Western Sudan, 1920-1936', *African Affairs*, Vol.86, pp.385-404.

Anon, (1987), 'Open Door: Sudan - supporting a huge refugee population', *Amnesty*, June/July, pp.14-15.

Brown, R. (1986), 'International Responses to Sudan's Economic Crisis: 1978 to the April 1985 coup d'etat', Development and Change, July, pp.487-511.

Buckman, V. (1987), '47 Squadron in the Sudan', *Flypast*, November, pp.21-4.

Davies, H. R. J. (1987), 'After the Famine in Sudan: Can Australian Experience Help?', *Geographical Journal*, Vol.153, pp. 181-94.

Davies, H. R. J. (ed) (1987), *Rural Development in White Nile Province, Sudan*, (United Nations University Press, Tokyo), 142pp.

Deng, F. M. and Gifford, P. (eds.), (1987), *The Search for Peace and Unity in the Sudan*, (Wilson Center Press, Washington).

Heraclides, A. (1987), 'Janus or Sisyphus? The Southern Problem of the Sudan', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.25, pp. 213-31.

Hewett, R. B. (1987), 'From Sketch Map to Satellite: Modern Mapping of Africa illustrated from Sudan', in Larby, P.M. (ed), *Proceedings of the SCOLMA/BRICMICS Conference*, London, pp.25-32.

Hulme, M. (1987), 'The 1986 Wet Season in Central Sudan', *Weather*, Vol.42, pp. 193-5.

Hulme, M. (1987), 'Secular Changes in Wet Season Structure in Central Sudan', *Journal of Arid Environments*, Vol.13, pp. 31-46.

Jal, G. G. (1987), *The History of the Jikany Nuer before 1920*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, (University of London).

Karkaba, A. (1987), 'Sudan: Alla Deriva', *Nigrizia*, September, pp. 10-13.

Lado, C. (1986), 'Agriculture and Environmental Knowledge: A case Study of Peasant Farming in Maridi District, Southern Sudan', *Malaysian Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol.13, pp. 7-36.



Mulla, R.M. (1987), *Legal Aspects of Decentralization of the Government in the Sudan*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, (University of London).

Prunier, G. A. (1986), 'Le Soudan après Nimieri', *Actuel Développement*, Vol.70, pp.8-11.

Prunier, G.A. (1986), 'La Révolution Ambiguë: l'après-Nimeirisme au Soudan', *Politique Africaine*, Vol.21, pp. 90 - 98.

Prunier, G. A. (1987), 'La Guerre Civile au Soudan', *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, Vol.5, pp.93-112.

Robertson, P. (1987), 'Prehistory in the Upper Nile Basin', *Journal of African History*, Vol.28.

Safwat, K. M. (1987), 'The Ecosystem and the Transitional Nature of the State in the Sudan', *Swansea Geographer*, Vol.24, pp. 99-112.

Tignor, R.L. (1987), 'The Sudanese Private Sector: An Historical Overview', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.25, pp.179-212.

Trilsbach, A. (1987), 'Environmental Changes and Village Societies West of the White Nile: Central Sudan', in Lawless, R.I. (ed), *The Middle Eastern Village*, (Croon Helm), pp.13-50.

Voll, J. O. (1986), 'The Sudan After Nimieri', *Current History*, May, pp.213-6 and 231-2.

See also pages 32-33 of this issue.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUDAN STUDIES

All members of SSSUK are invited to contribute to SUDAN STUDIES. The Editor is always pleased to receive short articles (c.350-500 words) on any subject related to the Sudan and its affairs. Original factual, research or philosophical articles can be accepted to a length of c.1500 words (longer by negotiation with the editor). Requests for specific information can also be included in the CAN YOU HELP' section.

Please note that the Editor is looking for members to contribute to regular features, such as DATA SOURCES IN THE UK, RESEARCH PROFILE, SUDAN MEMOIRS and TEACHERS IN SUDAN. Volunteers to write BOOK REVIEWS and design the CROSSWORD are also wanted. Please inform the Editor of Sudan publications noted in any discipline for inclusion in the regular list of references.

If members have any ideas about SUDAN STUDIES, for example with respect to format, length, new features and so on, please write to the Editor indicating whether or not you would wish your letter to be published (possibly in summary form).

All contributions to the newsletter should be typed or written in legible handwriting and sent to the Editor at the following address:

Dr A Trilubach (Secretary and Editor)

Sudan Studies Society of the United Kingdom

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THE GORDON MEMORIAL TRUST FUND

The fund was created in 1898 on Lord Kitchener's initiative to help the education of the people of the Sudan. It resulted in the foundation and maintenance of the Gordon Memorial College, now the University of Khartoum.

The Trust's capital is now worth some £300,000. Another, smaller fund specifically for the Kitchener School of Medicine is also managed by the GMC Trustees. The Trust cooperates with the Sudan Embassy in London and with the universities in the Sudan but is entirely independent. One retired official has already left a bequest to the Fund. Others have made enquiries. We are also considering further ways of increasing resources.

In recent years the income has been mainly directed to small scale initiatives in higher education, but other forms of educational aid are allowed by our charter: for instance we gave £10,000 towards a Save the Children Fund project for training medical assistants for work with children in refugee camps in 1985. A primary objective will continue to be the helping of young Sudanese who wish to study in Britain, and we will continue to support scholarly study of Sudan problems in this country. Carefully chosen assistance to projects in the Sudan and the purchase of basic items of equipment, books and periodicals for Sudanese universities will be supported.

The need is great and will almost certainly continue. The Trust provides a means for evaluating and channelling the income and for stewardship of the capital.

If you would like to receive more details, a list of trustees, and a schedule of recent donations - or if you would like to make a bequest or donation - you are asked to write to the Secretary: Mr Peter Davis, Goldsmith's College, 9 Dixon Road, New Cross, LONDON, SE14 6NW.

TAIL-PIECE

George Janson-Smith offers another anecdotal tail-piece from 50 years ago.

In those days in the southern Sudan there was little money available for 'Bush' schools. Syllables, printed in large letters on cotton sheets were put up in front of the class and were recited in chorus. These sheets were numbered in progression.

An Inspector drives up to a Bush School and a head comes out from under the thatch. "Its the Mufettish" Redoubled sound of "Ta-te-ti-to. Wa-we-wi-so." Inspector enters. "Good morning. What is the lesson this morning?" (as if he didn't know). "Reading Sir." "Good. Carry on." Even louder "Ta-te-ti..." "One moment. They are reading sheet 3 are they not?" "Yes Sir, certainly Sir." "But where is sheet 3?" "Oh Sir, much regret Sir. That was lost 3 weeks ago"

PS. 'Lost' was a euphemism. The teacher's young son led the Inspector back to his lorry. Across his small behind wobbled "Wa-we-wi-wo."