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SUDAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN

نشرة جمعية الدراسات السودانية

Ankole Cattle, Across the Juba bridge on road to Uganda
(photo: January '08, R. and C. Lobban)

Special Double Issue

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our purpose

The Sudan Studies Association (SSA) is an independent professional society founded in the United States in 1981. Membership is open to scholars, teachers, students, and others with interest in the Sudan. The Association exists primarily to promote Sudanese studies and scholarship. It maintains a cooperative relationship with the Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum. SSA works to foster closer ties among scholars in the Sudan, North America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and other places. Normal activities of the SSA include the publication of this Newsletter, organizing meetings for the exchange of ideas, and recommending research candidates for affiliation with appropriate institutions of higher education in the Sudan. The Association also sponsors panels and programs during the meetings of other academic organizations. It occasionally publishes the proceedings of its annual meetings in book form.

join us

Membership: Membership is for each academic calendar year which entitles the subscriber to receive all the issues of the SSA Newsletter, and to discounted registration rates for attending the annual meetings of the Association.

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1990-91 C. Fluehr-Lobban	1981-82 Richard Lobban

Reminder:

Sudan Studies Association
27th Annual Conference
May 16-18, 2008

Hosted at: Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida

Theme:

Sudan's Wars and Peace Agreements

Registration and Accommodation information at: http://www.sudanstudies.org

Guest Speakers:

Alex DeWaal, noted author on Darfur

Suleiman Baldo, human rights activist

The next few years will be decisive for Sudan's future as it resolves its protracted conflicts. Currently two peace agreements are being implemented: the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA). The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) is unfulfilled and events in the border areas with Chad are changing daily. The attempted coup in Ndjamena and potential for a wider, international dimension of the war are ominous.

- Do these agreements address the root causes of the Sudanese problem?
- What are the root causes of the problem - cultural, historical, economic, political, environmental, ethnic, etc.?
- What is the current status of the implementation of these agreements?
- How are the human rights provisions in the various agreements being implemented?
- Does all of this lead to the creation of the New Sudan, now common in Sudanese political vocabulary? What are the roles of the intra-Darfurian Dialogue, intra-Southern Dialogue, and other talks aimed at promoting reconciliation at various levels of society? How will the marginalized majority in rural Eastern Sudan avoid continued under-representation given the preponderant political domination of the East with the Khartoum establishment?
- What transformations are taking place in the capitol city of Khartoum? What about the conflicts over the construction of dams at Meroe and Kajbar? In addition to the new dams, what other controversial major projects in Sudan are being planned?

Registration forms and fees are available at the SSA website and should be sent to: Dr. Richard Lobban, Executive Director, Sudan Studies Association, Rhode Island College, 600 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Providence, RI 02908. The Program Organizer is Dr. Stephanie Beswick, Ball State University (sbeswick@bsu.edu). The head of the local arrangements committee is Dr. Peter Garretson, Florida State University (pgarret@mailer.fsu.edu).

Passages

A tribute to Sudan's leading historian: Mohamed Al-Gadal

By Mahgoub El-Tigani*
Tennessee State University

(Reprinted from Sudan Tribune Tuesday 8 January 2008.)

(editor's note: Look for the review of Mohamed Al-Gadal's *The Life and Career of the Mahdi* in this issue's Reviews and Commentary section)

Before his departure, today the 6th of January 2008, Professor Mohamed Sa'eed al-Gadal published a few articles in the al-Midan journal on the October Uprising (Revolution) in 1964.

Clearly re-stating his long-life commitment to authenticate with scientific research recurring lessons of the Sudanese historical resistance, as well as contemporary endeavors, to combat and defeat dictatorial governance, irrespective of apparent weaknesses of opposition groups or any propagandist appearance of ruling parties, al-Gadal latest articles signify the authenticity, predominance, and collective nature of the Sudanese political nationalism over all sources of local or external domination.

Born in Sinkat of Eastern Sudan in 1935, Mohamed Sa'eed al-Gadal graduated in the University of Khartoum in 1958, obtained his MA degree from California in 1964, and had his PhD from UoK in 1981. He taught in Sudanese high secondary schools, high institutes of education, University of Khartoum, and the University of 'Aden. He was dismissed from his job three times in 1971, 1981, and 1992 by anti-democratic regimes.

Gadal published 20 books on the modern history of Sudan, besides works on aspects of the history of Hadramut. Added to his English book on The Dawn of Pan Africanism (1900-1927), his works include academic research in Arabic on the economic policies and the wars of the Mahdiya, Islam and politics in Sudan, and a series of studies on the modern history of Sudan, the history of Sudanese communist party, and an academic guide on the history of Europe. He also published psycho-historical works on Imam al-Mahdi of Sudan and Gadal Pasha - a Sudanese instructor in Hadramut.

The Gadal school of thought has been consistently developed via strict adherence to an objective mode of analysis exploring a Marxist tradition of dialectical historicism, as well as enforcing a remarkable application of liberal academics in scores of published works. His research goals aimed apparently to provide a theoretical advanced re-structure of the material discourse of the Sudanese economic and political experiences through authenticated documentation of historical events.

Many of his readers often shared the impression that his well-researched works seemed to be guided by a vision on a possible flourishing future for an independently unified and prosperous nation free of both local and external patronages. For example, Tarikh al-Sudan al-Hadith, the Gadal's distinguished work (reprinted 2002), exemplifies his lifetime commitment to promote a clear understanding of the Sudanese mode of development in response to vibrant potentialities of the diverse community of the People of Sudan whose struggles never ceased to determine their own march of "economic and political growth" over all partisan or foreign monopolies.

In so doing, the Sudanese people have been exhibiting unique characteristics of "resistance to foreign domination," according to Ustaz al-Gadal, supported by a continuous political potential to conduct "revolutionary action." This was often manifested in historical events under the occurrence of certain social conditions (including possibilities of structural transformations, as well as the availability of appropriate popular leaderships) to restore "the unity and the independent growth of the Sudan over nationalist domination or foreign dependency."

The experiences of Sudan against the earlier Turko-Egyptian rule, the warlike oppressive Mahdiya, and the 50 years' anti-imperialist movement in the British colonial era testified to this trend.

Based on this mental schemata, the Gadal analysis of the Sudanese historical experiences in the modern times of national upheavals, namely the Turko-Egyptian, Mahdism, British rule, and the independence episodes extracts from objective materials (rather than personal views) the possible historical codes that might well explain the determined stages of Sudanese national behavior in the 18th century throughout the 19th and the first half of the 20ieth century.

The patriotic context of the al-Gadal works has been clearly underlying strict adherence to objective analysis and authentic research. His works will continue to enlighten both Sudanese and foreign scholars of history, as well as students of unity and progression in the social and political transformations of Sudan - the wonderful land of the socially diverse Sudanese!

- *The author is a sociologist at the Department of Social Work & Sociology in Tennessee State University, Nashville TN, USA. He can be reached at: emehawari@hotmail.com*

News and Notes

UNESCO's actions for the protection of cultural heritage in Sudanese Nubia

By Lise Macdonald

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

UNESCO
Culture Sector
Division of Cultural Objects and Intangible Heritage
Section of Museums and Cultural Objects

In 1959 the Sudanese and Egyptian Governments requested UNESCO to assist their countries in the protection and rescue of the archaeological monuments of Nubia which would have been flooded by the raising waters of River Nile, due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam. The Director–General launched an appeal on 8 March 1960 "to governments, institutions, public and private foundations and all persons of goodwill", requesting technical and financial contributions to save the Nubian monuments and sites from certain destruction. This appeal initiated the *International Campaign*

National Council of Antiquities Museum Officials, UNESCO representatives and conservation trainees pose with the Minister of Culture (center) in front of the Sudan National Museum, Khartoum. Taken at closing ceremony of UNESCO conservation training course. *(photo: Jan. 08, courtesy L. Macdonald)*

to Save the Monuments of Nubia, which proved to be unprecedented in its scope and achievements. It was to last for 20 years, and ended on 10 March 1980 as a complete and spectacular success. The Sudanese Nubian temples saved from destruction were partially relocated in the National Museum of Sudan, constructed for this occasion in Khartoum in the mid-60's.

In light of the important legacy of the *International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia* and long lasting collaboration with Sudan, UNESCO more recently concentrated its actions on the rehabilitation of the National Museum of Sudan. Since 2004, UNESCO restored its permanent galleries, the storages and the shelters protecting the Nubian temples located in the museum's garden. UNESCO carried out several capacity building activities in different fields of museum studies and provided the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (NCAM)
with extensive documentation and publications on preservation of cultural heritage.

Furthermore, UNESCO organised in 2005, an assessment mission of archaeological sites in Egyptian and Sudanese Nubia, involving representatives from the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) in Egypt and

NCAM in Sudan. This mission resulted in the signature of a *Memorandum of Understanding* between Egypt and Sudan in the field of cultural heritage and represented the first bilateral agreement between both authorities for the preservation of this foremost shared cultural heritage. An exhibition on the Nubian archaeological sites was prepared by UNESCO and presented in its Headquarters in Paris, at the
Nubia Museum in Aswan and during the 2006 African summit in Khartoum.

In 2003, the inscription on the World Heritage List of the sites of Gebel Barkal and the Napatan region marked an important step for the recognition of Sudanese Nubian archaeological sites. Consequently, UNESCO concentrated its activities on Gebel Barkal's site museum and developed jointly with the NCAM the latest project of a Nubia Museum in Wadi Halfa, near Lake Nasser.

Since Sudan's 1959 appeal to UNESCO, the Organization has continuously aimed to protect its outstanding cultural inheritance and raise international awareness on the essential value of these sites, a shared heritage of humankind.

Sudan Visit

SSA Executive Director Richard Lobban and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, SSA Bulletin editor traveled to Sudan in January of 2008. Carolyn was completing research relating to her study of the national and regional status of Shari`a after the signing of the CPA, and Richard was completing arrangements for a new archaeological field excavation at Abu Erteila, near to

Graduate, University of Juba

the Bajrawiya pyramid field close to Shendi town. During this visit they traveled to Juba, South Sudan where they were hosted by their friend Hoth Chan who is working with the United Nations Development Program Rule of Law project for South Sudan. They met many southern notables, and made helpful contacts at the University of Juba where they were delighted to find some old copies of the Sudan Studies Association Newsletter from the 1980s. They paid their respects at the Memorial to national hero John Garang located just next to the newly refurbished parliament building for the Government of South Sudan (GOSS). Thanks to the generosity of their hosts they were able to tour the city and its surrounding areas where many of the decisive events leading to the historic CPA occurred. We visited the conference room in the Hotel Raha where peace negotiations between the GoS and SPLM took place on a regular basis. Remnants of military campaigns are evident, especially around the strategic Jebel Kujur hills outside of Juba town, where tellingly suburban "middle class" houses are being

Memorial to national hero John Garang, Juba (photos, R. and C. Lobban, Jan. 2008)

Sign at Entry to Garang Memorial

constructed in the same area. The Juba bridge heading to Uganda is in active use but still in need of repair. The town is bustling but the economy is still a dependent post-conflict one where all essential food and fuel commodities are imported from either Kenya or Uganda. GOSS ministries are active and are functioning in newly renovated buildings from the former regional government infrastructure that was put into place after the Addis Ababa peace accords of the period 1972-83. However, more Ethiopians and Kenyans are employed in the service areas of the many hotels that have sprung up to accommodate the post-CPA UN and non-governmental aid workers who have come to Juba. New roads are being built all over town and river traffic has resumed for the needs of the many displaced persons who were affected by the long civil war. Despite the obvious challenges ahead, optimism is widespread and there is mostly talk of the future rather than the past.

In Khartoum the Lobbans met with many friends of the SSA, including old friend Dr. Ali Suleiman Fadlalla of the University of Khartoum Law School, and new friend Dr. Osman Mohamed Osman who attended the last SSA conference in Philadelphia. They also learned of plans for an international conference to be hosted by the newly formed Sudan Studies Society (SSS, see below) sometime in 2009. Announcement of the formation of the SSS was made by Dr. Yusef Fadl Hasan at the 7th International Joint Conference of the SSA and SSS/UK. More details about future conferences will follow in subsequent issues of the Bulletin.

FOCUS ON NEW NGOs

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban has met with several of the literally hundreds of new non-governmental organizations that are currently operating inside Sudan. For practical purposes most are located in the capital city, but many have branches in the cities and towns of Sudan's 26 states. She reports on one of these in this issue with others to follow. Members and friends of the SSA are urged to write their own contributions reporting on the work of these activist international and Sudanese organizations.

SuWEP, Sudanese Women Empowerment for Peace, was founded in 1997 as a national network of women working toward peace in Sudan. I met with SuWEP Director Fahima Hashim and Program Coordinator Zaynab Elsawi at their Khartoum office. Funded by the government of The Netherlands, the stated

mission is to promote a culture of peace and non-violence in the country. Nine groups, five in Khartoum and four in South Sudan have been organized in the organization's decade of work, and they collaborate with civic organizations such as Southern Women for Peace, Civil Society Network, Nuba Women for Peace, the National Democratic Alliance, the SPLM; SPLM and United Group, the Sudan People's Development Front Women's Group, and other non-partisan groups. SuWEP organizes training sessions and workshops periodically, primarily between northern and southern groups. They maintain a library for public use and would like SSA members to know that they would appreciate donations of books, particularly those dealing with feminist theory, peace building, and the enhancement of women's capacity in society and politics. One of their slogans—*bākr hūqqūna bas*, "only give us our rights!" provides an excellent summary of the mission of one of Sudan's women waging peace movements.

SuWEP leaders Zaynab Elsawi and Fahima Hashim, Khartoum office, January 2008

Articles

Sinnar During four Centuries: Reuveni, Krump and Schuver visit Sinnar: 1523-1883.

Prepared for SSA Annual meeting, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, May 07

By Gabriel R. Warburg
University of Haifa

Sinnar (or Sennar) was the capital of the Funj Sultanate until the Turco-Egyptian conquest of the Sudan in 1820-21. However, according to the late Prof. Peter M. Holt the "earliest records of Funj traditions date only from the late eighteenth century".[1] From Tabaqat Wad Dayfallah, written before the Turco-Egyptian conquest of Sudan, we know when Sinnar was founded:

> Know that the Funj possessed the land of the Nuba and overcame it at the beginning of the tenth century, in the year 910 (1504-5), and founded the town of Sinnar. 'Amara Dunqas founded it.[2]

Thus we have to rely to a large extent on travelers' accounts to gain information on earlier periods. I have chosen the evidence of three lesser known travelers as a source for my current paper. First a few introductory words regarding Sinnar. In his book "The Heroic Age in Sinnar", Prof. Jay Spaulding claims that the period, approximately between 1750-1850, "invites comparison to the Arab [pre-Islamic] jahiliyya." Whether we accept that or not it is of importance to note that the author views "the usurping social forces and intrusive institutions that destroyed Sinnar may be broadly characterized as "capitalist."[3] Furthermore, Spaulding also quoted a visitor to the court of the Sultan of Sinnar in the seventeenth century and noted that he "is called a Turk [Muslim] but he does not have the laws of the Turks."[4] In other words, they did not seem to have been fully Islamized at the time of his visit.

I David Reubeni [hereafter Reuveni] was, according to Hillelson,[5] a Jewish "adventurer" who traveled to Sinnar and met King 'Amara Dunqas in 1523. Reuveni's diary was written in Hebrew and the original diary was at the Bodleian library from where it presumably disappeared after 1867. However, an edited transcript of the original MS was published in Oxford in1887 and in Berlin in 1892. Whether he was a German Jew, as claimed by Neubauer, or the manuscript was a transcript of an oral presentation in another language, taken down by a German Jew, as claimed by others, was immaterial for Hillelson at the time. It was also immaterial whether he was an adventurer and an impostor, or took part in the Shlomo Molcho Jewish messianic movement, as stated by the noted historian of the Jewish people, Graetz. What was significant for Hillelson and is presented in his paper is that his information on the Funj and on Sinnar in 1523 seems accurate and that he could not have obtained it without traveling to that region. Reuveni traveled disguised as a sharif from Mecca which explains the honor granted to him in the newly Islamized Funj Kingdom, whose king treated him as if he were "an angel."[6] Apart from his stay with King 'Amarah Dunqas of the Funj, his description of Sinnar and ha-Reuveni's later meeting with the Pope, all of which seem to be narrated honestly, the rest of his manuscript contains little of interest.

He first describes his trip from the Red Sea to Sinnar. From Sawakin [Suakin] Reuveni joined a merchants' camel caravan, consisting of some 3,000 camels, with which he traveled for

two months until he arrived in Sheba. There he met King 'Amarah [Dunqas, 1504-33] "who dwells on the Nile and his Kingdom is Sheba the capital of which is called Lam'ul. And he is a black king who rules both over blacks and whites."[7] He further tells us about the many slaves he encountered who formed an essential part of Funj society. Regardless of Reuveni's decline of presents, the King sent him "four virgin slave girls all of them naked" and the messenger who delivered them said: "take them these slave boys and girls as a present from our lord the king." Although tempted, Reuveni relates that his "good angel prevailed… blessed be the Lord who saved me from this sin." Therefore, he presented the slaves as a present to the king's wife and said: "I present them to you as a gift of good-will. I desire nothing in return and I give you forgiveness of sins and a good place in paradise."[8] After ten months with King 'Amarah Reuveni left Lam'ul with his old servant en-route to Sinnar, which they reached after eight days.[9] There he met Obadiah [Sic.], the King's agent, who provided him with another slave as well as with three camels to accompany him on his way to Egypt.

Hillelson quoted a paper written by A.Z. Eshkoli, a scholar from Jerusalem, who claimed that most of Reuveni's manuscript was purely imaginary. Eshkoli claimed that the bulk of Reuveni's description was derived from contemporary literary sources and that the manuscript was fabricated for political reasons.[10] Aharon Eshkoli later went on to Paris, London and to the Vatican in Rome in order to study relevant documents about David Ha-Reuveni and to translate his manuscript which was then at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Eshkoli also summarized his views on Reuveni in his book on "Messianic Movements in Israel", where he claims that to begin with ha-Reuveni's aims were political and military, and that his claims to messianism came only after his long sojourn in Portugal.[11]

II "The Sudanese Travels of Theodoro Krump" (1700-02),[12] is according to Prof. Jay Spaulding, the best account of Sinnar and probably the most important source we have on the precolonial history of Sudan. Spaulding quotes Krump as describing Sinnar in 1700 as the most cosmopolitan and prosperous town in Africa and "close to being the greatest trading city."[13] He provides details on the structure and the functioning of the Funj Sultanate at the time and gives interesting data on the trans-Saharan trade and commerce, especially that of slaves. Krump was, according to our records, neither a pleasant companion nor a gifted writer. His account is centered on his own "virtues" and on the superiority of Catholic Christianity, which for him as a Franciscan missionary was the only true belief, while all non-Catholics were doomed to hell. Krump's "straightforward comments record what he himself experienced and what informants he trusted told him…,the material concerning Sudan itself exhibits substantial credibility."[14]

On 1 may 1701 the caravan with which Krump traveled arrived in Sinnar, capital of the Funj kingdom. In this kingdom it is customary to have one of the four viceroys as patron and the Jesuit fathers chose Shaykh Arbab Adam. "To [Shaykh Arbab Adam] we gave as a present a clean mirror, a pair of razors, a sugar hat, a few pieces of soap, some pepper, a handful of little nails, Muscat nuts, cinnamon bark, coffee, and some confectionery."[p.281][15]

On 4 May 1701 Krump and his fellow missionaries were summoned to the royal Funj palace to meet the king. The palace complex is built out of "clay-like mud knitted together with straw and dung." The rooms are dark, with one door only but with high ceilings. They have no furniture at all except for "mats of plaited straw on which to sit, a large earthen jar for water, and a gourd…to serve as a drinking vessel." [p. 283] within this palace live the king, his four legitimate wives, his six hundred concubines, and his children. The king received them, surrounded by a number of shaykhs and guarded by thirty slaves. He spoke to them in Arabic and asked them about the purpose of their trip. They told him that they were headed for Ethiopia and would "then return to Christendom" [Europe].They presented the

king with many presents ("European gewgaws" p.284), with which he was very pleased and indicated that they could stay as long as they wished and leave whenever they wanted.

DESCRIPTION OF SINNAR

"One should know that in all Africa, as far as Moorish lands are concerned, Sinnar is close to being the greatest trading city. Caravans are continually arriving from Cairo, Dongola, Nubia, from across the Red Sea, from India, [Dar] Fur, Borno, the Fezzan, and other kingdoms." According to Krump, Sinnar is as populated as Cairo, and has a religiously and ethnically mixed population. It holds a public market every day in the central square wherein one can buy practically everything. Krump describes the slave trade undertaken at this market at some length: [pp.285-6][16]

> Furthermore, every day at the public market human beings who are slaves—men and women of every age are sold like cattle. Every day two or three hundred of them are led out onto the square. Turkish merchants, with the permission of their law, make them serve their wantonness, and then sell them to other lands such as Egypt and India; great are their ill-gotten gains! Those under twelve years of age are as naked as God sent them into the world; the older ones have an old rag about the body to cover their private parts. When they are sold people say to the responsible party, "bring me those slaves." Then the purchaser, without shyness or shame, looks them over like cattle, at their mouth and teeth, and the whole body. If one pleases him he lays out the value…

The price of slaves is not a set price and hence bargaining may go on for some time. However, Krump mentions the following prices for slaves sold in the market of Sinnar: "The ordinary price of a male fifteen-year-old slave is thirty florins, or if he is well-formed, [p.286], forty. A female slave of this age, if she is of clear complexion, is sold for fifty or sixty. At times, especially in the case of Ethiopian girls, they are sold for eighty."[17]

> Krump now returns to the court of the kings of Sinnar:
> When a king in Sinnar dies they choose another, and they do it in the following manner. All the shaykhs and the other highest noblemen of the kingdom assemble; they elect one of the royal princes, born to either a legitimate wife or a concubine, and name him king. All the other [princes], who are still confined in the palace, they then kill with lances… This is done so that there will be no rebellion against the king among the many princes, nor any division of the realm; the peace of the kingdom is preserved. [p.286][18]

The Shaykh of Qarri who rules over the kingdom of Nubia up to the Red Sea, is a subject of the King of Sinnar and pays him an annual tribute, consisting of hundreds of slaves, horses, camels, and a large sum of money. He arrived in Sinnar with his guards and accompanying travelers on 7 May 1701. The King of Sinnar rode out of the city to meet him, accompanied by his court, soldiers and several hundred slaves armed with lances. Upon meeting each other the Shaykh of Qarri dismounted and kissed the King's foot. They then rode back into the town and gathered in the [p.287] central square, ("bigger than the square in Munich"), where the welcoming ceremony, consisting of dances by the female slaves and war-like

games by the males. These games also included the king and the shaykh: "The king himself with his soldiers rode against the shaykh of Qarri as if they wanted to fight each other, but all was in disorder. "Finally the comedy came to an end with a blast from a small field-piece, the whole strength of this oh-so-mighty king."[p.287][19]

III Juan Maria Schuver traveled in Africa in the years 1880-83, and visited Sinnar the former capital of the Funj, some sixty years after its conquest by the Turco-Egyptians and just following Muhammad Ahmad's manifestation as *al-mahdi al-muntazar* in June 1881.[20] He is introduced to the reader as being: "out of Amsterdam: a new traveler…who plunged into the interior of the Turco-Egyptian Sudan and beyond in 1881."[xxi] In April 1882 while Schuver was on his way to Gumuz, less than a year after the manifestation of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi, a Mahdist force attacked Sinnar, burned some of its buildings and besieged its garrison. Luckily for Schuver the force was defeated and driven out of Sinnar by government force led by Giegler Pasha, the acting governor-genera at the time[xxxiii]. Schuver, who visited Sinnar at the time, described it as the site of the *Muydiriyya*, [Provincial headquarters] which included all the Blue Nile, with about 12-15,000 inhabitants. Writing about the Mahdist attack in 1882 he wrote: "The seizing of the town by the insurgents in the month of March 82, has left no traces." [324] In fact he claims that most of the damage was caused by "the lower classes of the town itself, who profited from several days of anarchy which followed the departure of the Arabs" and pillaged European and Turkish shops. In fact he carries on to state that he saw with his own eyes how the pillaged merchandise was resold by the thieves to the European merchants at "derisory prices." [325]

As we know from other sources an attempt by the Mahdi to conquer Sinnar, made on the eve of his death, in January 1885, failed and Sinnar was finally conquered by Mahdist forces belonging to the *Jihadiyya* under the command of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Nujumi, in August 1885, and its garrison surrendered. "As usual, the fall of the town was the signal for a series of brutal atrocities and cruelties.[21]

Schuver casts some doubts as to the population figures of Sennar during the Turkiyya.

> It has been supposed that there was a population of more than 100,000 souls during the period of its apogee. Allow me to point out that Khartoum…having been for 40 years the capital of an empire ten times the size of the ancient Funj country, has only managed to reach a third of this figure; it may be that we should settle for a proportionate reduction for good old Sennar. [325-6]

Following a description of the "bad reputation" of the Sennarians, including its *Fuqara* [Sufis], slave dealers etc. He has nothing good to tell us about the people of Sinnar, who sacrifice their young daughters to marriage long before they have attained puberty. In fact he quoted a "pious Fakir" who unhesitatingly attributed the recent destruction of the town of Sinnar by [Mahdist] insurgents to the anger of Allah, irritated by these infamies and punishing these criminals…"[22]

Schuver describes Sinnar as follows:

> Sennar is almost entirely constructed in sun-baked brick…Its mosque, flanked with a short minaret, is the last building of this kind on this side of the Sudan. The town is in decay and only owes its little activity to the presence of the garrison, and the Mudiriya. [326]

In conclusion, Sinnar, once the capital of the Funj Sultanate, became an unimpressive little town following its conquest by the Turco-Egyptian army and its later destruction during

the Mahdiyya, following its conquest in August 1885, at the beginning of the Khalifa 'Abdullahi's rule It recovered only under the Condominium, especially after the construction of the Sennar Dam in 1924. Since World War II its population increased considerably and it became a new center for the government in the Blue Nile region. Nowadays it is an important center for both business and agriculture.

[1]P.M. Holt, "A Sudanese Historical Legend: The Funj Conquest Of Suba", BSOAS, XXIII/1 (1960):1-12

[2] Ibid., p.4; Sinnar was founded by the Funj but their sultans dwelt in Lam'ul until the capital was transferred to Sinnar in the 16th century. According to Arkell, A History of the Sudan to 1821 (London: Athlone Press, 1955), Lam'ul was on the Blue Nile between Singa and Rosseiris.

[3] Jay Spaulding, The Heroic Age in Sinnar, (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1985), xiv

[4] Ibid. xvii

[5] S. Hillelson, "David Reubeni, An Early Visitor to Sennar", SNR, XVI(1933):55-66; in Hebrew manuscripts and books he is referred to as David Ha-Reuveni; see also G. Warburg, "A Note on David Reuveni's Visit to the Funj Sultan: in 1523", Sudan Studies Association Newsletter, vol. 24/3 (June 2006):7-11: Revised version in Sudan Studies {SSSUK}Number 34, (July 2006):20-31

[6] Spain was at the time in much of a turmoil since the crowning of King Charles I in 1516 was rather unpopular and the uprising of the Spanish Comuneros followed, 1520-21. In 1535 Charles undertook an expedition to Tunis against the Turks, which may tie in with Reuveni's grand design.

[7] Hillelson, 57; 'Amarah Dunqas was King of the Funj from 1504-1533; Reuveni visited the Kingdom in 1523; according to Reuveni Lam'ul was on the Blue Nile, eight days journey south of Sinnar; see also Neubauer, (ed.) Medieval Jewish Chronicles, (Oxford, 1887) Vol. II, p.131

[8] Hillelson, 58-9; the term "good angel" is translated from the Hebrew *yetser ha-tov;* see also Neubauer, Medieval Jewish Chronicles Vol. II, pp.134-5; according to Reuveni his conscience intervened only after one of the female slaves was already in his bed.

[9] Hillelson, 59; Reuveni's departure was hastened by the arrival of a third Meccan sharif who stated to king 'Amara that ha-Reuveni was a Jew and an impostor. See Neubauer, Medieval Jewish Chronicles Vol. II, p. 136

[10] A.Z. Eshkoli, "David Reubeni in the light of History", Zion, Vol V, (1938); Eshkoli claims that Reubeni's description was derived from literary sources and that the manuscript was fabricated for political reasons; see also A.Z. Eshkoli (ed.), The Story of David ha-Reuveni Copied from the Oxford Manuscript, second edition (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1993), [in Hebrew]

[11] Ibid. XX, quoting Eshkoli's book Hatnu'ot Hamshihiyot beyisrael, second printing Jerusalem 1948, p.273

[12] Jay Spaulding,, The Sudanese Travels of Theodoro Krump, adapted with minor modifications from the English translation of Theodoro Krump, Hoher und Fruchtbarer Palm-Baum des Heiligen Evangelij (Augsburg: Georg Schulter & Martin Hapach, 1710); quotations and citations including page numbers are from the 1710 edition as reproduced and translated by Jay Spaulding and published online at: www.kean.edu/~history/krump2one.htm

[13] Jay Spaulding, The Heroic Age in Sinnar, (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1985),4

[14] Krump, p.2 of Spaulding's introduction to the translation.

[15] Quoted from Spaulding's translation of "Description of what befell the Missionaries in Sinnar" p.1; Soap seems to have been the most sought after commodity during this journey. It is mentioned frequently as a gift or a form of tribute demanded from travelers.

[16] Quoted from Spaulding's translation of "Description of the City of Sinnar", p.1

[17] Ibid., Prices in Egypt are according to Krump higher and a male slave will sell for sixty florins while a good-looking female will cost one hundred.

[18] Krump observes that in Sinnar "it is better to be the son of a slave than of the king." Quoted from Spaulding's translation of "Description of the City of Sinnar", p.1

[19] Quoted from Spaulding's translation of "Description of the City of Sinnar", p.2, Krump's viewed this military "comedy" as rather funny and

SOUTH SUDAN & THE ISSUE OF CUSTOMARY LAWS

*By Hoth G. Chan, JD

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An Overview

The giant Republic of Africa, the Sudan is currently facing some of the difficult choices ever in its history. The Southern part of the country seems to be heading in the opposite direction (succession) while the Western part (Darfure) has erupted into an uncontrollable volcanic fire. Many experts in the Sudanese affairs seem to be agreeing that this Republic has reached a point of no-return as far as the unity of her people is concerned. And that the only better option at the present would be to give the South Sudanese people some type of free choice to choose their destination. This idea was later put into the test at the Machakos Peace Talks, which resulted into the signing of the current Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), giving South Sudanese the rights to vote for unity or separation in six years time. That was the reason why Southern Sudan was given autonomy within the Sudanese union to run its affair independently. As such, the Government of the Southern Sudan (GOSS) came into being, which is now in charge of the Southern Sudanese affairs.

The Government of the Southern Sudan is structured in a federal form with ten States under its control. Each State is given a power to run its affair, notwithstanding those retained by the GoSS under the Constitution. The Constitution of the Government of the Southern Sudan divided the power between the three branches of government (Federal System of Government): the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary Branch. Each branch is an independent from the other two branches and at the same time inter-linked with the others in order to balance the power. And so, the Judiciary of the Southern Sudan is structured in such a way that there is one Supreme Court at the top for the whole Southern Sudan and an Appeal Courts (three Appeal Courts) each representing the former three Southern Regions (Greater Upper Nile, Greater Bahr-El-Ghazal, and Greater Equatoria), which are further divided into ten Southern States. The governments of the ten Southern States are also structured in the same format, each with its own three branches of government as required by the States and Constitution of the Government of the Southern Sudan.

[Structure of the Judiciary of the Southern Sudan (JOSS) as sketched by this author]

One of the main and difficult tasks currently for the Judiciary of the Southern Sudan (JOSS) is to revises the customary laws of roughly fifty or more ethnic groups found in the ten Southern Sudan States. It has to be emphasis here that Southern Sudan had never been a nation with common culture, albeit, these different ethnic groups fought their common enemy, the Arab north, together. To come up with a uniform customary legal system is difficult for one to embark on without first going back to the colonial time when the British government made those customary practices part and parcel of the

native courts administration in the Southern Sudan.

The Chief's Court Ordinances

No society can govern itself without laws which regulate the behaviors of that society's members. Norms or customs of particular society develops overtime and become laws in the legal sense. The Colonial regimes upon entering South Sudan became aware of the existed customs of the natives and devised ways to strengthened them through ordinances, first by the enactment of *Civil Justice Ordinance of 1929 (see for instance*, *Lufti, G. A: the future of English Law in the Sudan*) followed by the *Chief's Court Ordinance of 1931*. These Ordinances had made it possible for the natives to run their affairs using their customary practices as far as the laws were concerned. In fact the Ordinance states that:

"The Chiefs' Court shall administer the Native Law and Customs prevailing in the area over which Court exercises its jurisdiction provided that such Native Law and Custom is not contrary to justice, morality or order…"

By recognizing and affirming the customary practices of the Natives, the British Government had put herself in a favorable position as far as the administration of the Southern Sudanese was concerned. It was a huge recognition for the natives with significant political impact in the contemporary Southern Sudan. The same recognition was accorded to the Native Courts by the Sudanese Government, when in 1977 it enacted the *People's Local Court Act (Wuol Makec, John, The Essential for the Re of Customary Law in the Southern Sudan)*. Interestingly enough, the above quoted person, *John Wuol Makec*, is the present Chief Justice of the Southern Sudan Supreme Court. That Act repealed the original ordinance, but interestingly enough though; it replaced it with an almost identical mandate.

Hoth Chan in front of Judiciary,
Government of South Sudan (GOSS)

Hoth Chan in front of Judiciary, Government of the South Sudan (photo: R. and C. Lobban, 2008)

However, all the beneficial effects in regard to the growth of the Southern Sudanese's cultural integrity were relatively short-lived due to the eruption of the second civil war of 1983.

Chief's Court in the SPLA/M Liberated areas

The eruption of the second civil war in 1983 destabilized the civil system in the Southern Sudan, particularly the Chief's Court as the motto was to turned the old Sudan up-side-down and build a new and democratic Sudan on top of it. The revolution spearheaded by the SPLA/M militarized the civil system in such a way that Chiefs were chosen or selected rather, by the Military Commander of the area. Loyalty to the Movement was the paramount requirements for getting elected, which in turn jeopardized the partiality and neutrality of the Chiefs. Civil laws were made sub-ordinate to

the Martial Laws in order to meet SPLA's war operations. This concept had crippled the civil system thereby reducing the powers of traditional Chiefs in the Southern Sudan, a problem which the SPLA/M came to recognized very late (1994). The diminution or subversion of the Chiefs' authority has brought with it limitations on their ability to execute the law and a consequent weakening of traditional Customary systems. The implementation of military tribunals in place of customary courts throughout the civil wars was commonplace and typical of the deliberate or inadvertent actions which over time eroded the status of Chiefs within their communities, *see for instance; Abdel Salem, A. H., Civil Society and the future of Sudan. Phoenix State (2001), Red Sea Press.*

Chiefs' Court after the CPA

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) had marked the end of the South Sudanese Revolution, I suppose, as their cause was recognized by the International Community. A rebuilding process for the key institutions (among them the Judiciary) in the South was initiated and funded by the donors Communities through the United Nation Agencies. In fact, a sizeable number of Judges are now being trained in the neighboring countries. The training program of the Judges is funded by World Community through UNDP in order to build a capacity of the Judiciary of the Southern Sudan. However, one of the vital areas ignored already by the International Community and the Government of the Southern Sudan is the traditional chiefs sector. No doubt that the Chiefs are the custodians of the customary laws in the Southern Sudan and through them the administration of the local customs could becomes sustainable. The idea of building the judicial system from top to bottom thereby ignoring that sensitive area of empowering the traditional system is a sure way of missing the big picture of building a unify South Sudan Nation. No house can stand for a long time without a solid foundation. Chiefs are the foundation of the Southern Sudan house/Nation and through them a lasting and enduring nation can be build where customary laws would be accorded more weight when it comes to the settlements of communal disputes.

Justifications for written customary laws

It has to be emphasis here that there are compelling arguments on both sides in regards to the written form of customary laws. This is obvious when talking to ordinary people here in South Sudan about codifying their Customs. The principal reasoning often given were that whereas all the laws are prone to interpretation, unwritten law is more susceptible to misinterpretations and bias. Some of the resistance in regard to written customary laws ideas among South Sudanese is that customary law reflects the contemporary customs, practices and beliefs of a community. These customs may change and that customary laws must not be static, but flexible enough to reflect the changing phase of the society in question. That is, any move to codify or documents these laws to written form would certainly limit their flexibility. However, the above arguments have both negative and positive points defending on how one look at it. The point here is to modernize traditional system so as to make it competitive with the changing phase of other laws.

The reasons for push for uniformity of the Customary Laws in Southern Sudan has something to do with how different communities deals with one another when it comes to certain issues of paramount important. For instance, on the following issues: Marriage, Divorce, child Custody, Adultery, Property, Social Obligations, *inter alia*. All of these goes to the very hard of confusion, which should be harmonized by written common Customary Laws agreed upon by all the communities inhabiting this part of the country. At the same token, there are equally compelling arguments for the written down of customary laws, citing the study conducted by *Aleu Akechak, Robert A Leitch, and B.*

Justice Ayak-der Kom Awan, Supreme Court Judiciary of the Southern Sudan (Lobban, 2008)

Hum, for the World Vision & The South Sudan Secretariat of Legal and Constitutional Affairs (*A Study of Customary Law in Contemporary Southern Sudan*, March, 2004):

> First, the huge shift of population both out of and within the regions of Southern Sudan has brought peoples of different customs and practices in close vicinity with each other (this trend is predicted to increase as refugees' returns from abroad). The consequence has been a marked increase in conflict between different customary law systems. The lack of formal written codes of law has been both increased the complexity of the court's tasks and made the process of reconciliation amongst parties who more often than not are ignorant of their respective customary laws, more difficult.
>
> Second point, if the customary laws are to continue to thrive in Southern Sudan, they must be included within the domain of the Judiciary. Judges at every level of Judiciary must have at least equal access to and knowledge of the body of a particular customary law code as they do to domestic statutory law or any other body of law.
>
> Third, it is clear that the customary law systems of Southern Sudan will, in the future, have to be reconciled, on a frequent basis, with other bodies of law, particularly: domestic statutory law, Sharia law, International Humanitarian law and, at least in the short term, military law. All of these
>
> bodies of laws are to be found in written form. A written form of customary law would be better understood by external organizations and enable a closer harmony between the various bodies of law.
>
> Fourth, the appeals court process already has the effect of causing individual customary law with reduced to writing when higher court judges make decisions. Rationalizing precedent law with customary law would be much more effective where bodies of law are already written.

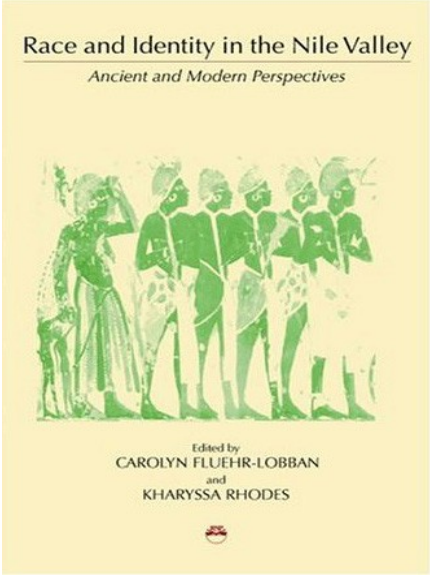
Ways Forward

The present confusion between the Statutory Courts and the Chief's court need a new approach instead of pushing the Chief's courts a side. For one thing, Chiefs are very expert when it comes to the handling of tribal customs and affairs. For another, most of the Chiefs are more matured and could handle both Judicial as well as Administrative issues simultaneously. What they need in order to function well or do their works more efficiently and effectively is to get a little bit of trainings, which they are not given at the present. The International Community and the Government of the Southern Sudan have to understand that empowering the traditional sector is the only way of solving the ongoing confusion between the traditional authorities (Chiefs) and the statutory courts.

Reviews and Commentary

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban and kharyssa rhodes, eds., *Race and Identity in the Nile Valley: Ancient and Modern Perspectives.*

Trenton, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press, 2004. i-xxviii + 292 pp. Index, bibliography. Price not given.



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Reviewed by
Ismail H Abdalla
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Edited works are notoriously difficult to evaluate well, even ones that are thematically narrower and chronologically more restricted than the book under consideration here. The fourteen chapters and short introduction of *Race and Identity in the Nile Valley: Ancient and Modern Perspectives,* ostensibly on "race" and "identity", cover a wide range of topics for much of the known history of the Nile Valley and adjacent Middle Eastern territories. The book is divided chronologically into three sections, "Race and Identity in Antiquity", "Pre-Colonial and Colonial Sudan and Egypt", and "Post Independence Race Relations", a time division and limitation to which however many contributors pay little attention. Dr Al-Baqir Mukhtar's "Crisis of Identity in Northern Sudan" of Section Three, for example, discusses habits and prejudices of ancient Arabians as much as it explores the identity dilemma contemporary Northern Sudanese are facing today. Similarly, Seif Da'Na and Laura Khoury in the same section spend considerable energy with less to show for it on the European economic penetration of the Ottoman Empire.

In the introduction to the volume, the editors make their intention clear. It is to reintroduce "race", long "underrepresented, submerged, or ignored", as an analytical paradigm in the historical and social study of the Nile Valley and the Middle East (p.xiv). Accomplishing this intellectual task will "shed fresh light upon the matter (race)" (p.xv). A second objective of the editors is to provide a platform in which race relations in Egypt and the Sudan can be compared (p. xv), in light not only of the way colonial power in both countries used race to inform policy, but also because of the implications of such policy for the post-independence period.

Instead of interrogating on theoretical and epistemological grounds the key terms of "race" or "racism" over time in different cultural settings to undo the under-representation, submergence, or neglect, or "shed fresh light on the matter" so as to lay down the foundation for and give coherence to the different contributions, the editors have chosen instead to write a brief, multi-dimensional though inconclusive summary of ideas about colors and different populations circulating among the ancients, describe the multi ethnic, multi-lingual Sudan, or highlight the incoherence of Orientalism and Egyptology. For a working definition of these terms, the reader has to wait till much later when different contributors offer their own. Luckily and, for this reviewer, wisely, many authors have put these often subjective terms in parenthesis, in part because they are not sure of their true meanings.

If there is one theme that undergirds

this uneven volume, especially the chapters in the second and third sections, it is the hermeneutic attempt to uncover the subtle and the hidden, to read between the lines, to second-guess informants, and to see through an intellectual prism accustomed to a history of brutal racial hierarchy in the US unknown elsewhere. Reductionism is paramount everywhere. "Arabs", left undefined, conveniently double as "Islam" and both are white and racist, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban's courageous attempt to draw the distinction between the two notwithstanding. Everything else, and every other ethnic group is "African" and "black", both terms left undetermined, while the betwixt situation of Northern Sudanese makes these hapless creatures lost in a world of confused identities, according to the essentialist approach of Al-Baqir Mukhtar. Unsubstantiated generalities are common. Slavery was unknown in the Sudan till the "Arabs" introduced it in the nineteenth century, Dr Jok Madut Jok assures his readers (p. 188), even if contributions by Richard Lobban, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Stephanie Beswick and others in the same volume testify to the antiquity of the institution, and its presence in Southern Sudan before contact with the outside world. Dr Jok also blames historians and social scientists for failing to identify Arab racism as the main reason why slavery existed in the Sudan (p 187). If this is true, it would be difficult indeed to explain away the participation in the Atlantic slave trade for three and half centuries of the African chiefs of Asante, Dahomey, or Yoruba land, or the Central African kings of Wadai, Bagirmi, or Bornu in the much longer Saharan slave trade. It is a truism that needs to be stressed here, and that is slavery as an institution existed in Africa and beyond because land was plentiful while labor was in short supply. Africans enslaved their brothers and sisters to augment linage or increase social and financial status just as much as Arabs enslaved Persians, Turks, Kurds and Africans before and after Islam. Arabic speaking tribes themselves were not immune to being "enslaved" as *mawaali* by their more powerful Arab protectors. The only element that Islam has added to the practice of enslaving others was ideological; Muslims are allowed, after due invitation and refusal to embrace Islam, to fight non-believers, and if conquered, to force them into slavery. Sure, by the enlightened, humanistic and liberal standards of today, such practice is barbaric and inexcusable. It was nonetheless the norm rather than the exception in medieval and ancient civilizations.

In the remaining limited space I will address only a few problems of content, style, or methodology in selected contributions. *Race and Identity in the Nile Valley* is an uneven edited work. Three of its fourteen chapters are reprints from different time periods, while a few authors use field research material collected in the 1980s (Hale). Several authors competently and expertly deal with their respective topics, making the reading intellectually stimulating and rewarding. Under this category I include the chapter by Al-Baqir Mukhtar, less his strongly opinionated and unsubstantiated generalizations about monolithic Northern Sudanese, the chapter by Sandra Hale, with a sharp and stylistically and theoretically invigorating first part, the comprehensive and thematically ordered chapter by Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Stephanie Beswick's informative chapter before she begins using the questionable Christian Solidarity International as a source, the incisive, articulate chapter of Catherine Cheal on the "Meaning of Skin Color in Eighteen Dynasty Egypt", and the balanced, non-polemic, non-condescending contribution by Anne Jennings. The remaining chapters to varying degrees are a cut below because of infelicities or for lack of vigorous editing (Richard Lobban), meaning and clarity sacrificed for theoretical jargon (Kharyssa Rhodes), reminiscence and impressionism (Maurita Poole), or a tendency to swallow too much without proper digestion (Sef Da'Na and Laura Khoury).

Race and Identity in the Nile Valley: Ancient and Modern Perspectives is a book that cannot be recommended to the general readership because of the many contentious issues it covers. Those in the field who are familiar with the socio-

political and historical context of the Sudan and Egypt, especially the citizens of these two countries, may benefit from the unsaid exhortations of the editors and authors to re-think received wisdom and question behavior considered normative.

I have started this review by reminding the reader that evaluating edited works is difficult. No matter how close the attention the reviewer gives to the text, because of time and space limitations there are bound to be major gaps in the narrative about the merits or demerits of the different contributions. I therefore hope all authors in this volume, some of whom are very close friends, take the above remarks in the spirit of comradeship and collegiality, a spirit informed and strengthened by our endless quest for the illusive exactness and perfection for what we do or write.

Review Essay
by Omar Soy Keita
Howard University
and Smithsonian Institution

This book grew out of two conferences: one being the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting of 1996, and the other the International Conference of Sudan Studies in 1997. It is not a collection of hypothesis-driven research papers. Its subject matter is of interest because of the ongoing discussion on "ethnicity", "race" and their interpretation, and the peoples of the Nile Valley as they relate to these topics. At the outset it must be said that the book is recommended, but not without criticism, and has its major value as a basis for generating discussions; this review is written accordingly. Hopefully, there will be a second edition, and a second conference in Cairo. There is ongoing discussion about the "identity" of the peoples in the Nile Valley and basin, inter-population conflicts within the valley, and between those of the valley and others. The conferences took place at the time of the culture wars, with "Afrocentrists" and "Eurocentricists" locked in "battles" about the "nature" of the ancient Egyptians, and whether or not ancient Greece borrowed heavily from ancient Egypt, and/or was visited by ancient Egyptians to any great degree. A lot of this can now be seen as somewhat frivolous and both "sides" no doubt think that they have "won". Irrespective of this, some things are certain: the Nile Valley is still in Africa, the biological diversity of indigenous Africans is immense, Africa is complex, and Greece is in southeastern Europe, not far from Africa. The review given here is that of a biological/biocultural anthropologist with an interest in early biocultural histories of Nile Valley cultures, their interactions with their closest neighbors, and the history of ideas about the diversity and origins of these people, as well as Africans in general.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is entitled "Race and Identity in Antiquity", chapters 1-6, Part II, "Precolonial Egypt and Colonial Egypt and Sudan", chapters 7-9, and Part III, "Post-Independent Racial Realities", chapters 10-14. There is an introduction and index. The authors come from a range of academic backgrounds including anthropology, archaeology, communications, and history. Notably there are no Egyptologists, or archaeologists of the epipaleolithic and predynastic periods. The authors are ethnically diverse. However, there are no Egyptians or Egyptian-Americans, nor the reprinting of articles by various Egyptian scholars, such as Gamal Mokhtar's piece from the UNESCO history, volume I. There was the republication of some of the thoughts of Anténor Firmin, a nineteenth-century Haitian scholar, and the editors are to be commended for bringing him to life here. The value of Firmin's work is that it can be compared to others of the time, to understand the different perspectives on iconography, the texts of the day, and to see variations in opinion. It could help to dispel the oft-

uttered excuse for bias: "they were products of their times."

The technical production of the book is generally good, but there are some problems; for example, some references are out of order or have been run into each other (e.g. on page 45 the Friedman reference has been made a part of the Celenko reference, thereby taking it out of alphabetical order, making it look like Celenko wrote a paper on Hierakonpolis). The same is true for page 83 with references by Burstein that have been fused to those of Blundell, and again on 154, where Aime Cesaire's name has been added to the end of the Cavalli-Sforza reference, whose first name has been misspelled. On page 41 a sentence cuts off in the paragraph continued from the previous page.

Some general points are in order of a thematic nature. The book would have profited from a demand that authors clarify the definition(s) of race, and their usages of this word. It seems that in some cases the term 'race' was equated with any difference. The distinction was not always made between identity (how a group or individual describes themselves), and identification (how others describe a group or individual). The work would have also benefited from a didactic review/overview of the Holocene archaeology of the Nile Valley and the interpretations of what archaeological data indicate about origins and contacts, and historical linguistics, as well as a general discussion about theories of ethnicity; this would have helped the audience by giving theoretical and evidence-based reference points, and preventing the audience from filling in too much with personal experience. There is also no review of the history of ideas about the peopling of the Nile Valley, the Egyptian population's origins and affinities and the variability in the reports; for example nothing is mentioned about DuBois work. Having said this, however, collectively the essays have some elements of these topics, but the book would have been more effective if specific didactic chapters had been included. These criticisms should not dissuade readers or those who would use this book in conjunction with others in a class, but rather indicate potential paths of discussion. Those who have a background will likely more easily discuss and debate the book. There are also philosophical issues related to attempting to know the mind of the ancients: we must be wary of imposing our meanings on the way they ordered, sculpted, and painted people. We must be aware of a racist legacy of interpretation in history, and the automatic (de)valuing of things African, the attempt to extract Egypt and Nubia from Africa and Africanity, and related issues.

The Introduction, by the editors, carefully situates the study of Egypt and Sudan in the colonial framework in which it arose. The also comment on different strains of what they call "Afrocentrism" in some sense genericising this term to mean all those who might say something positive about Africa; this might be seen as incorrect, especially by self-defined Afrocentrists who state that they work from a method that is new. It is questionable to project the term Afrocentrism back into the past. The editors do give a level of respect to early African diasporic writers who rarely receive it (unless they are the assimilated descendants of Africans such as Alexander Pushkin or Alexandre Dumas). The editors also point out the relationship between power and scholarship and the final determinations of disciplines in the social setting. They also indirectly show how modern scholars, e.g. Egyptologists, may ignore aspects of the writings of their predecessors, an ethically questionable practice that may weaken their case in terms of the history of ideas. Are the scholars of the ancient world always correct beyond a shadow of a doubt? Are those who have questioned certain categorical notions guilty of lying beyond a shadow of a doubt? The editors suggest that it is worthwhile considering these questions, and when it comes to Egypt it is easy to show the evidence in the news media, and other domains, for a continuing effort to extract Egypt (ancient and modern) from Africa. However, as with the effort to show the illegitimacy of the Prince Hall Masons, this campaign has failed, and the media

is out of date or merely reflects a racist legacy. (The more evidence that was gathered to deny Prince Hall legitimacy, the more apparent it became just how legitimate the Prince Hall Masons were and are.)

Chapter 1, by Rhodes, successfully addresses archaeological approaches to identity, and usefully provides a review of theories of ethnicity, boundaries, and their discovery in the archaeological record. The author also discusses the history of ideas about culture and peoples, covering the culture history, processual and post-processual approaches. Her example of archers' looses is useful, and even instructive. She points out how racism influenced work, mediated by a typological notion of "sub-Saharan".

Chapter 2, by R. Lobban, is entitled 'Afrocentric perspectives on race relations in dynastic Egypt'. This chapter gives non-specialists some vocabulary to assess discussions about human diversity, but there are otherwise problems. It is a valiant effort to address scanty information about something he calls "race relations" in the ancient Nile Valley, a dubious projection of a contemporary phrase back into the past; it is not quite successful. The title is somewhat misleading because he does not systematically review the writings of 'Afrocentric writers'. Rather he seems to attempt to give himself a gaze from an African perspective in some sense and fails—it is fuzzy; for example, the purpose for pointing out that Africa is not a term that the ancient Nile Valley folks would have known is not really clear. It is not really relevant to an objective analysis of the geography of the Nile Valley cultures and peoples. Europe and Asia also had very restricted meanings to the Greeks, and others, but this does not prevent a study of them as Europeans or Asians. The Greeks did not use the covering term European or Asian for themselves. Lobban notes how diverse Nile Valley peoples, specifically Nubians and Upper Egytians, collectively were sometimes presented under the protection of the same deity, suggesting that this might imply that some Egyptians saw a connection between themselves and [some] Nubians, and this is a prospective line of research for looking for other such connections between Egyptians and others. Lobban does not define race, but in some places seems to work from a perspective that the received racial taxa are legitimate, and seems to relate culture to biology in a proportionate fashion, which sounds quite old fashioned! This is odd and confusing—but will generate critical discussion. Being biohistorically/bioculturally African has nothing to do with a static non-evolutionary classification based on physical trait clusters and tied to old ideas about the invasion of Africa. He also seems to impose a Western worldview about 'race' (phenotype?) onto the mindset of the ancient Egyptians and Nubians in many instances. He conceptualizes Nubian-Egyptian relations as "race" relations instead of 'group' or ethnic or international relations. His use of language seemingly sometimes suggests that neither Egyptians or Nubians are Africans. There are other errors; he speaks of 'racial clines', but cline is technically applied to the spatial distribution of a single trait, but would not in any case be modified by the word 'race'. He equates skin color with nationality, suggests that the Egyptians engaged in 'racial' stereotyping. There are alternative interpretations for his claims that he does not offer. There is no evidence to indicate that the Egyptians had a 'racial' science, or ever spoke of people in terms of color; they depicted the peoples that they knew, sometimes in good detail. He interprets Mentuhotep II based on color, speculating on Nubian origins when in fact many Upper Egyptians of this time period would have been of the same color or very similar; recall Dynasty I kings conquered A group Nubia, incorporated it, making it the most southern nome of Egypt. Nubian origins are not needed for a dark colour in a Darwinian paradigm of microevolution, considered with the likely settlement pattern of the Nile Valley. In addition to this Nubians apparently interacted with predynastic Egyptians as he points out, but more important the Nile Valley was settled by peoples from the

Sahara in part, who apparently had a range of phenotypes. Texts also tell us that a certain 12th Dynasty pharaoh was 'predicted' and was identified only as being born of a woman from Ta Seti. In terms of skin color in reality it cannot be said that there was no overlap in color, on both ends of the spectrum, which likely explains why the Egyptians could have not started equating nationality with color in terms of verbal practice (this is a different practice than artist renditions of average colors, but note the variation in the facial features of some Dynasty 12 kings, that seems to a function of different Egypt workshops. In terms of physical anthropology Lobban mentions only Batrawi's study from the 1940s (!), and fails to present the results of other studies that did not use the discredited Coefficient of Racial Likeness. He uses modern Nigerians as a foil for African (?) or black (?), but which Nigerians—the skin colors and physiognomy of Nigerians goes far beyond the stereotyped "Forest Negro" type, and in any case this phenotype has no privileged place in the scientific conception of African biological variability. Lobban makes some mistakes concerning language, suggesting that modern language families can be scientifically traced back to the middle or upper paleolithic, which is not what standard historical linguistics teaches; in one place he equates Afro-Asiatic with Semitic, but Semitic is only a branch of Afro-Asiatic, and a young one at that, according to the specialists. Ancient Egyptian with Coptic is its own distinct branch of Afro-Asiatic.

Chapter 3, by Cheal, discusses color symbolism in the New Kingdom of Egypt. She suggests that the multiple meanings of color terms perhaps prevented them from ever becoming used as designations of peoples. It is a very important observation to make that Egyptians did not refer to people as Whites, Blacks, or Browns; the term "Nehesy" translated in various books as "Negro", or "black" is an imposition of the translators' ideas, since the term is not a color term in standard Egyptian.. In addition to this argument it can be pointed out that ancient Egyptians had no racial science, and that they merely depicted the people that they knew. They were aware of different skin colors but never engaged in taxonomic classifications based on skin color, or craniofacial form. Some authors have attempted to make Egyptians' descriptions and depictions of the world they knew (that had no far east Asians, or southern Indian-subcontinent Asians) the equivalent of racial thinking; this is better understood as modern authors wanting to project their own prejudices/worldview back into the past.

Chapter 4, by Burstein, shows us how physical difference does not always lead to conceptualizing foes or enemies in terms of those differences. Rather he illustrates how other kinds of stereotypes, some positive, some negative, can and did develop. This is a lesson for those who think that racism, a system of oppression, can be read back into the Greco-Roman past. Apparently the Greeks and Romans had different perspectives about those whom they collectively called Ethiopians. Burstein, without romanticisation, shows us a range of attitudes of the Greco-Romans based on ancient myths and power relationships that do not fall into denigration against skin color. While "proto-racism" has been attributed to these ancient Europeans it is fair to ask, as an American, did the Greeks or Romans systematically treat Kushite slaves or freeman as inhuman beasts, did they experiment on Egyptian and Kushite slave women, did they systematically and preferentially deny children from these peoples hope, did they think that one of their citizens with a grandparent from one of these nationalities was not *really* Greek or Roman, did they act like Thomas Jefferson? Burstein suggests that they do not. Now this is not to say that there was no Greek or Roman ethnocentrism, aesthetic prejudice or looking down on the Barbarians; these kinds of things can be demonstrated.

Chapter 5 is a reprint of an essay by Firmin, a nineteenth century Haitian scholar. This essay is of historical interest, and invites

comparison of his writing with that of the others of his time. It also invites us to ask was his interpretation only based only or primarily on a desire to vindicate "his folk" or was it viable in scientific terms, in terms of "scientific" information of the day? The answer to this question would be very revealing about how social prejudice influences the interpretation of evidence. It also makes us ask why the history of ideas was not brought to bear during the Black Athena debates; the fact that Champollion and even the racists Nott and Gliddon called the Egyptians Africans should have caused various kinds of reactions and reflections.

Chapter 6, by Beswick, examines the ethnic actors and society in the slave trade in Sudan, how slavery and identity influenced each other, and how this changed over time. It is a valuable contribution. Beswick does not fully place her story into the state systems that existed in Darfur, and eastern Chad; it is not clear what the relationship is between the sultans of Wadai, Darfur, to slave raiding and trading, and the role of the elites—and their own ethnic backgrounds. Her chapter is very revealing about the ordinariness of slavery, but this also raises a flag: what about most folk, and the notion of the ordinary day and ordinary life? Was daily life all about raiding and slavery? Another value of her piece is the illustration of ethnic fluidity, but also intertwining of various ethnic genealogies. The notion of rigid boundaries, cast from a primordial mold was not the case in these societies. She also informs us about different models of slavery, and different attitudes about women taken in war. Beswick tells us for example that Baggara groups never took certain captured women as wives, but what is more important is that the offspring of such concubines were raised as Baggara: a better deal than what Sally Hemmings got, from one point of view. It was also true, at least at one time, that some Baggara are low-land Fur in origin, because this Fur society does not have a pastoral moiety. Low-land Fur who became successful cattle herders merged into Baggara communities and became Baggara (see Haaland, 1969, but also Firth 1967 for a contrast with mountain Fur economy). As an aside it is curious that female circumcision in the minds of some African Muslims is an Islamic requirement, and a defining act, which is not true. So the pronunciation that a slave has become a Muslim after a forced circumcision, as noted in one of Beswick's examples is a fascinating parallel to Africans being forcibly baptised and declared Christians—on their way to slavery in Latin America. It would be interesting to know what the most learned Sudanese Muslim scholars would have to say about how this came to be viewed in this manner. Beswick does not tell us what Muslim Baggara women thought of being captured by non-Muslims, or how Muslim communities dealt with this in theory based on fatwas, or other writings. This essay does tell us about a societies that are neither culturally, genealogically, or genetically "pure"; it would have been nice if the author had discussed the fate of Dinka, Nuer, or Baggara women who wound up as the wives or concubines of Egyptians. We know of the fate of one of these: he became president of Egypt (a cautionary note for those westerners who would like to say that the fate of darker Africans in Islamic societies was no better than that in the West; no one looking like Sadat with his story, is likely to be president or premier of the US, France, Britain, or Belgium any time soon—which does not excuse slavery, colour prejudice or racism.). I do not know Sadat's mother's status, but I do know that his father, a soldier, met her in the Sudan. While color prejudice or frank racism may exist in Egypt, genealogy may be more important, and ranked above physical traits. It would be of interest also to have an essay on the Baggara, a term that probably covers a congeries of peoples now.

Chapter 7, by C. Fluehr-Lobban, is entitled "A critical anthropological review of race in the Nile Valley". In it she summarizes the concepts that have been used about groups and physical variation in the Nile Valley. Fluehr-Lobban appropriately mentions the works of Seligman, but not Elliot Smith in discussion of

concepts about the ancient people. The chapter is a good review overall. One must quibble with the idea that the diversity of Nubians is all due gene flow from other known groups. Indeed this was a topic of debate at one time. Conceptually one must make a difference between variation that may reflect adaptive evolution or the coming together of different lineages in a breeding population before the time of known ethnic or linguistic groups, versus interactions between known groups. One must consider evolution in the northeast quadrant of Africa and the region's importance in the evolution of modern humans.. Fluehr-Lobban, like Richard Lobban also does not review the physical anthropological studies that have been done on the ancient remains, or make mention of review articles that do. Overall the essay is an excellent introduction to numerous topics. The section on the status of Nubians in Egypt is well done, but when it comes to the ancient period it is important to re-conceptualize the origins and interactions between cultures and peoples in the southern Egypt/Nubian and the flanking Nile regions. Dynasty I Egyptians also conquered a Nubian polity and its geographical territory became a part of Egypt, thus Egyptianizing those folk, but also Nubianizing the resident Egyptians if these distinctions are possible given that there were likely different kinds of Nubians with variations in phenotype and possibly language.

Chapter 8, by Eve Troutt Powell, is about a Sudanese woman, Bakhita, who has been made a saint by the Roman Catholic church. This piece is an interesting commentary on history and memory, and the "disappearance" of the slave descendants of non-northern Nile Valley Africans into the populace who left no narratives—but it would be interesting to know if there are narratives from Armenian, Turkish or Greek slaves in Egypt, especially females. Bakhita is the exception because she left a text that is being used in some Christian Sudanese communities. (The Egyptian, Professor Leila Ahmed, in her book *Border Crossings*, states that as a girl she knew Egyptians who had living slave relatives or ancestors—and these folk were "white", not from Sudan or inner Africa.) Powell points out how Egyptians sometimes imitated Westerners in certain types of blackface mammy images, etc. It would have been useful if she had told us about any Egyptians who wrote or spoke up against these. In this day when Afro-North Americans and tropical Africans have supported Egyptian political interests it would be problematic if there was no opposing voice in Egyptian culture to colorism. Powell also pointed out how Bakhita has been appropriated by southern Sudanese although she was actually from Darfur, thus showing how religion is more important than a regional or ethnic affiliation.

Chapter 9, by Hale, makes an important contribution by showing how women in Sudan use Islam to resist male oppression—and possibly even Arabism; this is an interesting point ripe with possibilities and with contradictions: does this concern of women trump a "higher" position on the pecking order than the prestige of Arab identity? Hale does not answer this question. She also points out the use of ethnic labels to create prestige, while showing how Westerners' development of "racial" terms to describe physiognomies was of no little value in the actual social world of the Sudan. Hale points out how terminology is used to remove the "Arabs" of Egypt and Sudan from Africa, and by extension into the past remove Egypt's Africanity. This cannot be overemphasized, and it is a bit humorous to see how genetic studies—or rather geneticists—sometimes engage in similar practices, without knowing the particulars of the colonialist intellectual traditions that feed such—thereby throwing out Darwinism.

Chapter 10, by Jok Madut Jok, raises the issue of why the "racial" dimension of slavery in the African and Near Eastern worlds has not been addressed by scholars in a systematic way. He makes an important contribution in asking this question, but does not give absolute numbers of slaves, and the fact that many of these societies might have actually preferred white

slaves. Recall that a white Spanish eunuch named Judar Pasha, commanded Moroccan troops in their defeat of Songhay, having been sent by the sultan Al-Mansur, whose mother was a West African concubine! There were numerous European Christian slaves in the Maghreb and Egypt. Was there a "racial" basis/ideology for slavery akin to that of Euro-American southerners? The question may not be fair but much of the discourse on this topic has a hidden reference point to American racial slavery and ideology. Of course all slavery is unjust. Jok shows how local prejudices fed into British racism—but if it was racist ideology on the part of Arab Sudanese as an American understands racism, would those Sudanese have traded their southern origin slaves for whites, especially white women? I wonder… and if the answer is 'yes' what does that imply about a "racial" ideological basis for Sudanese slavery? Would white American slave holders have traded tropical Africans for Danish slaves if they could have had them ?

Chapter 11, by Albaqir Mukhtar, addresses the identity crisis of northern Sudanese, who while usually having physically dark skin and non-stereotypical Arab physiognomies, have Arab identity. (It is not necessarily clear to me that all of the populations in the Arabia at the time of the prophet, PBUH, necessarily looked the same, and this deserves some deep research.) I am not sure that the author gives us a complete picture of the problem and its solution. Mukhtar gives a stinging critique of what appears to be a situation of people claiming to be what they cannot be or are not, and are not fully accepted as; it is painted as pitiful and painful. He also gives us stories of past notable figures who self-limited themselves because of their colour, e.g. the famous Nubian poet; we need to ask how this happened, how did it arise, as well as describe it. (It is instructive that this poet has this view of himself, but that the "white" Arabs who had accepted his son as a suitor apparently thought that he was fine.) We should feel sorrow for people in such circumstances. Neither Antar nor Bilal limited themselves in who they married because of colour, and nor did Prince Bandar. There are questions however. We need to ask why there has been no active resistance on the part of Sudanese intellectuals—if this is a major problem? Do the elites in the Gulf with tropical African foremothers feel the same way? What about "black" Iraqis—what is there situation in this war? Were all of the original Arabs actually white as he suggests based on literature and images? Are there not times when Arabs of the past called themselves dark or black in contrast to the Persians? (See Evans, 1980.) Why have Sudanese intellectuals not been able to successfully mine the old literature, science, and Islamic beliefs to both bolster their claims of Arab identity and show that color is not what makes the real "Arab", and even to construct a new narrative of Arabness? Why have they not addressed the Arab League about this colour conciousness? Perhaps there should be an Islamic revolution around the issue of color—maybe justice this way is necessary before we talk about other things. Develop Sudan and have the leverage of oil and food; perhaps power will help here, if the problem is this deep. After all, non-Arab Africans (and African Americans) have found spouses in nearly all of the northern African states—is this racism or colour prejudice absolute, and what must we do to lesson it? What about the African identity of the Maghreb and Egypt—why have Sudanese Arabs failed to point this out? Why have these intellectuals and others not united their country and gone after the "Arabs" further north to keep alive the Pan-Africanism of Nasser and Nkrumah—i.e. how have things come to this, if his analysis is absolutely true—and demand their absolute inclusion? Mukhtar does not give us a range of strategies to address the problem. Was King Hassan or King Al-Mansur of Morocco less "Arab" because their mothers were sub-Saharan Africans. Should we suspect that the Sudanese crisis is in largely a part of the modern world—where nation state, "race", and ethnicity in particular forms have been transmitted by Europeans and Euro-Americans to

the rest of the world in a particular way? Is Antar less of an "Arab" because of his mother to the masses of Arabs? What about prince Bandar—is he less of an Arab? Interrogate this and use it. The East African warriors who died in the early battles of Islam—are they thought of by the early Arabs as simply "blacks" without cultural identities, and how did their companions see them? Why did the prophet, PBUH, send a community to Abyssinia in Africa, for protection? These questions should be explored, and used to generate the narrative within Arabism to gain justice as needed. While the Sudanese situation is no doubt real to some degree it can be undone—and trenchantly by Sudanese who insist on notions of culture devoid of biology, and who stand up for themselves and challenge the other "Arabs", if this is deemed important; but it could also be said that current events allow for a transcendent Africanity. Egypt could have easily in the 1950s decided that it was a country of Nile Valley descendants primarily, that bioculturally absorbed some Arabians, adopted aspects of Arab culture, and accepted Islam. The whole of northern Africa, and all of Africa may have a different tenor now. The joke that is mentioned about the northerner with dark skin and straight hair, whom the Syrian asked if he was from Senegal can be turned on its head: such folk do exist in northern Nigeria, Niger, and Senegal.

Chapter 12, by Da'Na and Khoury speaks really to the rise of Arab identity and nationalism, seeing this as a racializing process when it is the Arabs vs. the world. He labels all local ethnic groups races in a general social use of the term, which is at odds usually with the use in the previous papers. Da'Na and Khoury shows how Arabic speakers created Arab Nationalism to create a bulwark against the Ottomans, no doubt with generous help from Europeans; the Ottomans used religious rhetoric in contrast. What was the role of Christian Arabs and others in this process? The role of economic manipulation is well illustrated in the game played between by the Ottomans and European colonialists. This is an interesting perspective that leads to a very good discussion when contrasted to color and identity within the "Arab" world. How did the Turks view the Arab variability in skin color and physiognomy? Are there negative Turkish epithets? The Turks did have an impact; some Egyptians went to Turkey for wives apparently and it would be nice to have addressed this as Arabic speakers were contesting the role of the Turks: how did Turco-Egyptians feel about this.

Chapters 13 and 14, by Poole and Jennings respectively deal with the issue of aesthetic color prejudice and possible racism in the Egypt of the last 20 years. Poole points out color preferences in mate selection, and attitudes about color, especially in mate selection, after historically situating Egypt. She works from the perspective that aesthetic prejudice is a form of racism. The comments of an Egyptian female professor are especially informative on this issue, a rare time that an Egyptian calls his/her society racist—or rather that there "is racism in the Egypt", which might be taken another way. It would be of interest to know if females think as males do, and how this would change the results of her enquiry. It would be interesting to explore when the attitude about color became entrenched for feminine beauty—how much is Arab, ancient Egyptian, Greco-Roman, Turkish or European colonialist influenced—the defeated male wants the women of the conqueror. Paradoxically has a more open society led to disrespect of a man's choice in this regard, such that no one like Sadat could ever be president again, due to concern about his mother's origin? Do southern Egyptians have the same color prejudices as northerners? If color is paramount would a religious Egyptian prefer the liberal light-skinned Arab girl reared in Denmark to the dark or black skinned virgin from Kharga oasis or Aswan? This extreme example is meant to raise a point for those who know about Western racism—change the place and ask the question; this does not constitute a defense of Egypt, but is meant to further discussion about oppression. Jennings, an Afro-North American, gives her

personal experience in Egypt, concluding that she was not convinced that racism as Afro-Americans understand it can be demonstrated in Egypt. We can ask why we should privilege the US experience, but hers is a personal memoir, not a formal study. She had the experience of many of us who have visited Egypt: being asked are you going to go to Africa next, as though Egypt were not in Africa—but it is quite possible, given recent newscasts that folk forget that Iraq is in Asia, and India as well. Asia has come to mean Far East Asia for some. Jennings also spoke about conformity and perhaps this is an insight in general. People were ridiculed in Aswan if their dress did not conform. This is interesting, and reminds of the how Afro-Americans were first ridiculed for wearing their hair natural, even by their own folk who had internalized the slavemasters' physical traits as normative culture: how many tragic stories are there about this, and even now with women damaging their skins with skin bleachers in the US among Latinas and in Africa and the Near East proper. For the most part Afro-North Americans and Euro-Americans have gotten over the idea that one has to have straightened hair, but obviously not completely. We need a world where there is no Western privilege, and no privilege of those with white skin, no matter who they are; this is a legitimate struggle in human rights terms, but not totally theorized? One can recall Charlene Hunter-Gault, a great journalist, being criticized for wearing her hair in braids, as though this were not a legitimate cultural and human thing, as though she could not practice Afro-North American culture. Bodily mutilation is not dead, and extends beyond that of the genitals: where is the outcry against the skin lighteners and hair straighteners? Incidentally I had some similar experiences in Cairo in the mid-seventies; in Aswan folk would speak to me in Arabic, thinking that I was Egyptian; in Cairo this usually did not happen, unless I wore a galabiya, and only then on occasion. But I was in Egypt in the wake of the deaths of Nasser and Um Kalthoum; it was a different Egypt, and I suspect that while some of the insults others experienced in more recent times sometimes occurred that there was a different feeling in the air. Jennings reminds us of the power of great leaders like Nasser. I wonder if there was an outcry in Egypt when Nasser arranged for the marriage of an Egyptian to Nkrumah ? I would like to have commentary on what the Egyptian newspapers said. It would be a shame if the good aspects of Nasser's legacy were lost, and Egyptians hankered after a pseudo "white" identity. (The pyramids were not built by Swedes or Turks.) Jennings' essay is very careful in showing us how not to jump to conclusions about life episodes that in Alabama would be racist, but in Egypt, maybe not so, but with globalization who knows? The irony of her comments about Nubians are transparent: while Egyptian Nubians accepted their color or seemingly so, their Arabized cousins in Sudan were trying to escape their color and connections to local soil in numerous cases. But Egyptian Nubians as a community probably have a long way to go; this is perhaps (?) to be contrasted to the Egyptians whose father was northern Egyptian, and mother was Nubian/dark Saidi (or vice versa) in the current era: a study to be done. The voice of Egyptian human rights activists would be welcome in this conversation.

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Commentary to the reviews of *Race and Identity in the Nile Valley*

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(editor's note: The SSA Bulletin is intended as a forum for Sudanist scholars and has in the past afforded scholars whose books are reviewed to respond with the goal of promoting discussion and debate of the issues raised. In this spirit, I offer this brief response to the two reviewers.)

I thank the reviewers for their time and effort and I encourage readers of the SSA Bulletin to offer further commentary. I appreciate both the perspective of Sudanese historian Ismail Abdalla and that of my colleague Omar Soy Keita, a biological anthropologist and respected critic of existing models of race. *Race and Identity in the Nile Valley* was conceived in the late 1990s as an effort to break new ground, particularly to move beyond the simplistic racial renderings of Nile Valley peoples in the latest round of debates that pitted 'classical' scholarship of ancient Africa with Africentrist scholarship. I am also moved to write a commentary to the reviews because of the interest that the book has generated in Sudan where I have resumed research since 2005.

I first introduced the book to colleagues and students in universities, the press, and some NGOs in Khartoum in the immediate wake of the signing of the CPA in January 2005. Southern colleagues and friends-- from SPLM to SSDF to "independent" academics-- responded positively to the book's title, often commenting that "race is the central issue we need to discuss." They wanted more inclusion of varied southern perspectives where race and ethnicity overlap beyond the well-drawn history of "the legacy of race" that Jok Madut Jok outlines in his chapter. Reponses from Darfuri colleagues were similar, noting the centrality of race to national democratic discourse and the ways that the subject has been unrecognized, or deferred, in favor of an imagined national unity. Re-

sponses from central, riverain northerners was more variable. Responses ranged from outright rejection of the importance of issues of race and racism-- often accompanied by denial that race has played any part in post-independence politics (limiting the discourse to historical legacies from British colonialism), to defensive reactions, especially to al-Baqir Mukhtar's provocative article "The Crisis of Identity in Northern Sudan: the dilemma of a Black People with a White Culture," to engaged, objective reflection of Sudan's complex history with matters of slavery and race prompting remarks from elite Ja`ali and Shayqi, such as "our grandmothers were slaves and were as black as any Dinka." Al-Baqir's article has been translated into Arabic and is being circulated and discussed in progressive, democratic groups, among these the Republican movement.

Predictably, the non-standard application of racialized references such as "Arab," "African," "Black," are criticized by Abdalla, as is a homogenized, monolithic use of "Northern Sudanese." It should be evident that these terms are highly contested in just about every facet of contemporary public discourse—whether in scholarly discourse where the legacy of colonial categories fogs the minds of contemporary analysts, or in the western press as it describes conflicting parties in Darfur as 'Arab' against 'Black African,' or in human encounters inside and outside of Sudan where "Arab" and "Muslim" are confused, "African" is a as much about geography as race, and "Black" is a moving target in the social construction of race. "Northerner" and "Southerner" in Sudanese discourse have become akin to the "Black-White binary" in the US where people with complex social, ethnic-racial histories are homogenized and categorized as one or the other. Keita's comment about the use of "Nehesy"—often translated as "Negro" or "Black" belongs more to romance or fiction rather than historical fact since the ancient Egyptians did not employ color referents to the diverse peoples they described and represented.

Debates over 'Arab' identity still invigorate northern Sudanese intellectual life where linguistic-religious markers have been emphasized by the current regime and Khartoum recently proudly was honored as "a capital of Arab culture" (not to mention its close ties to Saudi Arabia). Increasingly, intellectuals and politicians specifically deny possessing 'Arab' culture, including followers of the old National Islamic Front now divided into two competing parties. Northern elite academics—overwhelmingly Shayqīya and Ja`alī-- may diffuse the overt politics of this discourse by adopting the language of Western scholars as people who have been "Arabized" (*musta`arabiyyeen*). Arab/non-Arab identity is still contested ground in the realm of ideas and politics. It is noteworthy that the term "non-Arab" is more used in journalistic writing, possibly in response to critics of their simple renderings of race and ethnicity in Sudan.

Today marginalized Nubians in Sudan and racially discriminated Nubians in Egypt are enthusiastically embracing their 'Blackness' and their part in classical African civilization, in no small part due to a strong interest in Nubian civilization and matters of race raised by Afrocentric scholars in the West. The five articles addressing "Race in Antiquity" in the first section of the book are being studied by a number of independent Nubian cultural-study and research groups inspired by their recovering their own history and relating it in their own terms, and perhaps of greatest interest is the fact that these groups have reached out and now include members form the Nuba Mountains. Independently, such new social connections are being forged in the growing megalopolis of Khartoum carrying out their own linguistic and folkloric research and demonstrating social-historical ties.

I am grateful to Soy Keita for acknowledging the contribution of 19th century Haitian scholar Anténor Firmin whose 1885 work in French, now translated as *The Equality of the Human Races: Positivist Anthropology* (2000: 2002), was a pioneering treatment of classical Nile Valley African civilization "from Memphis to

Meroë" a scientific verity not yet fully accepted over 120 years later. Moreover, Keita's review form the perspective of a biological/biocultural anthropologist with an interest in the co-evolution of Nile Valley peoples over the millennia of civilizational development. Indeed, the book lacks a solid contribution that would enlighten a more general, interdisciplinary group of scholars regarding the peopling of the Nile Valley from a biological-cultural anthropologist. Were a second edition of the book contemplated, this would be a high priority. Likewise the provocative comments made by both Abdalla and Keita about "power and scholarship," implicating Orientalism directly, of course, but also raising significant questions not only about Orientalist interpretation of non-Western civilizations, but about the ethics of their research methods. In this respect, mention could be made of Reisner's use of slave labor in his excavations in Nubia in the early 20th century, his refusal to employ the African-American research assistant, and his negotiations with Governor-General Kitchener over the disposition to various US and UK museums of finds from Reisner's excavations. In this respect, Keita's example of the vindication of the historical reclamation of the historic legitimacy of the Prince Hall Masons as a result of racist efforts aimed at denying their legitimacy is a relevant case in point that might inspire a future contribution critiquing racist methods as well as their analysis.

Keita's appreciation of the fluidity and nuance that Stephanie Beswick brings to her analysis of enslavement and identity especially in the 19th century is most welcome as an aid to the complexities of contemporary discourse. Keita reminds his reader of the importance of leveling the scholarly playing field –asking pointed questions of Muslim scholars how circumcision of women and men came to be emblematic of coerced Muslim identity and comparing this to forced baptisms marking enslaved Africans as Christian as they were transported to New World slave markets and plantations. These types of comparisons, in time and space, are likewise helpful to those who seek to uncover truth and facilitate reconciliation, whether for legacies of slavery and race in Africa or in the New World. The plea by Keita for a vigorous, candid, and sustained dialogue among Muslims over matters of race and identity that explore the diversity in Islam and begin, but do not end, with the commonality of religion is yet another dimension of the subject that he opens.

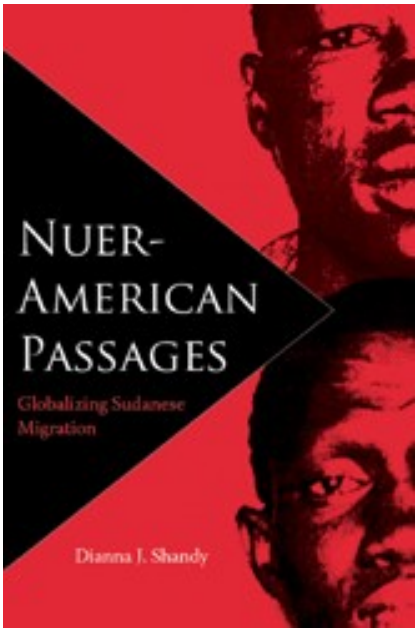
It was indirectly noted by the reviewers that Egypt, while represented by articles focused on antiquity, is discussed in contemporary society by two African-American scholars who conducted their research in Aswan (Jennings) and Cairo (Poole), respectively. The complexity of social-racial formations and hierarchies in the two major Nile Valley countries is only hinted at and not much explored, although Eve Troutt Powell has provided the best analytical framework to date in her 2003 breakthrough work *A Different Shade of Colonialism, Egypt, Great Britain and the Mastery of the Sudan*. Interest in an Arabic version of the book was expressed to me by Egyptian scholars from the Program of African Studies at Cairo University at a conference in Khartoum in 2005 on the relationships between the Nile Valley and Horn of Africa countries. However, discussions of race and identity between scholars from the two countries has been muted; indeed the idea for this book was launched, in part, at the 5th International Conference of the SSA in Cairo in 1997, where only Egyptian was on the program as a commentator. This dialogue internal to the Nile Valley will likely be lead in the future by Nubians of both nations and represents yet another extension of the landscape that kharyssa Rhodes and I attempted to lay out in the late 1990s. Jennings' observation, noted by Keita, that Egyptian Nubians apparently accepted their color while their Arabized cousins in Sudan were trying to escape it is perhaps a conversation opener. I would hope that Soy Keita will be a welcome participant in this conversation as Orientalist legacies are challenged. This and other scholarly illusions hinder Egyptian scholars from seeing their genealogical-historical re-

lationships with Sudanese, southern, Nuba, and all of the complexity that the "North" represents.

The conversations and potential new areas of research and reflection that the book has fostered inside and outside of Sudan have been its greatest reward. It is my hope that this response to the book's reviews in the SSA Bulletin may encourage further initiatives.

Dianna Shandy, *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*.

Gainesville: University Press of Florida , 2007.



Reviewed by Oscar H. Blayton.

It is hoped that *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration* by anthropologist Dianna Shandy will be greatly appreciated as a step towards clearing much of the fog that has shrouded the studies of the many peoples around the world whose voices, for various reasons, have not been heard as they articulate the phenomena of their existence.

Shandy, in true anthropologist style, takes great pains to inform the reader of what she wishes to say and why. As her work unfolds, the necessity for such exacting expression becomes clear. The author not only tries to enlighten the reader by presenting new information, she tries to point out misconceptions that have been fostered by earlier, well-respected scholars in the field. At the conclusion of the book, I felt as if I had followed her through a sociological mine-field.

In the author's own words, this work is "a study of the complex social networks that develop for Nuer refugees as they travel multiple sites of displacements." Beyond that, Shandy attempts to educate the reader about the complex and fluid migration processes of refugee Nuer, as members of a pre-established ethnic community, to the United States.

In order to make sense of her findings, Shandy has to begin at a very basic level of examining the various definitions of "refugees." She points out that this is necessary because the current legal and psychological paradigms do not adequately explain the concept of political refugees.

Preconceived notions about who and what refugees are tend to foster psychologically derived models where the experience of forced migration is believed to drown out the social, historical and cultural elements of a refugee's background. The implied assumption is that when refugees are uprooted from their geographical homes, they are uprooted from their culture as well. Shandy makes it clear that her data contradicts this belief.

The author points out the cultural history of the Nuer as having a transhumant pas-

toral rhythm that follows the dry and rainy seasons as they care for their herds of cattle. She uses that to illustrate that migration is not new to the Nuer. However, it is the context of this subject migration that is new to them.

It has been said that the Nuer may well be the most important case study in the history of anthropology because of Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard's three ethnographies that now are considered classics in the field. It may seem ironic, therefore, that a group as celebrated as the Nuer would need to be "defined" a half-century after the publication of Evans-Pritchard's work. But Shandy points out that many of the volumes on the Nuer are based on Evans-Pritchard's work completed many decades ago, causing the perception of the Nuer to become static. There has been too little effort to see the Nuer as "participants in their own history," she asserts.

Through a detailed description of her methodology, Shandy makes it clear at the end of the first chapter of her work where the strengths and weaknesses of her research lay and she gives the reader a full and fair opportunity to consider the usefulness of her data. She indicates that much of her information is derived from individual (mostly Nuer) informants who have moved as refugees from southern Sudan (or refugee camps in neighboring countries) to the United States. These narratives, although anecdotal, taken in the context of the numerous accounts collected by the author, weave a fabric of plausible understanding to a degree heretofore not achieved in the literature. In addition to narratives by informants, the author uses archival research, document review, participant observation and formal and informal interviews.

The author uses the remaining eight chapters to familiarize the reader with the Nuer people and their place in the history of southern Sudan and the windstorm of circumstance that have blown them to the United States and influence their lives in their new country. Shandy describes the nature of the civil war that has raged for more than 20 years in southern Sudan and driven many of the Nuer from their homes. She also details specific decision-making processes from the initiation of the journey to their arrival in the United States and beyond. She presents the Nuer refugee as a whole person by connecting him or her to their counterparts in Sudan and the refugee camps in neighboring countries and providing context to their new lives.

Shandy describes in detail the various strategies and tactics used by the refugees to negotiate the "journey" and in so doing, not only challenges commonly held precepts about the characteristics of the refugees, but also notions about the nature of the "journey" itself. Both the refugee and the journey are shown to be much more complex than thought by many policymakers whose decisions affect the lives of those refugees.

The author gives the reader a unique insight into how the Nuer in America confront the complications and difficulties in maintaining a cultural connectedness to the Nuer in Africa and their cultural underpinnings. The pressures associated with these issues create gender-related problems as well as those created by financial difficulties and cultural differences with the host population. One poignant cultural difference examined by Shandy – the tendency of the Nuer towards mobility and their apparent lack of ritual associated with departure – is illustrative of just how unequipped Americans are to comprehend this culture.

Finally, the author places the Nuer refugee in the United States within a global context and orients the reader to the impact of globalization in ways that are often not considered by many individuals (particularly Americans). Their various methods to utilize support groups, commerce and technology to maintain connections to family, friends, supporters and

potential supporters provide ample evidence of the refugees' ability to maintain a role in the world beyond that of helpless victim.

Shandy shows us that while a common notion of the Nuer has remained static during the past several decades, the Nuer themselves have not. This shows us that our preconceptions about groups of people often get in the way of our understanding of not only the world that is distant and remote, but also that part of the world that stands right before us. The first question this reviewer had about Shandy's book was: "Why was this book not written by a Nuer?" And there was some discomfort with the fact that it was not. But after following Shandy through her data and narratives, it is clear that America may not be ready to hear the Nuer speak in their own voices. It is hoped that America can hear the Nuer through the voice of Dianna Shandy today, so that eventually we can hear them through their own voices tomorrow.

The Life and Career of the Mahdi

Reviewed by Heather J. Sharkey

Lawha li-tha`ir sudani: al-Imam al-Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad b. 'Abd Allah (1844-1885) by Muhammad Sa'id al-Qaddal. Khartoum: University of Khartoum Press, 1985. Reissued as *al-Imam al-Mahdi: Muhammad Ahmad b. 'Abd Allah (1844-1885)*. Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 1992.

The year 1981 marked the centenary of the start of the Mahdist revolution; one hundred years before, the Sufi scholar named Muhammad Ahmad ibn 'Abd Allah had declared his calling as the Mahdi at Aba Island. In commemoration of the event, a librarian at the University of Khartoum decided to collect all of the biographical studies that had been written on the Mahdi up to that point. Much to his surprise and chagrin, however, the search yielded not a single biography on the Mahdi himself in sharp contrast to the forty-odd works on Charles Gordon which the same search uncovered.[1]

Muhammad Ahmad was arguably the single most influential personality in the history of the modern Sudan. Studies which deal with any aspect of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Sudanese history inevitably mention him and the movement which he launched. Yet in some sense the breadth of the historiographical tradition on the Sudan has remained quite limited. In particular, many extant English-language studies have tended to focus on Gordon and on the British/Europeans who followed him, while relegating the Mahdi and other Sudanese leaders into the space of a few pages. Such studies have, in effect, treated the Sudanese as if they were the backdrop on the stage of their own history.

Prompted by his colleague's fruitless search in the University of Khartoum library, Muhammad Sa'id al-Qaddal decided to reverse the biographical oversight on the life and career of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi. In 1985, the University of Khartoum Press published his biography; just this past year, in 1992, Beirut's Dar al-Jil publishing house chose to re-issue it. The reprinting of al-Qaddal's biography on the Mahdi testifies to its supra-Sudanese value as a work of history.

Admittedly, there have been a few works published in past years which ostensibly concentrate on the Mahdi. For different reasons, however, they fail to qualify as full-fledged biographies.

One biographical contender might be Isma'il b. 'Abd al-Qadir al-Kurdufani's *Kitab sa'adat al-mustahdi bi-sirat al-Imam al-Mahdi*, written in 1888. (Muhammad Ibrahim Abu Salim edited the text for a 1972 Arabic edition; Haim Shaked published a translated and annotated version in 1978.[2] Commissioned by the Khalifa 'Abdullahi, *Kitab sa'adat al-mustahdi* functioned as a panegyric and as an 'official' history of the Mahdist state. The book took pains to prove that Muhammad Ahmad was indeed the Mahdi, often by referring to popular Sunni eschatological traditions. Al-Kurdufani's text is of historical value and interest as an official Mahdist source. Nonetheless, it is not a biography in the usual sense of the term, since its primary function was to serve as a work of propaganda for the fledgling Mahdist state. As such it concentrates almost exclusively on Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi rather than Muhammad Ahmad the man.

What might seem to be a second contender, Richard Bermann's *The Mahdi of Allah: The Story of the Dervish Mohammed Ahmed*, published in 1932, actually reads more like a story-book, the underlying goal of which is to discredit the Mahdi and the Mahdist movement.[3] From today's standpoint, Bermann's text is shocking for its bitter xenophobia and racism, which tinge even Winston Churchill's introduction to the book. Its title, too, is grossly misleading. Only a fraction of Bermann's text deals with the Mahdi, and a sizeable chunk degenerates into a hagiography of Gordon. The book effectively targets a popular audience in order to justify British intervention in the Sudan (and European intervention within Africa as a whole) as a civilizing mission.

Set against this context, al-Qaddal's study is all the more refreshing. He has written what is neither a hagiography nor a vilification of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi. Al-Qaddal relies extensively on Sudanese Arabic sources, including texts written by Mahdiyya contemporaries (e.g., Yusuf Mikha'il, al-Kurdufani); studies by Sudanese scholars (e.g., Mekki Shibeika, Abu Salim); and collections of Mahdist documents. He uses English-language sources extensively as well: the contemporary accounts of Wingate, Slatin, and Ohrwalder, of course, but also scholarship by the likes of Hill, Holt, O'Fahey, and others. Careful citation of sources makes his study of considerable use to researchers who wish to follow the footnote trail. His Arabic prose is clear and straightforward, so that his book should be accessible to non-native Arabic speakers who have had a few years' training in the written language.

Less than 150 pages long, al-Qaddal's text manages to provide a thorough if concise survey of Muhammad Ahmad's life and thoughta much-needed account of the man and his mission. Al-Qaddal gives a brief outline of Sudanese history during the Turkiyya, and of the nature of Islam and Sufism in the Sudan. He then turns to a study of the early life of Muhammad Ahmad, placing particular emphasis on his religious education and development and on his Sufi beliefs. The last two-thirds of the book are devoted to Muhammad Ahmad after he had declared his calling as the Mahdi. He traces the crystallization of the movement and the consolidation of its support base, before detailing the military struggle under the Mahdi with a battle-by-battle description. He concludes his study with an analysis of the Mahdi's political, economic, and social program: he deals with such topics as Mahdist policy towards the Sufi orders, the structure of the Bayt al-mal, rulings on marriage, and so forth.

The author clearly admires the Mahdi; on the first page of the biography he calls him 'a revolutionary whose life story has illuminated [Sudanese] history.' Nonetheless, he tempers his praise with judicious criticism. For example, he criticizes the Mahdi for having ordered the burning of all books except for the Qur`an and compilations of *hadith*, and says that this step 'was not devoid of extremism.'[4] Moreover, he

describes the Mahdi's political, economic, and social programs as 'the weakest of his intellectual links,' in contrast to his highly developed and shrewd *jihad* ideology and military organization.[5]

Al-Qaddal seems to feel least comfortable in characterizing Muhammad Ahmad's position vis-a-vis the Sufi orders after his declaration of the Mahdiship. Muhammad Ahmad, after all, had been a member of the Sammaniyya *tariqa* before his calling. Once he had established a broad base of support, however, he had outlawed all Sufi orders, no doubt seeing them as potential rival power bases. Al-Qaddal repeatedly alludes to but does not truly confront the nature of Muhammad Ahmad the Sufi versus Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi, the continuities and the breaks between the two.

One of the most interesting series of minor details which al-Qaddal includes in his study pertains to the folklore and legends surrounding the Mahdi, and to the signs of *baraka* and proofs of piety which his supporters saw in him. When still a young man, for example, Muhammad Ahmad had been eating the food at one mosque where he was studying until he learned that it had been subsidized by the Turco-Egyptian government. He thereafter refused to eat the mosque food, on the grounds that it had come from illegal taxes. According to another story, Muhammad Ahmad had been selling firewood in the Khartoum market until he learned that one of his customers was burning it in order to distill liquor.[6]

How could one individual do so much to shape a country's history? This is the question which al-Qaddal asks at the beginning of his study. In the case of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi, even those historians who generally avoid the 'Great Man' theory of history cannot deny his remarkable charismatic force in propelling the history of the Sudan along its path.

Al-Qaddal may represent many Sudanese in attributing to the Mahdi a manifold and very positive legacy: he sees the Mahdi as a symbol against foreign oppression and a symbol for national liberation, who unified the tribes of the northern Sudan under the aegis of a shared Islamic heritage. This modern-day interpretation is certainly a compelling one, though in a nation as socially, politically, and religiously fragmented as the Sudan is today, one must realize that it is not the only one. While many Sudanese, of the North and South, might agree that Muhammad Ahmad represents one of the most influential figures in Sudanese history, not all would attribute to him the glorious legacy of national liberation and unification.

Footnotes

1. Muhammad Sa'id al-Qaddal, *Lawha li-tha`ir sudani*, 1 [1992 edn. p. 7]. [*]
2. Isma'il b. 'Abd al-Qadir al-Kurdufani, *Kitab sa'adat al-mustahdi bi-sirat al-Imam al-Mahdi*, Ed. Muhammad Ibrahim Abu Salim (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1972) and Haim Shaked, *The Life of the Sudanese Mahdi: A Historical Study of Kitab sa'adat al-mustahdi bi-sirat al-Imam al-Mahdi by Isma'il b. 'Abd al-Qadir* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978). [*]
3. Richard A. Bermann, *The Mahdi of Allah: The Story of the Dervish Mohammed Ahmed*, Introduction by Winston Churchill, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932. [*]
4. al-Qaddal, *Lawha,* 124 [1992 edn., 140]. [*]
5. al-Qaddal, *Lawha,* 123 [1992 edn., 139]. [*]
6. al-Qaddal, *Lawha,* 37, 42 [1992 edn., 49, 55-6].[*]

Featured reader artwork
Mixed media collage: *Darfur*.
By: Amber Higbee, Psychology Student, Rhode Island College

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Cover Photo

Ankole-Watusi cattle are native to Africa for over 6,000 years, descending from the Aurochs that became extinct in the 17th century. They have large, distinctive horns similar to the Texas Longhorn. They are central to Nilotic culture providing, in addition to meat and milk, the currency of everyday social relations, including the negotiation of marriage.

Simon Duop Puk, former Minister of Education Upper Nile State, current SPLM Secretary for States Affairs, Southern Sector, proudly displays SSA t-shirt in Juba, January 2008 *(photo: January '08, R. and C. Lobban)*

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